

Swim England gains clarity on how new restrictions will impact water polo

Swim England has gained further clarity on the new coronavirus restrictions which will impact adult water polo training and matches after Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday announced in a statement to the House of Commons that the rule of six would be extended to all adult indoor team sports.

It means water polo club sessions for players over the age of 18 will be limited to training and playing in bubbles of six people only. However, the new rules state that organised indoor sport or exercise classes can take place in larger numbers, provided groups of more than six do not mix. This means six could play a three versus three game in one area of the pool, while another group of six do the same in a different part of the water.

The latest guidance does not apply to U18s indoor team sports, which can carry on as before.

Swim England is seeking further clarification on how this applies to mixed groups of athletes aged over 18 and U18s but the current interpretation is that, in this instance, each group must be limited to six people.

It is also understood that a coach is not included in the six as long as they maintain social distancing at all times.

Extremely disappointing

Organised indoor team sports for disabled people can take place in any number.

Elite sporting competition and training is not affected by the Government announcement. However, club water polo activity is not covered by the Elite Sport Return to Domestic Competition guidance and, therefore, this particular guideline is not relevant to clubs..

Land training can also take place with groups larger than six for U18s.

Jane Nickerson, Swim England chief executive, said: "It's extremely disappointing the latest restrictions to combat the spread of coronavirus will affect adult water polo, especially as the Government had just approved our guidance to allow water polo clubs to return to competitive training and matches.

"However, the rules do allow groups of six to train competitively in bubbles and teams comprising of U18s only can carry on as previously. We realise that this will be frustrating to many but, rest assured, we will be doing everything we can to continue to support our water polo community during this time. In every activity, we'd urge people to make sure they are following the relevant Swim England Returning to the Pool guidance and the Government guidelines – and stay safe."

The Swim England Water Polo Return to Team Sport guidance is in the process of being updated to reflect these changes.

Toolbox



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