

Making Better Use of IT Systems in Table Tennis

1. Background

TTE has recently launched two new IT systems – TT Memberships and TT Leagues. These two systems work together but fundamentally do different things. TT Memberships provides a membership management system whilst TT Leagues is a league competition management system that initially is focussing on managing local league competitions.

Both systems have the capability to do considerably more – both separately and as a combined system. It should be possible to develop these two systems further so that they fundamentally change the way the players, clubs and leagues interact with TTE by providing a single interface for a range of transactions. Indeed, in the modern world our membership (clubs, leagues, counties, players, coaches umpires and volunteers) increasingly expect the National Governing Body to provide such on-line services as a standard benefit of membership.

2. The New IT Systems

(a) TT Memberships

TT Memberships is Commercial-Off-the Shelf Software supplied by Sport80 that already contains functionality that is not yet being tapped by the table tennis community. These untapped operational tools which cover events, finance and communications provide the opportunity to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and also provide new insights across the table tennis community. For example, a simple extension of the system would be for it to be used for members to pay affiliations to clubs and leagues, as well as for entry into other competitions and tournaments. Providing tools that help leagues and clubs manage their finances by automatically drawing up income & expenditure accounts and balance sheets would also be helpful.

As a commercially-available product, Sport80 will no doubt be enhancing the capabilities of their product over the next few years. We need to be in a position whereby we can make full use of such enhancements. Indeed, if we present to the developers a coherent list of enhancements that we would like to see in the product, we will have a better chance of getting them adopted.

(b) TT Leagues

TT Leagues is likewise based on a commercially-available platform but has had considerable bespoke development for league table tennis. Extending TT Leagues to include other league-based competitions (such as County Championships and British League) is a natural next step which is already planned. But some of the technology that is used in TT Leagues could find wider application in other competition and events. For example, the App-based system for entering results via mobile devices could no doubt be extended to tournament competitions so that as soon as a match is complete, the result is automatically sent to the competition organiser and the next match immediately scheduled to take place. This could speed up tournament management.

More generally, there is a huge demand in many sports for performance data to assist with performance improvement. TT Leagues has a wealth of performance data about individuals, this could be subject to analysis that would go beyond the usual data about wins and losses that go into player averages statistics. This might provide the opportunity to develop a premium product that

users would pay for to have access to these additional data analyses. Such a premium product might be used by both coaches and players.

3. Proposal

It is proposed to find out from the table tennis community what they would like from on-line systems and see whether the existing systems have the capability to meet these needs.

This will establish the basis on which a wide range of on-line services can be provided to the TT Community by TTE.

The project would need to involve representation from across the table tennis community – including National Council, MAG, Board, and Staff.

4. Next Steps

Feedback on this proposal is requested.

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