

# STRIVING FOR SUCCESS



2023/24

**GBBOXING**  
**ANNUAL REVIEW**



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## GB BOXING

GB Boxing was established in August 2008 to manage the World Class Programme (WCP) for boxing and ensure the best male and female boxers from England, Scotland and Wales are provided with coaching, support and opportunities to enable them to develop, improve and win medals at major international tournaments and the Olympic Games.

As the organisation which delivers the WCP, GB Boxing's primary role is to train and prepare the men and women in the Podium and Academy squads and identify and develop the next generation of boxers and coaches through its performance pathways and coach development activities.

The national governing bodies (NGBs) for boxing of England, Scotland and Wales are all represented on the board of GB Boxing along with an independent Chair, the Chief Executive and four independent directors appointed for their expertise.

GB Boxing is based in a purpose-built training facility at the English Institute of Sport Sheffield and its largest source of funding is a grant from UK Sport, made up of contributions from the National Lottery and the Exchequer. It also receives revenue and value-in-kind contributions from a range of commercial partnerships.

### OUR VISION

To inspire the nation through Olympic Boxing success

### OUR MISSION

To deliver a world leading performance programme which provides opportunities, guidance and support to male and female boxers that enables them to achieve their full potential in boxing and in life

## FOREWORD

# SUPPORT FROM BRITISH PARTNERS PIVOTAL TO SUCCESS OF WORLD BOXING



**BORIS VAN DER VORST** President, World Boxing

When I was asked to provide this Foreword, saying 'yes' was the least I could do after all the support that GB Boxing and the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for England, Scotland and Wales have given World Boxing since we decided to establish a new international federation (IF).

GB Boxing was in the room when a small collection of boxing leaders gathered in the Netherlands in 2022 to discuss the creation of a new IF. Back then, all we

started with was a blank sheet of paper and a host of ideas about how we could deliver a better future for boxing.

Yet since that first meeting, GB Boxing and the home nations – along with other key national federations particularly, USA Boxing – have played a vital role in the establishment, development and progression of World Boxing.

From that first meeting the organisation has gone from strength to strength. Following our launch in April 2023, which took place in England, World Boxing has established strong relationships with all of our key stakeholders and the media that cover boxing, most of whom recognised the need for change and that the previous IF was neither fit-for-purpose nor reformable.

Our membership has grown considerably and World Boxing has a footprint on all five Continents that compete in the sport. We are delivering a calendar of high-quality competitions and have commercial agreements with respected global brands like Sting and Nike Boxing.

Crucially, World Boxing has established a formal dialogue with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and we are working on the development of a pathway to ensure boxing is restored to the competition programme for Los Angeles 2028.

None of this would have been possible without the support we have received from Great Britain. Both GB Boxing's Chief Executive, Matt Holt, and board member, Simon Toulson, played prominent roles in the launch of World Boxing. Matt has since been elected a Vice President while Simon was its first Secretary General. GB Boxing and England Boxing were amongst the first cohort of six countries to become members of World Boxing, while Scotland and Wales followed soon after.

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**"WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A FORMAL DIALOGUE WITH THE IOC AND ARE WORKING ON A PATHWAY TO ENSURE BOXING IS RESTORED FOR LA 2028."**



Likewise, when it comes to delivering competition opportunities for boxers, they have been at the forefront.

In January 2024 the 'World Boxing Cup – GB Open' was held in Sheffield. It was an excellent event and when I spoke to many of the boxers about their experience all were extremely positive with many of them telling me that the staging, which included lights, music and ring walks, made it feel like a major championship.

Most importantly, it delivered fair competition and I am very happy that we will be returning to England in September 2025 when Liverpool will host the first ever World Boxing Championships for men and women. I am certain these will be great tournaments and I would like to express my gratitude to GB Boxing and England Boxing, along with their partners UK Sport and the City Councils in Sheffield and Liverpool for hosting these competitions.

Now that World Boxing has established a relationship with the IOC, the outlook for our sport is far brighter than it seemed back in 2022 when that small group of people met in a room in the Netherlands. An enormous amount of progress has been made in a short space of time and I am confident that with the support of our partners in Great Britain and all our members across the world that we will all continue to work together to deliver a better future for the sport and ensure that boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic Movement.



## CHAIR'S REVIEW

# ABILITY TO ANALYSE AND LEARN LESSONS POINTS THE WAY TO A BRIGHT FUTURE


**JASON GLOVER** Chair

The post-Olympic Games period is always a time when we reflect and look forward to the next cycle. As part of this process GB Boxing is conducting a detailed debrief and review, looking at all aspects of our work over the last three years including the Games period. Whilst I do not want to pre-empt the findings, even at this early stage it is clear that there are a number of key learnings that we can take forward into the next cycle.

Firstly, Paris proved to be the most challenging cycle that GB Boxing has faced since it was established in 2008. The legacy of Covid meant we only had three years in which to work, yet like all Olympic cycles we had to renew the team after 11 of the 12 boxers that competed in Tokyo left the World Class Programme (WCP).

Although this is something we have come to expect, the consistent loss of our best boxers places GB Boxing at a significant disadvantage to a majority of our rivals - such as Cuba and Uzbekistan to mention just two - as they benefit from having boxers that compete over multiple Olympic cycles.

To make matters more challenging, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia and subsequent refusal by the international federation, IBA, to ban participation of the Russian team in competitions resulted in our boxers being unable to take part in world and European championships from 2022 and meant they did not gain the high-level competitive international experience that is so vital to the development of top-class athletes.

