

## **Swimming Performance Pathway in Derbyshire Consultation – Summary of Responses**

Attendees were invited to consider the following questions:

1. What are the Pros and Cons for Model 1?
2. Could there be any amendments or improvements which could make this the preferred model?
3. If this is a preferred model, what would have to be in place for Model 1 to work?
4. What are the Pros and Cons for Model 2?
5. Could there be any amendments or improvements which could make this the preferred model?
6. If this is a preferred model, what would have to be in place for Model 2 to work?
7. Is there an alternative model you would like to propose or comments to record?

### **Derventio Club/Parents/Swimmers Consultation**

The consultation was held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May, was attended by approx 40 parents and 14 swimmers. Discussions were conducted in 4 groups -1 of which was the swimmers group.

### **General points and questions from consultation on 9<sup>th</sup> May**

#### ***Process***

- Is this timescale realistic with new coach in place unfamiliar with Derbyshire situation?
- Who is responsible for driving the direction of this plan for Derbyshire and DX
- How will consultation with local clubs be managed so that they all have an equal say – ensure all clubs/parents are properly consulted
- What support will be given to Head Coach through this process – he may be in a vulnerable position not knowing Derbyshire coaches/system
- What happens if clubs don't buy in??
- Can David Joy do road show to clubs to explain situation
- Need to establish clear targets about what DX is trying to do
- Club committees sometimes block messages to parents – how do we overcome this?

#### ***Coaching***

- Where swimmers have dipped in performance recently what consideration will be given when not their fault – lack of pool time, coaching etc
- How do we manage teenage hormones when selecting squads
- Who will line manage Head Coach to ensure accountability

- Club and Coach continues until 2011. How will this be managed for Kim
- Need to position Kim within these plans
- Need to ensure that proper consideration is being given to individual needs of swimmers to meet their age and skill level

### ***Pool time/logistics***

- Derbyshire is a big county – if it is a pathway for Derbyshire it must cover whole area – not just motorway path
- How does programme link to 5 year planning
- Good to see that both models help to ease the pool time situation currently in place

### ***Finance***

- Resources and costs need to match
- Can DASA put a levy on ASA registration to support DX
- Will DX parents transfer back to home squads and make raising funds for DX an issue
- DASA and Derbyshire County Council should fund more

### ***Hub Clubs***

- Are hub clubs/squads prepared to restructure pool time and squads to take in DX swimmers
- Will the establishment of hub club sites lead to a two tier structure of clubs in the county
- Are 3 hubs enough for Derbyshire given its size – what about northwest corner and extreme north east
- What happens when swimmers opt not to join DX – with hubs in Chesterfield and Derby, they may not need to join – there needs to be greater cross over between clubs and DX
- What powers will hub clubs have

### **General comments from the swimmers**

- They felt £10 a month in option 1 was too expensive for 1 session. Swimmers based in the South were not happy with the head coach spending so much time in the North. They felt it would lead to a number of coaches taking the sessions.
- Swimmers based in the North felt the head coach should spend time with them.  
There were a number of suggestions regarding standards from National to several Midland times but a set of Derventio times was preferred.
- The age for swimmers in the squad South should be a minimum of girls 12 and boys 13 with less part time swimmers.  
North based swimmers were not happy with option 2 and the swimmers present felt they had enough water time at present but requested more land work.  
All swimmers were happy to do fund raising activities.

- Swimmers based in the South would prefer to start earlier in the mornings.
- Swimmers would like long course training.

