



speedo



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WAVELENGTH

ENGLISH TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR SWIMMING

There have recently been some changes to funding responsibilities of the World Class Swimming (WCS) programmes, writes Director of English Programmes, Anne Adams-King. This will have some impact on the Start programme that was delivered through the WCS programmes of British Swimming. This is how the changes will affect the English swimming community in order to make the best use of what we have, while also aspiring to demonstrate what we could achieve in 2012 and beyond if we had more.

We will build an English talent development programme to interface the work of British Swimming to ensure that there is a seamless pathway with appropriate support for talented English swimmers to reach the podium, maximising the available resources from all partners and funding agencies.

Background

Our Age programme has successfully produced a stream of swimmers into the Youth and International programmes. However, with the successful bid for the 2012 Olympics and the associated changes to funding arrangements by UK Sport, Sport England, the establishment of the eight ASA Regions and the opportunities provided by the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE – appendix 1 provides more details), it was recognised that a review of current talent programmes was required. It was felt that the time was right for a step change in this area with the talent being developed into a stream of 'podium-prepared' athletes who are capable of delivering success for Britain in 2012 and beyond providing a lasting legacy for English swimming.

It is also recognised that England has limited 50m facilities and that those we have are not all being utilised effectively to develop talent. Indeed, perhaps the only senior programme in England that is effective is Loughborough University. However, if we are to be successful in 2012 and beyond, we need to get the swimmers into the right pool with the right coach NOW. The target therefore is to have eight to 10 effective programmes operational by September 2008. The concept of Age and Potential programmes will now end and an English Talent programme will be established.

The Vision

The vision is an integrated talent pathway, which would link together the World Class Talent programme with effective regional talent development units and the feeder system of Swim 21 networks (the club accreditation programme).

Each regional unit would have an elite coaching team and a regional development coach to support AASE swimmers and the coaches in the field, all of which would link with our Work Force Development programme to build excellence and capacity together.

The concept would be to enable talented swimmers to have

access to the best facilities and the best coaches. Each region would have a 'no compromise' high performance club that would deliver 'excellence' for swimmers, coaches, teachers and volunteers involved in swimming. It would not be a squad situation or something aimed at the elite swimmers but a place that provides young, talented swimmers with all the support that they need. It would aim to enhance rather than replace the training and support they are already receiving.

The programmes would also link with the regional education officers, the Institute of Swimming and would also be part of the National Skills Academy, should that come to fruition. The facility would become a 'centre of excellence' for the training of teachers, coaches and volunteers alongside the high performance club.

It is important to emphasise here that in order for the talent pathway to operate at an optimum level, all the areas identified need to be in place. However, it is recognised that some regions already have certain elements in place and, therefore, the priorities may differ.

Where next?

The World Class Start grant from Sport England that previously funded the World Class Age programme of British Swimming was retained in Sport England. The ASA will continue to receive funding through their one-stop plan and will need to apply this funding to deliver agreed key performance indicators. In addition, Sport England will also be directing further funding to the ASA and its regions to enhance talent development and build capacity. Therefore opportunities will exist for age group swimmers within the ASA regions.

We will immediately appoint an **English Talent Development Manager** who will:

- manage eight regional development coaches (RDCs) in their work to support Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) athletes and their coaches
- provide technical support to the regions and co-ordinate a nationally-led regionally-delivered English talent programme
- work with the regions to establish eight high performance clubs (HPCs).

These targets are obviously constrained by any new pools being built. Initial thoughts have been given as to which pools might be identified but there would be further discussions on the 50m pools and performance clubs. The England Talent Development Manager will work with the regions on developing these centres and from September 1 will continue any negotiations that are underway as well as undertaking any new work towards developing the clubs. Negotiations would take place to deliver two HPCs in 2006-07 (depending on the speed of a funding decision and programming of pools) and work would continue

through to 2008-09 to create a full network in each region.

Each high performance club would require a full-time head coach, who would be employed by the club. They would need to be based at a 50m pool with all associated costs for pool hire etc covered. These HPC set-ups should be additional to the current structure and not replacements for the programmes already established. *Appendix 2* identifies the requirements for these clubs.

We will also immediately appoint regional development coaches. In essence, these posts will be responsible for the AASE programme swimmers and have strong links with the high performance club team. However, they will also provide support to other talented swimmers and the region's talent delivery plans.

There is funding available in 2006-07 to be able to put in place five posts so some regions would double up. But as additional funding comes on line in 2007-08, each region will have a dedicated post.