Added to this, the qualification process for the Paris Olympics was the toughest that it has ever been, so while our boxers had three competitive opportunities to earn a place, the quality and quantity of opposition was unprecedentedly high. At the European Games, 319 boxers competed for 44 Olympic places while at the two world qualifiers, 632 men and women competed for 49 Paris places at the first event in Italy and 578 boxers fought it out for 51 slots at the final event in Thailand.

In the end, seven boxers from the GB Boxing gym secured qualification, six of whom represented Team GB, while Cindy Ngamba competed for the Olympic Refugee Team. Though this was fewer than at previous Games, when viewed in context, it was a very good achievement.

Secondly, events in Paris have enhanced our understanding of long-term trends in international boxing and enabled us to develop a clearer perspective on the performances of our teams at recent Olympic Games. While a simple comparison of the medal counts from Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 would suggest a downward trend, a deeper analysis reveals a more complex picture.

As a starting point it is important to stress that the six-medal haul secured by the team in Tokyo was the best performance by boxers from Great Britain since 1908. It was a 'once in century' event with an outstanding group of athletes.

At the same time, an analysis of the performance of other countries at Tokyo and Paris provides food for thought. Of the 10 nations who topped the boxing medal table in Tokyo, only three retained their place in 2024 and of the three countries that kept their spots in the top 10, both Cuba and Ireland won fewer medals. Cuba went from top of the table in Tokyo with five medals (four gold, one bronze) to fourth in Paris with two (one gold, one bronze). Ireland slipped from seventh with two medals (one gold, one bronze) to eighth with a sole gold.

Looked at in these terms it is fair to say that the intensely competitive nature of international boxing - which features far more countries than the vast majority of Olympic sports - means that it is incredibly



**"THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST CYCLE HAS CEMENTED THE VIEW THAT GIVING THE BOXERS EXPOSURE TO REGULAR TOP CLASS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND ENABLES THEM TO MAKE THE PROGRESSION FROM BEING A TALENTED INTERNATIONAL BOXER TO BECOMING AN ELITE, BATTLE-HARDENED COMPETITOR THAT CAN WIN IN ANY SITUATION."**



difficult for any nation to achieve sustained medal success over time.

In looking at comparisons across Games, a closer analysis of Great Britain's performances in boxing, indicates that if we take out the home Games in 2012 and the 'once in a century' performance in Tokyo – which could both be reasonably regarded as exceptional – then the medal return from the boxers in Paris, was on a par with those from other Games in the Lottery-funding era. In 2008 a team of nine boxers in Beijing secured three medals. Eight years later in Rio, a group of 12 men and women did the same. If we include the bronze won by Cindy Ngamba, who has effectively been a part of the GB Boxing squad for over two years, then the haul of two medals from seven boxers in Paris is on a par with the achievements of recent Olympics.

When considered alongside the quality of the actual performances by our boxers in Paris – where, by common consent, the vast majority of the team boxed well and six out of seven were only eliminated by the narrowest of 3-2 split decisions – a far more nuanced picture emerges than a simple binary comparison of the medal hauls between Tokyo and Paris.

In providing this analysis, it is vitally important to stress that neither myself nor anybody at GB Boxing is being complacent or saying that the extent of our ambition is to win one or two medals per Games.

We want to win as many medals as possible.

However, looking back in this way and having a deep understanding of the environment in which we operate provides valuable insight and enables the WCP to develop a clear idea of precisely what we need to do to be successful in future. Put simply, now is the time for evolution, not revolution.

Firstly, and most significantly, the Paris cycle has re-affirmed the critical importance of boxers gaining elite international experience over the full four years. The WCP has always placed a high value on this, but the experience of the last cycle has cemented the view that giving the boxers exposure to regular top-class international competition is vitally important to their development and enables them to make the progression from being a talented international boxer to becoming an elite, battle-hardened competitor that can win in any situation.

One frustrating aspect of the team's experience in Paris was that boxers from the GB Boxing gym were involved in eight 3-2 split decisions but lost six times. While there are many factors that may have influenced this – and we all accept that in a scored sport like boxing there is a degree of subjectivity which means that we may not personally agree with the outcome of a bout – it is reasonable to say that had our boxers been able to have four full years of international experience, unencumbered by the requirement to miss out on key tournaments, it is probable that some of them would have found themselves on the right side of the decision





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in these tightest of contests. Nonetheless we need to look at ways in which our boxers can perform more convincingly for the judges in a close bout.

Another key lesson from Paris is that as countries become increasingly competitive then to maintain GB Boxing's status as one of the leading nations in the sport, we have to look at ways we can innovate and think creatively so as to give ourselves an edge.

One area of potential development is in the area of individualisation and making the WCP more tailored to the personal needs of each boxer. While we have

never adopted a 'one size fits all' approach to training athletes, I am certain that with the quality of our coaches and support staff there is even more we can do to personalise each boxer's regime, inside and outside of the gym, in a way that will enhance and accelerate their development.

All of this can be assisted by the progress that has been made outside of the ring in international boxing – in which GB Boxing has played an influential role – that is bringing greater stability and the promise of a brighter future for the sport. For many years boxing has been plagued by controversy and uncertainty which eventually led the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to expel IBA and thereby place boxing's Olympic future in doubt. In response to this, GB Boxing and the NGBs for England, Scotland and Wales have been prime movers in the creation of a new international federation, World Boxing, which has made great progress since it was launched in April 2023.

Former GB Boxing board member, Simon Toulson,

became its first Secretary General and in November 2023, our Chief Executive, Matt Holt, was elected as a Vice President. Both have played key roles in the progress of World Boxing in the last 12 months which has established a formal relationship with the IOC and is developing a pathway for boxing to retain its place on the Olympic programme in Los Angeles.