### **Comments on Option1**

#### ***Pros***

- Keeps squad together
- Good quality time for each group with Head Coach
- This option may be significantly different to current model – for a visual change for others to see
- Development squads are much better for young swimmers
- Involves the local clubs more in system
- Affordability for parents
- Amber valley as a weekend option is more central
- Travel times reduced
- More access to quality coaching
- More quality pool time
- Better for the north

#### ***Cons***

- Funding and pool time are barriers
- Travel for head coach may be excessive
- Travel time to different pools for swimmers is still a challenge
- Swimmers will move to hub clubs
- 50/50 coach split not best for quality
- Travel times still a problem
- Membership fees need debate
- Model not affordable for DX
- Quality coaches already busy

#### ***Questions/observations***

- Need to detail selection criteria for A and B squads and how swimmers move between the 2 - how/who/when
- How will the squad be managed in the pool – will there be flexibility, or segregation?
- Can the North squad have 15 hours?
- Do clubs have the capacity to release coaches to support DX coach – coaches of right ability working with swimmers?
- Need to set selection criteria – is it age groups, is it midlands or national times or potential? General feeling that DX should provide for potential midlands to national swimmers
- 20 hours is for a senior squad – need to have more flexibility to allow younger swimmers to train less
- Needs to help prepare other swimmers for aspects – like experiencing camps

- 5hrs at weekend would be challenging – but optimum number weekend sessions needs to be planned well in advance and is essential
- Long course training also desirable and needs planning – maybe with hub clubs who already have some 50m time programmed
- Need consistency in approach to coaching which needs to meet individual needs of swimmers
- Training programmes need to be individualised for each swimmer – not designed around needs of best 3 or 4
- Maximum 2/3 coaches working with each group to build relationships and consistency
- Head coach time should be proportional not equal – based on performance of swimmers
- Swimmers need more skills work and land training
- How do we cater for swimmers moving up and down between groups?
- Where are the 15 hours in north?
- What are the criteria or qualification times?
- How many swimmers – how does this add up financially?
- Can we get quality 50m pool time
- Is this offering best value for money?

## **Comments on Option 2**

### ***Pros***

- Cheaper model

### ***Cons***

- Differentiates north and south
- Swimmers may leave DX and go to hub/home club
- This doesn't offer more than clubs already provide
- Travel time for younger swimmers to hub clubs will make it difficult for them to train
- Hub squads may have late sessions – too late for young swimmers
- Confusion over who swims for who
- Role of head coach is less clear in this option
- Hub clubs may not work
- The 50:50 coach split is not ideal
- Consistency of coaching is a real issue

### ***Questions/observations***

- In option 2 – does this mean there will be only 1 other coach and head coach rather than 5/6 coaches in the Option 1
- North needs to be not just about Chesterfield swimmers – will there be separate lanes and extra lanes?
- Need to ensure coaches drive session and there is consistency in coaching
- How will part timers be treated – part time works for some swimmers? Some progress more quickly than others, but some improve after a while

- Maybe look to introduce a probationary period for part timers
- Strength will be when clubs enjoy success of DX
- Need to change things to buy in the club coaches and swimmers and clubs
- Sometime swimmers have behaved with some arrogance – not helped relationship with other clubs and coaches
- Swimmers should go back to home club more often and become ambassadors and role models

### **One of 3 groups voted on the two options**

Option 1      eleven  
 Option 2      0  
 Abstain      abstain

### **Coach Consultation held on the 11<sup>th</sup> May**

The consultation was attended by approx 19 coaches. Discussions were conducted in 3 groups and then fed back to the whole group.

Option 1

#### **Pros**

- Involves coaches from home club, and strengthens that coach
- Offer of financial incentives to the coach

#### **Cons**

- Concern about financial viability - appeared to have double pool time
- Who would pay pool hire cost in the North (DX / Chesterfield?)
- Giving the presence of a North / South Divide, why not take the Chesterfield element of option 2 but use option 1 in the south?
- Why is Club & Coach not involved?
- Criteria affect cash flow

Option 2

#### **Pros**

- The progression is clear

#### **Cons**

- Feeder clubs potentially lose out on training fees paid to hubs by their swimmers

- Some feeder club coaches felt swimmers applying to join Hub Club should be directed to the feeder clubs' teaching programme

