



# **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.1**

## **National Playing Squads Selection Policy**

*This document has been produced by the Ireland Touch Technical Panel*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The ITA recognizes that selection in a representative team is the pinnacle of a huge amount of hard work and training. 'Selection' as defined in this policy is the process undertaken to ensure the best available players are chosen to represent Ireland. This policy is designed to ensure that all teams representing Ireland are selected under a fair and equitable process for all players.

### **1.0 SELECTION OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1 To select athletes that will form teams to achieve the best possible results for Ireland in World Cups, European Championships, Home Nations and other International matches/events.
- 1.2 To select athletes for development events that have the best chance of contributing to major tournament success in future.
- 1.3 To employ an open, practical and fair selection process that gives all athletes a chance to challenge for International selection.
- 1.4 To develop selectors and to guide the selection process in Ireland.
- 1.5 To have all teams selected using the selection process.
- 1.6 To have coaches take an active role in the selection process.

### **2.0 ITA PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS**

- 2.1 To be selected into an Ireland Team, Players must be current financial members of Ireland Touch.
- 2.2 It is compulsory for all players to attend the Squad Trials.
- 2.3 Selection Registration to be completed with Ireland no later than one full week prior to the event.

### **3.0 PLAYER DISPENSATION**

- 3.1 Any player unable to participate at the Ireland Trials must submit a 'Player Dispensation' form to the Technical Panel one week **prior** to the event.
- 3.2 Verbal notification for 'Player Dispensation' will not be accepted unless under extenuating circumstances.
- 3.3 'Player Dispensation' Forms will be reviewed by the Technical Panel who will submit a recommendation to the Selectors/Coaches concerned.
- 3.4 Acceptance of dispensation does not automatically place a player into any Ireland Team.

### **4.0 FIT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

*For FIT (Federation of International Touch) eligibility criteria for representing a country at international level in Touch, please see relevant ITA [Pathway to Play for Ireland – Doc 1.3](#).*

### **5.0 PLAYING DIVISIONS**

- 5.1 **Open Division** – Players selected into these divisions may be of any age. (Mens, Womens & Mixed)
- 5.2 **Age Divisions**– Players selected into these ALL Age divisions will be in accordance with their date of birth.
- 5.3 If a person chooses to play in a divisional age group outside their division by age, that person will be considered for the division they play and will not be considered for their correct age division.



## **6.0 SELECTION FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1. The relevant Trials/Selection dates will be published in advance and available to athletes from Ireland Touch by email or other form of communication.
- 6.2. Player assessment and the selection of Ireland training squads is to be conducted by approved Selectors and Squad Coaches under the governance of the Technical Panel.
- 6.3. The Selectors and Squad Coaches, under the governance of the Technical Panel, are responsible for establishing the strategic selection criteria for identifying Ireland squads and teams. This will include the number of trials which need to be attended, the retention of existing squad players, continuity and development.
- 6.4. The Technical Panel has final sign-off on selection criteria and all selections of training squads and teams.
- 6.5. Analysis of individual player abilities will be governed by the respective Coach's written specific team requirements submitted prior to the event commencing.
- 6.6. Touch is a team sport. Whilst athletes can do a great deal to develop in an individual environment, ultimately that athlete has to be able to realise their potential and perform within a team. Acknowledgement is made that in selecting for a team sport, combinations of athletes, the balance of a squad and the ability of athletes to play in more than one position are also considered alongside individual skill level.
- 6.7. All players must adhere to Ireland Touch codes of behaviour as outlined in the Ireland Touch Players Agreement.
- 6.8. Player's conduct, including conduct from previous tours, may be taken into consideration during the selection process.

## **7.0 TEAM FINALISATION**

- 7.1. The Selectors in conjunction with the Coaches will oversee the implementation of the selection process and finalisation of all Ireland Teams.
- 7.2. Ireland Squads + Shadows will be finalised at the conclusion of the designated trials. Squad/Shadows generally to consist of the top 16 players, followed by the next 4 players. In some cases, Squads may train with slightly larger numbers. In such cases, the Squad will be reduced to 16 + 4 shadows no less than one calendar month before the Tournament in question.
- 7.3. Athletes will be notified of their selection or non-selection as soon as possible with an agreed method of communication.
- 7.4. Confidentiality of all Ireland-selected players must be strictly adhered to by all Selectors and Coaches.
- 7.5. Final Ireland Squads will be ratified by the Chairman of Selectors prior to their release.
- 7.6. The Coach of each squad will be available to discuss the selection results with affected athletes. Non-selected athletes have the option for discussions to be witnessed by another Ireland Touch Selector and documented.

