



Swimming Officials Group committee

Zoom meeting 6.30pm 12 October 2020

Present:	R Downing	(RD)	SE SW President
	P Robbins	(PR)	Wiltshire & Chairman
	J Beard	(JB)	Regional Officials Training Coordinator & SOG
	N Harper	(NH)	Gloucestershire
	M Jeynes	(MJ)	Devon
	E Rookes	(ER)	Devon
	C Metcalfe	(CM)	Somerset
	N Jenkins	(NJ)	Cornwall
	T Roberts	(TR)	Dorset
	N Vause	(NV)	Officials Secretary

20.13 Welcome

(PR) informed the committee that Julia Airlie, (a Wiltshire referee), had recently passed away. Julia was a valued member of the officiating community at events held in the South West and nationally. Julia will be greatly missed by her friends and colleagues.

20.14 Apologises: C Cockill (SOG Deputy)

20.15 Minutes of previous meeting 5 February 2020: agreed, to be signed by NV.

20.16 Matters arising:

20.11 Seminars & CPDs

The planned meetings for Referees who would be mentoring / supporting J1 online candidates went ahead for Cornwall, Devon and Dorset. The March event at UWE for Gloucester, Somerset & Wiltshire was cancelled due to COVID. JB emailed an adapted presentation and supporting documents to all whom were due to attend. Complete JB

20. 2020 Technical Director appointments for regional events

JB proposed that the appointments agreed would stand for 2021, all unanimously agreed.

20.17 National Swimming Officials Group 5 October 2020

- Official's licenses that expire during Lockdown & ongoing restrictions will be given an extension. Staffing levels were reduced at Loughborough through restructuring and for the remaining Furloughed staff working patterns have changed with home working and infrequent visits to Head Office. Please continue to submit applications for renewal but

beware with a skeleton staff there will be processing delays. Newly qualified J1 Online candidates will receive their licence automatically from Loughborough.

- J1 Online logbooks will be processed in monthly batches.
- For any training enquires please do not contact Loughborough. Refer to JB for advice, she will contact Helen Whittle or Mark Davies if required.
- New named contact details of Loughborough staff will be notified in the future. Helen Akers was still on furlough at the time of the meeting.
- There will be no training opportunities for candidates until the Swim England Return to Competition document is signed off by the DCMS (Government Department). Following guidelines Level X is not a competition but a within training time trial.

Data downloads

- Swim England Data Protection restrictions on issuing details of officials is ongoing.
- The next download of J1 (Online) candidates that have completed their online learning is expected to include email addresses for the first time. This will enable contact to be made with the few candidates who have not followed the SW funded scheme. The list is for the use of the Regional Coordinator. Each County Coordinator and the pre-arranged tutor/mentor will be copied into the email sent to each successful candidate.
- JB shared the end quarter 2019 download of SW officials with county coordinators and NV. All sensitive data was removed and those who request no sharing of data were redacted before issue. All recipients follow the code of practice and do not share the data with other third parties. The ongoing Data Protection issues has prevented the distribution of any further lists by Swim England to the Regional Training and Development Coordinator.

20.18 Swimming competition and officiating during Covid

Level X

- The pilot included 11 clubs from across the county.
- Emphasised this is a training activity for the swimmers, to be held in bubbles with no outside involvement.
- To be compliant with individual clubs Covid risk assessment.
- There is no expectation for qualified officials to be present apart from Two SE members with the minimum qualification of J1 who are required to verify the results and start. The British Swimming referee module is being updated for reference; however, judging is not the purpose of Level X it is a training exercise for the swimmers benefit to gain some racing times. The only anticipated infractions would be if a swimmer gained an unfair advantage for example at the start. One timekeeper per lane is required, with no need for any qualifications. On no account should stopwatches be shared.
- Results will appear in the rankings with Level X displayed against them. How the times might be used for future competition has not been decided yet.
- Further guidance will be released after 15 October. (PMN All clubs were sent guidance on 16th October and the Level X events can start from October 23rd. The link is <https://www.swimming.org/sport/information-for-clubs/> and see attachments for Promoters conditions and Guidance for officials)

Other levels

- No information is available until the Return To Competition document is signed off by DCMS.
- Swim England recently announced a possible revised timetable for County Events from the end of May to mid-July and stated a hope that Regional Events might still be possible on their original dates. The meeting expressed the view that with the second wave of Covid among us realistically this might not prove possible.

