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## On the path towards a mentally flourishing Scotland



Good mental health is arguably the highest priority for us as individuals and for the nation as a whole. The Government's new strategy 'Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland' recognises this. Increasing the mental wellbeing of Scotland is one of the key indicators for success of the SNP Government. Current statistics tell us that 1 in 4 of us will suffer from mental ill health at some point in our lives. However, we need to do more than simply provide a good service for treating mental illness, we also need to look at the factors that contribute to poor mental health and tackle these.

Three key components for positive mental health are social interaction, control over your life and good physical health. We know that the most immediate impact of Paths to Health is positive mental well-being. This is the case regardless of whether participants are experiencing mental illness or are simply those who would benefit from being more active.

So what is it that we are doing right?

- There is considerable research which directly makes the link between being physically active and positive mental health.
- Being outside in green open spaces as opposed to more controlled indoor environments.
- Walking groups facilitate positive social interaction.

But is Paths to Health not more about encouraging physical activity?

If physically inactive people are gaining positive mental health through participation then they are going to come back and become more physically active! Win Win!

In Paths to Health's latest newsletter they focus on the range of activity being undertaken by the Paths to Health network which is contributing to a mentally flourishing Scotland.

Walk more, feel the difference – mentally and physically!

<http://www.pathsforall.org.uk/>

### Fond farewell to Kenny Steele...



After 12 years with the Paths for All Partnership, Kenny Steele, Paths to Health Programme Manager, is moving on. Kenny is going to be taking on a new role at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Kenny has managed Paths to Health since it started. His enthusiasm for developing health walks in Scotland is huge and the reach of Paths to Health is well beyond its original aims.

All at SUS wish Kenny well in his new role...

### Sector Skills

### Agreement for Scotland



SkillsActive, in partnership with a number of professional bodies and government offices, has undertaken extensive consultation with employers and training providers in Scotland to discover the skills gaps and shortages for the country. The result of this consultation have formed part of SkillsActive's Sector Skills Agreement for Scotland, and has resulted in an action plan detailing how SkillsActive, in partnership with key sector bodies, will address the skills needs of the workforce in Scotland.

The SSA Summary for Scotland is available to download:

[http://www.skillsactive.com/resources/publications/FINAL\\_Scottish\\_SSA.pdf](http://www.skillsactive.com/resources/publications/FINAL_Scottish_SSA.pdf)

### SUSPAC on the Web:

Please see our website for a range of informative flyers:

[www.susport.org.uk](http://www.susport.org.uk)

### New topics include:

- Women and Weights
- Shin Splints
- Dance

# Editor's Letter

It's almost that time of year again when we overindulge, feel guilty then decide that we need to lose weight/exercise more/eat more healthily (delete as appropriate). New diet regimes and 'celebrity' fitness DVD's are splashed across the media and many people are seduced into trying them out. It's a time to reflect on the past year and look ahead to the year to come. Looking back over the last couple of months as the new chair of SUSPAC we've had the third successful Active Age Festival and been involved in the review of the governments physical activity policy-'Let's Make Scotland More Active' as well as the continued production of our flyers and this newsletter. Looking ahead to next year I'm really excited that the student dance festival is going ahead in February at the University of Dundee. The festival will give students the opportunity to experience different dance styles, share ideas and meet other students from different institutions. We also have two workshops planned for next year. The first one will look at special populations and the effects of exercise and the second at innovation in physical activity and exercise. These workshops are open to all members of SUS.



I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a lovely New Year.

*Jackie*

## CHRISTMAS SEMINAR 2008 REPORT

SUS's fourth annual Christmas Seminar was held in Queen Margaret University on Thursday 11th December 2008, it attracted more than 50 delegates from universities, further education institutes and various other organisations across Scotland.



Cycling was launched as the newest SUS sport. Jim Riach from Cycling Scotland updated us all on the current state of cycling in Scotland and Keith Stocker from Scottish Cycling informed us of his organisation's work and how they may aid SUS in providing a good quality cycling programme for universities throughout Scotland.