## **8.0 PLAYER REPLACEMENT**

- 8.1. Any selected player that withdraws from the selected player list is to supply written notification of their withdrawal to their respective Squad Coach, and/or the Technical Panel immediately.
- 8.2. The Selectors will co-ordinate a replacement player (from the list of extras supplied) through discussions with the Squad Coaches.
- 8.3. Should a replacement decision be unable to be finalised/agreed between Selectors/Coaches, then the Technical Panel will be asked to make the final selection decision.
- 8.4. Players from the original selected player list will not be replaced unless all previous selected shadows have been taken up into the team.



## **9.0 REVIEW PROCESS**

- 9.1 An athlete may request a review of any given selection decision by submitting an email request for a review, including the grounds for a review, to the Chairman of Selectors within 3 days of the announcement of the relevant selection decision.
- 9.2 The review will be undertaken by the Chairman of Selectors and the Technical Panel within 7 days of receipt of the review request and may at the Chairman of Selectors/Technical Panel's discretion include a meeting with the relevant athlete or Head Coach.
- 9.3 The Chairman of Selectors/Technical Panel shall have an unfettered discretion either to uphold or amend the original selection decision as a result of the review and will communicate the decision to the relevant athlete(s) and Squad Coach as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 9.4. The decision of the Chairman of Selectors/Technical Panel is final and binding on the athlete being an exercise of discretion in the matter of selection. It is not a disciplinary or 'judicial' finding and as such is not subject to appeal.



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.2**

### **Ireland Touch Technical Panel**

The ITA Technical Panel consists of three core members: the Chairman of Selectors, the Director of Coaching and the Director of Referees. These positions are appointed on an annual basis by the ITA Committee. The Technical Panel core members may add temporary members to the Panel at its own discretion. The Technical Panel is responsible for the overall best interests of Ireland International Touch.

### **Ireland Touch Selectors**

The Technical Panel will appoint Selectors to work in conjunction with Squad Coaches to select the best group of Squads to represent Ireland at International Touch Tournaments. It is expected that Coaches will collaborate closely with the panel of Selectors in the best interests of Ireland International Touch. It is also recognised that at certain points Coaches, ambitious to achieve in their own category, will seek to act in the best interests of their own particular Squad.

### **Cases of Dispute between Coaches**

In cases of dispute between Coaches, for example where two Coaches wish to select the same player in their Squad and where there is no pre-existing Squad prioritization (eg. Mens Open prioritized over Mixed Open), the Selectors will attempt to mediate to find the best solution.

Should the Selectors be unable to finalise the squad, then the Selectors will refer to the Technical Panel for final adjudication on the make-up of Squads. The Chairman of Selectors will have the deciding vote and will sign off the squad for each team.

### **Cases of Player Appeals**

The Technical Panel will deal with written appeals from either players who are unhappy at not having been included in an Irish Squad or from players who are unhappy about the Squad in which they have been placed. The Technical Panel will have final adjudication on player appeals.



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.3**

### **FIT Eligibility Rules for International Representative Players**

The following criteria have been set down by FIT.

#### **1. Eligibility Criteria**

- 1.1 For an individual to be eligible to represent a Member country in international competition, the individual must be able to prove:
  - 1.1.1 They are a Legal National (including Citizenship) of the Member country; or
  - 1.1.2 They have parent (mother or father) who was born in the Member country; or
  - 1.1.3 They have been a resident of the Member country for three (3) years; and
  - 1.1.4 The individual has not represented another Member country in international competition in the sport during the previous three (3) years.
- 1.2 In addition to the criteria listed in paragraph 4.1 to be eligible to participate in Federation events, an individual must also meet:
  - 1.2.1 Membership requirements of the Member country association; and
  - 1.2.2 Gender criteria (male / men's or female / women's); and
  - 1.2.3 Age criteria in Senior aged divisions. It is normal for age-related divisions to specify a minimum age by the year of competition or a minimum year of birth. Tournament regulations will specify the specific criteria.
- 1.3 An individual participating in any Federation event must be able to clearly prove their identity by presenting one of the following:
  - 1.3.1 Current driving licence; or
  - 1.3.2 Current passport; or
  - 1.3.3 Other, suitable photographic evidence

#### **2. Second Representation**

- 2.1 An individual who has represented one Member country may seek a clearance to represent a second Member country provided that individual meets the eligibility criteria listed in paragraph 1.1 above for the second Member country.
- 2.2 An individual is entitled to one change only. Once a change has been undertaken in an individual's lifetime, no further changes will be allowed.



