



## President's Report June 2021 – April 2022

### COVID still pending

Another year of COVID, another year of restrictions however, the end is in sight. Sports centres are open once again, masks are a thing of the past and Netball is with a vengeance!

Once again, I would like to thank all of you in the netball community who abided by the rules regarding restrictions over the past year to help stop the spread of COVID19. It wasn't an easy task and it pushed some of us to the limits. We lost many netball players who turned to other sports, to participate in outdoor activities. However, we have gained some players who, due to COVID, now wish to be more active and we welcome them into our netball family with open arms.

### Events and training

Several events in our netball calendar were postponed or moved online due to the pandemic. This was to prevent participants, volunteers and family members from potentially having to isolate over the festive season. We thank you for your understanding as we were aware it wasn't ideal.

Despite the uncertain times, we managed to organise two of the three scheduled junior **match play days** during the last year. Special thanks go out to Aubonne Girls Netball Association, Geneva Girls Netball Association, Jura Girls Netball Association and Les Citrons Verts Netball Club who supported the organisation of the events as well as participation. Junior match play days are the ideal opportunity for clubs to play all of their players allowing them to gain invaluable court experience in a friendly environment. Scores are not recorded or published so it really is a development opportunity for everyone. Match play also provides our smaller clubs the opportunity to play as composite teams can be formed. Three out of the four participating clubs were able to participate in certain age categories by forming a composite team.

Our annual **Junior Clubs Tournament** was held in November 2021 over two days which was the first time in our history. This was a strategic move made by the Committee to ensure we adhered to the COVID19 restrictions allowing the event to still go ahead. An immense amount of organisation entailed and the commitment from the Committee to ensure the event took place was outstanding. Four of our Junior Clubs participated in all four age groups – Aubonne Girls Netball Association, Geneva Girls Netball Association, Jura Girls Netball Association and Meinier Netball. A total of 192 individual members participated over the two days. Competition was intense, the level of play clearly having improved and we would like to congratulate everyone who participated in this event. All four clubs were at least Champions or Vice-Champions in at least one age group.

This season saw the largest number of Clubs participating in the **Peppermill Challenge Tournament**. The inclusion of Nyon Netball Club for the first time and the return of Zurich Netball Club is a testament to the growing interest and participation in the sport. A total of 9 clubs registered for the one-day event and a total of 108 players participated. We are happy to announce that the buvette raised CHF 403.15 for Ukraine.

### Notable developments

One of our key aims is to develop netball in Switzerland. This was again a challenge due to many obstacles including COVID19. Outside netball coaches were not permitted into schools and we worked together with the Département de l'Instruction Publique and delivered netball equipment to three **public schools**. In addition to this, an optional complementary coaching course is due to be delivered on 28 April 2022 in Geneva for all PE teachers in the canton. Information regarding local clubs will be provided via course handouts. This partnership is essential to increase the visibility of netball in public schools.

Relaunching the **Swiss Netball league** after the hiatus last year was supremely important for us, providing an opportunity for clubs to play against each other in a competitive manner. Zurich Netball Club joined the league for the first time as did Nyon Netball Club which demonstrates the growth and also the progress from our Members in recognising and understanding that this is our National League and that inclusion and travel is an essential part. Our league is now played in three different Cantons by seven different clubs. A total of 137 individual members have registered to play in the league.

Our **U15 league** was launched in December 2021 with four teams from three junior clubs participating. This younger-aged league was created to offer more netball opportunities to our younger players, to help bridge the gap between juniors and seniors in terms of competitiveness and increase the overall level of netball in Switzerland in the longer term. A total of 57 individual members registered for the U15 league.

Swiss Netball held two **Member Clubs** Forums this season. This is an open non-decision making platform where club representatives come together and discuss ideas, ask for support and raise any challenges they may have. The Committee acknowledges the challenges facing many of our clubs and they were taken into account when working on our strategy and calendar.

Our website, which we launched in August 2020, is now a go to source of information. Our work is more streamlined and the development of the website has significantly reduced the number of emails received from you, our Members. Keeping the

information up-to-date is a time-consuming task and one that we know is highly important. We kindly ask our members to please respect our volunteers when requesting updates.