Funding and Sustainability

The model will use money from the ASA, other linked funding and Value in Kind (VIK) from partners such as local authorities, universities, pool operators and clubs. Discussions are currently taking place with Sport England regarding additional talent funding, which would be required to establish the high performance clubs.

We would, however, require the lead partner (probably the club) and head coach to develop a business plan for sustainability, as the future success of this programme depends on long term sustainability. There is ample evidence that this is achievable with clubs having employed professional coaches for many years. However, the culture change is designed to make coaches accountable and professional with more management skills, and to bring about a step change in performance in a no-compromise environment, working in local partnerships to deliver talent ready for podium success. The HPC requires free or nominal pool hire charges for their programmes to be a success and sustainable to 2012 and beyond.

Conclusion

We have re-focused the entire process of identifying and taking care of young talent. It is an exciting time for developing swimming in England, as we will have a programme that concentrates on English swimmers.

Some funding is already in place but the ASA is currently talking to Sport England about unlocking money earmarked to develop regional talent and we will be detailing to the organisation where we are at the moment, where we want to be and how we are going to get there.

The programme will be led by an England Talent Development Manager who will define the new programme of identifying and nurturing talented athletes and will manage a team of eight RDCs in their work to support AASE athletes, other talented swimmers and their coaches.

Appendix 1

Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE)

Background to AASE

Skills Active, in partnership with a number of governing bodies of sport, industry experts and other partnership organisations, has developed the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence framework. The framework was approved in March 2004.

This qualification offers the first opportunity for elite and potentially elite athletes to get a proper recognition of the skills, knowledge and understanding they are developing/gaining in their quest for excellence.

AASE is a Government-funded initiative that has been designed to meet the needs of young people aged 16-18 who have the realistic potential to achieve excellence in their sport and are seeking to perform at the highest level as their main career goal, while continuing with their education. Notionally taking two years to complete, the AASE framework will, for the first time, provide a structured national training and development route, across all sports, for talented young athletes, many of whom may go on to represent their country on the world stage.



Mark Foster, James Hickman and Karen Pickering assisted commentator Bob Ballard at the Lords v Commons Speedo-sponsored charity swim, also attended by the Duchess of Gloucester and Gloria Hunniford

AASE Framework

The AASE programme is a two-year programme and consists of three components:

- 1) National Vocational Qualification (NVQ): Level 3 (sports specific). This qualification recognises your excellence in a specific sport. The NVQ is made up of eight sport specific units. To gain the full NVQ, all eight mandatory units must be achieved
 - plan, develop and apply your technical skills
 - plan and develop your physical conditioning
 - plan, develop and apply your tactical skills
 - develop the attitudes and mental skills necessary for excellent performance
 - plan and manage your own lifestyle
 - plan and manage your career
 - communicate and work effectively with others
 - maintain the health and safety of yourself and others
- 2) Technical Certificate: This is made up of 780 guided learning hours in an academic qualification such as AS/A-Levels, BTEC Awards, coaching qualifications etc.
- 3) Key Skills: Key Skills in application of number and communication. This will be built into the NVQ level 3 (NB if you have achieved grade C or above in English and maths, you will be exempt from this component).

Delivering the Project

The NVQ Level 3 in sport-specific programme will be developed and delivered by the ASA in swimming, water polo, synchro and diving. Athletes will be given a portfolio to collect evidence for all eight units. The regional development coach will conduct assessment for all units. Internal verifiers will also be appointed to assess the qualification. The NVQ Level 3 will be awarded by Edexcel, the UK's largest awarding body.

All RDCs will have to undertake an assessment qualification – minimum of L20 and develop on to the A1.

Academic programmes will sit with the apprentice's chosen college and will consist of 780 hours of learning over two years and be awarded by the appropriate body.

The overall apprenticeship will be awarded by Skills Active after all three components have been completed.

Appendix 2

High Performance Clubs (HPC)

Objective: • To provide an opportunity for coaches and targeted, and identified athletes (in general terms females 14-16 (+ or - 1 year) and males 16-18 (+ or - 1 year) to develop linked to a programme where adequate and appropriate training times are available in a cost-free environment. If athletes are already in a programme that provides the majority of their needs, then they may 'drop' in to the club environment.

Coaching: • The coach would coach and manage a maximum of 12 identified and targeted athletes in six lanes of a 50m pool, for approximately 10 x 2.5 hours per week/50 weeks per year. All training times to have an amount of flexibility.