- 2.3 Consideration of the circumstances of any request for change should be applied and may include marriage, employment, development of the sport and personal matters.
- 2.4 The following clearance procedures applies should an individual wish to change intended representation to a second Member country:
  - 2.4.1 An application for clearance is to be completed and submitted by the individual to both the original Member country and to the intended Member country national associations.
  - 2.4.2 Should both Member country national associations agree to the clearance, then that individual is clear to represent the second Member country, the former Member country is to advise the Federation Secretary General that such clearance has been agreed, and forward a copy of the respective clearance.
  - 2.4.3 Should either of the Member countries not concur with the application for clearance then the individual may submit the clearance application, together with any supporting evidence, reasons for non-concurrence and associated documentation from Member countries, to the Federation Secretary General for consideration and decision.
  - 2.4.4 The Federation Secretary General is to advise the individual and both Member countries of the decision within a reasonable period of time.



# PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.4.1

*To be seen by the Technical Panel, Selectors and Coaches only*

## Some points on the Principles behind Ireland Touch Selection Procedures

### **Selecting the best players to play for Ireland**

*In selecting players to represent Ireland at international level, the best players from the community of Irish Touch players (as adjudged by objective and subjective selection criteria and coaches’ assessment at Trials) will be selected.*

### **Selecting the squad to which players will be assigned**

*In adjudicating on which Squad a player will be allotted to, the Panel of Selectors will seek to be accommodating in order to ensure that all available players of international ability take to the field in an Irish shirt. The Selectors will work closely with Squad Coaches in this regard and in cases of dispute will seek feedback from Coaches on all factors affecting the placing of a player in a particular Squad. In the normal course of events, Squads will be selected by the Selectors in conjunction with Squad Coaches, while in cases of dispute the Technical Panel will have final adjudication.*

<b>Criteria which the Selectors may have to take into consideration when deciding on which Squad a player will be allocated to.</b>	
<b>Objective Criteria</b>	<b>Subjective Criteria</b>
<p><b>Age</b> – all else being equal, players should play in their age category</p>	<p><b>Age vs Ambition of the player</b> – a player may be ambitious to still play at a younger age category and still be good enough to play at that level</p> <p><b>Age vs Leadership</b> – A squad of younger players may benefit from the presence of an older more experienced player.</p>
<p><b>Prioritized Squads</b> – the prioritized, most prestigious squads will be <i>Open Squads</i>.</p> <p><b>Mens</b> and <b>Womens Open</b> will be prioritized over <b>Mixed Open</b>.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized Squads vs ‘Potential Winners’</b></p> <p>A team with a vast majority of newer or debut players may be categorised by the Technical Panel as ‘development’ rather than realistic Championship winners, ie. while they may not be realistic contenders now, the experience they gain will hopefully make them contenders in the future. Some squads may be deemed by the Technical Panel to be ‘potential winners’, for example, a team with a proven track record and consistency of selection. The Technical Panel may choose to prioritize selection of this squad over another.</p>



**Unbiased Selection Decisions by Selectors (in Conjunction with Squad Coaches) in accordance with Objective Selection Criteria**

Wearing an Irish jersey is a huge honour and players should feel that honour no matter which Squad they are allocated to. Players can state a preference for their Squad choice on their trials form but this is no guarantee that this is the Squad they will be selected for.

**Unbiased Selection Decisions by Selectors (in Conjunction with Squad Coaches) in accordance with Objective Selection Criteria**

**Vs.**

**Ensuring all available players of international ability take to the field in an Irish shirt**

*Player contentment* – will a player be disgruntled/unhappy at being in another Squad to the extent they will decide to drop out of the Squad system.

*Location* – A player based in Dublin being allocated to a predominately Galway-based Squad may be demotivated/unable due to outside commitments to continue in the Squad.

*Player preference for Mixed vs. Single Sex teams.*

*External Life Factors* – Eg. A married couple with young children. It may not be realistic for them to play on two different squads.

Friends who have a connection on/off the field who may wish to play together – it may be worthwhile pairing them in a team.