Our **Individual Membership program** will soon be in its third year. We are now more in-line with other Swiss sport governing bodies. Our individual membership continues to grow. We have 364 Members so far in the 2021/22 season and we had 231 Members in 2020/21. This 58% increase is a great step forward towards Swiss Olympic recognition providing us with critical and vital information on our Membership base. With Eventene now up and running for the majority of all Swiss Netball events, we implemented a 'live view' for clubs that allows membership to be easily checked. We thank our Members for supporting this program and we are looking forward to seeing the membership base grow again next year.

#### Community and Country News

Swiss Netball teamed up again this year with Migros for the '**Support Your Sport**' initiative. This enabled clubs to register, collect vouchers and allocate them to their club to raise important funds. Some local clubs and Committee members signed up and took part in "**Samedi du Partage**" and "**Journée de la bonne action**". Two important events in the calendar supporting the local communes.

Swiss Netball is also actively liaising with different sport initiation event agencies to promote netball at their events, namely Women Sport Evasion in Lausanne and Sport 2Days in Thonex. We believe these are great opportunities to promote netball and attract potential new members to our community and we would like to thank our clubs for playing their part in their local communities.

#### Coaching

Coaches in all schools and clubs in the country are key to improving the quality of netball. This season, Swiss Netball have made a few steps to help improve coaching in Switzerland. The Swiss Netball Coaching Pathway was defined in relation to the Coaching Courses available. The Online Netball Leaders course, offered in partnership with Welsh Netball, helps provide the groundwork of what is required to be a Netball Coach. The Foundation to Coaching Course is the next step, introducing how to be a Netball Coach and the basics of how to plan a Coaching session. Both courses are part of the base level of the Swiss Netball Coaching Pathway, aimed at school and club coaches, allowing progression to support the Avenir Suisse program. Although Swiss Netball has not yet gained recognition with Jeunesse et Sport/Jugend und Sport (J&S), the J&S Coaching Course is the next intermediate step on the Coaching Pathway. When Swiss Netball is recognized by J&S, all courses will be provided in J&S format and enrolment. Currently there are no advanced courses offered by Swiss Netball but these are planned for the future. Swiss Netball is also working with Netball France, in collaboration on an international Coaching Course, that would not only be able to strengthen the quality of coaching in Switzerland but could also be offered to other developing nations in Europe. With this Coaching Pathway, Swiss Netball aims to offer at least two of each Online Netball Leaders course and Foundation to Coaching courses in the next season.

#### Officiating

It was a great start to the season for Officiating, with all course information available on our website in both English and French. Registrations for all our educational learnings were opened on 1 August 2021. In September, two Swiss Netball umpires, Bronwyn McGinity and Lorna Rettig, created a little bit of history with Netball France by umpiring at their inaugural Coupe de France de Netball in Paris. We would like to thank both umpires for participating in this event and for representing Swiss Netball as well as they did.

To date, we have delivered one Swiss Netball **Introduction to Umpiring course** and one **Europe Netball C Award umpire course**, with a total of 10 learner umpires in-country for this season. We wish all the candidates good luck on their umpiring journey to becoming fully qualified C Award umpires. A further two Europe Netball C Award umpire theory courses were delivered to the National Squad in order for them to gain better knowledge of the rules. We would sincerely like to thank our Swiss Netball Umpire Theory Tutor Helen Ashton and express our appreciation of her professionalism and commitment to tutoring our umpire courses in Switzerland. We would be lost without her support.

At the end April, we will be welcoming Europe Netball Umpire Assessors for the C Award Practical assessments and we would like to wish all the learners good luck in their quest to become qualified. We are also delighted to have 4 candidates aiming to progress to a higher-level of umpire award and who have attended the first part of the theory course for the Europe Netball B Award. We hope you enjoy the new challenge.

Swiss Netball Members were invited together with other emerging nations to participate in a 'Commonly misunderstood rules session' webinar with Cheryl Danson, Europe Netball's Director of Officiating. 18 people including coaches, players and umpires attended the session from Switzerland, all of whom greatly benefitted from Cheryl's wealth of over 40 years of experience in the game and as a world class former international umpire.