The progress of World Boxing offers hope of a better future for the sport that will see improvements in every aspect of boxing, not least scoring, officiating and safety. GB Boxing has an opportunity to influence this and I have no doubt that our boxers and the WCP will benefit from the creation of a better run sport, where integrity is guaranteed and the interests of boxers are put first.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that we have a fantastic WCP at GB Boxing and should continue to build on our existing strengths such as coaching, identifying and developing talent and the ability to collaborate effectively across a wide range of expertise. We have a very talented group of boxers coming through and they will benefit enormously from having the opportunity to work daily with our coaches and sport science staff, across a full four-year cycle.

Most importantly, we should cherish the world class culture that underpins this and continue to make sure that the GB Boxing gym is a place where boxers want to be and which facilitates their development and growth as elite athletes and as individuals.

As long as we learn the right lessons from the Paris cycle whilst continuing to do the things that have enabled the WCP to achieve so much in the recent past then I am very confident that GB Boxing will have a very successful Games in Los Angeles in 2028.







# PERFORMANCE REVIEW



Performance activities in 2023-24 were dominated by the qualification campaign for Paris 2024 and the Games themselves. At the same time, GB Boxing always has to be wary of long-term considerations and building for the next cycle and, in the last 12 months, it has also made notable progress in a number of areas relating to Performance Pathways and Coach Development that are expected to have a beneficial impact on the long-term sustainability of the World Class Programme (WCP).

## Competitions and Olympic qualification

Persistent issues in the international environment meant that boxers from Great Britain were not able to compete at some major tournaments in 2023-24, most notably the men's World Championships in May 2023 and the women's equivalent, six weeks earlier.

Not being able to participate in these tournaments was a disappointment. However the WCP still delivered a healthy schedule of competitive action at 14 events on the international circuit in the course of 2023-24 which saw boxers from the squad win 120 medals (46 gold, 37 silver and 37 bronze).

These competitions provided good preparation for the Paris qualification campaign which got underway at the 2023 European Games in Krakow where GB Boxing won four medals and secured three Olympic places.

The first boxer to secure qualification was Charley Davison who went on to win bantamweight bronze as she booked a place at her second Olympic Games. She was followed by welterweight, Rosie Eccles, who also took bronze as she confirmed her ticket to Paris. The team's stand-out performance came in the men's super-

heavyweight division where Delicious Orie defeated all-comers to become the European Games champion and secure Olympic qualification.

The team's fourth European Games medal came in the men's flyweight division where Kiaran McDonald won bronze however this was not enough to earn qualification as only the gold and silver medallists at flyweight were guaranteed a place at Paris 2024.

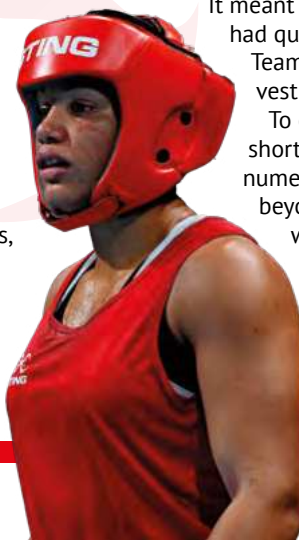
The second qualifier in Busto Arsizio, Italy, in March 2024 was officially titled the '1st World Qualification Tournament' as more than 600 boxers from over 100 countries competed for 49 places. No medals were handed out and boxers only competed until they secured qualification.

After a week of intense competition, middleweight, Chantelle Reid, and heavyweight, Pat Brown, became the fourth and fifth members of the GB Boxing squad to reach Paris. They were joined by their GB Boxing 'training partner' Cindy Ngamba who also qualified in the women's middleweight division, however as Cindy does not possess a British passport, it meant she would compete as a refugee.

The last boxer from Great Britain to qualify was Lewis Richardson who earned his light-middleweight slot at the final event in Bangkok where 578 men and women from more than 130 countries competed for 51 places.

It meant that seven boxers from the GB Boxing gym had qualified for Paris. Six of them represented Team GB, while Cindy Ngamba competed in the vest of the Olympic Refugee Team.

To qualify seven men and women, after a shortened Olympic cycle and in the face of numerous, unforeseeable challenges that were beyond the control of anyone at GB Boxing, was an excellent achievement and a well-deserved reward for the hard work of the boxers and everyone connected with the WCP.







## The Paris 2024 Olympic Games

The boxing tournament at Paris 2024 began at the North Paris Arena and concluded at the world-famous Roland Garros Stadium, for the medal stages. It ran for 14 days and featured 248 boxers from 68 National Olympic Committees (NOCs), competing across seven men's weight classes and six for women.

In the end, boxers from the GB Boxing gym came away with two medals as Lewis Richardson secured a bronze for Team GB while Cindy Ngamba made history by becoming the first refugee in history to win an Olympic medal as she also took bronze.

The two medals were the highpoints of a tournament that began in frustrating fashion for GB Boxing. Despite producing a series of strong performances, four of the first five boxers to compete for Team GB lost in the first round by narrow 3-2 split decisions in bouts that many observers felt they deserved to win. It was a reminder of the intensely competitive nature of elite international boxing and how bouts can be determined by the finest of margins.

The first-round victories for Lewis and Cindy provided a massive boost to the GB Boxing team which the pair carried through to the latter stages and the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to box in front of a 10,000 crowd on the Philippe-Chatrier court at Roland Garros.

Although both boxers bowed out at the semi-final stage as marginal 3-2 split decisions went against them, the bronze medals for Lewis and Cindy were a fitting reward for two people that have overcome significant adversity, inside and outside of the ring, during their careers and been superb ambassadors for GB Boxing.

