



### Executive Summary

The club has had a mixed season in 2014 in terms of success & performance and in particular the decrease in player participation at tournaments and training. While the club continues to remain popular for touch players who want to learn how to play the game, as well as those players who want to advance their touch skills, increased player participation is required at both training & tournaments if the club wishes to remain competitive and improve on performance in 2015.

### Key messages for 2015 season.

- **New Training Programme including a new coaching structure and changes in squad selection procedure.**
- **Renewed focus on development of existing players and retention of existing & new players**
- **Improve Club standings in STS**
- **Host club social events throughout the season, including a club internal team day.**
- **Grow team participation in tournaments.**
- **Continue with focus on Grant & Funding applications with the aim of securing a more permanent training facility for the season.**

The following provides a summary of the 2014 season and outlines proposals for the 2015 season ahead.

### Training & Coaching

The Club commenced its Touch for All [Beginner] sessions in Jan 2014, which ran for six weeks. This year the sessions attracted a large number of new players to the sport with 40+ new beginners attending at its peak. The retention of new players was down compared to previous years; however those players who did continue to attend training through the season have integrated well within the Club. The Management Committee and Coaches felt that the poor weather in the first quarter of 2014, the change in venue in March to Glasgow Green and the gap between the Touch for All sessions and the main playing season were the key contributing factors in loss of new players early in the season.

To address this next season, it is proposed to move the Touch for All sessions to March, again running for 6 weeks to mid-April. These sessions will coincide with pre-season fitness & skills sessions for non-beginners. From mid-April, the normal midweek training sessions will commence until mid-October with the summer league commencing mid-May.

The Club is also looking at securing part of the football pitches located at Glasgow Green and have commenced discussions with Glasgow Life in relation to this. If successful, this will secure a proper training venue & facilities for the 2015 season and would be another step in the right direction for the club. The plan for 2015 would be to continue with this facility for midweek training for the remainder of the season if available.

This year for the most part we had improved availability of Coaches when compared to 2013. This allowed Coaches to train players in three separate squads depending on player numbers at a given training session. However, turn out at training sessions was at times down across the senior & intermediate squads. This made it difficult for Coaches to run planned sessions and some squads were joined together for certain training sessions to make up numbers. Subsequently this limited some senior player's progress

For the Club to remain competitive and improve year on year, regular attendance at training is vitally important for all players and for the club. Training allows players to improve skills, learn new plays and become familiar playing Touch with each other so they can take this into a competitive game.

Next season there will be more emphasis on attendance at training and the responsibility of this will lie with the Coaches from each squad. Again next season the aim is to have 3-4 training squads, each with their own two coaches and assistant coach / senior players to assist during the sessions where required. Squads will be decided following the pre-season fitness & Touch for All sessions, plus player commitment for the season ahead including availability for tournaments, as well as consultation with the players to understand their requirements with regard to squad selection.

Players will remain in their training squads unless a player progresses to a level that the Coaches deem a player suitable to be moved to a more senior squad. Before a player will be considered for advancing to a higher squad, that player will need to demonstrate particular skills and understanding of the basics of the game. Players who may come from a



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particular sporting background who may have good ball handling / passing skill, along with fitness and agility will remain in a suitable beginners group until such time as they know and understand the basics of the game before they are considered by Coaches for moving up a level.

Coaches will be responsible for their assigned squad in terms of coaching and mentoring players, encouraging players to attend training and in team selection for league & tournaments. Basically, players within a particular squad will train, play and compete in league & tournaments in that squad. Selection of teams will no longer fall onto one person but onto the individual coaches responsible for their squad.

### Tournaments & League

In terms of club ranking the club finished outside the top 8 in the STS series dropping from joint 6<sup>th</sup> in 2013. This was disappointing for the club, as we had improved our ranking in the previous two seasons and the STS tournaments only guarantees positions for the top ranked 8 teams from the previous season. This could have implications for the numbers of teams we can enter into a STS tournament in 2015. One of the main focuses for next year will be to improve the club overall ranking, ensuring the Club moves back into the top 8<sup>th</sup> positions within Scotland.

In terms of other tournaments & league, the Club won Women's division in the Glasgow Cup in July. Congratulations to all those involved with this win.

