

Minutes of SW Para/Disability Committee Meeting 12th November 2020 via Zoom

- 1. Present:** Graham Cockill (GC), Chair; Chrissie Robinson (CR), SW Region Chair; Dave Hill (DH), Coach; Colin Trudgeon, RMB Member; Roger Downing, SW Region President; Gerry Griffin, SW Region Treasurer; Kerry O'Reilly, Gloucestershire; Maria Harris, Devon; Richard Smith, Wiltshire; Chris Elliott, Cornwall. Paul Robbins (RMB Vice Chair) was present for part of the meeting
- 2. Apologies:** Kay Willcox (Somerset); Steve Johns (Dorset); Martin Lees (ML), Swim England; Carl Cooper (CC), Swim England. Kay and Steve tried to access the meeting but were unsuccessful.
- 3. Minutes of meeting held on 6th August 2020:** Agreed as an accurate record.
- 4. Matters arising from minutes of 6th August meeting:**

The Swimmer of the Year Trophy and Plaque have been engraved with Reece Dunn's name. The plaque will be posted to Reece, and the trophy will be kept by the SW Region at Reece's request. GC will try to arrange a trophy presentation photo opportunity for Reece in 2021 if circumstances allow.

Action: GC

5. SESW Para and Disability Swimming Committee Code of Conduct:

Committee members were asked to sign this document and return it to the SW Office. A scan via email will suffice.

Action: All

6. SW Para-Swimming Development Plan:

a) Swim England Proposals for the Para-Swimming Competition Pathway

The main aims of the proposals are:

- To bring structure and coherence to the pathway so that it aligns with the existing broader regional and national structure;
- To offer more heats to finals opportunities, and more events (eg relays) for swimmers by creating larger competitions;
- To create more opportunities for para-swimmer classifications.

It had been hoped that an agreed new para-swimming competition pathway could be implemented from September 2021, but this might be put back to September 2022.

Committee members will send their individual comments and views to ML, but general points and questions to emerge from our discussions for feedback to Swim England include the following:

- There is agreement and willingness to pair up with another region to run regional championships
- The view is that late September and early October come too soon in the swimming year to run regional championships, with many clubs restarting in September after a summer break and swimmers unlikely to be ready for competition. While late October could be a possibility, there is some feeling that swimmers might opt for one of the many open meets on offer at that time instead of their regional para-swimming championships.
- Question: Could regional championships take place in the middle of November? (This could clash with Arena League galas).
- Question: Could the N & S Zonal meets scheduled for November be converted into North and South Open Meets for para-swimmers, and also double as Regional Championships, with all northern regions competing together, and likewise all southern regions, and from which each region could identify its own results?

Or: Could regional para-swimming championships be subsumed within the regional championships that take place during the May window, leaving the November N&S Zonal meets as broad open meets for para-swimmers. (This would offer ordered progression from county to region to national competition).

- The importance of training Officials at regional para-swimming meets was emphasised.
- Committee members support turning the March National Para-Swimming Junior Championships into long course.
- In the main, para-swimmers are competing in county championships in the South West. County reps undertook to check whether their counties operate flexible qualifying times to encourage para-swimmers to enter. **Action: County Reps**
- Coaches and teachers value being consulted about developments to the para-swimming competition pathway, and would welcome further opportunities to offer their thoughts (perhaps via a via Zoom consultation event) to Swim England. **Action: GC to inform ML**

b) Forthcoming CPD for Para-Swimmers: The Swim England team are planning to run a National Development Day, via Zoom, on Sunday 13th December which will target regional level swimmers who are not on the talent programme, the aim being to deliver some key messages on what improvements are being looked for in athletes so that they can be considered for the talent programme. DH, our SW coach, will deliver a land-based workshop as part of the programme. Coaches, teachers and parents are also welcome to join in. Details about content and eligibility criteria will be sent out shortly to swimmers, coaches, teachers and county reps from the SW Region Office, through which the bookings should also be made. DH offered to send his database of known para-swimmers to the SW Office to help with distribution, and County reps also agreed to distribute the information about the National Development Day to the known swimmers and coaches/teachers in their counties. **Action: DH and County Reps**

c) GC reported that the two Swim England CPD sessions offered to coaches and teachers nationally at different levels, viz. Developing Physical Literacy in Para-Swimmers (run on 8th September) and Identifying Suitable Practices for the Development of Para-Swimmers (10th September), both run by Carl Cooper, were well structured and targeted, and very well received by the participants.

d) SW Para-Swimming Championships 13th March 2021 at Horfield Pool: it was agreed to retain the booking for this event and make a decision in the early part of the new year as to whether the championships should go ahead. ML has asked if the booking could be used for a Newcomer Event for swimmers in the South West to be classified should we decide to cancel the championships. CR will check with the SW Office staff about details of cancellation fees that might be applied should the booking not be able to be used. **Action: CR**

7. **Para-Swimming Secretary:** The vacancy remains open.

8. **AOB:** None

9 **Date of Next Meeting:** GC will choose a date in late January once the availability of Swim England colleagues is known.