Cindy's historic medal once again illustrated the unique ability of boxing to give opportunities to people in the most difficult of circumstances. Her achievement

was recognised around the world as one of the most inspirational and heartwarming stories of Paris 2024 and Cindy was one of six athletes invited to join the President of the IOC, Thomas Bach, on stage for the closing ceremony. It was a triumphant end to a remarkable journey and a huge source of pride to everyone connected with GB Boxing.

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## Performance Pathways

Long-term planning is critical to the ongoing success of the WCP and, given that many boxers depart for the professional ranks at the end of each cycle, the delivery of sustained medal winning success from one Games to the next is dependent on securing a steady flow of talent into the GB Boxing squad.

Added to this, there is a strong body of evidence which indicates that the most successful boxers who win medals at the Olympic Games typically spend between five and eight years in the GB Boxing squad, so there is a clear advantage in the WCP being connected with the most talented young boxers in Great Britain at an early point in their careers.

Ensuring this pipeline of talent continues to flow is critical to the ongoing success of the WCP and in the last 12 months GB Boxing has collaborated with the national governing bodies (NGBs) in England, Scotland and Wales to deliver 23 Assessment Camps at its gym in Sheffield that have been attended by 68 boxers (41 men and 27 women).

The camps have taken place over a series of weekends and the aim is for the boxers to attend on multiple occasions so that the GB Boxing coaches can assess their development over time and evaluate them on a variety of physical, technical and psychological criteria.

As well as an opportunity to train with the GB Boxing coaches, the camps give the boxers a chance to work

with the sport science and medicine staff from the WCP and learn about different aspects of what it takes to be a world class athlete, with sessions looking at different elements such as injury prevention, nutrition, psychology and lifestyle.

Of the 68 boxers that attended Assessment Camps in 2023-24, 17 were offered a place on the WCP. Nine have joined the programme and the other eight will join in the early part of 2024-25.

At the other end of the pathway, GB Boxing has continued to enjoy success with Podium2Pro (P2P) whereby it works with selected former squad members that have turned professional.

The first two P2P boxers are Tokyo 2020 medallists, Lauren Price and Karriss Artingstall. Both remained unbeaten in 2023-24 and in May 2024, Lauren Price became GB Boxing's first P2P boxer to secure a world title when she defeated American welterweight, Jennifer McCaskill, to win the IBO, WBA and Ring Magazine belts.

Having an Olympic gold medallist and three-belt world champion in the gym sends a powerful message to all of the boxers that train alongside Lauren and shows that GB Boxing can deliver a pathway that provides boxers with coaching, support and management at every stage of their career.

## Coach Development

Following the recruitment of several new coaches in 2022-23, activities in the last 12 months have focused on providing development opportunities for this new cohort with a focus on learning experiences and knowledge development.

GB Boxing has also created a new Coach Development Group to identify and create learning opportunities for the next generation of elite coaches that currently operate within the WCP as part-time Performance Coaches or senior NGB coaches.

In delivering its coach development activities, GB Boxing works closely with key partners to maximise opportunities for learning and three of its Performance Coaches are currently taking part in UK Coaching's 'Performance Pathway Collective' programme.







**Lewis Richardson and Cindy Ngamba have both overcome significant challenges on route to their Olympic bronze medals. Lewis was denied the opportunity to compete for a place at Tokyo when the final qualifier was cancelled in 2021 due to Covid. In 2023, he nearly quit the GB Boxing squad when his weight class (75kg – middleweight) was removed from the Olympic programme. Since moving to England from Cameroon at the age of 11, Cindy has faced many challenges, including time in a Home Office detention centre as a result of paperwork irregularities. Although she has lived in the UK for over 15 years, Cindy's passport application is yet to be approved so at Paris 2024 she competed for the Olympic Refugee Team.**

**What has been the biggest challenge you have faced in your career?**

**CN:** My main goal since I started boxing was to go to the Olympics but I did not have the right paperwork. GB Boxing helped me with this. They connected me with the Refugee team, which I was able to join, and this allowed me to realise my dream.

**LR:** The uncontrollable factors that have been put in my way. Things like the middleweight division being taken out, injuries and the political factors that meant we could not go to certain tournaments which stopped me from progressing the way I wanted to.

**Has there ever been a time when you have felt like giving up?**

**CN:** There have been many times. The main one was after the qualifier in Poland where I had won my first fight but lost the second. I was really down. Fortunately, I had a great team on my side and they helped me to learn a lot from the fight. I went to the second qualifier in Italy and booked my place in Paris.

**LR:** There were large parts of 2023 when I felt like the Olympic dream was over. But I think it's a testament to myself and the people around me that I never gave up and battled through.

**What stopped you giving up?**

**CN:** It was because I was doing this for me and I felt I had the ability to do it, so I did not want to give up. Being able to talk to my family and the team at GB Boxing was a big help. It gave me the motivation to continue.

**LR:** I just had a 'never give in' attitude. A big thing for me in at the end of 2023 and heading into 2024 was to never have any regrets. I wanted to explore every possible avenue so that I knew for certain whether the Olympic Games was meant to be for me. I decided to drop down to 71kg and the rest is history!

**Did having such a challenging journey make it more satisfying when you achieved your goal of an Olympic medal?**

**CN:** 100 per cent. When I think about all the hardships I went through and all the ups and down that I have had to overcome, I can honestly say I would not change anything. Everything happens for a reason. Even in the moments when you don't like it, you have to go along with it, keep your head high and push through because there is going to be a light at the end of the tunnel.

**LR:** Without a doubt. Always the journey, never the destination. It's the journey that makes us who we are today. I am proud of myself for overcoming all the obstacles that have been put in my way and I am very grateful for all the support I have received.

