

THE OT7

OT7_ISSUE #03

SEVEN

STORIES FROM THE TOUCHLINES

HIDEAKI 'HITCH' NARA

BEHIND JAPAN TOUCH'S RISE

- TANIA ROSSER: RUGBY ROYALTY • RENEE WATSON: BEATING NZ •
- ENGLAND DOMINANT IN EUROPE • PORTUGAL REFEREES •
- THE BIRTH OF POLISH TOUCH • AND MORE... •



WELCOME TO

THE OT7 SCOOP #003

4	KIWI ROOTS TO IRISH RUGBY ROYALTY Tania Rosser has done it all	FEATURES
28	HIDEAKI 'HITCH' NARA The quiet force behind Japan Touch's rise	
42	RECORD BREAKER Renee Watson on beating New Zealand	
14	SIX DARTS TOUCH Building a community, one touch at a time	EVENT REVIEWS
22	THE SPARK IN THE EAST The birth of Polish Touch	
38	THE RISE OF PORTUGAL TOUCH REFEREES Strengthening their role within the Touch landscape	
50	ATLANTIC YOUTH CUP	
62	SENIORS EUROPEAN CUP	
74	OPENS EUROPEAN CUP	
86	TO RANK OR NOT TO RANK?	
88	QUICK SNIPPETS	
90	UPCOMING EVENTS	
92	OFF THE MARK WITH PROFESSOR PLAY-ON	





Here we go again, another edition of **The Scoop**, and what a whirlwind it's been getting this one together.

Getting it over the line has been a proper labour of love, late-night edits, and more coffee than I care to admit.

But it's always totally worth it.

Huge thanks to everyone who's contributed, shared their stories, insights, and opened up about their experiences to make this issue happen, and bring the wider global Touch community along for the ride.

This month has been packed with action, Europe has been buzzing. Youth, seniors, and opens all in action. 'International' games everywhere. Records broken. Teams on the rise. And somewhere in the middle of it all, a new player or so has picked up a ball and started to play, having been inspired by it all...

Whether you're participating in your local Touch scene, involved to get/keep fit and make friends, aiming for higher representation, or just enjoying watching, there's a story here for you.

So, grab a cuppa. Settle in. Read about the people, the stories, and the moments that make Touch more than just a game.

This one's for anyone who loves seeing the world of Touch spin just a little faster than expected.

Gregg



THE GAME CHANGER

Tania Rosser: From scrumhalf to history maker



Credit: El Keegan

Without Touch, I wouldn't have been the Rugby player I was.

KIWI ROOTS TO IRISH RUGBY ROYALTY

If you've spent any time around elite women's rugby in the past two decades, chances are you've heard the name **Tania Rosser** spoken with a mix of admiration and awe.

Born in New Zealand but proudly calling Ireland home, Tania carved out a stellar playing career as a scrum-half for Ireland, earning over 50 caps and representing her country at multiple Rugby World Cups.

But her influence didn't stop at the final whistle. A trailblazer for women in coaching, she's taken her rugby brain and competitive edge to the sidelines, mentoring, strategising, and inspiring the next generation of players.

Whether it's her tactical nous, her calm leadership under pressure, or her infectious love for the game, Tania has become a figurehead for what's possible in women's sport.

In this issue, we sit down with Tania to talk about her journey from the pitches of New Zealand to the green jersey of Ireland, her transition into coaching, and the lessons she's learned about resilience, leadership, and staying ahead of the game.

Early days & rugby roots

You've had a stellar career in professional rugby – how did Touch first feature in your playing journey?

Touch came into my life from a very young age. I grew up completely immersed in rugby culture, watching the All Blacks religiously and my brothers play every Saturday on frosty pitches. Though I wasn't allowed to play rugby myself, I was always around the game. One day, in our

garage, we convinced my dad to start a women's Touch team. Despite getting hammered every week that season, I was instantly hooked. Touch became my first sporting love.

Growing up, who were the players, coaches or people who shaped your love of sport?

My brothers were huge influences. They took me everywhere, from rugby to softball and cricket, and their passion was infectious.

But a major turning point was meeting my basketball coach, Uncle Elliot. He impacted me deeply, both on and off the court. He taught me how to visualise, how to breathe through pressure, and most importantly, how to believe in myself.

Do you think your rugby skillset gave you a natural edge when transitioning to Touch – or was there a learning curve?

Actually, it was the other way around. Touch shaped the rugby player I became. The sport gave me an incredible foundation in reading defences, exploiting space, and developing agility. It taught me speed and communication – two essential skills for a scrumhalf. Without Touch, I wouldn't have been the rugby player I was.

What do you think Touch can offer to rugby players – especially women – who might be looking for something different or more accessible?

Touch provides a pathway that's accessible, inclusive, and empowering – particularly for women. It offers all the strategic, athletic, and teamwork elements of rugby, but with less contact.

That makes it ideal for players wanting to build skills like speed, agility, and spatial awareness, or simply looking for a different pace. It builds confidence, fosters community, and keeps the love for the game alive in a supportive environment.

Leading from the front

You became the first female head coach of the Leinster Women's side in 2021 – did you feel the pressure of that milestone, or just see it as the next step?

Honestly, I saw it as the next step in my coaching journey and felt privileged to take on the role. Yes, it was a significant milestone to be the first female coach to lead the team – but part of me was frustrated that these barriers still exist.

It shouldn't be groundbreaking anymore, but we're still having to prove that female coaches belong.

“
Ultimately, success comes from creating a space where players feel supported, challenged, and valued
”



Credit: Tania Rosser Personal Collection

Back-to-back titles with Leinster! What's been the key to building success in that team?

TRUST AND TEAMWORK.

I've surrounded myself with people I trust, and that's created a strong foundation of mutual respect. We've worked hard to build a high-performance environment with clear standards. I've also learned that good coaching means being adaptable, staying open to learning, and knowing when to ask for help.

Ultimately, success comes from creating a space where players feel supported, challenged, and valued.

How does coaching Touch differ from coaching elite 15s rugby – or is good coaching just good coaching?

Good coaching is grounded in strong principles, but each code requires different tools. Coaching Touch demands an intense focus on technical skills, communication, and fast decision-making.

In 15s, you deal more with structure, contact, and a broader range of roles. But the core values – respect, preparation, adaptability – are the same.

How important is visibility of female coaches and players to grow Touch and rugby among girls in Ireland?

As a player, I only ever wanted the best coach, regardless of gender. But I can see now how important it is for girls to see strong, passionate female leaders. Female coaches bring a unique dynamic: we often have softer skills, emotional awareness, and a different way of reading situations.

That said, we also face barriers – being labelled "aggressive" when we're simply assertive or being spoken to differently by officials. Visibility matters because it normalises female leadership.

GIRLS NEED TO KNOW IT'S OKAY TO BE CONFIDENT, DEMANDING, AND DRIVEN.

Growing the game in Ireland

You've been central to Ireland Touch's progress in Touch over the past few years – how rewarding was it to coach the X18s to Ireland's first-ever youth gold medal?

This has been a 3-4 year project and winning gold felt like a massive payoff – not just for the players but also their families. Our journey started with the Mixed 15s, coached by Peter Walters, who gave them a masterclass in Touch basics.

From there, we strategically brought in John Ennis to build their technical knowledge. His impact was phenomenal – he adapted his approach to suit young players and brought out the best in them. We also increased our resources – from tailored S&C programming to a full recovery trailer with cryo chambers. It all came together in that final performance.



SET OF SIX

TANIA ROSSER

You've got six touches, make 'em count.

1 First Touch

Hardest thing about coaching your own kid?

He thinks he knows more than me!

2 Second Touch

What's more nerve-wracking: playing or coaching?

Coaching.

3 Third Touch

If you could play one more game – what jersey would you wear?

That's tough!

Either my 50th cap vs Black Ferns or my gold medal game at European Touch Championships where I won MVP.

4 Fourth Touch

Favourite moment on a Touch pitch?

Playing school nationals in NZ with my best mates.

5 Fifth Touch

Pre-game ritual?

As a player: music.

As a coach: personal check-ins with players.

6 Sixth Touch

One piece of advice for anyone trying to grow the sport locally?

Find the right people.

Share the passion.

Go for it.



Credit: Steve McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

Credit: Steve Lund





Credit: Steve Lund



Credit: Dan Sheridan - INPHO



Credit: Leinster Rugby on X

That must've been extra special with your son playing such a big role in the team – what was that like for you, watching him step on that stage?

Serge is the reason I do all this. When he was seven, he was the only kid in Ireland playing Touch. Unlike in NZ, there was no team for him. Seeing him now, thriving in a sport he loves, surrounded by lifelong friends, it means everything.

“His performance in the final made me incredibly proud, but I think he was just relieved!”

It's not easy being the coach's kid, I struggled at times to balance those roles and definitely held him to a higher standard.



Beyond coaching, you've been pushing hard on partnerships and sponsorships – what's the biggest challenge in building a sustainable Touch programme?

Touch is built on community and belonging. Billy (Ngawini) and I know how transformational it can be, and we want to share that.

We've been fortunate with sponsors who truly back the programme and help reduce financial pressure on players. We make sure to endorse and promote them throughout our season, sponsorship is a two-way street.

Our programme wouldn't be where it is without House by Noel Dempsey, High Point, Atlantic TU, and so many more.

With nearly 100 companies involved through individual player sponsorships, we're growing not just a programme, but a movement.

“It's not easy being the coach's kid, I definitely held him to a higher standard.”



Club culture

DSC Touch is booming – now with 150 players and four clubs. Did you expect things to grow this fast?

We believed that if we got the formula right, players would come. Junior development is at the heart of everything we do. Others might shy away from coaching younger players, but we thrive on it. We have amazing parents and strong relationships with local rugby clubs. Billy has a real talent for getting kids hooked – they try one session and most come back.

What's been the secret to getting so many people involved – and keeping them engaged?

First impressions matter. We make sure every new player's first experience is fun and positive. Billy's laid-back coaching style works brilliantly with kids, and we try to ensure all our coaches carry the same energy. Yes, we do serious drills and game planning, but we always end with "freestyle Touch". It's all about fun, friendship, and family.

You and Billy Ngawini had a vision a few years back... now it's really taking shape. What's next for you both in Irish Touch?

We're still dreaming big. There's the NZ World Cup, the possibility of Touch at the Olympics, and player pathways we're developing with those goals in mind. We'd love to launch another 2-3 DSC clubs and eventually run a league for all members. The vision keeps evolving.