Each of the committee chairs updated the delegates on their work throughout the year. Highlights included a successful Active Age Festival, the recent launch of Curling as a SUS sport, the upcoming Student Dance Festival, SUS's work in providing professional development for all employed in sports services in

universities across Scotland and the fact that the number of annual SUS sporting events now lies in excess of 190. The SUS strategy was discussed and debated amongst all delegates aided by Jacqui Stone and Neil Park who have been working hard throughout the previous months to put the strategy together. The SUS strategy outlines the work of SUS and it's vision for the next five years. The final version of this strategy is set to be completed in the New Year.

After networking and checking out the Scottish Cycling and Sustrans information stands over lunch, the group split into three Breakout Groups. The theme for the day was 'Go Green', this was reflected in workshops on sustainable transport lead by Fiona Miller of Sustrans and Going Green in the University Environment lead by Malcolm McRobert of Sustainability Insight and the EAUC. The third group, under the SUS tagline 'competitive', discussed developing cycling as a SUS sport. This session was facilitated by Paddy Hill from BUCS Cycling and Keith Stocker from Scottish Cycling. Constructive thoughts and opinions emerged from this and we all look forward to successful cycling programmes in the future.



Following an EGM, delegates chatted and said their festive farewells over a drink in the QMU Students Association bar.

Huge thanks must be given to all speakers who gave so generously of their time and energy to provide delegates with informative and interesting sessions. Thanks as well to all at QMU, especially Eddie Wilkinson and Saul Bertoletti for all their hard work, thank you for allowing the day to run so smoothly.

Attention now turns to the annual SUS conference to be held in Heriot Watt University on the 9th and 10th of June 2009. More information on this will be out in the New Year.





## Student Dance Festival 2009

On February 1st at the University of Dundee SUS will hold the first Student Dance Festival. The focus of the day is for students from different Universities to participate and perform in a variety of different dance styles. Exercise trends seem to come and go but dance based activities are becoming more and more popular. Most Scottish Universities have at least one dance club or society and more dance based fitness classes are appearing on class timetables. Dance



provides many physiological benefits similar to aerobic exercise, can improve flexibility and strength, promotes self esteem and confidence and allows freedom of expression.

Classes at the festival will be taught by a combination of students and professional teachers. We're extremely lucky to have a teacher from Scottish Dance Theatre to present two classes in contemporary dance. Scottish Dance Theatre have built a reputation for high quality choreography and performance and have a company of dancers from all over the world. They have won the Critics Circle National Dance Award for Outstanding Company Repertoire (2003) and a Herald Angel for Luxuria (Edinburgh Fringe 2005) In complete contrast there



will be a Bollywood dance lesson delivered by a teacher who has created work for television, schools and charities. Other sessions include a contemporary class with a celtic twist, musical theatre, jazz, cheerleading and pole fit.

Student dance groups will also have the opportunity to perform a short piece of their own choreography to the group. Any student groups interested in performing should contact Jackie Davidson at the University of Aberdeen. [j.davidson@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:j.davidson@abdn.ac.uk)

## Creating a Nation of Active Women conference

On 24 November, the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF) hosted the Creating a Nation of Active Women Conference at the Emirates Stadium in London. WSFF presented the first national strategy to create a nation of active women and with this the recognition of the need to draw on the experiences of other sectors in looking to attract and retain more women and girls in sport.



Over 200 delegates from a wide variety of organisations attended the event and had an opportunity to hear from a variety of speakers that included:

- Tessa Jowell Minister for the Olympics
- Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, Paralympian Gold Medallist
- Dame Kelly Holmes, Double Gold Olympic Medallist
- Stephanie Ankrah, Marketing Manager, Women's Training, Nike
- Donna de Varona, Olympic Gold Medallist, First President & Chairman, Women's Sports Foundation USA and Member of the IOC Women in Sport Commission and Co-chair, Back Softball Campaign
- Kate Spicer, Freelance Journalist & Broadcaster, and Writer of Cycle Girl column, Sunday Times
- Mercedes Coghen, CEO, Madrid 2016 Olympic Bid
- Phil Smith, Director of Sport, Sport England
- Sue Tibballs, CEO, Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation
- Margot Raggett, CEO, Lexis PR - Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty
- Mark Brian, Head of Sport Programmes, BUCS
- Scott McCarthy, CEO, British Judo Association
- Jessica Lindohf, Women, Girls & Sport Officer, sportscotland
- Katharine Merry, Olympic Bronze Medallist
- Heather Frederiksen, Paralympian Gold Medallist
- Pui-Tien Man, Sweat in the City Participant



