

Notes from Scottish Swimming Networking Event

General Discussion

Thanks given to all club and members who renewed their SASA Membership for the year ahead.

SASA have been very prudent with their budget however were unable to use the furlough scheme due to the nature of public funding.

They have been scenario planning a number of different returns to the pool and have been liaising with Leisure Trusts and what a return to training will look like for them.

Pool Operators will play a very important role in how we come out of this and how Scottish Swimming and Leisure Centres can support Clubs.

SASA have established a working group to make documents and guidance for a return to the water however they advised that this would start off in a small and progressive manner with “professional athletes” returning to the water first. This will most likely be Olympic Qualifiers etc however sportScotland will release more information on this in the coming days/weeks. The return of professional athletes will help shape what a return to the pool might look like at a Club level.

Scottish Swimming are liaising with Swim England who will be releasing a new document in the coming days however it was stressed that we remember the four nations of the UK are on different paths and the Swim England guidance will not apply to Clubs in Scotland but it will help shape the Scottish Swimming guidance.

It was stressed that a return to training will not be linear and they are aware that it may mean we move forward into a new phase or backwards into a previous phase. At all times Scottish Swimming will be following Scottish Government advice which will ultimately dictate what a return to the pool might look like.

It is believed that swimming at a Club level may be able to return (in limited capacity) in **Phase 3** however it was also said that this was an optimistic view and depends on a number of factors.

With regards to Leisure Centres, there is likely to be a phase reopening of centres and the Scottish Swimming Return to Water roadmap will be dependent on individual pool operators and leisure centres.

Capacity will be an issue however Scottish Swimming will be pushing for Clubs to be granted access to the water first and foremost before other user groups.

Governance

It was advised that all AGMs due to take place between now and September should be held via Zoom and that Clubs start planning this now. There will be guidance and documentation released to help ensure times are adhered to to allow all attendees the chance to have their voices heard. There will also be a presentation available for Clubs to use if they so wish.

Engagement

Scottish Swimming are currently looking at how to deliver a Poolside Helper course virtually (this might be useful for some of our older swimmers and may also help with retention once we return to the water).

There will also be new courses available for booking. They gave the example that instead of a number of swimmers for different clubs booking onto a fitness course or a seminar, **whole clubs** can book specialists and experts to deliver training via Zoom. I would imagine that this will be Free of Charge however there wasn't really any discussion on this matter.

Support

There will be a consultation with Clubs to ascertain if the Return to Water document (which will be updated each time the Government advice changes) works for them.

SASA will support Clubs to gain sustainable pool time however there may have to be some compromise. There will be a survey sent out in the coming days for Clubs to complete which will help Scottish Swimming gain an understanding of what pool time Clubs currently have and how they can work with Leisure Trusts and Pool Operators to help Clubs gain access to pool time when it is safe to do so.

There will also be a survey sent out to Clubs to detail the financial impact of COVID-19 which will help give them a clearer understanding of the support needed by different Clubs.

It was stressed that this is not the time to start open water swimming if you have not done so already.

Back to the Water Discussion

The return to training will be a systematic and sustainable process.

There may be need to consider modified Squad structures initially before gradually increasing this when the guidance says to do so however this must be risk assessed (I will email with regards to a template and if there is any guidance documentation out there to help us create a risk assessment).

No clear guidance given on lane numbers etc however I would imagine that this will be agreed upon by Leisure Trusts and Pool Operators but I will email Scottish Swimming for more clarity on this.

Closing Notes

The North District AGM will be held on 22nd August via Zoom and there will be a “dry run” on the 15th to iron out any technical issues.

Chair of Garioch ASC noted that 8 swimming pools have been drained completely which will impact on Aberdeenshire Clubs returning to training once guidance says it is safe to do so.

It may be a case that local leisure centres open **1 or 2** at a time and gradually phase this however it won't be as simple as saying Leisure Centres can reopen as staff need notice that they will be returning to work from furlough and will also need to go through competency tests to determine suitability for work.

There is a Wayne Goldsmith Mini Series for Parents being run at the end of June, July and August. Wayne Goldsmith is a world renowned swimming coach who has coached very top athletes - I will post the information about this once I know more.

The next of these meetings will be in approximately 6 weeks.