*Reward for all-round Commitment to Touch* – the more players give to Touch Development etc., potentially the more input they could have in which Squad they play in (only on the basis that they are good enough to be included in the selection process in the first place)

**Further Notes for Coaches and Selectors**

- Coaches will be expected to provide a selection criteria document for the selectors.
- Selectors and Squad Coaches will be expected to attend Pre-Trials and Post-Trials briefings.
- The Trials Process is looking to provide each Squad Coach with a squad not a final team so if we include one or two extra players who will be subject to further selection process it is no big deal
- The general guideline will be 20 players. (16 + 4 shadows although the shadows do not need to be specified at this stage.)
- If including an extra player, the guiding principle will be, ‘does player have enough basic skills to be included on the basis of **potential future improvement** over the course of the training cycle?’
- It is expected that the Squad Coaches will work together and in conjunction with Selectors for the overall benefit of Ireland International Touch. If a Coach suspects ‘poaching’ of a player who is eligible for multiple Squads by another Coach, this should be reported immediately to the Technical Panel who will adjudicate on the matter.





## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.4.2**

*To be seen by the Technical Panel, Selectors and Coaches*

### **General Principles of Selection Procedures: (On which Ireland Touch Selection Process is based)**

Selection in a representative team is the pinnacle of a huge amount of hard work and training. Selection can be euphoric. Rejection can be devastating. It is important to 'get it right'.

An organisation should seek to:

- develop concise and clear policies, procedures and criteria
- communicate these policies, procedures and criteria effectively to all concerned well in advance of timelines
- ensure consideration and counselling for those who are not selected

#### ***What should be included in a Selection Framework?***

- how the process will work
- who is responsible for selection
- who to contact about issues
- the events and dates to which the selection criteria applies
- the criteria and how they will be applied
- appeal rights and processes

#### ***Good lines of communication***

- It is essential that everyone involved in the sport is fully aware of the policy and criteria against which selections are made.
- It is crucial that the selection criteria are easy to understand. Athletes should be in no doubt as to what is required of them to achieve selection or how the selection decision will be made.
- Athletes work best towards achieving a goal when they know exactly what is required of them, and the best way of ensuring this is to write it down.
- Expectations should also be conveyed to coaches and managers and, in some cases, to family members.

#### ***What do athletes want from a selection process?***

- Athletes want and expect certainty and consistency in the selection process.
- Athletes expect the process to be unambiguous and administered fairly and consistently. If the selection process is seen to be fair and unbiased, then disputes will be minimised.

#### ***Fairness in Selection***

What are rules of 'fairness'?

- The athlete must know exactly the nature of the selection process. This means ensuring that the athlete is aware of the standards or criteria that have to be met. If these are objective, they should be plainly spelled out. If they are subjective, it must be made abundantly clear that the ultimate decision is entirely a matter for selectors. If they contain a mix of both objective and subjective elements, then that must also be clear.
- The athlete must be given an opportunity to put their case to an appeals or review tribunal.
- The selectors must make selections without bias.



- Fundamental to the notion of fairness is that the process be transparent and accountable.
- Another aspect of the notion of fairness is the requirement that athletes be given sufficient time to comply with the selection criteria.

### ***Selecting the selectors***

The process of 'selecting the selectors' is as important as selecting the athletes:

- It is best to have an odd number so that the possibility of a 'hung jury' is reduced.
- Ideally, the selectors will have participated in the sport themselves (preferably at an elite level), but will no longer be competing at that level.
- Selectors must understand and appreciate the culture of the sport.
- Selectors must be willing to be accountable for their actions, that is, be prepared to make and justify tough decisions.
- Selectors should be respected (as distinct from be liked) by athletes.

### ***The Selection Decision***

It is up to the selectors to decide the best way to communicate their decisions. Normally, this would be in writing (although it would depend on the sport itself and its profile in the community).

Decisions should be made early enough to enable those who missed out to lodge an appeal and for it to be heard well ahead of the event.

There is generally no reason to tell the successful athletes why they were selected. For unselected athletes, feedback will benefit both the athlete and the sport. Constructive feedback will:

- ensure that selectors adhere to the objective criteria laid down by the selection process
- give unsuccessful athletes the satisfaction of knowing that their application and efforts were seriously considered by the selection panel
- force selectors to give proper consideration to the process itself, thus ensuring constant improvement through continual analysis
- lessen the strong feelings of loss, disappointment, anger and even grief that some unsuccessful athletes could experience. The explanation process might be seen by some athletes as a form of counselling and could go a long way towards lessening those feelings
- reinforce athletes' knowledge of the selection criteria and also their understanding of how that criteria is applied.
- Unsuccessful athletes can better make decisions about their future when they know how the selection criteria are applied.