The conference itself built on last year's event which highlighted a crisis in female participation, providing an opportunity to explore solutions to this, taking invaluable lessons from the retail sector on how to treat women as customers, tailoring products and services to meet their needs and applying these to sport.

Delegates also had an opportunity to hear about good practice in the sector and from inspirational speakers like Katherine Merry and Heather Friedriksen who shared their own sporting success stories. Copies of the presentations and the strategy document "Creating a Nation of Active Women" are available on the WSFF website [www.wsff.org.uk](http://www.wsff.org.uk).

# Expert Interview: Tim Woodhouse



1. Tell us about your role as within the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation.

I'm Head of Consultancy at WSFF which means I help the organisations and individuals who deliver sport (governing bodies, sports clubs, coaches etc) to design their activities in ways which attract women and girls to participate.

2. What do you love the most in your role?

I really enjoy learning about different sports and helping the people involved to make small changes which have a big impact for women and girls. For example Judo recently introduced a new grading system which means you don't fight another person to be awarded your belt. Because of this they have already seen a dramatic rise in the number of women and girls staying in the sport longer.

3. And what is the most challenging aspect!?

The most challenging aspect is definitely trying to get media coverage for all the fantastic sport that women are taking part in. Apart from the Olympics and perhaps Wimbledon, the coverage of women's sport is very poor. Not only are the public missing out on some very exciting competitions, but young girls are growing up in a world which seems to only value men's sport. It's not hard to see why so many teenage girls stop participating.

[www.wsff.org.uk](http://www.wsff.org.uk)

4. Can you tell me something about your personal view on physical activity, health and fitness?

Regular participation in physical activity, either as part of a team or as an individual, has so many advantages. The health benefits are obvious, but I have seen so many examples of where sport has been the focal point for social change, both on an individual and community level. That's why it is so important to create a nation of active women, to make sure that its not just men and boys that get to enjoy the benefits.

5. What message would you most like to give to university and college students?

My advice would be to make sure that whatever you end up doing after uni or college; make sure you keep participating in your sport. For me, the 70 minutes of hockey I play each Saturday make the stresses of work instantly disappear.

6. And finally, what's your vision for Female Physical Activity over the next five years?

It's a cliché, but the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, as well as the 2014 Commonwealths, give us a once in the lifetime chance to make a drastic change in the way women and girls view and take part in sport and physical activity. WSFF's Commission on the Future of Women's Sport is trying to take advantage of that chance, to find out more visit [www.wsff.org.uk/commission](http://www.wsff.org.uk/commission)

## Level 3 CYQ Exercise and Pregnancy Course, Exact Training.



This course was held over 3 days with each day focussing on a trimester as well as exploring some postnatal issues and considerations. Theory sessions were intermingled with practical workshops which involved us wearing ever bigger backpacks on our fronts to simulate pregnancy! This made a huge difference to our understanding as well as getting us a lot of funny looks from gym members who looked on bemused as we staggered on and off treadmills and tried to sit down and stand up. There were 7 of us on the course which allowed us to have a good amount of discussion. We each now have to complete a case study and prepare for a practical assessment and theory paper which will take place at the end of

January. All going well we will then be the proud possessors of the Exercise and Pregnancy Qualification. We were really impressed with the quality of the teaching and support provided by Exact Training and are looking forward to inviting them back to run other courses for us.

Juliet Balfour



## Research in Brief

### ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY



Students at St. Andrews University are undertaking a research project looking at a talent transfer project with the aim to get more females playing rugby.