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**What aspect of the support you have received from GB Boxing has been most significant?**

**CN:** GB Boxing has always done everything right. The coaches and support staff fully understand you as an athlete and are able to help you in many different ways. For me it was mainly helping me in my sparring and making sure that when I compete it feels the

same as when I spar. We spent a lot of time watching back my spars so that I have an understanding of each round I have boxed against each opponent, so when I compete I can adapt and put into place what I need to do to win.

**LR:** I think it is just the holistic approach that GB Boxing takes in allowing us to be the best athlete we can be. I really appreciate the belief in me from the coaches, especially Gary Hale and Dave Alloway, along with all the sport science staff, who I have a great relationship with. They are good friends, as well as great staff members. But really it is the whole team who have just been a big help. In the ring you are there on your own but in the background there is a whole team providing massive support.



# OPERATIONS REVIEW

Effective operational management is critical to the successful delivery of the World Class Programme (WCP). Strong leadership, sound financial management, productive relationships with key stakeholders and a positive culture are key elements of this, and in the period covered by this Annual Review, GB Boxing has made demonstrable progress in each of these areas to ensure that the work of the organisation outside of the gym continues to have a positive impact on what happens inside of it.

## Leadership and management

Organisational stability is particularly important in an Olympic year and over the last 12 months GB Boxing has benefitted from strong and consistent leadership at both board level and in the day-to-day management of the WCP. There have been no changes to the senior leadership team and a single departure from the board.

This stability has enabled GB Boxing to make excellent progress in many areas of operations, with

perhaps the most significant being in international relations where it has played an important role in the establishment and progress of a new international federation (IF), World Boxing.

## International Relations

Legally established in December 2022, World Boxing was created by a small group of boxing

leaders in response to the persistent turbulence in international boxing and widespread recognition that the existing federation, IBA (International Boxing Association), was not reformable and that unless immediate action was taken then boxing's long-term future as an Olympic sport was under threat.

Following a successful launch in April 2023, World Boxing has gone from strength-to-strength. In August 2023, GB Boxing and England Boxing were amongst the first cohort of national federations to become members and two months later they were joined by Boxing Scotland and Welsh Boxing. By the end of the 12-month period covered by this report, World Boxing's membership had grown to 27 countries. Since then, it has continued to grow and exceeded 50 countries shortly after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

The important role played by GB Boxing in creating World Boxing was illustrated at its first Congress in Frankfurt Am Main in Germany on 25 November 2023 when GB Boxing's Chief Executive, Matt Holt, was elected as one of three Vice Presidents. As a member of the World Boxing Executive Board, Matt works closely with former GB Boxing board director, Simon Toulson, who also played a pivotal role in the development and progress of the organisation as its first Secretary General.

In addition to these executive roles, GB Boxing and England Boxing have been prominent in enabling World Boxing to create and deliver a calendar of high-quality competitions and in January 2024, the 'World Boxing Cup: GB Open' was held at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield.

Having a rare opportunity to compete at home was a bonus for the men and women in the GB Boxing squad, who performed superbly to win 21 medals, including

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nine golds, across 13 weight categories. Following on from this, the World Boxing Cup Finals 2024 will also be held in Sheffield in November 2024 and it is hoped that the 'World Boxing Cup: GB Open' will become an annual event in the international boxing calendar.

The support provided by GB Boxing has enabled World Boxing to achieve an enormous amount in the last 12 months. It has grown its membership, delivered a calendar of high-quality competition opportunities and secured partnerships with leading brands including Sting and Nike Boxing. Most significantly it has established a formal relationship with the IOC. All of this offers hope of a better future for the sport and significantly increases the likelihood of boxing being part of the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

## Culture

The culture at GB Boxing is widely regarded as one of the key strengths of the WCP and this year's annual Culture Healthcheck (CHC) by UK Sport revealed that this continues to be the case.

In a departure from previous reports, the methodology for this year's CHC aimed to establish a qualitative picture of the culture at GB Boxing and was based on a 'Walk the Floor' (WTF) exercise in the gym whereby a collaboratively constructed panel - which included former squad member and Tokyo Olympian, Cheavon Clarke - held a series of interviews with boxers, coaches, sport science and medical staff and employees.

The panel visited the gym on two separate occasions in October and November 2023 and insights were gathered through one-to-one interviews, focus groups and informal conversations and observations during the working day.

68 people from the WCP took part in the exercise, which included 87 per cent of boxers and 91 percent of staff. Following the data collection process, the panel met on three occasions to develop a series of themes and produce a nine-page report which was extremely positive about the culture at GB Boxing.

The report concluded: "There is an overall, widespread belief that the GB Boxing performance environment in Sheffield is being very positively experienced and that athletes, in particular, are grateful for the opportunities it provides.

"Boxers on the WCP are largely happy. Coaches and support staff demonstrate care toward the athletes, and working relationships between individuals are effective, collaborative, and respectful.

"Clear positives and strengths of the culture are demonstrable performance results and the belief that Sheffield is a place where boxers are 'winning well'. Several people referred to its inclusiveness and diversity as underpinning a genuine sense that the sport and the programme exist to better people's lives."

To help maintain and build on the strength of the culture, the report included a series of recommendations that covered a number of areas including: career education for boxers; broader team building activities outside of the gym; and ways in which the athletes can be given more of a voice in the evolution and delivery of the WCP. A plan is being developed on how these can be taken forward in the coming year.



## Performance Lifestyle

One of the reasons frequently cited by boxers for their positive attitude towards GB Boxing is the level of broader, wraparound support they receive as part of the WCP.

Much of this is provided through GB Boxing's Performance Lifestyle Coach who delivers a range of athlete centred education and support on subjects including personal development, access to funding and helping the boxers to manage their lives' away from sport.

In the last 12 months more than 70 per cent of the boxers have been supported in securing access to the UK Sport Personal Development Award fund and have used this to pursue a

range of life skills and personal development activities. These have included driving lessons, foreign language classes, learning to swim and career development courses in areas such as personal training and health and beauty.