What's the unseen work involved in launching new clubs?

Behind the scenes, it's relentless: admin, kit, scheduling, funding, player welfare, parent comms. You wear every hat, and do it because you believe in the impact it makes.

DID YOU KNOW...

- Born in New Zealand, but made her mark in Irish rugby history
- Represented Ireland at three Rugby World Cups, earning over 50 caps for Ireland as a dynamic scrum-half
- In her 50th game, helped Ireland beat the Black Ferns
- Represented Ireland at netball
- First female head coach of the Leinster Women's team, leading them to back-to-back titles after just one season in charge
- Won gold at 2018 European Touch Championship
- Still plays and coaches Touch at club and international level.
- Co-founded multiple DSC Touch Clubs, now with 70+ players from U14s to adults
- Coached Ireland's X18 Touch team to their first-ever youth gold medal
- Proud rugby mum, her son was part of that gold-medal-winning squad



The original DSC crew

Values & vision

Leadership style: How has your approach evolved from player to coach?

I'm always evolving. As a player, I was demanding and intense. Transitioning to coach, I had to learn that not everyone sees the game like I do, and that's okay.

Now, I set high expectations, but I meet people where they're at. I never ask something I wouldn't do myself. My motto: "You are the standard you walk by." I still haven't mastered sub-box calmness, I'd love to channel my inner Pete Walters!

He never raises his voice and is always composed.

What setbacks have shaped you most?

Injuries. Being dropped. Being a female in a male-dominated sport. Being far from home. Being a mum.

Each challenge has taught me resilience, empathy, and purpose.

How do you juggle being a parent, elite coach, club builder, and role model?

I'm a mum first, always. When I join a new team or project, I make that clear. If that doesn't sit well, it's not the right environment for me.

Balance comes from knowing my "why."

Every decision is made with my family in mind. Simon and Serge are part of every plan, and they're my biggest supporters. I accepted my most recent role after Serge said, "Mum, you deserve this. Go show them how good you are."

As for being a role model – I don't see myself that way. That's not my goal. I believe families shape kids' values, not athletes. I just try to live mine honestly. Sometimes I lose balance. But I always come back to why I started.



Simon, Serge & Tania 2014
Credit: independent.ie

Balance comes from knowing my "why."



Simon, Serge & Tania 2025
Credit: Personal Collection



 029 2088 7123

 SALES@BELIEFSPORTS.COM



4 WEEK
TURNAROUND



CUSTOM
DESIGN



TEAM
STORES



NO
MINIMUM
QUANTITY



TOUCH
SPECIALISTS



SIXDARTS touch SERIES

Six Darts Touch Series: Building a community, one touch at a time

A cluster of players jog onto the pitch. All ages, all shapes and sizes. People from different backgrounds and from all over the world. Jerseys of different colours mingle together as laughter, high-fives, and shouts of encouragement fill the air. It doesn't look like a typical sports league kickoff... there's less tension, more smiles, and an unmistakable sense of community.

Welcome to the Six Darts Touch Series, a grassroots competition quietly reshaping the way Touch is played and developed in Spain and beyond.

Founded by Danny McCreedy and Mark Roberts, the Six Darts Touch Series (SDTS) is a privately organized, non-profit series of mixed-category touch events designed to make the game more accessible, inclusive, and fun.

With its flexible format, creative incentives, and emphasis on community, it's not just about competition... it's about connection.



From a simple idea to a growing movement

The roots of the Six Darts Touch Series stretch back to a simple conversation between McCreedy and Roberts about how to give new and emerging teams more opportunities to play. Traditional league structures, they realised, often left developing clubs struggling with long travel commitments, inflexible schedules, and games that could be overwhelming for newcomers.

“We wanted to create something that made the sport easier to access,” recalls Danny. “If you’re a new team with only a handful of players, or you’ve just started introducing younger players or women into your squad, a traditional format can be really daunting. We thought: why not strip it back, make it simpler, and focus on growth first?”

That spark became the Six Darts Touch Series; now a structured but flexible competition hosted by local teams across Spain. Each host follows guidelines set by the SDTS Executive Team, ensuring consistency in everything from refereeing to atmosphere, but still brings its own local flavour to each round.

What makes it different?

Unlike conventional Touch competitions, SDTS embraces adaptation. Matches are just 10 minutes per half instead of the standard 20, reducing fatigue and the risk of injury. Teams need only six players to enter, and if they’re short, they can borrow players from others or join forces to form a “Barbarians” team. The minimum requirement of two women on the field at all times ensures gender balance, while bonus points are awarded to teams that bring additional female or under-18 players.

For Mark, these changes aren’t gimmicks... they’re part of a bigger philosophy.

“The heart of the Series is about participation and inclusion,” he explains. **“By rewarding clubs who recruit women and younger players, we’re not only making teams stronger in the short term, we’re building the future of the sport. These are the players who will carry Touch forward.”**

The atmosphere reflects that ethos. Matches are competitive, but they’re also family-friendly, with food, entertainment, and plenty of encouragement for spectators to bring friends along. That sense of fun is as much a part of the Series as the on-field action.

Credit: Six Darts Touch



Building bridges, not barriers

The structure of SDTS also acknowledges a common barrier to grassroots sports: travel and time.

Unlike rigid leagues, teams can play in just one round or all of them, depending on their availability. That flexibility allows smaller clubs to grow at their own pace without the pressure of constant commitments.

“We know what it’s like when you’re trying to set up a new team in a small town,” says Danny.

“If you’ve only got a dozen players and everyone has jobs, studies, or family responsibilities, it can be tough to play a full league season. By making it flexible, we’re saying: just come when you can. The important thing is that you’re part of it.”

This adaptability has also allowed the Series to attract a wide mix of teams, from seasoned clubs to complete beginners. In 2024–25, six teams participated, with more expected in the coming years.

And for the 2025–26 season, the Series will mark a new milestone: the first round in Arroyo on 20th September will not only feature Spanish clubs but also teams travelling from England and Portugal, highlighting its growing international reach.

“Having teams from outside Spain join us this year is a huge step,” Mark says with pride. **“It shows that the Six Darts Touch Series isn’t just a local idea anymore, it’s something that resonates with the wider Touch community across Europe.”**

Refereeing, Respect, and Responsibility

Behind the easy-going atmosphere, the SDTS still maintains strong standards of professionalism. Each round must include qualified referees, with a target of 40% being full-time officials and the rest drawn from players. Matches always have two referees, with a lead referee overseeing fair play.

Respect is central to the code of conduct: dissent, abusive language, or disrespect toward officials simply won’t be tolerated. It’s all part of reinforcing the community-first culture.

“We want people to see refereeing as part of the game, not separate from it,” notes Mark. **“When players take a turn with the whistle, they learn empathy for the officials and understand how important it is to keep things fair and respectful.”**

The “180s”: A New Chapter

As the Series matures, the founders are also developing the **Six Darts 180s**, a “Barbarians”-style representative team made up of standout players from the competition.

Selection isn’t just about skill, it’s also about attitude, discipline, and potential. The 180s will train together after each round and embark on tours, with the first planned for Glasgow in 2026.

The idea, Danny explains, is to create aspiration within the grassroots. **“We want players to feel that by committing to the Series, there’s a pathway for them to grow, to represent the Six Darts community, and to experience international competition. It’s about raising the ceiling while keeping the doors wide open.”**



Beyond the field: The role of Six Darts

The Series takes its name from its sponsor, Six Darts, a creative agency specialising in brand strategy and design. Their philosophy, blending creativity with strategy, or “hitting the perfect 180”, shapes the way the Series is run. From graphic design to event presentation, the professional polish is part of what makes SDTS stand out from other grassroots initiatives.

“Sport and branding have a lot in common,” says Danny, founder of Six Darts. **“You’re telling a story, building an identity, and creating an experience people want to be part of. That’s exactly what we try to do with the Six Darts Touch Series.”**

Looking Ahead: A roadmap for growth

The SDTS leadership team isn’t short on ambition. Their roadmap includes growing the number of rounds per season, creating dedicated male and female categories, launching a junior 180s squad, and hosting events in the UK and wider Europe.

The Series also has a growing team backing up Danny and Mark, each with a specific role to play.

But even as they look to expand, Danny and Mark are keen to keep the essence intact.

“We’re not chasing size for the sake of it,” Mark insists. **“The priority is that people feel welcomed, supported, and excited to come back. If we get that right, the growth will take care of itself.”**

More than a competition

In just a short time, the Six Darts Touch Series has become more than a sports event... it’s a movement.

It’s where new teams take their first steps, where established clubs find fresh challenges, and where friendships are built that extend beyond the pitch.

By blending flexibility, inclusivity, and professionalism, Danny and Mark have created something rare: a grassroots competition that feels both fun and aspirational, both local and international.

As the Series looks ahead to inspire players of all ages and bring in a new wave of youth players and young families, it is their hope that this initiative can help elevate the sport of touch and give it much more visibility in Spain and other countries across Europe... and with a focus on creating a unique experience for all, it’s clear that the Six Darts Touch Series is about more than who wins or loses. It’s about belonging and about building a sport where everyone has a place.

Or, as Danny puts it:

“If you can get six players together, you can be part of this. And once you’re in, you’re family.”



Meet the team



Danny McCreedy
Co-founder



Mark Roberts
Co-founder



Steve Anderson
Technical Director

The 5 year roadmap for the

2026

Increase number of teams per round.
Increase to 4 rounds.
SixDarts 180s
Barbarians UK Tour.

2027

Develop Mens' Open category within the Series.
Create female 180s team.

2028

Develop Female category.
Create men's
Female 180s
SDTS round



erson
Director



Laura Requejo
Legal Advisor



Ciaran Walter
Community Mgr

The SixDarts Touch Series



Female Open
Men's 180s team.
180s tour.
held in the UK.



Develop 180s Juniors team.
Mixed 180s Europe tour.
Six Darts round in EU.



180s tour with ALL categories taking part.
Mixed, female and male categories in Series fully established.

THE SPARK IN THE EAST



The birth of Polish Touch

WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU MIX A RUGBY-MAD POLISH PLAYER, A STACK OF INSPIRATION FROM THE ENGLISH TOUCH SCENE, AND A DEEP LOVE FOR COMMUNITY SPORT? **APPARENTLY... A WHOLE NEW NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY.**

If you've been to any England Touch events this season, chances are you've seen Mags von Gron, whether with a whistle on the pitch or cheering loudly from the sidelines.