A needs analysis, questionnaire and a series of fitness tests will help identify players with specific physical attributes. The identified players will take part in an intensive rugby programme through links with the University's Club and P.E. Department and the results of this project will be concluded next year.

Debby Sargent, St. Andrews University



### LUCY MCGRATH EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

Whilst on placement with SUS Lucy has been completing some research into why female students at the universities in Edinburgh and Glasgow participate in sport and exercise; the barriers that some female students face to participation and what is being done to help the students overcome these issues. This research was to supplement SUS' annual audit where quantitative data is gathered about the number of female students that

participate in university sports clubs. It was felt that a more in depth study is needed as there has been no recent qualitative research on what female students feel are barriers to their participation.

The aim of this exploratory research was to determine a general picture of what female students in Edinburgh and Glasgow universities felt were the main barriers to their participation in sport and exercise and how the universities are assisting their students to overcome these. The project also considered the reasons why female students are involved in university sport and exercise and students' general perceptions on a number of issues.



Due to time constraints it was impossible to focus on the whole of Scotland and so there were eight universities involved in this study. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected in the form of questionnaires and interviews.

The research project includes a review of previous studies in similar areas which gained background information on the topic which assisted in the creation of the hypothesis: 'there are a number of barriers facing female students and as a result they do not participate in university sport and exercise.'

The main findings from the research were:

- Female students do not necessarily follow national trends regarding levels of inactivity
- Time is the largest perceived barrier to participation
- Keeping physically fit was the main reason for participation in any form of sport and exercise
- Universities do not think that female participation is a particular problem in their institutions.

Following completion of the project the whole report will be published on the SUS website: [www.susport.org.uk](http://www.susport.org.uk)

However in the meantime for more information please contact [csesus@staffmail.ed.ac.uk](mailto:csesus@staffmail.ed.ac.uk)



# UPDATE - ROUND THE UNIS

## STIRLING

The Pedometer Project is an example of colleagues involved in research and practice working closely together. The project encourages staff, students and the local community to become more active by loaning pedometers.

## IDEALS Project to Zambia

A group of five students from The University of Stirling have recently been selected to take part in this years IDEALS project (International Development through Excellence and Leadership in Sport) The project aims to use sport as a tool to tackle vital health issues among Zambian children and teenagers. The students will spend six weeks in the heat of Lusaka, Zambia, with staff and students from five other sports-focussed UK universities.

## GLASGOW

Kerry Murdoch is now on maternity leave and we have Calum Hill in place. Calum has worked closely with the Teaching Team over the past few years; whilst studying Sports Science he was successful in gaining 1 of 6 YMCA Gym Instructor courses funded by the Sport and Recreation Department. The project was very successful last year and we have recently selected 6 more students to gain either Gym or Studio Instructor Award.

The Teaching Team are looking forward to the Masterclass we have planned for Wednesday 14th January, it will be a fun packed session and a great way to kick-start the New Year's fitness regime. Also next year the 5 & 10k Run for Fun will be held on Saturday 21st March. This will be the 3rd year the event has taken place, the event raises funds for Yorkhill Children's Society and we hope to make next year's event bigger and better.

Finally Over the last term we have had a series of seminars on Nutrition and Hydration aimed at

2) Muscle Conditioning, 3) Cardiovascular Improvement, and 4) Sports Performance. These 2 hour sessions, including Q & A, were presented by Jaymie Mart, Senior Sports Scientist from Lucozade Sport. Jaymie got her first degree in Sports Science at Aberdeen University and her Masters at Glasgow. The seminars were well attended by scrupulous exercisers resulting in plenty Q & A's.

## STRATHCLYDE

On Friday 21st November Strathclyde University sponsored the newest award at the Glasgow Sports Personality of the year Awards Dinner.

Glasgow student Sarah MacIntyre is a Curler and has competed at notably high levels gaining the rank of world number 1 for U23's. We were delighted to hear on the night that Sarah was a deserving winner of this award and we wish her and the team going to the World University games in China next year all the best of luck.