Through the Performance Lifestyle service, GB Boxing also provides help and assistance to boxers that depart the WCP and over the last year it has delivered transitional support to more than 20 men and women that have left the squad.

**"THERE IS AN OVERALL, WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT THE GB BOXING PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT IN SHEFFIELD IS BEING VERY POSITIVELY EXPERIENCED AND THAT ATHLETES, IN PARTICULAR, ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES IT PROVIDES."**

## Diversity & Inclusion

Following the creation of a Diversity and inclusion (D&I) Steering Group in 2022 GB Boxing has continued to develop its work in this area over the last 12 months.

One area of notable progress has been in mental health where a range of new activities have been introduced following an internal review. These have included wellbeing meetings for athletes and staff, increased mental health screening and the introduction of post-competition 'decompression' sessions for boxers and staff. These sessions are focused on major championships and aim to provide an opportunity for boxers and staff to talk about their experiences and process them in a way that enables them to learn lessons and move forward with a positive mindset.



**“THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM DELIVERED A HOST OF MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES, MANAGED MULTIPLE INTERVIEW REQUESTS AND COLLABORATED WITH KEY PARTNERS, SUCH AS TEAM GB, UK SPORT AND THE NATIONAL LOTTERY, TO CREATE NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOWCASE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BOXERS”**

In other areas, GB Boxing has used its communications platforms to raise awareness of issues and causes relating to D&I. It now has a dedicated D&I section on

the GB Boxing website and has featured several news stories highlighting activities in this area. One example of this was a news article in April 2023 which highlighted the support provided by the WCP to Muslim boxers during the period of Ramadan.

To ensure that its own communications activities meet with best practice industry standards, one of GB Boxing's media

team attended a Paralympics GB workshop on ways to ensure that communications are as accessible as possible to people with visual and hearing impairments.

## Anti-doping

GB Boxing supports clean sport and in the last 12 months it has delivered an extensive programme of anti-doping education to its boxers. This work is of critical importance to both the career development of the boxers and the broader reputation of GB Boxing and has contributed to another positive year in which boxers returned no adverse findings from 80 out-of-competition tests.

## Communications and media

Highlighting the successes and achievements of the WCP is a key part of maintaining and enhancing GB Boxing's positive reputation and, as an Olympic year, 2023-24 has been a busy period for communications and media.

During the qualification pathway one of the communications team attended the competitions in Poland, Italy and Thailand to provide a live news service which included up-to-the-minute results, daily updates and mixed zone interviews and reaction from the boxers.

In the final build-up to the Games, the communications team delivered a host of media opportunities, managed multiple interview requests

and collaborated with key partners, such as Team GB, UK Sport and The National Lottery, to create numerous opportunities to showcase the achievements of the boxers.

Notable highlights among these included: working with Team GB to deliver a team announcement media day in the GB Boxing gym attended by nearly 20 press and broadcast journalists; two BBC Radio 5 Live podcasts hosted by Steve Bunce in June 2023 and July 2024 which focused exclusively on GB Boxing; multiple opportunities for boxers to visit the Sky Sports studios and appear on its boxing programmes; and numerous appearances by boxers on BBC Radio 5 Live's flagship Olympic preview programme, 'Path to Paris'.

Boxers from the squad also featured in a wide range of partner campaigns and media activations. Delicious Orie appeared in Team GB's 'Hometown Heroes' content series and campaigns for two of its sponsors Aldi and Tik Tok. Charley Davison and Rosie Eccles featured prominently in Team GB's 'one year to go' media activities in July 2023.

During Games time the coverage of GB Boxing was inevitably influenced by the performances of the team, and while there was some negative reporting about a series of losses in the early rounds and the medal haul from Paris being lower than at recent Games, a detailed analysis of the coverage revealed a balanced picture.

There was very little criticism of the men and women that did not win medals or the GB Boxing set-up as many of press and broadcast journalists that reported on these bouts felt that the British boxers had performed well and were unlucky to find themselves on the wrong end of a series of contentious 3-2 split decisions.

It meant that while Paris 2024 was not considered Team GB's most successful boxing performance of recent years, GB Boxing did not receive widespread criticism and benefitted from the numerous media appearances of Lewis and Cindy who were superb ambassadors for the WCP and consistently cited the support they have received from GB Boxing as critical factors in their success.

In its corporate communications, GB Boxing's most high-profile activity over the last 12 months was its part in the launch of World Boxing in April 2023. As one of the founders of World Boxing, GB Boxing's Chief Executive, Matt Holt, was one of the main spokespeople in the launch, which was managed by GB Boxing's media team and generated huge volumes of media coverage across the world.

An analysis by the media tracking specialists, Meltwater, showed that in April 2023, GB Boxing was mentioned in more than 1,500 pieces of global coverage with more than 1,000 of these appearing in UK media outlets. The tone was 99 per cent positive or neutral.

Throughout the year, GB Boxing also maintained a steady flow of daily social media activity to showcase the WCP and raise awareness of the boxers achievements and for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024, GB Boxing's social media footprint grew by six per cent, meaning it now has just under 140,000 followers across its four main platforms. The largest platform continues to be Instagram which grew by 10 per cent to nearly 60,000 followers by the end of the year.





## Commercial

GB Boxing's main commercial relationship is with kit and equipment supplier, Sting, and over the last 12 months it has continued to amplify this partnership with a range of promotional activities. Photoshoots and content gathering days were hosted in the gym in September 2023 and May 2024 which included all of the Olympic boxers. The shoots featured both performance and lifestyle images and provided content that enabled both GB Boxing and Sting to promote the partnership across their respective communications channels in the build-up to Paris.

