

UKFF Advice on Starting & Running a Floorball Club

Purpose

1. UKFF has been asked many times for advice on how to successfully launch a new club. Many of the suggestions here apply equally to adult teams and youth teams. They are based on 10 years of experience in running youth and adult teams. Please feel welcome to suggest any additional ideas you may have by contacting the [UKFF Development Officer](#)
2. Many clubs which run an adult team would like guidance to help start a youth team to be able to introduce experienced ex-youth players into their adult team each year. Having just two youth teams (8-12 year olds and 12-15 year olds) has proved very successful in growing an adult floorball team. As players get older they move up between the teams and the adult team can expect to receive 3-5 new players each season with 5+ years of floorball experience.
3. Over the year, the UKFF has seen many floorball clubs drop out of leagues, stop regular training and eventually cease to exist, usually because of players moving out of the area or key people who run the club leave. This document should be of interest to established clubs as well to reduce the risk of this happening.

Topics Covered by This Document

SECTION 1 - GETTING YOUR CLUB SET UP

- What type of club to start
- Where to train
- Recruiting Players & getting equipment
- Pricing and how much to charge to cover costs
- DBS/PVG checks if you have under-18 players

SECTION 2 - EXPANDING YOUR CLUB

- Funding/grants
- Publicity
- Matches and leagues
- Games v drills

SECTION 1 - Getting Your Club Set Up

What type of club do you wish to start?

- Team funded clubs; these are where there is a group of players in an area who all contribute money to pay for venue hire, tournaments, transport and either provide their own kit and equipment or contribute an equal amount for the club to buy the equipment.
- University funded clubs; there are quite a few of these in the UK, where the university helps fund equipment and transport, and the players usually buy their own sticks and train for free using university premises.
- Externally funded clubs; for example Hastings Floorball Club is run like this. They apply for funding support to run youth training sessions and adult community sessions and this helps pay for venue hire for training etc. Players who want to leagues pay some of their own entry costs.

These two categories are in one section in this document because even after a team is up and running recruitment of new players is important when existing players move away, retire or youth players go to college. If you are short of players or funds it is best practice to look to recruit new players rather than increase the price per existing player.

The minimum you need to get started is:

1. Venue –the location and time of your sessions is critical in attracting players. We have found sports centres make the best venues. They will often display posters for you and the large number of visitors means that you can pick up new players easily this way. A school sports hall is often cheaper but less people will hear about your club. In terms of weekly training times. Either way ask to speak to the ‘block bookings’ manager to get a regular slot which usually means you don’t have to pay VAT saving 20% on the cost. We have found that between 4pm and 6:30pm on Saturdays is the best training time to attract youth players and their parents as this doesn’t interfere with other weekend commitments. Adults often prefer weekday evenings; sports hall space can be hard to come by but don’t give up as there are venues out there! In terms of paying for the venue please see the section below.
2. Team Coaches – Two is better than one so try to recruit an assistant (e.g. parent of youth player) to help cover for holidays and sick periods. If you have any players under 18 years old there must be at least one coach who has been checked for a criminal record at every training session. In England, the Disclosure and Barring Service does this and in Scotland it is the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (the Disclosure and Barring Service used to be called ‘CRB’). The UKFF can help you to get coaches DBS or PVG checked free of charge. Within 28 days of receiving your DBS certificate please contact the [DBS Online Update Service](#) and then the certificate becomes permanent. After 28 days, you can’t use this Update Service. It is also important to have a simple child protection policy that all coaches are familiar with. The UKFF can provide a [template](#). This is almost always a requirement of the sports centre and parents. Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance (for volunteers too) is necessary and the UKFF can provide this if required. Please contact the UKFF about coaching training and certificates.

3. Make a plan and make it fun - a couple of minutes' introduction for all new players at their first session is useful and helps them integrate quickly if they haven't played before. If they have, introduce them to the team to encourage them to get to know the existing players. There are lots of online coaching videos for drills for [outfield](#), [youth](#) and [goalies](#). But include fun games too, even simple ones.
4. Equipment – The UKFF can loan you starter kits of sticks, balls and bags if you don't have some or any equipment you can borrow. We recommend not using goalkeepers at first to avoid buying kit before it is needed. An outfield player (always standing up) in front of the goal is best and allows you to use small/cheap goals if required (e.g. 60cm by 40cm). There is a guide to what length and type of [stick to buy online](#). Bibs and whistles can be borrowed or purchased very cheaply online.
5. Keep records of money paid out and in. Please see the section below but this is important as these records protect the club staff from being accused of misplacing monies. Keep all receipts, and put all transactions through the club accounts promptly.

Recruiting Players

1. Join the UKFF as a non-league team and join the floorball community. You can get your club listed on the national website which helps recruit new players. Often experienced players looking for a club to join are willing to travel some distance to train with your team and can bring experience and enthusiasm.
2. Ask neighbouring teams to send players to join in and help demonstrate the game at your first few sessions to have some good matches. Go to www.ukfloorball.org to contact them.
3. For youth teams, contact local schools to see if they are happy to run floorball sessions in PE lessons. The kids will love it and you can hand out some leaflets at the end to introduce the kids to your club.
4. Run a birthday party service! Hire the hall plus a room for their meal afterwards. Let the parents do the catering. Run a 1 hour floorball fun session and then the parents take the kids into the room you have hired and they take over. You can charge enough to make profit of £20 per session to help fund your club and give more reasons for kids to want to come to your club sessions.
5. Register on lots of sports websites e.g. the sport centres own website to get noticed.
6. Reward Recruiters! “Word of mouth generates more than twice the sales of advertising” (JonahBerger.com 2017). Ask the existing players to bring some friends to try out floorball. We have found that the following works particularly well for youngsters: if a player brings a friend then make the first session free, but if they keep coming to training and after they have paid for their first block of sessions, then give £10 back to the player that persuaded them to go. £10 is a lot of money to a youngster. The new player will have paid you more than £10 so even if they never show up again you haven't lost money and they did give floorball a really good try-out. Generally paying them with an Amazon voucher or voucher their choice allows you to track the expenditure in the club accounts & means there is no issue with handling cash from the club accounts.