### **General Comments**

- Communication at all levels would be important
- Some feeder club coaches felt Andi's "Coaching Philosophy" should be imposed on hub squads, although it was unclear how far this should go
- The discrepancy in numbers between options 1 and 2 was not fully understood, particularly with respect to standards
- It was felt rigid standards were needed at all levels and had to be clear and assessed regularly
- How would the bottom end of clubs be filled?  
Will there be part timers, as this works well for smaller clubs? Bigger clubs might be able stay with their own club longer.
- Best swimmers from smaller clubs will be forced to move to bigger clubs to get pool time; this damaging effect has been stopped recently with DX in place. This also impacts as friends may also leave
- What is the motivation for smaller club coaches with Hub Squads?
- DX needs to stay under one umbrella, Nova does
- How could more pool time be provided for smaller clubs instead of pushing to bigger clubs or Hub Squads?
- If Hub Squads come into play will Andi oversee all training sessions, as well as the 'A' Squad?
- Hub Squad concept is financially driven, not Club driven
- How would coaches' roles be integrated across the model/s?
- There is something good/bad in each model

### **Consultation held on the 13<sup>th</sup> May**

The consultation held in Derby, was attended by approx 20 people. Discussions were conducted in 3 groups – and then all came back together.

### **General points and questions**

- Overall preferred option 2, a coach who had been to the meeting on Monday admitted he had changed his views upon reflection
- Hub Club needed more time/finance
- It was better to have a number of steps and they seemed better
- Movement criteria needed to be:
  - Transparent/publicised process
  - Clear standards
  - Age and times need to be amalgamated
- How many performance swimmers are there in the County?
- Is the review needed?
- Part time has caused some issues:
  - often doesn't seem part of DX
  - communications problems coach to coach

- Concern over VFM particularly with consistency over coaches
- The back up for coaches when away and quality of these was questioned, as was the criteria for these stepping in to the sessions.
- Want swimmers to swim for feeder/home club when appropriate
- In the model was p/t development the same as Hub and does it include p/t swimmers
- Concern that it is only available for richer parents
- Peer pressure would be applied to join bigger clubs
- There needs to be parental recognition of the pathway, including the costs and moves

### **Consultation held on the 14<sup>th</sup> May**

The consultation held in Chesterfield, was attended by approx 14 people. Discussions were conducted in 3 groups – and then all came back together.

### **General points and questions**

- Concern over perception issues that need to be addressed.
- How would DX get quality pool time as this proposes using a number of pools?
- There needs to be better pool allocation and access
- What if swimmers did not want to move from the hub squad to DX?
- What if swimmers don't want to move to hub squad?
- Why move from Hub to DX?
- Has to be better financial commitment from partners
- All clubs need to buy in to the model, and should use swim21, including allocating pool time.
- All coaches to buy in and move swimmers
- Communication has to be better, this includes from DX, however, it was also noted that many clubs were poor at distributing information. Coaches too had a responsibility to give information in a non-partisan way.
- There needs to be a better relationship between home club and swimmers when moved/coming back. This includes, athletes recognising their attitudes may have an impact.
- Consideration should be given to the retention of the DX Executive to ensure succession planning, whilst adding an independent element.
- There is no current link to standards, if a swimmer gets into the squad; they stay there, even if not performing.
- How/who is going to recruit the swimmers?
- The part time option should be kept
- There was concern over small numbers in either model
- Why a Chesterfield hub squad and not Rykneld?
- Should DX change name?
- Fee structure needs to be looked at
- How does Chesterfield fit in with option 2? If option 1 will they be on board?

- More support needed for non-swim services, such as psychology, sports medicine etc

## **Next Steps**

The comments collected and summarised below will be fed into the consultation process. There have been 3 other consultation events during week commencing 11 May, involving clubs and coaches. Andi Manley the new Head Coach of DX was involved in the coaches meeting held on 11 May.

Comments from each of these consultation events will be considered by the Strategic Group steering this review process. The group is meeting again on 28 May.

A further proposal will be circulated to all consultees soon after 02 June.