

BUCS TENNIS SAG – MINUTES

Date 12/03/2026
Time 10:00 – 12:00
Location Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES

Matt Wildt (MW)
Alistair Higham (AH)
Claire McCulloch (CM)
Harrison Fernandez Lewis (HFL)
Mike Castle (MC)
Sean Berthelson (SB)
Carl Baldwin (CB)
Arum Akom (AA)

APOLOGIES

Sophie Kitson (SK)

ORGANISATION

Chair, Nottingham
NGB Rep, LTA
Parasport Representative, St Andrews
Workforce Development, Nottingham Trent
Welsh & Recreational Representative, Cardiff Met
Scottish Representative, Edinburgh
Competition Representative
EDIA Representative

ORGANISATION

BUCS

Item	Action*
1. Welcome and Apologies MW sent apologies for Sophie Kitson.	
2. Minutes and Matters Arising The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.	
3. LTA Update • Partner university funding applications ongoing; funding decisions expected to be released for 2026-29 w/c 15 June 2026. • New promotional videos launched (performance pathways, Super Weekend footage). • Updated partner university web listings – institutions asked to check their information here. • Master U event sponsorship withdrawn; week to be held free in case an alternative event/friendly can be arranged. • Encouragement for students to apply for grass court hitting opportunities.	
4. BUCS Doubles Qualifying 2026-27 • Competitive Opportunities for Top vs Lower-Ranked University Players ○ Discussion highlighted differing needs between elite players and mid/lower team players. ○ Comparison was made between UK university structure and the highly prioritised US collegiate model. ○ Noted that top players often have external competitive opportunities, unlike those in lower teams. • BUCS Doubles Qualifying ○ Support & Rationale ○ General support for BUCS Doubles Qualifying introduction. ○ Scottish perspective (SB): Qualifying stage would increase participation and visibility of the event in Scotland. ○ Expected that qualifying would not drastically change which teams progress but would enhance engagement. • Operational Challenges ○ Funding: ▪ Current BUCS financial model links entry fees to event costs. ▪ Concerns on whether qualifying can be afforded under existing structures. ○ Scheduling: ▪ Need to avoid clashes with Freshers' Week, other university events, and pro events. ○ Potential window identified during the No Winter County Cup period. Action: MW/SK/CB to investigate (1) funding options and (2) suitable calendar placement for doubles qualifying.	MW/SK/CB

5. Ranking Systems 2026-27 • Current Issues ○ Doubles lineup rule (based on sum of rankings) widely seen as flawed. ○ Example: National champion pairs unable to play at #1 due to ranking-sum constraints. ○ Lack of trust in WTN because: ▪ BUCS Play and LTA systems do not sync. ▪ University match results do not automatically update WTN (if not uploaded) and do not update UTR until after the season is finished. ▪ Reliance on students manually entering results introduces inconsistency. • WTN Feasibility Discussion ○ Technical limitations likely persist into next season (per CB and AH). ○ However, increased BUCS Play data capture may allow manual input of results where needed. ○ Potential long-term aim: ▪ Move BUCS to a trusted ranking system (WTN or UTR) once data flow is reliable.	
6. Calendar 2026-27 • Awaiting confirmation from BUCS regarding: ○ Dates for next year's BUCS Doubles ○ BUCS Big Wednesday ○ Super Weekends • Pro event schedule expected to broadly mirror previous years. Action: BUCS to share once the draft calendar is available.	BUCS
7. BUCS Padel Championships 2025-26 • At time of meeting, tender process underway. • Now, UK Padel confirmed as third-party provider. • Padel Champs will take place on 9-10 May at Slazenger Padel Leeds, more info here.	

8. Rules & Regs Review • Doubles Regulation Proposal ○ Proposal: Remove ranking-sum requirement and allow teams to nominate doubles pairs freely. ○ General support in the room: ▪ Adds strategy/jeopardy. ▪ Reduces administrative queries. ○ Concerns: ▪ Could encourage tactical manipulation (e.g., stacking pairs to clinch a needed win). ▪ Mirrors historic issues before ranking sum rule existed. • Doubles Declaration Process ○ If doubles ranking rule is removed, need a clear method for pair declarations. ○ Suggested method: sealed declaration similar to match shootout. • Rankings Change Process ○ Query raised about whether a full university consultation is required. ○ Previous reg changes took years; desire to streamline if possible. Action: SK to review BUCS regulatory process and confirm whether a competition regulation change or full consultation is required.	BUCS
9. AOB • Ball Quality at National League & Championship Events ○ Feedback from elite players: match balls quickly degrade, especially in men's events. ○ Proposal for: ▪ Introduced ball change during matches (e.g., after 9 & 11 games). ▪ Additional tubes of balls at high-level events (e.g., BUCS Big Wednesday). ○ Minimal cost impact expected. ○ Some players have even offered to fund improved balls. ○ Additional Note: SK looking at change ball provider after quality issues this season. • Future Rankings Direction ○ MW requested CB's neutral perspective on whether BUCS should: ▪ Move to WTN-based system in September, ▪ Apply only to National League/Premier, or ▪ Maintain current bona fide order. ○ Awaiting CB written input.	
10. Date of Next Meeting Thursday 23 April 2026 – 10:00am-12:00pm	