What you may not know is that behind the scenes, she's been quietly building something pretty special: the **first-ever formal Touch Rugby organisation in Poland.**

Touch Rugby in Poland isn't exactly new, but up until now, it's mostly lived in the shadows of Rugby Union and League, used as a training drill or warm-up game rather than a sport in its own right.

There's been no proper structure, no national body, no international representation.

But that's all changing.



THEIR VISION?

To see Touch played from the Baltic to the Tatras.

But they're not stopping there...

Maybe even a Polish team at a future Euros or World Cup

From Łódź with love

Rewind a few years to Sroki Łódź, a Rugby League club that ran the first real push to introduce FIT-style Touch in Poland.

They hosted informal 4-a-side games, got players involved, and laid some early groundwork.

The dream never quite took off, but the spark was there.

Fast-forward to 2025, and Mags, originally from Poland, is bringing the fire. Teaming up with Kamil Kleszcz, a proud Łódź local and Rugby League player, the duo are working to officially launch **Touch Rugby Poland**.

THEIR GOAL?

To create a national body, connect with the international Touch community, and secure recognition (and funding!) from the Polish government.

Their aim is to reach people who either haven't played full-contact rugby yet, or who no longer play it. We want to grow Touch in regions where rugby already has a presence, making the most of the experience of retired players as well as attracting brand new fans to the sport.

In addition, they plan to introduce Touch to school and university students by working closely with local educational institutions, making the game accessible to younger generations and create a pathway for long-term participation.

They believe this approach will allow them to build a strong, sustainable Touch Rugby community in Poland – one that connects existing rugby regions, welcomes new players, and inspires the next generation.

Community roots, global dreams

It's already happening. There's a steady recreational group in Łódź (which just so happens to be the birthplace of Polish Rugby League), and a growing community around Nowy Sącz in the south. Mags brings the international know-how, and a clear understanding of what good Touch looks like. Kamil brings the local passion, backed by clubs like Sroki Łódź and Biało-Czarni Nowy Sącz.

A FEW BUMPS IN THE ROAD

Of course, it's not all smooth sailing. Equipment isn't easy to come by. Pitches are hard to book. And, believe it or not, rugby balls are surprisingly expensive in Poland. But that's not stopping them. Mags and Kamil are a dream team: one part global vision, one part grassroots grit. If they succeed, and all signs suggest they will, they won't just build a sport, they'll build a movement.



History made!

Poland made Touch history recently with the first-ever official FIT rules showcase match, played alongside the Rugby League fixture.

Officiated by Mags Von Gron, the clash saw Rugby Club Biało-Czarni Nowy Sącz take on Sroki Łódź Rugby League, a landmark moment for the sport's growth in the country.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Keep your eyes on Poland. The heart, hustle and home-grown ambition of this project could be just what the Touch world needs.

And with Mags leading the way, we wouldn't bet against them.

FROM SIDELINES TO SCORELINES, THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

RUGBY CLUB
BIAŁO-CZARNI
NOWY SĄCZ



#RCBCNS
NOWY SĄCZ





ENGLAND'S MONOPOLY: DOMINANCE OR IMBALANCE?



Over the 2025 summer 'international season', England have been near untouchable in Touch across youth, seniors and opens.

- Youth – 9 categories. 6 golds. 1 silver. 2 bronze. A medal in every single division.
- Seniors – 8 categories. 7 golds. 1 silver. Again, a medal in every division, with multiple England v England finals.
- Opens – 3 categories (England entered 2, with three teams in each). 2 golds, 2 silvers, 1 bronze. A medal in every division entered, once more with England v England finals.

On paper, this is a remarkable record. It's a level of dominance rarely seen in international team sport. But how did England get here?

A decade in the making

This success hasn't come by accident. It's the product of a structure that was put in place over ten years ago. A youth programme was first launched before the 2014 European Championships, with an X18 team assembled to play as an opener against Wales. It worked, but with most players from a single school, it wasn't representative of the whole country. Nor did it provide a clear pathway forward.

That changed with the launch of the University Series. Originally a separate initiative created by Harry Grocott and Mark Aldous, it gave young players an outlet beyond school. The series eventually came under the England Touch Association's umbrella in 2017, and from there, growth was explosive.

With multiple sports-focused universities starting Touch teams, and quickly expanding to second and third squads, England suddenly had a true production line of talent. The bulk of today's Atlantic

Cup and Opens players are products of that system.

The University Series has since partnered with BUCS, with Welsh and Scottish universities also joining. But the vast majority of teams, players and opportunities are still based in England.

Great for England, but what about everyone else in Europe?

It's undeniable that this structure has made England stronger year after year. But it raises some tough questions for the wider European game:

- If England are allowed multiple entries into the same division at FIT-sanctioned events, does that automatically give them an advantage in medal counts?
- When finals regularly end up as England v England, does that limit opportunities for other nations to compete at the sharp end of tournaments?
- With such a well-oiled pathway, from schools to universities to opens and seniors, is the talent gap between England and the rest of Europe only going to grow wider?
- Does this imbalance undermine the credibility of European competitions, making them feel more like extended domestic tournaments?
- And perhaps most importantly: if smaller nations are constantly outclassed, how long before they lose motivation to enter at all?

This isn't a criticism of England's success, quite the contrary, given I was part of building these foundations. The players, coaches and administrators deserve enormous credit for the system they've continued.

But there are inconsistencies in how participation is managed. England can enter multiple teams into divisions at European Championships events, often justified as “strengthening the category”, yet we don’t see the same flexibility when it comes to concepts like “European Select” or indigenous representation when it comes to World Cups. The rationale then is often heard citing the principle of “one nation, one team” to block those opportunities.

That begs the question: where should the line be drawn, and is the current approach really serving the wider good of the game?

Do we even care if England keeps getting bigger and better?

After all, Australia win almost everything on the world stage of Touch, and most of us accept it as the natural order.



What’s next for Europe?

If England’s dominance is now clear, the real challenge lies in how Europe responds. Without a regional body like the now-defunct EFT, there’s little structure in place to help other nations catch up.

So, what should happen next?

- Should bigger nations play a more active role in mentoring and supporting developing countries, or is their responsibility simply to focus on their own growth?
- Would it help if funding or resources were ringfenced specifically for 'smaller nations' to build grassroots programmes and coaching pathways?
- Should tournaments cap how many teams one country can enter in each division, or would that unfairly restrict opportunities for players?
- Could there be room for more development-focused competitions alongside the main championships, to give emerging nations a better chance to compete and progress?
- Would cross-border partnerships be a realistic way of spreading the game more evenly across Europe?

The question is whether Europe wants to embrace England’s rise, as the benchmark for standards, or create an environment where more nations are given the tools and opportunities to challenge them?

HIDEAKI NARA

HOT STEPPER



HIDEAKI 'HITCH' NARA, The quiet force behind Japan Touch's rise

In the fast-paced world of Touch, few names carry the quiet influence of Hideaki Nara. A driving force in Japan's development on and off the field, Nara has spent decades shaping players, teams, and the sport's culture.

From grassroots coaching to leading Japan's World Cup campaigns, his dedication has been as constant as it has been transformative.

The journey started in Japan's domestic leagues, but his influence has long stretched beyond its borders. He has been the link between generations of players, carrying the lessons of his own mentors while nurturing the next wave.

We sat down with Nara to talk about his journey, his vision for the game, and why the smallest details often make the biggest difference.

INTRODUCTION & EARLY YEARS

You've represented Japan on the international stage since 2001. Do you remember your very first cap for Japan? What was that moment like for you?

My first cap was at the 2001 New South Wales State Cup in Australia. I was both excited and a little giddy to see so many people playing Touch Rugby in Australia and to witness such a high level of play. Haha. As a result, I have the bitter memory of breaking my collarbone just five minutes into the very first match. Haha.

Growing up in Machida, how did you first get introduced to Touch? Was there a defining moment when you knew it would be more than just a hobby?

Until high school I played baseball and had nothing to do with Touch Rugby. But when I entered university, I came across a poster in the cafeteria, and that's how I discovered Touch Rugby. At the 2001 New South Wales State Cup, the St. George team, mainly made up of New Zealanders, completely blew me away with their tricky plays, and I was hooked.





You've played in six World Cups across different eras of the game. How has international Touch changed over the past two decades?

Compared to my first World Cup in 2003, I've seen the number of participating countries increase with each tournament, and the level of play has kept rising.

Australia and New Zealand remain powerhouses, of course, but the level in Europe has improved dramatically, which I think is closely related to their development of junior players.

THE STEP AND PLAYING STYLE.

You're widely known as a master of the step and have even published a book about it. How did that become your signature?

I was fascinated by the goose step. I loved it so much that I spent countless hours studying it, purely out of passion. When I began uploading my step videos to YouTube, Japanese rugby teams started contacting me for coaching, and that's when I began teaching the goose step to others. When I decided to make it my profession, the "Stepper" was born.

**I WAS
FASCINATED
BY THE GOOSE
STEP. I SPENT
COUNTLESS
HOURS
STUDYING IT,
PURELY OUT
OF PASSION.**



Is your stepping technique instinctive, or has it been developed through analysis and study over time?

I spent a lot of time analysing and studying it. Back then, YouTube didn't exist, so I used VHS tapes to repeatedly watch St. George matches, replaying and slow-motioning the goose step, practicing it myself, checking and fixing, and confirming over and over.

You've coached rugby, lacrosse, and football (soccer) players in stepping. What do you think is the common factor Touch can improve across all these sports?

It's about how much you love playing. In any sport, that passion is the key to improving.

LEADERSHIP AND COACHING

You've not only played at the highest level but also coached and developed younger generations. What's the most enjoyable part of working with young players?

I think this is the same for any coach, but it's when you see young players with eyes sparkling as they train. I'm also lucky that I can still play alongside them, so being able to share the field and play with that same energy is one of the most enjoyable moments.

What's your coaching philosophy? How do you create an environment where players can grow both technically and mentally?

First, I make sure I'm enjoying the time myself. If I'm having fun, I believe that feeling will naturally transfer to those I coach. I also choose my words carefully so that players feel encouraged to take on new challenges comfortably.

You've been described as someone who can inspire and motivate teammates at crucial moments. Where does that leadership style come from?

If people feel that way about me, I'm truly honoured. Originally, I was the type to just focus quietly on my own play. But after studying Touch in Australia/NZ, I had the privilege of playing under many great leaders. In Japan, I also had the chance to work with legendary coaches like Weesang Paaka and Steve Roberts, and I learned a lot from them.