The Club also entered two teams into various tournaments in 2014 with the largest number of teams entered in Stirling (four teams), a first for the club! However, the Club struggled to enter teams into the STS tournaments in Edinburgh in May and Aberdeen in July due to lack of availability of players

The Club again entered 4 Mixed, 2 Women's & 2 Men's teams in the Glasgow League. Congratulations to the Senior Women's Team who won their division.

In addition to the successes at club level, a number of players travelled to Swansea to represent the National sides for Scotland in the 2014 Euros. Well done to all players involved and congratulations to Stevie Bennett in the Masters Mixed squad who were European Champions in their division.

### Club & Youth Development

In terms of **club development**, the club was successful in receiving Club Mark Status from Glasgow Life & Glasgow Sport in 2014. This is a very important step in the clubs development as it underlines our core values as a club and its position within the community, as well as acknowledging the policies that we have in place. In addition, it provides promotion of the sport within the wider Glasgow community, as well helping with applications for additional funding and grants. On behalf of the Club, a big thank you to Elaine Clark, Jenny Johnston & Victor Francisco Suarez and all involved in helping the club achieve this important award.

Besides the competitive aspect of the Club, a large part of the club is the social aspect. In 2014 the club did not host as many club social events as it did in previous years. However, in 2015 there will be a group of members tasked with organising social events for the Club so that players come together more as a Club. The Club will also look at hosting its own internal team day in 2015.

This year the Club announced that its long standing Head Coach, Victor Francisco Suarez, would be stepping down from his position. Victor has made a significant contribution both on and off the field in helping to build the Lions to the successful Club it is today and also not forgetting his overall contribution to the game itself. His commitment and passion over the years has been instrumental in the development of the Club and has left a solid foundation for the future. On behalf of the Club Management, Coaches and Players I would like to thank him for his years of service, not only as Head Coach, but also his other roles within the Club.

Following a Coaches meeting in October, the Club is delighted to announce that Gillian Bond has been appointed as Coaching Director. Gillian's main focus will be the mentoring and development of the Club Coaches. Terry Bauld will become Technical Director and her main focus will be technical & skills development within the club. It is not proposed to appoint a Head Coach to the Club and the Coaches agree that the appointment of Gillian & Terry in the above roles will satisfy the clubs requirements and fulfil the coaching direction for the Club, its Coaches & Players in 2015.



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As the club looks forward to the next season, the Committee and Coaching staff will remain focused on attraction & retention of players within the Club as well as focusing on existing players to ensure they develop within the Club. The outline of how the club aims to achieve has been detailed earlier in the report.

In terms of **youth development**, 2013 and 2014 have seen the Lions embark on a long term goal to establish a youth section in order to provide the opportunity for young people of all ages to participate in the sport. Much of 2013 focused on the development of our safeguarding policies and management systems within the Club to facilitate a youth section.

Working together with Glasgow Life and Sports Council Glasgow the Lions continued working with St Mungos in 2014 and looked also at extending our schools links to support the development of touch rugby. Through developing School-Club links our long term aim is to eventually establish youth sides for different age groups within the Club. The club had planned to run a number of taster sessions in April & September this year within St. Mungos, however our contact within the school was unavailable during these times and so the sessions were put on hold for the time being until St. Mungos can accommodate roll out of touch rugby within the school. We also explored working with a local youth group and developed plans in terms of how that could work in the future. Development of youth in 2015 will be dependent on 2 key factors 1) in line with where the Club is at and what can be realistically delivered based on the available resources (including youth coaching capacity and commitment/availability of coaches) next season and 2) the development of recognisable Governing and Regional Bodies that can effectively support their affiliated Clubs in the appropriate ways.

A lot of time and effort has gone into getting a club youth development programme in place over the past two years and this would not have been possible without the great work that Jenny Johnstone has done in relation to this. On behalf of the Club, I would like to thank Jenny for all her time & effort in helping the Club get its youth development programme off the ground. Jenny has agreed assist with youth Development & Safe Guarding within the Club in an active capacity to support the Club with Youth Development in 2015 until she moves down south in 2015. I would encourage anyone who is interested in volunteering to progress Youth development in 2015 to please get in touch with the Club before the end of the year.