Post meeting note:

If any officials are approached by a club to officiate at “a competition” please report it to the SW Regional Office as “competition” is not currently an allowable activity and goes against the Government approved return to swimming guidance.

Level X is NOT of course a competition but a training exercise that should ideally be resourced from within club training bubbles.

20.19 Officials training during Covid

- No training is currently allowed on deck across all levels of qualification. No one will be disadvantaged by this decision; the extension will be equivalent to Lockdown and the period without competition plus 3 months to run from when competition resumes.
- Referee practical, sign off and final assessments will recommence when competition returns. Theory sessions were encouraged to be held virtually to maintain interest.
- J1 (old) trainees expected to complete by July will be granted the extension outlined above.
- J1(online) since the end of January 2020, 78 trainees signed up, 70 SW funded and 8 self-funded. 43 South West funded, and the 8 self-funded candidates have completed the online phase and 27 SW funded candidates are pottering through the content. With no poolside practical incentive this is hardly surprising, JB is monitoring and periodically encouraging their progress. JB estimates that the 61 PILOT phase J1 candidates are still on course to achieve a remarkable 85% completion as J1s once competition is underway. A summary of all J1 online training and progress from July 2019 - October 2020 is attached.
- J2 / J2S British Swimming updated the script in readiness for the next phase of online learning, which is now delayed. The presentation has been circulated by JB to all counties for use in virtual theory sessions. Dorset have added a small amount of additional content to support the delivery by ZOOM which JB is happy to share. Their first theory session is scheduled for Wednesday 14 October.

Timekeeper training

- To encourage Young Volunteers British Swimming are contemplating offering separate TK training at a cost of £5 per candidate. If the candidate later enrolls on J1(Online) that fee will be reduced to £15. (PMN this has been launched as part of the LEVEL X supporting materials without a practical element).
- Consequently, the Group TK training, (10 places for £25), may end in the future. Whilst there is no practical work possible this training cannot be delivered.

20.20 Recruiting Officials

With no engagement with parents or the return of competition date unknown the majority of counties are not actively recruiting new officials.

Dorset have promoted J2 / J2S virtual sessions, Wiltshire has a waiting list for J2/J2S theory, the remaining counties will pursue when a date is known.

The possibility of a fall in numbers continuing their training or qualified officials losing interest was discussed. To ensure retention of our volunteers JB suggested county coordinators to engage with trainees and qualified officials between now and Christmas. Thanking them for their help and giving reassurance that they will be the first to know of the proposed return of competition.

Action: County coordinators to email their trainees and officials.

NV to email all officials that had signed up for 2020 regional events thanking them for their continued support.

20.21 Reports from the counties

Dorset County Report on Officials

Since the pandemic curtailed all on deck officiating and training activity the following has happened In Dorset (in no particular order)

A) One Dorset club has ceased to exist, and their 11 officials were encouraged to join other clubs or to contact Jill Beard if the IOS route was needed.

To date, of the 11 officials

three starters have stopped officiating (2x retirement and one a move abroad)

Two J2 have gone to other clubs (one in Dorset one in Somerset)

One J1 trainee (online but self-funded) has withdrawn through change of circumstance and another is expected to do the same

1x J1 has joined a new club

1 xJ1 trainee has joined a new club

1x J1 & 1xTk hopefully will join other clubs

B) All trainee J1 candidates have had encouraging emails from either Tracey or Jill whilst Inevitably waiting to continue their on-deck training. Responses are a bit haphazard as to be expected when no activity can take place. One candidate who is keen has moved to Wiltshire and been put in touch with The Wilts County Coordinator. Those candidates who have ceased their (historic) training activity have been noted as such.