TOUCH RUGBY IN JAPAN

How much of a driving force was it to have someone like Steve Roberts in the early Japan team?

I think it was huge. Being coached by Steve, and before him Weesang Paaka from New Zealand, gave us a much deeper understanding of Touch, things like theory and tactics, beyond the trial-and-error approach we'd been using.

Steve also taught us why Australia is so strong and what they do to stay at the top, which I believe led to our bronze medal in 2019.

Thanks to them, we also learned a lot about the mental side of the game, what it means to be a team, and what it means to represent your country, which became a big driving force for Japan's progress.



Credit: TFA



REPRESENTED

Represents Japan at NSW State Cup, Australia 2001 & 2002



TWC, SOUTH AFRICA

Played in 2nd Touch World Cup, placing 4th in Men's Open. Voted MIP



NSWSC

Australia & NZ National Championships



TWC, AUSTRALIA

Played in 4th Touch World Cup, placing 5th in Men's Open.



TWC, JAPAN

Played in 1st Touch World Cup, in home country, placing 4th in Men's Open.

TWC, SCOTLAND

Played in 3rd Touch World Cup, placing 4th in Men's Open. Voted MIP

TFA NTLs

Played in Australian National Touch League

TRANS TASMANIA

Trans Tasmania Series Internat Test Ma





TRANS TASMAN

Trans Tasman Series International Test Match



TWC, MALAYSIA

Played in 5th Touch World Cup, getting Bronze in Men's Open.



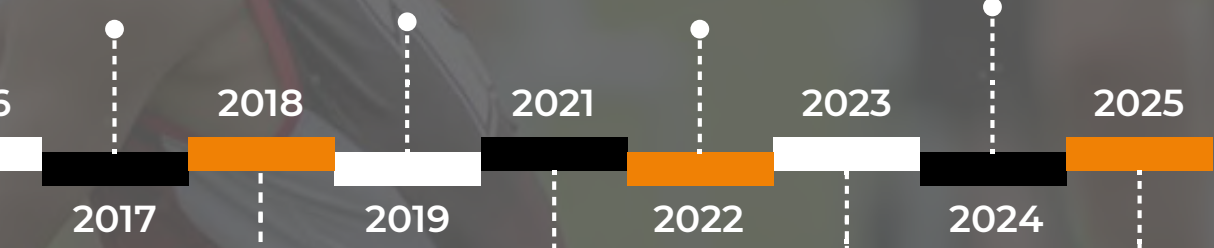
STEP CLINICS

Overseas step coaching & clinics began



TWC, ENGLAND

Played in 6th Touch World Cup, placing 5th in Men's 30s



2017

2018

2019

2021

2022

2023

2024

2025

TRANS TASMAN

Trans Tasman Series International Test Match

TFA NTLs

Played in Australian National Touch League

PUBLISHED

Published Japan's first step coaching book

TRANS TASMAN

Trans Tasman Series International Test Match (M30)

EUROPEAN SENIORS

Played in Senior Touch Cup, with the European Select M40s Team



SET OF SIX

NARA HIDEAKI

You've got six touches, make 'em count.

1 First Touch

Favourite try of all time?

2007 World Cup in South Africa – a buzzer-beater, come-from-behind win against South Africa with a quick dive.

2 Second Touch

If you had to choose a Touch Rugby theme song?

U Can't Touch This – MC Hammer

3 Third Touch

Most underrated skill in Touch Rugby?

Dump / Rollball

4 Fourth Touch

Favourite country you've played in?

New Zealand

5 Fifth Touch

Best stepper you've ever faced?

Dylan Hennessy

6 Sixth Touch

Your dream six-a-side team (any players, any era)?

Peter Walter (NZ)

Dylan Hennessy (AUS)

Remus Gentles (NZ)

Dean Williams (NZ)

Drumayne Dayberg-Muir (AUS)

Ifor Jones (NZ)

Japan has made remarkable progress on the international stage, including the bronze medal in 2019. What do you think was the key to that success?

First and foremost, it was thanks to the older generation who paved the way and passed down an environment for us to grow in.

On top of that, we constantly challenged ourselves by touring in Australia and New Zealand to face the world's best. Learning know-how directly from top coaches was also a huge factor.

And, of course, the motivation of the current players is the number one key.

Having coached in over 20 countries and seen various approaches, what do you think is the unique strength of Japanese Touch Rugby?

I think it's our craftsman-like mentality. We can take a single play, think deeply about it, refine it like sharpening a sword, and push it to the highest level of precision.

LEGACY AND THE FUTURE

With national caps, coaching success, and a published book, you've already achieved a lot. What keeps you motivated to keep challenging yourself?

As a player, Touch is the one time I truly feel I shine, so I always want to improve and give the audience that thrill, so I don't think I'll ever stop.

As for coaching and other work, my motto is to make as many people as possible smile through my activities. That's my motivation.

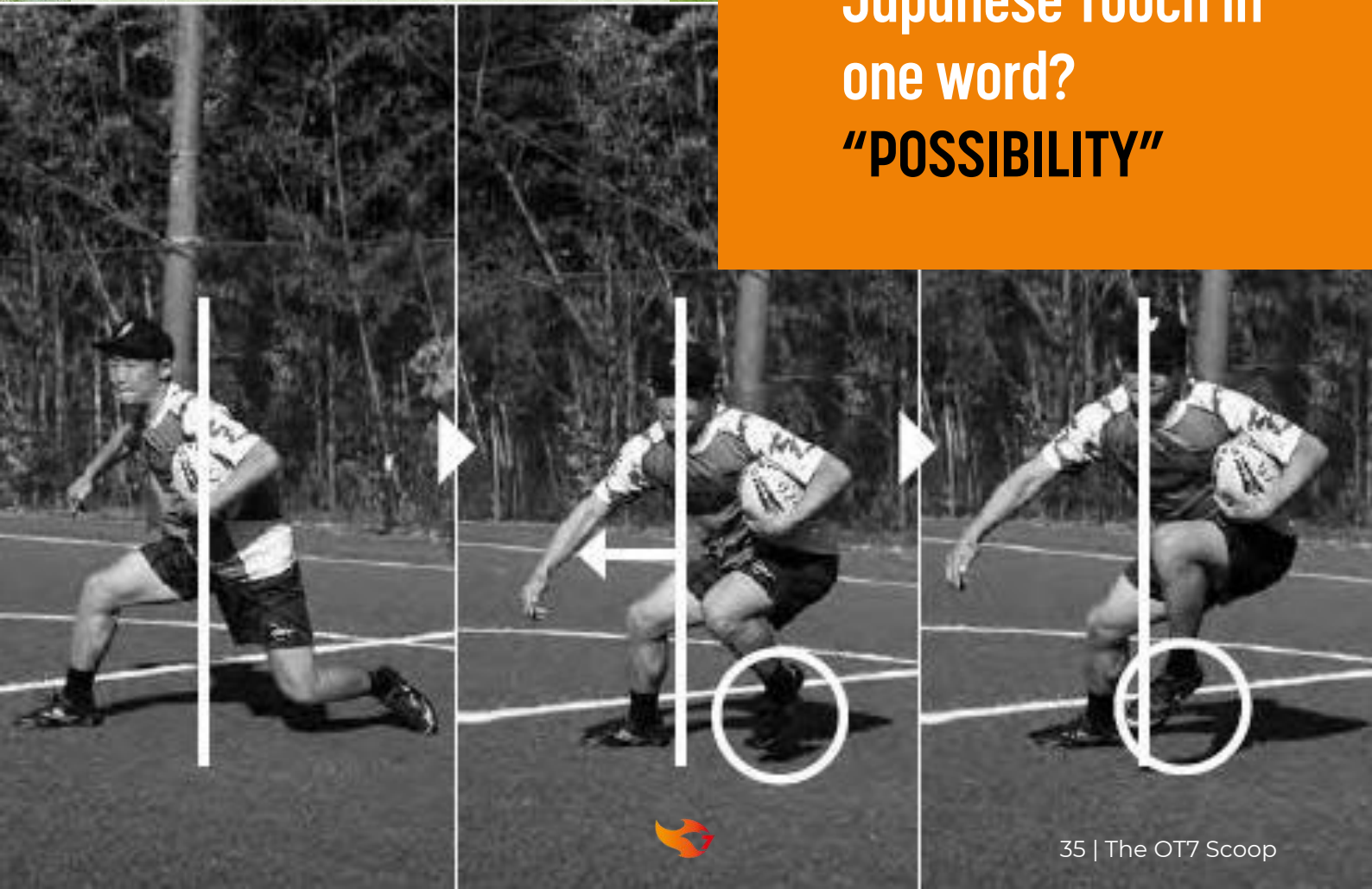
Right now, that's through Touch and step coaching, but I'm also excited to see how other things I'm good at might branch out into helping people in new ways.



Finally, what are your new projects, goals, or dreams for the future?

To coach stepping all over the world, to teach in New Zealand, the home of the goose step, and to keep playing at the World Cup for as long as I can.

If you had to sum up your impact on Japanese Touch in one word?
“POSSIBILITY”

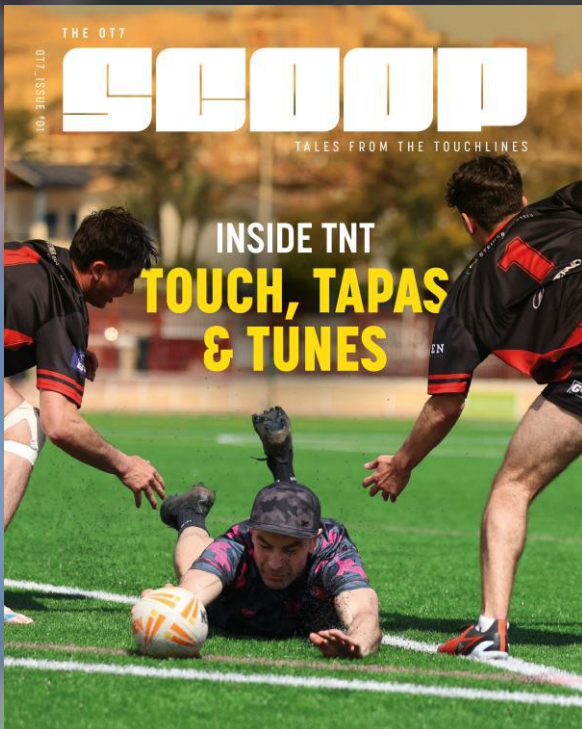


DID YOU KNOW...