### **Finances**

In terms of finances, the Club was again successful in its application for the big lottery grant which secured valuable funding for the Club. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year we have received this funding and I would like to thank Denis Donoghue for his continued efforts in securing this funding. The Club also received funding for achieving Club Mark status from Glasgow Life. Other sources of income generated for the Club this year were obtained from hosting the Club Day & Beginners tournament. There were a number of other avenues explored by the Grants & Fund raising sub-committee in 2014 and I would like to thank Denis Donoghue, Ann Marie Wall & Lindsay Dunlop for their efforts over the past season in relation to this. Further work on this will continue in 2015.

Funding for the Club is very important as it allows the Club to provide training equipment, players kit, subsidies for tournaments fees, coach development courses as well as covering other expenses such as insurance, pitch and venue hire, and transport to tournaments. As the Club now seeks to secure a more permanent training facility going forward, additional funding and potential grants will have to be secured to finance this in 2015.

More details of the Club finances for 2014 are contained within the Treasurers report.

### **Committee and Management**

In terms of Committee and Management a number of **sub committees** were set up to focus on key areas within the club. These sub-committees consisted of Youth Development, Grants & Funding and Club Tournaments. It is planned to continue the above sub-committees in 2015 reporting back to the main committee, Additional members within each subcommittee will be sought from club members / volunteers, so please let us know if you are interested in getting involved in a subcommittee in 2015.

### **Further Acknowledgements**

In addition to those acknowledgements already mentioned in my report, I would like to thank a number of people on behalf of the Club for their contribution in helping the Club continue to run smoothly in 2014:



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All the Coaches who were led by Victor & Terry as well as those players who assisted during training sessions during the season.

The sub-committee members for their involvement and contribution to the Club:

Youth Development chaired by Jenny [Audrey Murphy, Adrian, & Victor]  
Grants & Funding chaired by Denis [Anne Marie & Lindsay]  
Tournaments chaired by Terry Bauld [Alan Donaldson]  
Funding & Sponsorship chaired by Mungo Ferguson [Lesley & Alan Donaldson]

Ann Marie, Lindsay & Brian McCluskey for their work on the Club's communications and weekly newsletters. I would like to also thank Ian Simms for his work in sending out communications for the summer league.

Brian for maintaining, monitoring and updating the Lions website, Facebook and twitter accounts and securing tonight's venue.

Ryan Shearer for being Tournaments Manager for the 2014 season. A great job was done throughout the season and the Club appreciates efforts.

Victor for his work in managing the teams each night of the league, often in times with reduced player numbers due to unavailability of players.

Jen Kieran as Club Captain and all the Team Captains over the season.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee Members for their support and work throughout 2014. The Committee does a huge amount of work behind the scenes which often goes unnoticed. The Committee has again done an outstanding job in keeping the Club running smoothly and efficiently this season, often requiring additional time and planning outside of the training sessions and tournaments. As a Club, we are fortunate to have such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of people that have contributed immensely over the past year.

As we grow as a Club, its success is only achieved by the people we have in it, this is why we always seek volunteers to come forward and help out; be it coaching, administrative, sitting on sub-committees, there is always a job or task within the club that needs doing throughout the year. So if we are to guarantee the success of the Club going forward, we would ask that you come forward and let us know if you can help out.

It is always sad when members of the Committee decide to step down. This year Terry & Victor have decided to step down from their respective positions on the Committee. Both have made a huge contribution to the running of the Club over the past few years and have left a lasting legacy within the different aspects of club they were involved in over the years. For me personally, it has been a pleasure to work with them in helping the club to develop. On behalf of the Committee and Club, I would like thank Terry & Victor for all their efforts during their time on the Committee and their commitment to the Club and we look forward to their continued support going forward.

To guarantee a thriving club we do need more members and the Committee will continue with a membership drive, however we all know that successful recruitment of new players often comes from within the club by spreading the word amongst relative, friends and work colleagues as you are the best way of advertising the club and the sport as players and members, so we would encourage you all to try and bring a new player(s) along in 2014.

To close, I would like to say to all of our players if you want to continue to improve and be successful, attending training sessions and being available for tournaments are hugely important to the development of the club and the progress of you as players. We have seen this in past seasons where regular turn out by players has seen the club progress in terms of STS rankings when compared to this season. With that said, we hope to see all of you back regularly in 2015 at the training sessions.

Thank you for your continued support in 2014 and we look forward to your support and a successful 2015 season.

Adrian O'Sullivan  
Chairperson