We are also pleased to announce that Cathryn Rich is currently in-training to become a Europe Netball Officiating Tutor for the Europe Netball C Umpire Award and will be a great addition to the Swiss Netball tutoring team along with Helen. Good luck Cath!

It is great to see more of our learner umpires and technical officials taking advantage of attending Swiss Netball Junior matchplay events where they can be supported by their club's qualified umpires, giving them the opportunity to practice their skills and receive umpiring feedback. There is no substitute for match experience and it is a great development opportunity to practice in a friendly and safe environment without the pressure of an official tournament.

From the start of the Swiss National and Junior Leagues to date, we're pleased to report that 29 different scorers and timekeepers and 8 umpires have officiated across both competitions. Thank you to everyone who has supported the teams in this way. The

game can't be played without umpires and we continue to be sincerely grateful to each and every one of them for their smile on court, whistle in hand and continued investment in our game.

#### Streamlining

Debbie Brown, General Secretary and owner of Individual Memberships joined our Committee this year and is managing to streamline our admin mailbox. We ask our Members to submit queries to the relevant mailbox which helps speed up the turn-around process. We would like to take this opportunity to remind our Members to submit queries to [admin@swissnetball.ch](mailto:admin@swissnetball.ch) unless there is a specific request which should be sent to the relevant inbox, for example, [communications@swissnetball.ch](mailto:communications@swissnetball.ch) and [membership@swissnetball.ch](mailto:membership@swissnetball.ch).

We also have an up-to-date Key Contacts file for all member centres (clubs, schools, equipment suppliers) which is essential to our development and growth. This is a two-way process so we ask our Members to kindly inform Swiss Netball of new committee personnel or school contacts and send in any updates to club statutes to ensure our records are in-line with yours.

#### National Squad and Avenir Suisse

Our **Avenir Suisse** programme and our **National Squad** on-court training were back this year. We also provided a Summer training programme that was delivered by our Head Coach Vanessa McErlain-Naylor.

The 2021 **Europe Netball Open Competition** took place in October 2021, postponed from May 2021 due to COVID19. For the first time since 2016, Switzerland entered the competition and we are now well on our way to World Ranking again. The matches we will play in May 2022 should secure our spot on the ladder. Thank you to everyone involved in the making the Open Team a reality again, from coaches to players, parents to committee – everyone.

The 2022 **U17 Europe Netball Competition** was scheduled to take place in February 2022 however, due to concerns related to COVID19, the event was postponed to November 2022. We know that athletes as well as parents and the National Squad Management Team were disappointed with this decision taken by Europe Netball however, we fully stand by Europe Netball as players health and safety is our top priority.

Volunteers came forward and supported us with photos and video footage this season. Mia Horler created two excellent videos which were a real hit – a detailed and eye-opening video from the Open Championships in Gibraltar and also an excellent video of the Junior Clubs tournament – thank you Mia. We would also like to thank @whosalenka and Joe Morikawa for providing us with quality portrait and action shots of our National Squad. Videos and photographs are essential for our development, they are an important medium to portray our sport in a visual manner. @black\_and\_burst\_photography, Neil Wilson also provided us with some outstanding action and team shots from Gibraltar in October 2021. Grace Beesley and Jo Saul also did a sterling job on our Twitter Feed during the Open Championships – thank you.

The National Squad Management Team have delivered and achieved far more than was expected this year. Avenir Suisse and the creation of two squads, namely a Junior Squad and a Senior Squad allows the seamless inclusion of athletes in the Junior Squad to participate in the Senior Squad training when deemed physically and mentally mature to do so. This natural progression enables our talented athletes to experience training with the Senior Squad giving them an insight into what is expected at this level.

I would like to sincerely thank our National Squad Head Coach, Vanessa McErlain-Naylor who goes far above and beyond her role. Not only is Vanessa fully committed to improve the level of play in Switzerland but to also improve the level of coaching and officiating. Moniek van Rossum, our National Squad Assistant Coach, Bronwyn McGinity, National Squad Assistant Coach and Assistant Team Manager, are also invaluable to the National Squad and I would like to thank them immensely for all their hard work and unfailing commitment to the success of the National Squad.

