



DERBYSHIRE AMATEUR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to Swim England East Midland Region

Performance Pathways

A Derbyshire Perspective

*Information for swimmers/parents/clubs
and the swimming community in Derbyshire*

Introduction

Our sport has many facets, from learn to swim through social/fitness to participation and competition. Our swimmers should be able to take part at every level. The challenge for Derbyshire ASA is to facilitate swimming for all ages and abilities, while increasing participation in the sport, thereby protecting the future and financial viability of all the clubs that are the lifeblood of swimming in Derbyshire.

One aspect of that challenge is to encourage performance pathways that allow the most talented and dedicated swimmers to fulfil their potential. It is recognised that successful pathways can also increase the level of participation as success breeds interest in the sport.

What are Performance Pathways?

Swim England has a broad definition of performance pathways. It is acknowledged that there are many types of performance pathways for example: Single club systems; Local Authority supported schemes; Specialist performance hubs; club collaborations and sports colleges. Every recognised pathway should have four key elements as described by Swim England:

- Ability at age 14+ to access at least 16 pool hours per week
- Consistent Coach/Coaching
- Outside pool resources such as Land Training - Strength and Conditioning, Nutrition
- Links with College/University

What does this mean in Derbyshire?

For many years Derventio Excel were the only recognised Performance Pathway within Derbyshire. The application of performance pathway principles through Derventio Excel has reaped significant rewards - culminating in disproportionate county representation at the highest levels (5 Derbyshire swimmers at 2020 Olympics and 8 at 2022 Commonwealth Games. A remarkable legacy.

All things evolve, however, following the recent merger of City of Derby and Derventio Excel we now have a new paradigm in the county. A key feature of the DX model was the aspiration that swimmers on the pathway retained strong links with their 'home' club. This aspect is one that DASA have been keen to preserve as we enter a new performance regime.

The following is a brief synopsis of the current Performance Pathways in Derbyshire

Derby Excel (new club following merger of City of Derby and Derventio Excel)

Offers access to their performance squads in a similar way to the DX pathway. Differences include: a shift of club representation towards the pathway club; an agreed/negotiated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Derby Excel and individual 'pathway clubs' which enshrines the principles of representation and provides tangible links to the pathway; improved and thorough invitation process.

For more information visit: <https://www.derbyexcel.org.uk>

Chesterfield

Chesterfield have established a Northern pathway as a direct response to the difficulties faced with DX in the north of the county and has similar principles to those of Derby Excel with regard to the use of MOUs and club representation.

For more information visit: <https://www.chesterfieldsc.co.uk/club-info>

Repton

Repton has a national reach/aspiration and their swimming squads are a combination of school pupils, boarders and local community. They are self contained in terms of recruitment, access to pool time and off pool support and as a result are not seeking MOUs with Derbyshire clubs. Their location means that they are affiliated to Derbyshire and swimmers within their programmes are Derbyshire swimmers. This means that the standard of competition and performance within the county will inevitably be raised.

For more information visit: <https://www.repton.org.uk/swimming>

Conclusion

There are now 3 distinct performance pathways within Derbyshire and the programmes are committed to working together to enhance performance swimming to maintain and improve the high standards previously achieved. All three clubs have worked in conjunction with and been supported by East Midlands Region and Swim England.

DASA have agreed with the Performance Coaches that the MOU for engagement is specific to each Club and Pathway, and there is no need for a non-engagement version.

All three performance clubs will work together to promote swimmer and coach development which DASA is keen to support.

DASA looks forward to the new regime and will continue to support effective pathways where it can.