### ***Counselling***

Almost invariably, unsuccessful candidates feel a great sense of loss, and even grief. This is not surprising given the level of commitment, dedication and training that athletes give to their sport. Every sport should be conscious of such feelings and take steps in advance to soften the blow. This is another way in which a sport can maintain a good relationship with its participants.

### ***Appeals Tribunal***

Athletes should be made well aware of the timing restrictions that apply to appeals, for example, 'appeals must be lodged within 72 hours of notification of decisions'. When a decision of the selectors is appealed and referred to a tribunal, it must be recognised that other athletes may be affected if the appeal is upheld and if necessary they should have the opportunity to be heard by the tribunal.

Tribunal members should be appointed well in advance and told in detail (preferably in writing) what is expected of them. Tribunal members should be people who were not involved in the original decision. Their role is to decide whether the selection criteria and process have been applied and followed – whether the decision



reached by the original selection panel was properly made, in that the selectors acted according to the points in 'the laws of the organisation'.



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.5**

### **Ireland International Squads: Players Agreement**

*Dear Player*

*On behalf of the ITA we would like to congratulate you on your initial selection for an Irish International Touch Squad going forwards toward representation at major championship. Representing your country in sport is a huge personal honour.*

*The ITA appreciates the great effort and commitment players are about to undertake. The ITA Committee and coaches are here to support all players in whatever way we can to achieve success. Our 'Player Agreement' clarifies what participation in an Irish squad will entail and provides information which will help you during your training schedule and at tournaments.*

*As amateur sportspeople, the ITA will always try to be accommodating of the differing circumstances of our players. However, individual commitments must be balanced against the Squad need to establish standards to be able to compete successfully at the highest levels.*

#### **1. Player Rights**

- Touch is a small but growing sport in Ireland and as such, our togetherness is our strength. Members of International Squads will be able to call on a support network of coaching staff, managers, senior players or other members of the ITA regarding any issues, both on and off the playing field, relating to their squad participation. Players are encouraged to participate as fully as possible in the community of Irish Touch.
- Players should expect to be dealt with in a respectful way by coaches, officials and other players at all times.
- Players have the right of appeal on decisions regarding their Squad. Players may talk to the coaching staff or in writing to the Chairman of Selectors. Issues will be dealt with in as fair a manner as possible and will be adjudicated on by the Chairman of Selectors and Technical Panel.

#### **2. Player Codes of Conduct**

- Ireland players, coaches and support staff are ambassadors for Touch in Ireland and as such should lead by example in terms of their own personal conduct at trainings and tournaments.
- Players will be expected to show respect to other players, coaching staffs, referees and officials. Behaviour of players (both on and off the field) will be taken into consideration in terms of participation in international tournaments.

#### **3. Attendance at training**

- Players will be expected to attend 80% of trainings associated with their squad.
- Players that cannot attend trainings should advise the Squad Coach in advance with the reasons. If a player cannot attend 80% of trainings, any decision on this issue is at the discretion of the coaching team of that Squad. The coaches may also consult with Selectors/Technical Panel.
- Squad Coaches will consider the location of their player base when planning training.
- When taking into consideration special circumstances, the guiding principal for Coaches will be weighing fairness to the individual as against fairness to the whole group in their goal to achieve success at international level.

#### **4. Fitness Requirement**

- Teams will have a progressive fitness plan where players will be measured.
- Players that fail to make the minimum requirement or fail to progress will be assessed on a more regular basis and can be dropped from the playing team if failing to meet standards or show improvement.
- Players are expected not to drink the night before Squad training sessions to an extent where it will affect their performance at their team's training sessions.



***Representing our country at international sport is an honour. Part of our recognition of this as players will be the principal of players giving back, where possible, to the sport of Touch in Ireland.***

**5. Coaching and Development Assistance Commitment**

- Players may potentially be required at some stage to commit some time to assist in coaching of less experienced players and to the overall development of Touch in Ireland.
- In any coaching or development sessions, the ITA will provide full support to players. Sessions will be led by Ireland coaches or senior players and other players.