At the beginning of the year, it was clear that the National Squad needed more support due to the growth of the Squads and to the stepping down of India Shibil due to other commitments. We advertised and three people came forward – Jessica Brown, Marneylea Browne and Sarah Gillett. With the aim of improving the level of coaching in Switzerland, Swiss Netball appointed all three coaches as Support Coaches for the National Squad for the remainder of the year. Thank you Jess, Marney and Sarah for your commitment this season.

#### Translation

As we develop and grow, so do our needs and expectations from Members. We are doing our best to provide as much information as possible in at least two languages, namely English and French. We are aware that more needs to be done however, we lack the resources. We have worked with two volunteers recently and we would like to thank them both: Cecile Aulagne and Isabelle Zippelli van Engen. If there is anyone else willing to assist us with translation, please contact us.

#### Finance

Jessica Brown took over as our Finance Officer this year and I'd like to thank her for all her hard work. Her expert financial knowledge and experience has ensured that Swiss Netball has financial stability. We would also like to thank Charlotte Hogg for once again verifying the accounts.

#### Louise Goddard

Louise Goddard who has been our General Secretary, Head of Communications and Vice-President sadly stood down at the end of March after six years on the Committee. For those of you who know Louise, know that she always gives 100% however, due

to other commitments, this was no longer possible. Louise was the backbone of Swiss Netball, she understood what was going on and was brilliantly capable of dissecting the facts from the fluff, at looking at all viewpoints in all areas and was a staunch advocate of female empowerment. She is deeply rooted in the local community and has a good sense of humour which is essential for anyone on the Committee. She was the voice of reason. Her keen eye for design and desire to learn enabled her to create our new website without any prior knowledge and excel in social media. Louise represented Swiss Netball at several Europe Netball AGM's and at the World Netball AGM that took place in Liverpool in 2019 just before the World Cup and before COVID put a stop to in-person meetings. Not afraid to learn or question, not afraid to go out and get it done, Louise was always there, always ready to help and support, always Louise. End of an era.

Louise, you will be deeply missed on the Committee not only by me, but by us all. We wish you all the best in your new job and we thank you for the hours and hours, totalling weeks and weeks of volunteer time you have devoted to Swiss Netball.

When Louise informed us that she was standing down, we advertised the role on social media platforms and we selected two great candidates to take on our Communications. Lauren Hoare from Zurich Netball Club who we co-opted onto our Committee and Amy Porter from Nyon Netball Club who will support Lauren. They are both excited to join us on our journey and they both bring with them a wealth of communication and netball knowledge and bucket loads of enthusiasm. Welcome to both Lauren and Amy.

#### The Committee

The 2020-21 committee completed another challenging year with great success. The amount of volunteer time they devote to ensuring netball is delivered in this country is outstanding and far beyond many of you could imagine. Their continued commitment and belief that participation helps individuals beyond the court is evident daily. We, the Committee, are fully cognisant that we must work together with our Members for the betterment of the sport, that we need to engage with the local community to progress and deliver netball however we cannot do this alone, this is a two-way commitment from our Members.

Thank you everyone: Claudia Almer, Coaching Lead; Debbie Brown, General Secretary and Individual Membership; Jessica Brown, Finance; Carol d'Alberti, Vice-President and Officiating Lead; Jeremy De Friend, Development and Membership Liaison Officer; Louise Goddard, Communications; Silvio Martinelli, Governance; Saloté Waqanivalu, Operations.

Thank you too to all our Member Clubs, Individual Members and affiliated schools.

We thank you all for your continued support and confidence and we look forward to welcoming you back on court next season.



**Emma Connolly**

**Swiss Netball President**

## **Swiss Netball International and National Match Programme 2022-2023**

### **International:**

- Netball Europe 2021 U17 Challenge: 11-13 November 2022
- Netball Europe 2022 U17 Challenge: 24-27 February 2022
- Netball Europe Open Challenge: 11-15 May 2022

### **National:**

Swiss Netball Match Play – Juniors & Seniors

Venues TBC

- 2 October 2022 – Junior
- 29-30 October 2022 – Senior
- 6 November 2022 – Junior
- 19 March 2023 – Junior
- 3-4 June 2022 – Senior

Junior Clubs Tournament: 26-27 November 2022

Peppermill Challenge Cup: Sunday 26 March 2023