There have been 3 new enrolments on J1 online during the pandemic, but none have yet completed that phase.

C) All J1 qualified officials who worked at 2020 county events were invited to enrol on ZOOM Theory Training for J2 and this is taking place in October (Sessions include a short equipment test and protocol discussion followed by two theory sessions based on BS PowerPoint).

D) All J2 qualified officials with sufficient experience were invited to enrol on ZOOM theory session which is scheduled for November.

The take up for C and D is small but it has allowed the establishment of the protocols that can be deployed when any new requests are received, or future recruitment drives are launched

E) Workbook sessions by ZOOM are planned for 2 Starter candidates waiting for a final poolside assessment. ZOOM WILL BE USED for similar J2 and J2S sessions going forward.

F) All officials who worked at 2020 County events will get an encouraging email once the protocols for level X are announced circa [15 October](#). This is important to try and avoid “loss of officials through inactivity”. In addition, because level X will be taking place within club TRAINING bubbles under exiting Club COVID RISK ASSESSMENTS and ANTICIPATED to only need 2 folk to start and verify the results leaving many officials with no activity. It is hoped the message will reassure the majority, who will therefore not be on poolside until into 2021, that they are still very much valued by their clubs and the county. (the return of traditionally licensed competition and leagues cannot happen until Swim England plans are agreed by the DCMS and are allowed in law)

G) Once the 2020 officials list is received from SWIM ENGLAND any officials listed who have not been covered by previous emails and WHO ALLOW CONTACT will have a similar email to point F above.

H) Planning for Officiating 2021 County events is not being undertaken until the return to competition beyond level X has been approved by DCMS.

I) It is understood that all clubs still active in the county now have some water time, but it is sometimes less than before and/or costing more.

Wiltshire

Following the cessation of poolside activities, we in Wiltshire have been fairly quiet.

No interest has been forthcoming on new courses although some potential candidates have expressed an interest to commence once some form of defined competition commences

We have received one J1 candidate transferring from Hampshire and she has been allocated a Tutor close to her home.

Wilts Officials Coordinator have been co-opted on to Wilts Competition group to advise and have input from an Officials point of view to aid with the planning and organisation of County Championship and Leagues following publication of Swim England return to completion guidelines Some candidate have raised various queries on their ongoing training and these have been dealt with by their Tutors.

One to one rules updates have been held for relicensing.

Cornwall

We are struggling generally with access to pool time for training. No interest from new people wishing to train but frankly that's understandable until such time as we get back to competitive swimming.

I think it also depends what happens when training settles down into a regular routine. Also need to bear in mind current situation with pandemic.

Devon

We are having little progress, without pools and no competition. Our main pool in Plymouth is shut until next year. It is a matter of wait and see until things improve.

Somerset

The John Cooper trophy was awarded to Graham Cockill for his outstanding services to officiating.

Gloucester -Nothing to report.

20.22 Seminars & CPD courses

- FINA rules 2017-2021 can be delivered virtually for those needing to relicense.
- Contemporary Issues online (IOS).
- No arrangements for a 2021 Para CPD.
- The possibility of a virtual seminar, (Zoom can accommodate 100 attendees), was discussed for all officials in 2021. To regroup as a community, build confidence and prepare for our return on deck.

20.23 AOB

20.23.1 - CM enquired if the FINA rules 2017-2021 was required for relicensing if a candidate had recently completed a training for a higher qualification. JB confirmed it was necessary because of the inclusion of Protest & Complaints slides.

20.23.2 - Roger thanked the committee for the invitation to attend the meeting. The current situation was frustrating, but we must remain positive and he looked forward to seeing us all at events in the future.

The date of the next meeting was agreed for February 2021, (subject to the availability of Zoom).

The meeting ended at 7.45pm