**6. Financial/Sponsorship Commitment**

- Participating in International Touch Tournaments can be expensive. As an amateur sporting organization, unfortunately, some costs may have to be borne by players.
- The ITA will make clear to players as far as possible in advance exactly what monies must be paid and when.
- One of the big financial commitments for the ITA is the ordering of playing kit which must be done well before the start of a tournament. All players will need to have paid all monies prior to being provided with ordered kit.
- Each player will receive a breakdown of where their money was allocated post campaign.
- The ITA works extremely hard to secure sponsorship deals to offset as much of the cost as possible for players and asks players to assist in any way they can with this.
- The ITA organizes fundraising events to raise funds to offset the costs to players. It is in players own interests to support these events as fully as possible.

**7. Referee Qualification Commitment**

- Players will be encouraged to attend a Level 1 refereeing course prior to playing at International Tournaments. The purpose of this is to enable players to gain a better understanding and anticipation of the rules.
- Players are recommended to assist their local competitions in refereeing.

**8. Commitment to a Squad**

- Players that are selected to represent Ireland will be committing to the Squad they are selected in.
- Players can drop out of a squad but will not be eligible for selection in any other squad except in exceptional circumstances, to be decided upon by respective Squad Coaches and Selectors, under the governance of the Technical Panel.

*I, the undersigned, agree to abide by the above Players Agreement and recognise that if I cannot meet these requirements that my participation in an Ireland International Touch Squad may be in jeopardy:*

<b>Print Name</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.6.1**

### **Pre-Trials Letter to first-time Ireland trialists**

Dear Player

Thank you for expressing an interest in trialling for Ireland Touch International Squads. International representation in any sport is a huge personal honour and also brings a responsibility to represent the national jersey to the very best of your ability.

For all players who put themselves forward for selection, the ITA is here to support you in whatever way we can to help you achieve your Touch International ambitions.

To assist you in the Trials and Selection process, please read the following documents.

<b>Document A: ITA Player Selection Criteria</b>
The sporting attributes and abilities that ITA selectors and coaches will be looking for in a potential Irish International Touch player.
<b>Document B: Touch Knowledge and Skills</b>
Touch Terminology and Basic Elements of Touch that Coaches at International Trial level will expect you to understand and be able to execute to a reasonable level of competence. There are links to PDFs/videos that go through each of the elements.
<b>Document C: Quick Rules of Touch</b>

Familiarising yourself with the elements and terminology outlined in these documents can greatly increase your chances of being successful at Trials.

The ITA wishes you every success.

Yours in Touch

ITA Director of Coaching  
Paul Brown



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.6.2**

### **Pre-Trials Letter to returning Ireland internationals**

Dear Player

As a capped Irish International, we thank you for once again putting your name forward for selection for an Ireland International Touch Squad. As you know, international representation is a huge personal honour and also brings a responsibility to represent the national jersey to the very best of your ability.

The ITA is here to support all international players and teams in whatever way we can to achieve success. The standard of international Touch has risen year on year and therefore, to compete and win at this level we must strive to constantly raise our own standards within Irish Touch.

In view of this, prior to attending Trials, please read the following documents. As a capped International, Ireland coaches will expect you to arrive at Trials with an awareness and understanding of the elements included in these documents.

<b>Document A: ITA Player Selection Criteria</b>
The sporting attributes and abilities that ITA selectors and coaches will be looking for in a potential Irish International Touch player.
<b>Document B: Touch Knowledge and Skills</b>
Touch Terminology and Basic Elements of Touch that Coaches at International Trial level will expect you to understand and be able to execute to a reasonable level of competence. There are links to PDFs/videos that go through each of the elements.
<b>Document C: Quick Rules of Touch</b>

Familiarising yourself with these documents can greatly increase your chances of being successful once again at Trials.

The ITA wishes you every success.

Yours in Touch

ITA Director of Coaching  
Paul Brown



## **PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.7**

### National Squads Player Selection Criteria:

#### Qualities Coaches are looking for

##### **FITNESS**

**Aerobic Endurance-** ability to maintain physical and mental performance over a whole game/tournament with minimal fatigue: often the difference between elite and other players.

**Speed/Endurance-** maintains speed over longer distances, able to repeat bouts without loss of speed; ability and commitment to chase in defence.

**Work Rate-** ability to continue producing high level of output in individual games and throughout the tournament; recovers quickly; consistently error free; contributes to all facets of game; seems to be everywhere.

##### **TEAM SKILLS**

**Positional Awareness-** being in the right position at the right time in attack and defence then taking advantage of it; awareness of the position of team-mates and opponents; gets back into position without disrupting others; rarely caught in the wrong spot.