- The coach would be totally result-driven and independent, and would not be expected to make the programme self-sufficient in terms of funding.
- Any HPC promoted and developed by British Swimming or the ASA must enhance the coaching opportunity of the club already established in the area. Therefore this HPC should be additional to the current coaching programme.
- The coach must be a licensed coach and hold ASA/UKCC qualifications or equivalent.



Sarah Price helped launch the ASA's 'Get Safe 4 Summer' campaign on Blackpool beach

ASA Volunteer Mileage Rate

The ASA Volunteer Mileage rate has been revised with effect from 1st July 2006 to:

Up to 10,000 miles – 40p per mile
Over 10,000 miles – 25p per mile

The following conditions apply to these rates

Conditions

- 1) The rates are in line with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) approved mileage rates for use of a private vehicle on company business. The decision of the ASA to move the volunteer mileage rate in line with HMRC rates does NOT imply any employer/employee relationship between the parties. The ASA mileage rate is intended to cover travel expenses incurred whilst undertaking voluntary activity on behalf of the ASA.
- 2) The ASA does not take any responsibility whatsoever for the tax status of volunteers with HMRC. This is the sole responsibility of the individual. Specifically, should a volunteer claim more than 10,000 miles at 40p from both their ordinary employment plus any ASA and other volunteer activity, the volunteer is responsible for the tax position arising. The ASA does not undertake to log the total mileage of its volunteers – only that mileage incurred on ASA activity.

Judicial information

During the period November 2005 to June 2006, the ASA's Judicial Administrator received in excess of 45 complaints. Of these, three were rejected by the Judicial Commissioner.

Remarkably, of the remaining complaints only five remain unresolved. The remainder were determined either by the Commissioner or an IDDRP Panel (Committee).

With but a few exceptions, complaints fall under one or more of the following categories:

- i unacceptable conduct at water polo matches
- ii dissatisfaction with club management and administration
- iii failure of club committees to follow fair procedures
- iv violations of the ASA/IOS Code of Ethics.

If only

Very few complainants under headings iii and iv above would arise, if only committees, coaches and teachers took the time to read the ASA/IOS Code of Ethics and the ASA Judicial Rules 180 to 185, formerly *Appendix A*.

Complaints are costly

At its May meeting, the Judicial Management Group, the JMG, directed the Commissioner to publicise the cost of responding to members' complaints.

Processing and determining complaints, even the ones that are completed in days rather than months is a drain on financial resources. It is not unusual for document bundles to exceed 600 pages. The mind boggles when you consider the cost of labour involved in collating and assembling the bundles and then copying them for distribution to the panel and the parties. Add to this the cost of telephonic communication, travelling and the cost of hiring venues and it is clear that: even the simplest of complaints diverts resources from projects that would benefit the whole of the sport and its members.

The time must come, soon, when IDDRP and IDDRAP panels recoup realistic costs from complainants and respondents.

Commissioner's major concerns

Other than the cost of resolving complaints, the Commissioner, if not surprised, is saddened at the recurring evidence that many Club Committees believe that they have the right to terminate membership without fair process. This is a recurring concern of the Commissioner and the Judiciary. Sadly, there are clubs 'out there' whose committees are blissfully unaware that their members have rights.

Many clubs expel young swimmers for no other reason than their parents are seen as difficult? Difficult to believe, perhaps, but it happens – frequently.

Violations of ASA laws and rules

When imposing sanctions the Judiciary and the Commissioner have a range from which to choose. Sanctions include exclusions, suspensions, fines, costs, orders, directing fair internal dispute resolution meetings and rectification of rules. These are but a few.

Recently, the Commissioner has found it equitable to order two clubs, one from the North and one from the South to publish written apologies to young persons.

Rights of appeal

Most, if not all, judicial systems have judicial tiers so that a decision of a lower tier may be appealed to a higher one. ASA Judicial Laws and Rules reflect this. Whenever the Commissioner determines a complaint, the parties are advised of their rights to appeal. Likewise the parties to a complaint heard by the IDDRP are advised of their rights of appeal.

Unforgettable

The heart of the ASA Judicial system is kept beating by the Judicial Administrator and her two assistants at Loughborough. They will provide guidance to would-be complainants and prospective respondents but are not authorised to discuss the details of a case. If you need that sort of help or advice, and, if you ask nicely, they will put you in touch with an ASA friend.



Emmerdale star Tony Audenshaw (rt) after some coaching from James Hickman

Amateur Swimming Association

Membership Fees 2007

The ASA Board has agreed the following ASA membership fees for 2007:

**Category One
£4.25**

**Category Two
£17.50**

**Category Three
£3.00**