We were also delighted to see a Strathclyde Graduate take the Disabled athlete of the year award, Aileen McGlynn was awarded this for her outstanding achievements in the recent Paralympics.

## HERIOT-WATT

Calum Robb (23) from Haddington, a Sports Scholar at Heriot-Watt University, studying for a PhD in 'Comparative Immunology', was selected to fight for his country and captain the team at the recent 19th World 'All Styles' Karate Championships in Tokyo.

Athletes from over a hundred countries and five continents, attended the most prestigious event on the karate calendar which is held every two years. Many of the fighters are professional, others are funded by their countries, whilst the remainder have amateur status like



Have you got stuff happening at your place? If so please let us know !

the six-strong Scottish Team. Calum won the bronze medal in the Heavyweight category which had 62 entrants. Calum was delighted with his medal, not only for himself, but for his country. This is the first medal for Scotland at the World Senior Championships since the Great Britain Karate Team was disbanded in the late seventies. In addition Calum was the only fighter from the home countries to receive a medal.

## DUNDEE

ISE are pleased with the recent news of further facility developments. A £1.6million development at Riverside is to go ahead and will include; two artificial surfaces, one 3G, one sandpressed, upgrading of the grass pitches and an upgrade of the changing facilities. This will benefit the huge number of students, staff and community groups who use the University's Sports Ground. Campus Sport is well under way at ISE with five sports played weekly by around 200 participants. A Campus Sport Volleyball tournament took place at the end of November with over 70 players turning out!

## ST ANDREWS

On Tuesday 11th November the Department of Sport and Exercise played host to around 60 students from six different high schools across Fife. Working with Vicky Torrance from WHAN (Working in Health Access Network) the Department of Sport & Exercise set up a day of activities that would challenge the pupils both mentally and physically. The aim of the day was to highlight the many different ways in which health professionals can link in with sport. It gave the youngsters an insight into how sports performers are supported by a team of people, often behind the scenes. Pupils took part in a variety of taster sessions which included strength and conditioning, fitness testing, sports psychology, nutrition and speed and agility.

## Student Page

### The City of Glasgow Cup



Between Sunday 1st and Wednesday 4th February, 2009, the biggest sporting clash of the season will take place. The Universities of Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde, will meet in the 4th Annual City of Glasgow Cup. The varsity tournament will begin on Sunday 1st with Strathclyde University hoping to hold on to the trophy after their big win of 2008!

The sports have been delegated out so that each three are hosting, GCU Arc, Stepps and Kelvinhall being the main venues! This tournament is traditionally very competitive therefore to reward the winners the plan is to have a presentation ceremony to all winning teams and to the overall winner of the cup! This year Caley are fielding super strong teams in order to fight off the competition and hopefully emerge victorious... for the first time EVER!!

Let the games begin.... | City, 3 Universities, 1 Cup... | WINNER!



### Ski Season



With the Ski season vastly approaching for University Ski trips the news is good with regards to the weather in the Alps this year! The popular student resort of Val Thorens has seen largely sunny skies which in turn provided excellent skiing conditions with some fresh powder off-piste. Val Thorens is all about altitude. With the highest lifts in the Trois Vallées, skiers can expect to find some of the most challenging terrain here. There seems to be something about the height of the place that gives the nightlife a somewhat frenzied air as well... perhaps explaining the student interest!

### International Football Tournament

The first Robert Gordon University International Student Football Tournament took place at the start of this year. The University's RGU: SPORT and RGU: Union collaborated to bring about the tournament which included seven teams from Venezuela, San Marino, Angola, Nigeria, Italy, Scotland and Argentina.



The competition took place in RGU: SPORT every Saturday and was run as a league for 7 weeks. There were many thrills and spills throughout the event, with some impressive football being played along the way. It was a closely fought tournament, with Italy just coming out on top and Argentina coming a very close second. For all of their hard work and dedication, Italy won the top prize of the replica World Cup trophy. The aim of the tournament was to bring international students together, to have fun and to meet new people. It was also an opportunity to get students participating more in physical activity and sport, and to try their hand at competitive football regardless of their sporting abilities.