**Team Skills-** ability to interact with others in team; follows directions, unselfish, positive attitude to referees/officials; encourages others; knowledge of rules, patterns, policies and game plan; maximises strengths and minimises weaknesses; cohesive; adapts to different roles and patterns.

**Defence Skills-** knowledge and application of defence policies; commitment; pressure situations; communication; interaction; applies pressure; can read play; does not panic; in control.

**Response to Instructions-** ability to carry out the game plan; responds to instructions from coach/captain/team mates.

##### **INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**

**Speed/Power-** speed off the mark; acceleration.

**Agility/Balance-** ability to change direction without losing speed or balance; applies both to attack and defence.

**Attack skills-** ball skills (scoop, pass, catch); evasion (sidestep, swerve); can apply pressure; adapts quickly; sets up support; takes right options; communicates; initiates attack.

##### **VISION**

**Vision-** peripheral- team mates/opposition using side vision; field- ability to see what is happening in the whole game – the “big picture”; sees things early; reacts quickly; good understanding of opposition strengths and weaknesses; can assist team-mates.





**Decision Making Capacity-** ability to select the right option both in attack and defence that will benefit the team; decisive and reacts quickly; confident in taking options; takes responsibility; does not rely unduly on others for direction.

### **COMMUNICATION**

**Communication-** (often first thing noticed) ability to talk positively and effectively for the benefit of the team e.g. calls wraps/switches, talks in defence; vocal but not distracting; assists others to see problems and opportunities; reinforces; controls game.

### **PRESSURE**

Copes with Stress/Pressure- ability to perform tasks while under various psychological stresses.



## PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.8.1

### What knowledge or skill levels are typically expected of uncapped players/first-time trialists at Ireland Trials?

Below is outlined Touch Terminology and Elements of Touch that Coaches at International Trial level will expect you to understand and be able to execute to a reasonable level of competence. Familiarising yourself with the elements in these resources can greatly increase your chances of international selection.

#### Touch Knowledge:

##### Reasonable level of familiarity with Touch terminology and concepts below

- **Understanding the Game:**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Understanding%20Touch.pdf>
- **Glossary of Touch Terms:**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Glossary%20of%20Terms.pdf>
- **FIT Touch Rules**  
[http://www.sportingpulse.com/get\\_file.cgi?id=658941](http://www.sportingpulse.com/get_file.cgi?id=658941)
- **Team Positions**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Team%20Positions.pdf>
- **Penalty vs Roll Ball – Rules Quiz**  
<http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=touch-rugby-rules-tap-penalty-rollball>

#### Touch skills:

##### Familiarity with and ability to perform skills below to a reasonable level of competence

- **Dump/Roll-Ball**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Roll%20Ball.pdf>
- **Effecting the Touch: Offensively and Defensively**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Effecting%20the%20Touch.pdf>
- **3-player Driving Play (Powers)**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Drives.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cG0XQjestww>
- **General Defensive Principles (General Understanding Required)**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Defence%20in%20the%20Three%20Defensive%20Zones.pdf>
- **General Attacking Principles (General Understanding Required)**



<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Attacking%20Principles.pdf>

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20General%20Attacking%20Strategies.pdf>

- **Scoop and Go**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Scoop%20and%20Go.pdf>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI2UeeOxHul>

- **Boxing/Subbing/Rules of Subs Box**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Subbing&Substitute%20Box.pdf>

**IRELAND TOUCH – GENERAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:**

**General Ball Skills - Rugby Crossover Skills**

- **Running with the Ball**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Running%20with%20the%20Ball.pdf>

- **Side-Step**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Side-Step.pdf>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sdy1lfm9egg>

- **Passing**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Passing.pdf>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkhAvoakxGY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBm2pQsdUoQ>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8bRQnjmoxE>

- **Catching**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Catch.pdf>

- **Off the Ball Movement**

<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Off%20the%20Ball%20Movement.pdf>



## PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.8.2

### What knowledge or skill levels are typically expected of previously capped Irish internationals at Ireland Trials?

Below is outlined Touch Terminology and Elements of Touch that Coaches at International Trial level will expect returning International players to understand and be able to execute to a good level of competence. Familiarising yourself with the elements in these resources can greatly increase your chances of once again achieving international selection.