- Has played for the Japan national team since 2001
- One of only a handful of Japanese players to compete in six Touch World Cups.
- Won bronze at the 2019 World Cup in Malaysia
- Named Japan team Most Influential Player twice at World Cups (2007 & 2011)
- Completed a Touch Rugby World Tour across 23 countries
- Author of Japan's first step coaching book, published in 2021
- Founded Japan's first dedicated Touch Rugby school in 2015
- Coaches not only rugby players but also lacrosse and soccer athletes in step skills
- Began overseas coaching in 2022, bringing his step techniques worldwide.



PREVIOUS EDITIONS



#001 INSIDE TNT TOUCH, TAPAS AND TUNES

The inaugural issue, pulled together by the amazing Suzi Baxter-Seitz

This edition was the kickstarter for **The Scoop** magazine. It covered everything about the Touch N' Tapas event we are (in)famous for, capturing the vibe from every possible angle, both on and off the field.

It's full of personality, honesty, and humour.

Read more [here](#)



#002 WHAKAPAPA NOT PASSPORTS

In our global reaching second edition, we covered much wider topics.

The growth of Indigenous events, Karley Banks, breaking glass ceilings, the new four referee system trials by Touch Football Australia, reviews of ents and previews and predictions of the 'international season' in Europe.

If you're in it, thank you. If you're reading it, thank you too

Read more [here](#)



THE RISE OF THE PORTUGAL REFS





Touch in Portugal has seen remarkable development in recent years, both in terms of participation and refereeing. At present, the country has around 400 active players and a regular competition calendar, ranging from social tournaments to more competitive events, including two international tournaments.

Almost all matches are now refereed with the three-referee system, which raises the standard of officiating and brings Portugal closer to international best practice.

Portugal had its first Level 1 referees in 2016, even before the formal establishment of the Touch Rugby Portugal Association, a key step in consolidating the sport which took place the following year.

Another milestone was the publication of the Portuguese version of the FIT Rules – 5th Edition in 2021, making the regulations more accessible to the national community.

That same year, Portugal had its first Level 2 referees, paving the way for advanced referee training, and in the following year, its first Level 3 referees.

Along the way, there have already been three upgrades (Levels 2 and 3) at Touch N Tapas.

Meanwhile, in April 2023, Portugal finally achieved independence in delivering and validating Level 1 referee courses, offering training fully in Portuguese. In addition, several national refereeing gatherings were held, as well as specific referee training sessions for players.

More recently, there has also been a clear effort to further boost internationalisation. Since the 2024/2025 season, increasing participation in international events, such as Touch N Tapas, has become a strategic objective to encourage referees to develop in more demanding environments.

If you have been at a tournament lately, you will likely have come across one or more of a host of new Portuguese refs.

At the same time, in February, Porto hosted a Level 3 course open to international participants, with referees from Spain, Scotland, France and Switzerland, highlighting Portugal's growing credibility as a training hub.

Several referees have already completed the theoretical component of this course, and one has already achieved full Level 3 certification.

The next step is to consolidate these achievements. It is essential to validate on-field the referees who have already completed the Level 3 theory component, while also increasing the number of active Level 2 referees.

In addition, Portugal already has two Level 1 coaches and two Level 1 presenters, and work is underway to progress to Level 2 coaches / presenters, which will ensure greater continuity and autonomy in referee development. With this strong foundation, the goal is to continue growing sustainably, strengthening Portugal's role within the European Touch landscape and raising the competitive and organisational standards of the sport.

You can find more about Portugal Touch Refs on their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages



THE GOAL IS TO CONTINUE GROWING SUSTAINABLY, STRENGTHENING PORTUGALS ROLE WITHIN THE TOUCH LANDSCAPE

PORTUGAL TOUCH ARBITRAGEM

Pedro Brites



RECORD BREAKER



At the 2024 Touch World Cup, **Renee Watson** and the England Women's 40s made history, by becoming the first non-Australian women's team to beat New Zealand, the first northern hemisphere side to do so in any category, and recording the closest result against Australia outside of New Zealand itself.

Off the pitch, she's a TED Talker, founder, consultant, and leadership coach



Renee Watson: Beating New Zealand and Breaking Records

Take us back to that moment, beating New Zealand at the World Cup. Did you know straight away what a big deal it was?

Yes and no!

In the Northern Hemisphere particularly, New Zealand teams are revered so I knew it was a huge achievement. It was a key goal right from the outset of the campaign, and I knew it would take an extraordinary team to take the win.

We'd worked so hard, and when the final whistle went, the first thing I felt was a rush of pride in the team. It wasn't until later, when the messages started flooding in from people all over the touch world, that it really started sinking in how much impact the win would have beyond our sense of achievement.

Your team wasn't just the first non-Aussie women's side to beat NZ, but also the first northern hemisphere team ever to do it. What did that mean to you personally?

Being a coach is a bit like being a parent, you invest so much into the campaign, your athletes and wider team.

You come to care deeply about each person, and you do everything you can to steer them towards a shared vision.

Coming into the game I felt it all come together, I was calm and confident, and I think it was the first time I properly knew we could do it.

“what might happen if we go out there, just be playful, have some fun and wreak a bit of havoc?”

Our ethos for that game was curiosity and mischief. I remember asking the team something along the lines of: *“what might happen if we go out there, just be playful, have some fun and wreak a bit of havoc?”*

This mirrored my whole approach to coaching, so to know that we succeeded by doing things a bit differently made my inner rebel extremely satisfied.

You also pushed Australia to a 6–4 result, the closest any women's team besides NZ has ever got. How do you prepare a team mentally for those kinds of games?

From day one, two and a half years before the World Cup, psychological fitness was a key pillar of our playbook.

Amateur sport is a huge investment in time and money so I wanted to ensure that my athletes got more out of it than wins and losses.

This meant creating a culture where people could grow, push themselves and have space to work through mental barriers that often held them back on and off the touch pitch. We became an innovative and resilient team that was willing to take risks, that was the secret sauce for us in this game.



DID YOU KNOW...

- Played in the 2019 Touch World Cup, for the Eurostars, in the first ever women's 35s division
- Part of the first all female, international coaching/management team in England Touch's history
- First female Head Coach for an England team at a Touch World Cup (2024).
- Led England W40s to first ever northern hemisphere win over New Zealand.
- First non-Australian women's team to beat New Zealand at a World Cup.
- Recorded the closest ever score v Australia by a non-NZ side (6-4).
- Coached in the first ever Women's 40s division at a World Cup, and England's debut.
- Delivered a TED Talk and founded Leap Wild Coaching & Curiosity Box.
- Gold medallist at Australia's National Touch League.
- International player and coach with a knack for breaking records.
- Turns lessons from the pitch into business leadership gold.

You called it an “intense, exhilarating, challenging roller coaster.” What was the toughest part of that tournament for you?

Selecting the playing 14 for each game. I hated having to tell two people that they wouldn't be playing.

They all deserved to play and there's no crystal ball to give you certainty as a coach that your decision is going to be the “right” one.

Managing energy was also hard. Seven games in four days is brutal. You're constantly balancing recovery, tactics, and morale. Keeping everyone's heads and bodies in the right space was a big test.

You've said not making the gold medal match felt like missing your goal at the time. How has your perspective on that changed a year later?

I'm not someone who gives myself an easy ride. For better or worse, when I set goals, I tend to stop at nothing to achieve them, so it still burns a bit if I'm honest.

Particularly as I know that had we made the final, we would have lifted in a way that would have seriously challenged Australia for gold.

There are so many positives and learnings to take away though, it was my first big tournament as a coach and I learned a lot about managing the peaks and troughs of a long tournament.

The biggest silver lining has been the messages I got from women's opens players, teenage girls and mums sick of just watching their kids, all saying how inspirational we had been, so my biggest feeling now is that we changed the narrative about what's possible and that's worth its weight in gold.





WOMEN'S 45S CHAMPIONS



COACHING & LEADERSHIP

You were the first female Head Coach for an England team at a World Cup. Did you feel extra pressure or extra pride in that role?

I didn't really think about it until afterwards, and then mostly just felt indignant that it mustn't remain that way!

I'd like to think I brought an extra flavour to the Head Coaches meetings and maybe made some of the men look at things from different perspectives?

You've spoken about leadership lessons from the pitch to the boardroom, can you share one specific moment from the World Cup that taught you something you've since applied in business?

Sport stretches you in a way that most things in life can't, so it's a great way to test the edges of your capacity to adapt.

I'm not sure there is a specific moment that demonstrates this but the WC taught me that my resilience and strength of will is deeper and more powerful than I thought.

How do you balance creating space for others to shine with still wanting to win?

A big part of our psych fitness programme was about exploring what success looked like for each of us and as a team.

This meant that we each had lots of ways we could "win" and we all knew we were looking in the same direction as a team.

We celebrated individual wins regularly and we also laughed about failures, this meant people could be vulnerable, try things and accelerate their progress. For a relatively inexperienced team this was key to our successes.





SET OF SIX

RENEE WATSON

You've got six touches, make 'em count.

1 First Touch

Favourite Touch memory/photo?

Beating NZ, hands down. That photo with the whole squad grinning ear to ear still warms my belly.

2 Second Touch

If Touch had a theme song, what would it be?

Lose Yourself, Eminem (some may assume I'd say Ice, Ice Baby, Vanilla Ice but that's another story)

3 Third Touch

One leadership lesson you wish you'd learned sooner?

Instinct and analysis can coexist so trust both.

4 Fourth Touch

If you have a(nother) TED talk tomorrow, what would it be about?

How mushrooms can save the world and your mental health

5 Fifth Touch

What changes or innovations would you like to see in Touch?

Greater diversity in leadership roles. On a day to day level: Better mechanisms and more support for small nations to participate in big tournaments

6 Sixth Touch

Dream 6-a-side team – any players, any era?

Oof that's a tough one!
Bo de la Cruz - obvs,
Kylie Hutchinson – for the calm,
Kristina Sue – all round awesomeness,
Kerry Rendell – for the legs and craic,
Eloise Hillebrand and Elsa Claes – exciting young ones to watch.

Do you think touch needs more female coaches at the highest level, and how do we get them there?

Is that even a question? Of course!