### SPORTS UNION UPDATES

With semester 1 coming to an end, Dundee has enjoyed their first semester of intramural sport. The programme is called Campus Sport and has included 5 sports; 5 aside football, netball, squash, badminton and table tennis. There have been over 200 people, both students and staff, participating weekly in the recreational leagues.

The sports have in the most part been successful and the participants have contributed ideas and development opportunities for the New Year. The past semester also included a one off Volleyball tournament; this had 16 teams of varying experience, from first timers to first team players. The 70+ participants enjoyed a night of dodgy music and even worse fancy dress costumes. Everyone really enjoyed the night and some are considering changing sport....

2009 is going to be bigger and better and the whole year will be kicked off with a week of recreational taster sessions for Staff and a whole day of FREE sport for students...

To find out more about Dundee's Campus Sport Programme or to view some interesting photos... please visit our website [www.dundee.ac.uk/ise/campusport](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/ise/campusport)



Paul Blake, Sports Union President

### Sports Ball Fever!!!

January sees the beginning of a long Sports Ball season. Edinburgh get the ball rolling so to speak in late January, then Herriot Watt, Strathclyde and Glasgow University all have their Ball on 21st Feb. All non involved AU Presidents are setting a challenge to attend all three... will keep you posted on how that goes!



On behalf of all AU Presidents, have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Love AU Presidents 2008/09 x



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3rd Floor  
48 Pleasance  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9TJ

Phone: 0131 650 9654

E-mail:

[jacqui@susport.org.uk](mailto:jacqui@susport.org.uk)

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
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We're on the Web!

[www.susport.org.uk](http://www.susport.org.uk)

## Active Scotland website is now LIVE!

I am delighted to announce that the Active Scotland website is now LIVE!

<http://www.activescotland.org.uk>



The Active Scotland website has been developed by NHS Health Scotland as a tool to support you when working with patients, clients or students to answer the question "where do I go to be active?"

Looking at physical activity in the broadest sense, the site captures a range of local physical activity opportunities in the form of spaces, places, services and contacts that can help the people of Scotland become more active. Simply enter your postcode or town into the website and all will be revealed!

We hope that you will recognise the benefits that access to a resource such as Active Scotland can bring and hope that you will take the opportunity to utilise this fantastic resource and promote it along side your existing work and join us in helping the people of Scotland enjoy the benefits of an active life.



NHS Scotland are in the process of having some promotional materials developed such as 'point of sale' cards, leaflets, posters, post-it-notes, memo-blocks, web-link icons etc, if you would like to receive some of these items to help in the promotion of the site please email your postal address and they will send materials to you in due course. Flora Jackson

[\[Flora.Jackson@health.scot.nhs.uk\]](mailto:Flora.Jackson@health.scot.nhs.uk)

## Dates for your Diary

- 23rd January - 21st March: Dreams on Wheels Exhibition, Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh
- 1st February - SUS Students Dance Festival, Dundee University
- 17th February - SUSPAC Workshop: Working with Specialist Populations, Glasgow University
- 24th February - PAHA Conference, Venue TBC
- March - SUSPAC Newsletter, Issue 8

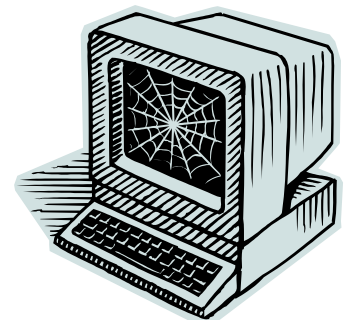
## Web Links



[www.activescotland.org.uk](http://www.activescotland.org.uk)



[www.wsff.org.uk](http://www.wsff.org.uk)



[www.paha.org.uk](http://www.paha.org.uk)

**physical activity and health alliance**

Networking Physical Activity and Health in Scotland

**SkillsActive**  
Shaping Skills for the Future

[www.skillsactive.com/](http://www.skillsactive.com/)

[www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)