## Social Impact

As an organisation that benefits from public funding, GB Boxing is committed to having a positive impact on society, and over the last 12 months it has undertaken a wide range of community activities. This has included both corporate initiatives delivered by GB Boxing as part of its social impact work and individual acts by the boxers in their local communities.

At a corporate level, GB Boxing has made significant progress in its social impact work in 2023-24 and, following an extensive consultation with boxers, coaches and employees, it has developed a programme of work based on the theme of 'social capital' which aims to use the assets and resources of the WCP to help positively impact on the life opportunities of people in disadvantaged situations.

To deliver this GB Boxing has developed partnerships with a local mental health charity, Sheffield Mind, and an organisation called Roundabout which helps young people to break the cycle of homelessness.

Both organisations were selected following an open tender process and made strong cases for how boxing can be used to enhance the social capital of the people they work with. A joint programme of work has been developed with each charity which will be delivered over the next 12 months.

On an individual level, the majority of boxers in the Podium and Academy squads have undertaken some form of community activity in the last 12 months including school visits, awards days at local boxing clubs and support for charitable initiatives.

One of the most active boxers in supporting local communities has been Lewis Richardson, who was recognised for his outstanding efforts in this area when he was given the Community Award at GB Boxing's annual awards evening in December 2023. Lewis's exceptional work in his hometown of Colchester included supporting a 'Box Smart' initiative to improve young people's behaviour through sport and delivering a boxing master class to support the local Salvation Army's Christmas appeal.

He was also one of 21 athletes from 16 sports selected to be a 'changemaker' as part of UK Sport's 'Powered by Purpose' programme to help athletes use their platform to inspire, facilitate and enable positive social change. As part of this, Lewis took part in a series of workshops and delivered a number of personal appearances to support community and education programmes across the UK.

In addition to all of this, GB Boxing supported the NSPCC's 'Keeping Your Child Safe' initiative in October 2023 and deployed its social media channels to support a week of activity to raise awareness of the campaign and deliver guidance and support to children, parents and coaches about the importance of ensuring sport is a safe environment. The WCP will build on all of these activities in the next 12 months to ensure that GB Boxing can continue to engage with local communities and have a positive impact on society.

**"ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL, THE MAJORITY OF BOXERS IN THE PODIUM AND ACADEMY SQUADS HAVE UNDERTAKEN SOME FORM OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITY IN THE LAST YEAR."**



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Financial Review contains extracts from the audited accounts for the year end March 2024. It includes details of GB Boxing's board members and their sub-committee functions along with a summary of the Profit and Loss Account for the year and a copy of the Balance Sheet.

These condensed financial statements do not comprise statutory accounts within the meaning of section 435 of The Companies Act 2006. These accounts were reported upon by the company's auditors, PFK Smith Cooper Audit Ltd, and delivered to the Registrar of Companies. The report of the auditors

was unqualified, did not include a reference to any matter to which the auditors drew attention by way of emphasis without qualifying their report and did not contain statements under section 435 and 498 (2) and (3) respectively of the Companies Act.

The responsibility for the management and oversight GB Boxing sits with its board of directors which is comprised of an independent chair, the Chief Executive of GB Boxing, two representatives from each of the three home nations and four independent directors appointed for their expertise.

## GB Boxing board of directors

The people listed here are those who served on the board of GB Boxing for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

Board member	Sub-committee function
<b>Jason Glover, Chair</b>	Audit, Remuneration (Chair) and Nominations Committees (Chair)
<b>Matthew Holt, Chief Executive Officer</b>	
<b>Richard Brooke, England Boxing</b>	Audit Committee
<b>Michael Norford, England Boxing</b>	
<b>Craig McEvoy, Boxing Scotland</b>	Remuneration Committee
<b>Colin Metson, Welsh Boxing</b>	
<b>Paul Thorogood MBE, Welsh Boxing</b>	Nominations Committee
<b>David Chadwick, Independent</b>	Audit Committee
<b>Christine Ohuruogo MBE, Independent</b>	Nominations Committee
<b>Simon Toulson, Independent</b> (Resigned 5 December 2023)	
<b>Lucy Walker, Independent</b>	Audit (Chair), Remuneration and Nominations Committee

The make-up of the Nominations committee is as required for appointment to the board. The Appeals and Disciplinary committee is constituted according to the procedures for dealing with disciplinary matters.

<b>Matthew Holt</b>	Company Secretary
<b>PFK Smith Cooper Audit Ltd</b>	Auditors



## Detailed profit and loss account for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income	3,198,276	3,244,077
Direct expenses	(1,727,276)	(1,661,748)
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>1,471,000</b>	1,582,329
Other operating income	30,762	33,258
<b>Less: overheads</b>		
Administration expenses	(1,695,724)	(1,598,172)
<b>Operating (loss)/profit</b>	<b>(193,962)</b>	17,415
Interest receivable	5,843	2,286
Tax on surplus/(deficit) on ordinary activities	-	(2,950)
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(188,119)</b>	16,751

## Schedule to the detailed accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024

Income	2024	2023
	£	£
UK Sport income	3,035,613	3,050,273
Foreign nations and other recharges	79,029	89,836
Sponsorship and other income	83,634	103,968
	<b>3,198,276</b>	<b>3,244,077</b>
<b>Direct expenses</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Podium boxers	495,502	453,679
Development boxers	27,566	15,672
Female boxers	6,322	7,613
Talent Group ID	113,810	150,167
Equipment and clothing	10,000	11,079
Coaches	231,204	233,000
Camps	134,366	150,220
Sports science and sports medicine	540,516	484,389
Cost of boxers' accommodation	167,990	155,929
	<b>1,727,276</b>	<b>1,661,748</b>
<b>Other operating income</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Rents receivable	30,762	30,762
Insurance claims receivable	-	2,496