The diversity of thought and approach brings so much value to a team and to an organisation. Without it something is always lost. It isn't just about women, I particularly want to see People of Colour in Head Coach roles too.

We need role models, mentorship, and practical support to manage the workload. Something no one really talks about is the level of privilege required to take on a voluntary coaching role which is a practical limitation for many people. No one does it for the money, but many people won't do it because they simply can't afford to.

LIFE AFTER THE WORLD CUP

You've had quite a year, moving your family back to Australia, new business ventures, winning NTLs. Was it hard to step back from coaching during that time?

Strangely not!

I threw so much into the World Cup campaign, I needed time away to recharge afterwards.

I have really enjoyed having time to support my family through this massive life transition down under and putting my boots back on and trying to remember how to play!

Watching the Lionesses win Euros under Sarina Wiegman has sparked something so watch this space.

Leap Wild Coaching is all about supporting women through big life transitions. Do you see a parallel between how women handle change in life and how players adapt on the field?

Definitely.

Women consistently underestimate themselves, our capacity to adapt, our reservoir of power and ability to navigate change is HUGE.

Leap Wild is about helping women to realise and tap into all that in natural spaces that breath life into us. It's for women at the moment but I see it being for both men and women in the future – we all need it.

Do you see another coaching role in your near future, or are you still enjoying being on the playing side?

It's coming, where, when and how, we shall see!



BUILT TOUGH



45-51 RIXON ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, NN8 4BA

01933 274400
SALES@VERMEERUK.CO.UK
VERMEERUK.CO.UK

BC200 BRUSH CHIPPER



Vermeer[®]
United Kingdom



ENGLAND PAINT THE ATLANTIC YOUTH TOUCH CUP RED, WHITE & GOLD

Despite England's youth squads reminding everyone why they're the nation to beat, bagging six of the nine gold medals available, and podium finishes in the others, the weekend wasn't a one-team show.

France threw down the gauntlet with a Mixed 15s win over Wales to take gold, backing this up in the U20s Women's division, defeating England in the final. Each of the France teams took home gold or silver medals to boot.

Ireland got the home crowd roaring in the last game of the competition, clinching their first ever youth gold medal in the nailbiting Mixed 18s final. Their Mixed 20s team took a silver, and Boys 15 a bronze.

Wales were strong and consistent across the board too, as they took medals in five of the six categories they entered, taking a top three* finish overall.

South Africa took home three bronze medals from the four teams they brought.

Albeit the live stream had its glitches, again, the coverage of the games was great, easy to follow, and the talent across the board is progressing at a rate of knots, confirmed by the England 20s beating the Irish Men's Open in a friendly during the event.



**ATLANTIC
YOUTH TOUCH CUP**

LIMERICK  IRELAND

**2025
ATLANTIC
YOUTH
TOUCH
CUP**

**IRELAND'S HOME
CROWD ROARED AS
THEY TOOK THEIR
FIRST-EVER YOUTH
GOLD**



15s DIVISION


G15 | England Girls clean sweep

Girls' representation remains a challenge with fewer girls' teams entering across the board in Limerick compared to the boys and mixed divisions. This was typified most clearly by the Girls 15s division, with only two teams (England & Wales).

England showed increasing dominance across the first four (out of five) rounds, with 25 tries to Wales' five. But come the de facto final, the Welsh were testing the mettle of the English.

The scores were tied for much of the first half at 1-1 with the third try not coming until the 15th minute. England opened the scoring in the second half and despite an early reply from Wales, they soon got into a rhythm, running out comfortable winners at 5-2.

3-1, 5-1, 8-0, 9-3, 5-2.

 England 5-0 Wales

X15 | A huge win for France

A dominant display by favourites, France, as they topped their pool easily, with the closest game being a 14-3 win over Ireland.


Putting away the Cayman team 17-0 in the quarter final and England 8-5 in the semis, they met Wales in the gold medal match.

The Welsh had gone unbeaten in their pool, and in similar style had no issues, beating all teams by at least 10.

They saw off Portugal 19-3 and the Scottish 19-1 in the quarter and semis respectively.

A tight match up in a thriller of a final.

But it was Maël Pin's French side that took the spoils.

 France 6-5 Wales

B15 | England boys take gold at AYTC


In the double round robin, England won all their pool games.

Wales scored after 2 mins and managed to keep England out for the first 7 mins of the game. They were in contention for the first for 15 mins of the first half going toe to toe.

England managed to break the deadlock and go two up on the stroke of half time and didn't look back in the second half

It was Eli Bingley, the team's top try scorer and divisional MVP, who put the 12th and ultimate try over the line in finals.

A strong performance by the English to take gold.

 England 12-7 Wales





	X15	
	6 - 5	
FRANCE		WALES
	B15	
	12 - 7	
ENGLAND		WALES
	G15	
	5 - 0	
ENGLAND		WALES

Credit: Touch France

Credit: Touch France



18s

DIVISION



Credit: FT



18s

DIVISION



Credit: FT



20s

DIVISION

X20 | The first medals are awarded

The first finals to finish at the AYTC was the X20s division, and it was England who took the first podium.

After losing both pool games against the strong Irish outfit, they turned it on when it mattered most.

Owen Joyce scored the try that sealed the deal for the English.

🏆 England 10-9 Ireland

B20 | England win the series

In the triple round robin series, the England men's 20s went undefeated in a dominant display of talent at the AYTC. They even took out the Irish Men's Open team in a friendly too, showing their depth of experience across the board.

🏆 England 3-0 France series win

W20 | France take home gold

After some big losses to England in the 2023 edition of the AYTC, France's W20s came out fighting in Ireland.

In a triple round robin, they went into the finals as favourites, having beat the English twice (8-4, 8-3) and losing once (5-4) in the pools.

A fatal error on England's line, saw the French capitalise on the uncharacteristic mistake, to go two tries ahead, with four minutes to go.

England scored with forty seconds left, but the buzzer sounded and we saw the elation from the French as they took gold.

🏆 France 5-4 England



X20	
	
ENGLAND	IRELAND
10 - 9	
B20	
	
ENGLAND	FRANCE
7 - 6	
W20	
	
FRANCE	ENGLAND
5 - 3	



OVERALL WINNERS

ATLANTIC YOUTH CHAMPIONS

ENGLAND

BOYS 15	Gold
GIRLS 15	Gold
MIXED 15	Bronze
BOYS 18	Gold
GIRLS 18	Gold
MIXED 18	Bronze
MENS 20	Gold
WOMENS 20	Silver
MIXED 20	Gold





Credit: ETAF/IT

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
B15	ENGLAND	WALES	IRELAND
G15	ENGLAND	WALES	-
X15	FRANCE	WALES	ENGLAND
B18	ENGLAND	FRANCE	WALES
G18	ENGLAND	FRANCE	SOUTH AFRICA
X18	IRELAND	WALES	ENGLAND
M20	ENGLAND	FRANCE	ENGLAND LIONS
W20	FRANCE	ENGLAND	SOUTH AFRICA
X20	ENGLAND	IRELAND	SOUTH AFRICA

RANKINGS TABLE

	B15	G15	X15	B18	G18	X18	M20	W20	X20	Rank
ENGLAND	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	2	1	1
FRANCE			1	2	2		2	1		2
WALES	2	2	2	3	4	2				3
IRELAND	3		5	4		1			2	4
SOUTH AFRICA					3	6		3	3	5
ENGLAND LIONS			10				3			6
SCOTLAND			4			7			4	7
BELGIUM			6			4				8
CAYMAN			7			5				9
PORTUGAL			8	6						10
LEBANON	4					8				11
UKRAINE				5						=12
CHINA			9							=12

MEDAL TABLE

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
ENGLAND	6	1	2	9
FRANCE	2	3		5
IRELAND	1	1	1	3
WALES		4	1	5
SOUTH AFRICA			3	3
ENGLAND LIONS			1	1



Credit: ETA/FIT





ENGLAND DOMINATE THE SENIORS EUROPEAN TOUCH CUP, WINNING SEVEN OF THE EIGHT **GOLDS**

As predicted, it was England who camped on the top podium spot, playing in every final (twice with All-England finals) and winning seven of the eight golds on offer.

With England's M30s, M45s, X30s and W40s not losing a game, they put on a masterclass across the competition, setting the standard. England M30s won 7-4 over Scotland, M45 took the spoils 12-2 against Ireland, X30 played a spirited and much improved Ireland, winning 10-7 whilst the W40s beat their W45 compatriots 7-3.

The Women's 27s division was hotly contested and the pool results showed it was anyone's to win. But in a dramatic reversal of results, it was the England W35s team that came out on top of their younger English counterparts, taking gold with a 4-3 win.

England M35s took on Wales, winning 12-3, whilst England M40s reversed their pool round loss against Wales, to take the top spot, winning 8-5.

Scotland Men's 50s took the only gold not going back to England in a dramatic 3v3 drop off. The Scot's lost the previous days meeting, in the Yarrow Cup, but revenged their loss in the most exciting way. After the English dropped the ball over the line, it was Scottish MVP, Chris Bromley, double stepped the English to run virtually full length to deny the clean sweep.



STIRLING
SCOTLAND



FEDERATION
OF INTERNATIONAL
TOUCH



STIRLING
SCOTLAND



FEDERATION
OF INTERNATIONAL
TOUCH



Lots of positives

The tournament took place in a beautiful setting at picturesque Stirling, with the Wallace Monument overlooking the four fields. The backdrop alone gave the event a special feel, and pitch quality was excellent across the weekend.

Organisation on the ground was strong, with the local committee clearly working hard to deliver a full tournament experience. Beyond the games, there was plenty for families and spectators to enjoy, vendors, merchandise stalls, activities for children, and spaces to socialise all added to the atmosphere.

The inclusion of “select” teams also deserves a mention. While some eligibility questions arose (covered later), their presence ensured viable divisions, greater variety of match-ups, and the opportunity for more players to compete internationally.

Off the field, the social side of the event was a highlight. The Saturday night Ceilidh brought players, referees, and supporters together in true Scottish style. Laughter, dancing, and a few tired legs the next morning showed how much the community valued the chance to celebrate together.

Lots to take away

As with any major tournament, there were plenty of positives alongside some talking points that the community will want to reflect on.

Some of these issues have been raised before at other events, so it feels like there’s a real opportunity to make small but meaningful improvements for future masters competitions.

OPENING SPEECH

This raised eyebrows. Lines such as “your warm ups last longer than your games,” and mocking that the participants are all “fat around the middle” were intended as tongue-in-cheek but didn’t land well with many in the crowd.