#### Touch Knowledge –

##### Good level of familiarity with Touch terminology and concepts below

- **Understanding the Game:**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Understanding%20Touch.pdf>
- **Glossary of Touch Terms:**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Glossary%20of%20Terms.pdf>
- **FIT Touch Rules**  
[http://www.sportingpulse.com/get\\_file.cgi?id=658941](http://www.sportingpulse.com/get_file.cgi?id=658941)
- **Team Positions**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Team%20Positions.pdf>
- **Penalty vs Roll Ball – Rules Quiz**  
<http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=touch-rugby-rules-tap-penalty-rollball>

#### Touch skills:

##### Familiarity with and ability to perform skills below to a good level of competence

- **Dump/Roll-Ball**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Roll%20Ball.pdf>
- **Effecting the Touch**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Effecting%20the%20Touch.pdf>
- **3-player Powers/Driving Plays**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Drives.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cG0XQiestww>
- **Drag/Fade**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Drag%20or%20Fade.pdf>
- **Cut/Switch**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Switch%20or%20Cut.pdf>



- **The Bow**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Bow.pdf>
- **Wrap/Loop**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Wrap%20or%20Loop.pdf>
- **General Defensive Principles: Shooting/Rolling/Line Defence**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Defence%20in%20the%20Three%20Defensive%20Zones.pdf>
- **Line Defence**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%2010%20Principles%20of%20Line%20Defence.pdf>
- **Quickie (Dump Split)**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Quickie.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjXQQgRsF3w>
- **Scoop and Go**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Scoop%20and%20Go.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI2UeeOxHul>
- **Shooting in Defence**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes-%20To%20Shoot%20or%20not.pdf>
- **Diving**  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFNLIR5fF7o>
- **Boxing/Subbing/Rules of Subs Box**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Subbing&Substitute%20Box.pdf>

## **IRELAND TOUCH – GENERAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:**

### **General Ball Skills - Rugby Crossover Skills**

- **Running with the Ball**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Running%20with%20the%20Ball.pdf>
- **Side-Step**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Side-Step.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sdy1lfm9egg>
- **Passing**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Passing.pdf>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkhAvoakxGY>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBm2pQsdUoQ>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8bRQnjmoxE>
- **Catching**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20The%20Catch.pdf>
- **Off the Ball Movement**  
<http://oldprod.irelandtouchassociation.com/Player%20Notes%20-%20Off%20the%20Ball%20Movement.pdf>



# PATHWAY TO PLAY TOUCH FOR IRELAND – DOC 1.9

## QUICK RULES OF TOUCH

1. The conventional rules of the game as laid out by the Federation of International Touch (F.I.T) will apply.
2. The fields are 50x70m though local variations may occur.
3. The attacking team must start with a tap from the middle of the field.
4. The defending team must be back 10m for the start of play and after each touchdown.
5. After a team scores the play begins again with a tap in the middle.
6. The person who takes the role of dummy half can cross the try-line but not score
7. If the dummy half is touched while possessing the ball it is a turnover. ROLL BALL.
8. After being touched, the player touched must roll the ball between their legs.
9. The attacking team continues play until they have had 6 touches
10. After being touched 6 times the ball is handed over to the other side. ROLL BALL.
11. After touching the attacking player with the ball, all defending team members must retreat 5m.
12. Ball to Ground: When the ball is dropped on the ground it is a turnover.
13. Turnover: When the attacking side loses the ball to the opposition
14. No control: When the ball is thrown, dropped, knocked on, in a touch. ROLL BALL.
15. When someone is penalised their team must then retreat 10m.
16. If the defending players do not retreat they are offside. PENALTY
17. If a touch is considered to be too strong. PENALTY
18. Offside: when the defending players have not retreated 5m. PENALTY
19. Forward Pass: When the ball is passed in front of the player who possessed the ball. PENALTY
20. Touch and Pass: When the person who is touched then passes the ball. PENALTY
21. Voluntary Rolled Ball or No Touch: When the player is not touched and rolls the ball between their legs. PENALTY
22. More than a Meter: the ball must not be rolled more than one meter. ROLL BALL
23. Shepherd or Obstruction: Obstructing a touch from the defending side. PENALTY
24. Deviation: When a defender changes their direction before retreating straight back 5m. PENALTY
25. For minor offences i.e. bickering with refs, shouldering, leg trips etc. the player will be sin binned for five minutes without replacement.
26. Foul play of any nature (the referee being the sole judge) will result in the offending player being sent from the field without replacement.