Administration expenses	2024	2023
	£	£
Directors salaries	103,218	102,043
Directors pension costs	27,590	26,831
Staff salaries	801,902	745,519
Staff national insurance	96,787	97,381
Staff pension costs	52,970	50,671
Staff training	8,178	3,302
Hotels, travel and subsistence	26,544	41,540
Consultancy	67,738	60,927
Printing, postage and stationery	5,914	10,907
Telephone	9,576	17,009
Legal and professional	59,456	3,795
Auditors' remuneration	16,268	9,630
Equipment hire	3,870	4,682
Bank charges	449	325
Difference on foreign exchange	442	124
Sundry expenses	75,713	83,438
Rent and rates	177,025	175,590
Insurances	22,377	21,803
Repairs and maintenance	13,370	8,769
Depreciation	51,774	55,571
Profit/loss on sale of tangible assets	1,942	-
Disallowable input VAT	49,286	56,983
Credit card charges	918	505
Tickets	22,417	20,827
	<b>1,695,724</b>	<b>1,598,172</b>
<b>Interest receivable</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Bank interest receivable	5,843	2,286



## Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Tangible assets	1,065,328	1,085,908
Investments	1	1
	<b>1,065,329</b>	<b>1,085,909</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors: amounts falling due after more than one year	20,000	-
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	382,365	309,195
Cash at bank and in hand	220,326	384,436
	<b>622,691</b>	<b>693,631</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(238,729)	(142,130)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>383,962</b>	<b>551,501</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>1,449,291</b>	<b>1,637,410</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,449,291</b>	<b>1,637,410</b>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>		
Profit and loss account	1,449,291	1,637,410
	<b>1,449,291</b>	<b>1,637,410</b>

## THE ROAD TO LOS ANGELES

# SETTLED ENVIRONMENT CREATES REASONS FOR OPTIMISM



**ROB MCCracken CBE** Performance Director

After such a demanding Olympic cycle in which we faced so many unforeseen challenges it was fantastic to see Lewis Richardson and Cindy Ngamba win medals in Paris.

In different ways they have both faced huge adversity yet have come through to deliver on the biggest stage in sport and I speak for everyone at GB Boxing when I say that Lewis and Cindy both thoroughly deserved their rewards.

After the historic success of Tokyo, the Paris cycle was always going to be tough, particularly in a sport as competitive as boxing where – as the medal table from one Games to the next shows – it is very difficult for any nation to deliver sustained success.

The harsh reality of sport means there will be highs and lows and so it proved at this summer's Olympic Games. Despite all the challenges we faced during the cycle, GB Boxing did well to qualify seven men and women for Paris who then went on to deliver a series of excellent performances,

yet sadly they did not all get the rewards they deserved.

To lose four first round bouts on 3-2 split decisions was very disappointing particularly as I felt that most of our boxers had done enough to win. However, fine margins are part of elite sport and the key thing is to learn from these experiences.

I am confident that we have done this and, as we enter the next Olympic cycle, I think we have many reasons to be optimistic.

We are beginning the Los Angeles (LA) cycle in a much better place than where we started out for Paris. We have four years (instead of three) to work with the boxers and many of our current cohort have built-up good levels of international experience by being in our Academy squad for up to two years.

This additional experience and time on the World Class Programme (WCP) is incredibly useful. Observers of the sport often think that a boxer is only with GB Boxing for the duration of a four-year cycle, but all the evidence shows that boxers who win Olympic medals – like Lewis Richardson, Galal Yafai, Pat McCormack, Ben Whittaker and Frazer Clarke to name just a handful – have usually been part of our squad for somewhere between five and eight years.

This allows them to build-up international experience



and work with our coaches over a longer period of time in a way that inevitably helps them develop the extra know-how which can give them the edge in those tight contests at the highest level where the margins are finest.

Another factor that contributes to accelerating the development of our boxers is the opportunity to gain top-class experience and exposure to a range of styles at major international tournaments.

Fortunately it seems that with the emergence of World Boxing, the politics and external factors that have affected the sport and prevented our boxers from competing at some major international tournaments in recent years are settling down and I am hopeful that in the LA cycle our men and women will get more exposure to the top-level competitions and training camps that are so vital to their development as elite athletes.

It all contributes to a positive outlook and, on a purely personal level, I am very much looking forward to taking a team of boxers to LA in 2028.

As a 16-year-old watching the Olympic Games the last time it was held in LA in 1984 I was in awe of the USA boxing team that won an incredible nine gold medals and featured many great names such as Pernell Whittaker, Evander Holyfield, Mark Breland and Meldrick Taylor.

It inspired me to go to my local gym in Birmingham and is part of the reason why I have gone on to have a career in the sport as a boxer and now as a coach and Performance Director.

To take a team to LA and win some medals for Team GB would be personally very satisfying for me and I am confident that with the talent we have coming through and the knowledge and experience we possess in the WCP that we have every hope of achieving this.

**“WE ARE BEGINNING THE LA CYCLE IN A MUCH BETTER PLACE THAN WHERE WE STARTED OUT FOR PARIS. WE HAVE FOUR YEARS TO WORK WITH THE BOXERS AND MANY OF OUR CURRENT COHORT HAVE BUILT-UP GOOD LEVELS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN OUR ACADEMY SQUAD.”**





**"I AM HOPEFUL THAT IN THE LA CYCLE OUR MEN AND WOMEN WILL GET MORE EXPOSURE TO THE TOP-LEVEL COMPETITIONS AND TRAINING CAMPS THAT ARE SO VITAL TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT AS ELITE ATHLETES."**



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