Considering the time, effort, money, and family commitments involved in preparing for this event, a more celebratory tone might have set a stronger opening atmosphere.

WATER AND TOILET PROVISIONS

With 600+ people on site, hydration and sanitation were a big challenge. The venue relied on one tap, and boxes of water, where demand far outweighed supply in the summer heat. Similarly, portable toilets (around 15 across three days) struggled to keep pace with usage.



IN IT TO WIN IT?

A number of “Euroselect” and other composite teams entered the tournament, adding depth and variety to divisions. However, questions arose over whether these teams could progress to finals or podium places. In some cases, they were denied the opportunity despite strong results in pool play.

Meanwhile, other divisions saw flexibility – for example, England were permitted multiple entries in the same category, with both teams eligible to progress and win...

The contrast left some players confused about consistency of entry rules and eligibility.





Credit: H H Photospace





W27

 **4 - 3** 

ENGLAND W35 ENGLAND W27



M30

 **7 - 3** 

ENGLAND SCOTLAND



X30

 **10 - 7** 

ENGLAND IRELAND



M35

 **12 - 3** 

ENGLAND WALES





M40

 **8 - 5** 

ENGLAND WALES



M45

 **12 - 2** 

ENGLAND IRELAND



W40

 **7 - 3** 

ENGLAND W40 ENGLAND W45



M50

 **7 - 6** 

SCOTLAND ENGLAND





NO TROPHY FOR CERTAIN DIVISIONS

The podium experience also varied. Some divisions had large trophies, others had nothing, with winners only realising after the ceremony that they weren't getting anything.

For example, the M35 and M45 winners didn't receive a trophy despite playing full round robins and finals. Meanwhile, other divisions with only two or three teams did see trophies awarded.

The lack of transparency around this left some players disappointed. A clear, published policy ahead of time would likely resolve this for future events.



WOODEN MEDALS

Medals again proved a talking point. Wooden medals were awarded to podium teams, echoing the approach at the 2024 World Cup. While the intent is to reflect sustainability values, many players felt a metal option would better reflect the scale of the commitment and achievement.

This debate isn't new, the Youth events the week previous was awarded metal medals, whilst senior players were left questioning why consistency couldn't be applied across all FIT-sanctioned tournaments.

LIVE STREAM GLITCHES AND NO COMMENTARY

Streaming was handled using Veo cameras, giving remote viewers a static feed but without commentary or broadcast production. While this potentially kept costs *slightly* down, the quality was noticeably far behind the coverage provided for the Youth event just a week earlier, where two fields were streamed with live commentary.

The balance between affordability and player experience is a constant challenge. Still, the majority of players expressed a desire to see their efforts showcased on the same level as other divisions.



ORGANISER'S PERSPECTIVE

The organising team outlined their objectives for the event as:

- Keep costs for players and referees low
- Promote the best of Scotland through local suppliers and vendors
- Provide additional entertainment for families and spectators
- Work with the local community and independent businesses
- Do things differently

Many of these goals were achieved, and the event had plenty of highlights. The on-the-ground volunteers and staff were excellent, and very few issues arose during the event itself.

The areas highlighted simply show where small adjustments could help bring the senior and masters experience closer to the standard now being delivered at youth and opens level.

After all, they are just looking for a level playing field and all athletes to feel equally valued with consistency.



OVERALL WINNERS

SENIORS EUROPEAN TOUCH CUP

ENGLAND

WOMENS 27	Gold
MENS 30	Gold
MIXED 30	Gold
MENS 35	Gold
MENS 40	Gold
MENS 45	Gold
WOMENS 40	Gold
MENS 50	Silver



Credit: H H Photospace



	Gold	Silver	Bronze
W27	ENGLAND 35s	ENGLAND 27s	SCOTLAND
M30	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	FRANCE
X30	ENGLAND	IRELAND	SWITZERLAND
M35	ENGLAND	WALES	-
M40	ENGLAND	WALES	FRANCE
M45	ENGLAND	IRELAND	-
W40	ENGLAND 40s	ENGLAND 45s	EUROSTARS
M50	SCOTLAND	ENGLAND 50s	ENGLAND 55s



RANKINGS TABLE

	M30	W27	X30	M35	M40	W40	M45	M50/ M55	Rank
ENGLAND	1	1 2	1	1	1	1 2	1	2 3	1
SCOTLAND	2	3			4	4		1	2
WALES				2	2				=3
IRELAND			2				2		=3
FRANCE	3	4			3				5
EUROSTAR/SELECT			5		5	3		5	6
SWITZERLAND			3						7
PORTUGAL			4					4	8
NETHERLANDS	4								9
GERMANY SELECT	5								10

MEDAL TABLE

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
ENGLAND	7	3	1	11
SCOTLAND	1	1	1	3
IRELAND		2		2
WALES		2		2
FRANCE			2	2
SWITZERLAND			1	1
EUROSTAR/SELECT			1	1



ITALY HOST SUMMER SHOWDOWN IN CALVISANO



FROM BRONZE TO GOLD, ENGLAND MEDAL ACROSS THE BOARD, TOPPING THE TABLE AT THE OPENS CUP

The European summer of international Touch ended in northern Italy, where Calvisano Stadium, home of one of Italy's most decorated rugby clubs (though many locals seemed blissfully unaware that hundreds of Touch players had taken over their ground), staged the European Opens Cup, a reincarnation of the 2017 'Permit'.

With Euros 2026 selection on the horizon, players were itching to make their mark, and we're not just talking about their mosquito bites. England fielded three men's and three women's squads, packed with so much talent that selectors will face a serious headache narrowing down final squads next year. Off the pitch, there was a real sense of camaraderie, but once boots were laced, it was fierce, ranking points, medals, and international reputations were all on the line.

CAMARADERIE OFF THE FIELD, FIERCE OPPONENTS ON IT.

The Opens Cup capped a summer that showed just how competitive *some of* European Touch has become. England remain the benchmark, but Ireland and Scotland have proven they're right on their heels in the men's, and France, in the women's and mixed. Belgium and Italy both showed great progress.

With Euros being penned for 20-26 July 2026 in Vichy, France, the Opens Cup was more than just a tournament, it was an audition, a statement, and a reminder that the battle for European supremacy is only getting fiercer.



**IRELAND'S SPOIL
ENGLAND'S FULL
SET, WHILE FRANCE
TAKE THE MIXED IN
STYLE**



MO DIVISION

ENGLAND'S THREE MEN'S TEAMS SHOWED BOTH STRENGTH & DEPTH

Finishing at the top of the table and drawing every head-to-head encounter against one another, was proof that there's no single standout, but a full pipeline of talent pushing for international spots.

The margins were razor-thin, and the consistency across all three highlighted the competitiveness inside England's setup.

The final was as many had expected, and it didn't disappoint. Mavericks burst out to an early two-try lead, giving them just enough cushion to withstand Storm's relentless pressure in a frenetic finish. The 10-8 result crowned Mavericks champions, but more importantly, underlined England's enviable depth: three squads all capable of medals, and every player pushing the standards higher ahead of the next European cycle.

SCOTLAND, IRELAND AND THE RISE OF THE CHALLENGERS

Scotland brought power and intensity and disrupted several teams' rhythm. Their matches against the top nations were decided by single scores, underlining how close they are to breaking through.

Ireland also impressed. After drawing 8-8 with Scotland in the pools and losing narrowly to England Storm, they showed resilience in the men's competition, proving once again they could mix it with the top tier.

The surprise came in the bronze medal game, where Ireland's spirited effort toppled England Phoenix by two tries to claim a podium finish.

DEVELOPING NATIONS

The Netherlands and Italy endured some heavy defeats (NLD 19-0 FRA, ITA 23-0 IRE), but their enthusiasm never wavered.

Every try was celebrated, and their determination to compete, and improve, was clear.

The Opens Cup showed why it's so important to keep these developing nations involved at top-level events, as the experience gained is invaluable.





Credit: England Touch

GOLD



**ENGLAND
MAVERICKS**

10 - 8



**ENGLAND
STORM**

BRONZE



IRELAND

8 - 6



**ENGLAND
PHOENIX**



WO DIVISION

ENGLAND DOMINANCE IN WOMEN'S DIVISION

There was a noticeable gap between the top and bottom four teams, and from early on it looked like a four-horse race between the three England squads and France.

The results reflected that. England's third side, for instance, still managed to put eight tries past their closest 'bottom four' opponent.

With three teams entered, the England sides often cancelled each other out in tight, high-quality contests that underlined how evenly matched they were.

All three of their squads reached the medal matches, with Storm claiming bronze over France before Phoenix beat Mavericks 5-3 in the all-England final.

SIGNS OF GROWTH ACROSS EUROPE

While England's three squads inevitably dominated the medal spots, the Women's Open also highlighted the growing ambition and determination of other European nations.

France continue to look like the most established challengers. Their 4th-place finish came after a string of solid round-robin performances, and a narrow 6-5 loss to Storm. A silver medal in the 2023 Euros, losing just to England, and top European team in the TWC pools in 2024, just shows their huge progress over time.

Italy, despite finishing eighth, deserve credit for their resilience. Their team spirit never dipped, and for many players it was valuable exposure to international competition.

Scotland were back on the international stage, their first time since their 2022 Euros silver medal, and were another side that showed real progress.

With a clear sense of identity, the Scots are building the kind of programme that could turn them into consistent semi-final contenders.

Ireland players showed flashes of creativity in attack and plenty of commitment in defence, but depth of squad remains a challenge. With more centralised coaching and support, they have the potential to close the gap further.

The **Netherlands** are in an improving year on year, but still short of the experience to compete with the top sides. Their players never stopped working and showed attacking flair in patches, even when outgunned by the bigger nations.





CLOSING THE GAP

The gulf between the top and bottom four was clear. But equally clear was the hunger and fight from every side to improve and the so-called chasing pack deserve credit

With greater access to coaching, stronger domestic competition, and more regular international fixtures, all have the potential to raise their standards and make the Women's Open more competitive than ever.

For many, the competition was about more than just results, it was about building experience, exposing players to high-level opposition, and laying foundations for future growth

Credit: England Touch

GOLD



**ENGLAND
PHOENIX**

5 - 3



**ENGLAND
STORM**

BRONZE



**ENGLAND
MAVERICKS**

4 - 3



FRANCE



XO

DIVISION

FRANCE CLAIM HISTORIC MIXED OPEN GOLD

The Mixed Open division delivered some of the most exciting and unpredictable Touch of the event, and fittingly, it was here that history was made.