SECTION 2 - Expanding Your Club

Once the numbers start to increase you can start to create a more formal floorball club. We recommend

1. Buying official size goals (160cm x 115cm). Online retailers like efloorball.net have some as 'collapsible goals' as cheap as £72 each including delivery. Because they are collapsible the delivery is much lower than for fixed goals.
2. Buying goalkeepers kit. This is around £250 per goalie. Youngsters love to have a go in goal wearing the kit and you will need goalies to start to enter competitive events like the youth leagues and National Youth Floorball Club or even just friendly matches against nearby teams.
3. Setting up a bank account. To set up a bank account once you have a constitution you can apply for a community bank account or a sports club bank account at many high street banks - you can get a current account (without a debit card) without any fees usually if you are a non-profit sports club. It is worth getting [Guidance](#) on the different bank accounts is available.
4. Big capital purchases can be paid for with help from grants from local charities, and their processes are often quick and simple. We recommend that you Google 'charity grants' in your town and county. Also try www.fundingcentral.org.uk For larger amounts, you can also apply to the National Lottery 'Awards For All' or Sport England for a 'Small Grant' but they require accountant verified sets of annual accounts for a year or longer. Local charities are very often very willing to give you several hundred pounds for start-up equipment but not for running costs.
5. Start playing in leagues which can help motivate your players and creates a relationship with other clubs locally. Please see the [UKFF website](#).

Prices for Players

The importance of pricing is often under-estimated. Pricing can encourage players to attend every training session or make them question if they really want to come any more. We have found that providing a big discount for players who pay in advance encourages significantly more people to turn up each week. This means you have better training sessions so more people turn up. To inspire this loyalty, don't give the discounts just for paying in advance, but get players to pay for a block of consecutive weeks. If they miss one, then the period that is paid for isn't extended. For example, £25 for 6 calendar weeks even if they miss some, or £7 for one week ('pay-as-you-go'). Even when tired they will show up because they have already paid and training sessions become a habit. This can also help if you have to pay for the hall in advance.

Publicity

Players move on and there will be a constant flow of players out of your club, even established clubs find this, so constant recruitment is recommended for all clubs.

1. The easiest way is word-of-mouth i.e. persuade your existing players to talk to their friends.

2. But a modern business saying is 'if you are not on the web you don't exist' so create a Facebook page. It's free and simple. If you are used to using Facebook for your own personal life you can create a sports page:
Go to your own personal FB page, go to bottom left of the screen and click on CREATE PAGE. Fill in some details e.g. make it a public page and off you go. It's all free and simpler than a website. The key points we would recommend you include are: Do you welcome a) new beginners and b) experienced floorball players c) men and women/boys and girls. Floorball is one of the best mixed sports with a low injury rate. Day of week, time, location of training. Some photos preferably of team if not generic pictures of the venue and a floorball match. If someone posts on the page you will be automatically notified by FB. You can easily add more administrators in case you are on holiday. Updates every few months show readers that your club is still going and fun.
3. Get into the local papers, it's free and can reach literally thousands of people around your sports centre. Journalists love well written stories but they must be about a local team, preferably about something new or a success. A photo is more eye catching for the reader and will get your article noticed. Don't forget the local free advertiser newspapers which go to every single house in your town. It's easy to get a colour picture on the back page. Always explain what floorball is because the British public haven't heard of it. Write the article in the third person the way a journalist would so they can copy and paste it into one of the additions this month.
4. Posters in sports centres are normally free if you hire a hall there, A3 or A4 is best. Include the key info in the Facebook section above.
5. The UKFF has some old but professional looking leaflets available at 5p each, with a white space on the back. You can run them through a home printer and add your contact details.

Be Democratic and Share the Load

Ask some reliable players to take on small roles (e.g. one person to wash the bibs every fortnight, someone to hand out and count the sticks back in, appoint a skills coach, and a child protection officer if you have under-18s). Approach players individually rather than emailing the group. This shares out the workload and avoids existing staff 'burning out' and running out of enthusiasm. It also encourages players to feel more loyal and involved in the club. But be democratic. The players own the club, not the person who started it. Ask their views and be flexible in your plans. Encourage players to take on responsibility but let them 'do it their way' which motivates them to keep on working.

Skills and Drills

Agree with the players whether you want to be a serious competitive club, or just playing for fun and fitness. If it's fun, play floorball games and spend most of the sessions playing matches. If you are a competitive club, appoint a skilled/personable player as a Team Coach and use drills as well as matches to improve skills/tactics. Playing a 'training match' i.e. a match with one training rule (e.g. maximum 3 touches of the ball) is a great compromise and can achieve the quickest effect on skills used in match situations.

UKFF Support

Please contact the UKFF Development Officer for help and advice www.ukfloorball.org