From the very first whistle, France made their intentions clear. They opened their campaign, and the tournament, with a commanding 9–2 win over hosts Italy.

A tough round robin test came against Switzerland but showed composure to win 7–3 and maintain their unbeaten record.

Touch France stormed through the competition unbeaten, securing the first gold medal of the finals programme with a dominant 15–8 victory over Belgium.

Along the way, they showcased the speed, skill and balance that make mixed Touch such a unique spectacle.

BELGIUM AND ITALY BREAK NEW GROUND

Belgium's breakthrough silver

After years of steady development, their campaign in Italy marked a genuine breakthrough moment

Belgium were one of the stories of the tournament, not only pushing France harder than anyone else but also securing their first ever international at medal opens level.

Italy delight home crowd with bronze

Hosts Italy delivered a milestone moment by clinching their first international medal. After a strong knockout stage and a thrilling 9–7 win over Switzerland in the bronze final, they proved that mixed Touch has a real future in Italy.

The home crowd loved it, and so did the players.

Switzerland close, but just miss out

Switzerland were impressive throughout, finishing third in the round robin and pushing both finalists along the way. Their narrow 9-7 bronze playoff loss to Italy will sting, but it also shows they're right on the cusp of turning consistency into medals.

Lebanon and Middle East show promise

Lebanon's second-place finish in TWC24 pools was powered by a contingent from Australia, that depth was noticeably absent at the EOTC, highlighting a question around sustainability: can Lebanon develop a domestic playing base and that doesn't rely on overseas players flying in?

Middle East Touch, despite finishing 6th, showed moments of quality too.





Credit: Touch France

THE MIXED OPEN SHOWED HOW MUCH DEPTH IS EMERGING ACROSS EUROPE

France's dominance, Belgium's breakthrough, and Italy's home success were clear markers of progress.

Will Wales bounce back from their year off? Will England be able to select a team to bag their first ever gold medal at Euros? Or will France push on again in a home Euros?

The future of European mixed Touch looks more competitive than ever.

GOLD



FRANCE

15 - 8



BELGIUM

BRONZE



ITALY

9 - 7



SWITZERLAND



OVERALL WINNERS

OPENS EUROPEAN TOUCH CUP

ENGLAND

MO

Gold

WO

Gold

XO

-



Credit: H H Photospace





	Gold	Silver	Bronze
MO	ENGLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
WO	ENGLAND	ENGLAND	ENGLAND
XO	FRANCE	BELGIUM	ITALY

Credit: England Touch



RANKINGS TABLE

	MO	WO	XO	Rank
ENGLAND	1 2	1 2 3		1
FRANCE	6	4	1	2
BELGIUM			2	3
IRELAND	3	6		4
ITALY	8	8	3	5
SCOTLAND	5	5		6
NETHERLANDS	7	7		7
SWITZERLAND			4	8
LEBANON			5	9
MIDDLE EAST TOUCH			6	10

MEDAL TABLE

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
ENGLAND	2	2	1	5
FRANCE	1			1
BELGIUM		1		1
IRELAND			1	1
ITALY			1	1



**PLAYER OF THE XO FINAL
LOUIS CHANTRAINE**



TO RANK, OR NOT TO RANK...?

There's no official way to rank countries competing at these events, even the world rankings have disappeared from the international federations site.

It's been mooted that there's potentially multiple ways to do this and have it standardised across all tiered events.

So, we have done just that for the recent events. Youth, Seniors and Opens?
Is it perfect? no.
Is it consistent, yes (Well, kind of)

With England entering multiple teams in the same division, this skews things slightly, but the top spot is generally clear cut.

SO, WHO CAME WHERE?

For a long time, it's been generally accepted that the rankings are purely based on points collected in each division, meaning without winning a medal, but entering every available category, you could come out on top.

In practice, this rarely happens for the top spot, however when you move to second-fifth, there's usually some undercurrent of controversy, with data being skewed to suit a narrative.

There's potentially multiple ways to manipulate the data to show what you want it to, depending how your country did.

We could prioritise High Performance only (medals/gold count more), reward participation (you rank higher by entering more teams, regardless of result), whilst another way is to purely count medals, prioritising 1st/2nd/3rd over total points, or a mixture of all with more weight for certain criteria... the list goes on.

TOURNAMENT RANKING EXPLANATION

Each team earns points based on placement in a division:

1st place = highest points (equal to number of teams),

2nd = one less, ... last = 1 point.

Bonus Points:

Gold = 100 pts

Silver = 60 pts

Bronze = 40 pts

Participation Bonus:

Each team entered = 1 bonus points.

Final Score =

Total Points + Medal Bonus + Teams Entered

Final Rank is based on the Final Score (higher is better).

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?
IS THERE A BETTER WAY?**



ON THE SCENE
FOR THE HONOR ROLL

2



QUICK SNIPPETS



ENGLAND JUNIOR NATIONALS

With 37 teams, from seven regional franchises, covering six categories, the event has grown year on year, which is clearly showing in the England's top end results.

But this event is as much about participation as it is medals.

Winners

- U12B | Midland Tigers
- U12G | South West Saxons
- U14B | North West (B)
- U14G | South West Saxons
- U17B | North West (W)
- U17G | West Wildcats (O)

USA NATIONALS

Seattle hosted the 2025 Tournament at the Regional Athletic Center in Washington.

With teams from across the USA and beyond, including Canada and the Cayman Islands – Lacey was the place to be for the three-day tournament, as clubs went head-to-head for glory. Some excellent play (and colourful kits) on display the whole weekend.

You can re-watch the games on the [USA Touch YouTube Channel](#).

Winners

- Masters | [Seattle](#)
- Mixed | [New Orleans](#)
- Women's Open | [Portland](#)
- Men's Open | [Peaks](#)

BEAGLES WIN AT TOUCH N' TULIPS

The star studded London Beagles went unbeaten in Amsterdam, beating Touch Eintracht in the finals to take the cup.



Why online forums matter in our sport

Every sport has its talking points, big wins, tough losses, and yes, the occasional controversial decision.

For players, coaches, referees, and fans, these moments spark debate. And the question often comes up: *where is the right place to have those conversations?*

The answer is simple: online forums.

Forums give people space to share ideas, frustrations, improvements, and celebrations.

They're where we can discuss what's working and what isn't, without it being personal. It's not about criticising individuals, it's about recognising that everyone sees the game differently, and that healthy debate helps us learn and grow.

Open conversation is not the enemy, in fact, it can be part of the solution. Talking openly about the challenges, whether that's costs, recruitment, or decisions on the pitch, makes the sport stronger.

If we can't share those thoughts in forums and community spaces, then where else can we?



UPCOMING EVENTS LIST

Tournament of Kings and Queens

 20 September 2025

 France


 €280 per team

 Mixed

 [link](#)



Gone To Lyon

 18 October 2025

 Lyon/France


 €380 per team

 Mixed

 [link](#)



Touch en Nord

 18 October 2025

 Roubaix/France

 €150 per team

 Mixed

 [link](#)





Enter NOW!

ON THE SEVEN EVENTS

T T T T T T TOUCH N' TAPAS

SENIORS & MASTERS

27-28.MAR.26
ELCHE, SPAIN



Vermeer
United Kingdom

PRINCIPAL EVENT PARTNER



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
TOUCH ESPAÑA

OFF THE MARK

Welcome to *Off The Mark*, the part of the magazine where common sense takes a water break. If you came here for serious analysis, you've taken the wrong pass.



PROFESSOR PLAY-ON takes care of all your Touch problems, needs and wants, think of her as your favorite (Agony) Aunt...



Dear Professor Play-On

I've mastered the dummy pass so well that now I accidentally dummy my own team. They never run the right lines because they think I'll never actually pass. How do I win back their trust?

Lonely Playmaker, Los Angeles

Dear Lonely, you've achieved the Touch holy grail: Unpredictability

The fact that your own teammates don't trust you only makes the opposition's job harder.

My advice? Double down. Pretend you're about to dummy, then dummy the dummy, then pass. By the third fake-out, everyone (including yourself) will be so confused you'll probably score.

And isn't that what Touch is all about?

Dummy away, my friend, dummy away.

Professor Play-on

Dear Professor Play-On

Whenever I make a break, my teammates scream "Go! Go!" as if I'm suddenly going to transform into Usain Bolt.

Should I just accept my lack of pace, or start carrying a scooter onto the pitch?

Slow in Slough

Slow, my love, Touch is not about how fast you run, it's about how dramatically you collapse at the end.

Scooters may be frowned upon (unless they're in team colours), but you can still work the crowd.

Run in slow motion, arms pumping like Baywatch, and let the defence catch you.

They'll never expect it. And remember, in touch, it's not the pace that counts, it's the excuse!

Plod on, I say.

Professor Play-on

SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS!

Send your questions to Professor Play-On by emailing

play@onthesevenevents.com

Thanks to Meme2Touch for the memes...
Go check them out on [instagram](#)

WARNING: MEMES AHEAD

Some might make you laugh. Some might make you groan. Either way, don't take them too seriously, we didn't.

But do proceed with caution: these memes may contain traces of sarcasm and if you're easily offended, congratulations, you've just found your least favourite page.



THE OT7

SCOOP

TALES FROM THE TOUCHLINES

YOU'VE MADE IT TO THE BACK PAGE. CONGRATULATIONS!

There's no prize, but we admire your commitment.

This independent publication has been stitched together with love, lots of late night edits, and far too many coffees.

We're always on the lookout for stories from across the Touch world. Whether you're running drills in Dublin, dodging puddles in Poland, or just itching to rant about your mate who never makes subs, if it's about Touch, we want to hear it.

Praise, complaints, stories, Touch memes?
Fire them all over to: Play@OnTheSevenEvents.com

We'll read everything. Eventually. Probably over coffee.

Until next time, keep running forwards and passing backwards...

Website
OnTheSevenEvents.com

Insta
[@OnTheSevenEvents](https://www.instagram.com/OnTheSevenEvents)

Facebook
[@OnTheSevenEvents](https://www.facebook.com/OnTheSevenEvents)

The Scoop - Previous editions
onthesevenevents.com/the-ot7-scoop

Newsletter signup
https://bit.ly/OT7_News



**We look forward to seeing you
On The Seven!**



**ON THE SEVEN
PREMIER TOUCH TOURNAMENTS**