

ENGLAND PROGRAMME SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING SENIOR AND JUNIOR TRIAL INFORMATION

England Training Squad 2017

Overview:

This guidance document is intended to provide transparency regarding the requirements to seek to achieve in order to be considered for a place on the 2017 England Training Squad (15yrs+).

Rationale:

Synchronised Swimming is a team sport. The multi-faceted nature of team sport make objective criteria very difficult to define, and thus there will be significant components of subjective decision making with regard to final squad places. The Talent Development Officer (TDO) has the final say and final discretion on decision making.

The requirements, approximate costs and phases are outlined, as far as possible, in this guidance document. The TDO along with appointed National Coach(es) have discretion on the requirements throughout the phases.

Number of athletes selected:

We are looking for enough athletes to have a competitive squad of 10-12 Junior athletes and 10-12 Senior athletes, some athletes may therefore be in both the Senior and Junior squads, if it strategically advantageous.

Junior and Senior athlete's need to be 15 years old during 2017 and Juniors no older than 18 years old during 2017.

Solo and Duet selections will be made from athletes from within the selected Squads and details of the selection Trial will be published separately.

Objectives

- To select athletes that will form the team to achieve the best possible results.
- To select athletes for the England Training Squad that have the best chance of potential development and success at the competitions during 2017.
- To select athletes who have the potential to represent GBR at international level during 2017 and in the future.

Eligibility

- Athletes born in 2002 or earlier (15+ in 2017) are eligible to take part in 2016 Trial.
- Athletes must be eligible to represent England/Great Britain at international level (athletes must hold a British passport).
- Athletes must be able to demonstrate commitment to all training camps and competitions if they are selected.
- Athletes must be able to undertake and provide evidence of training outside of England Training Camps in their Home Club. The Club Coach will be required to Sign Up to the Programme demonstrating full support and commitment.

General

All athletes are expected to comply with the ASA Code of Conduct and any other protocols or policies notified to them by the ASA. These documents will be sent to the relevant athletes upon selection.

Further selection to the travelling competitive Teams will be conditional on signing and complying with the British Swimming Code of Conduct and complying with British Swimming Rules and Polices. These documents will be sent to the relevant athletes upon selection.

Athletes must demonstrate an uncompromised commitment to training preparation for peak performance at the competitions during 2017 as determined by the TDO/Coach(es). If for any reason the athlete is unable and/or unwilling to fulfil this commitment, they may be withdrawn from the squad and/or a place in the team. This will be at the complete discretion of the TDO/Coach(es)

Athletes will be expected to attend each training intervention and all programmed events, where invited, taking part in all programmed activities. Dates and timings may vary in accordance with external information and unforeseen circumstances. No athlete will be allowed to miss or leave a camp/training or undertake any activities that are not deemed directly relevant to the team performance unless written consent is provided by the TDO, a formal written application must be submitted clearly stating why time away is required and the performance benefit demonstrated. Athletes must have this signed by the club coach.

Athlete Contribution – all athletes will be required to make a contribution to squad training in the region of £300-£500 for the year, this will need to be paid on acceptance of a squad place. Competition and overseas training camps may require a further contribution of £80-£150 depending on length of stay and overall costs incurred, this will be invoiced separately.

The year will start upon selection in September 2016 and athletes are expected to remain part of the squad and attending training camps, where specified, until the end of the season, September 2017. After the final competition of the season if an athlete requests to retire early from the programme, this will need to be submitted in writing prior to the final competition of the season. No refunds of the Athlete Contribution will be made if an athlete leaves the programme early.

If Athletes are unable to attend a Trial due to illness or injury, a letter from a medical professional shall be required prior to the Trial date and a further Trial date may be offered, this will only be considered if the athlete has had previous England/GB selection. This will be at the discretion of the TDO/Coach(es)

Athletes who become injured during the year after selection will need to provide a letter from a medical professional detailing their condition/diagnosis and prognosis, plus the medical professional's contact details. An appointed ASA medical professional will be required to assess the athlete and to review the external medical professional's assessment of their condition and diagnosis/prognosis before the athlete is allowed to continue training with the programme. Provided that both medical professionals agree, the athlete can continue on the programme based on the medical advice. If the medical advice is disputed by the athlete (or their parent or carer if under 18) or there is disagreement between the medical professionals the athlete will be withdrawn from the programme.

Athletes selected to the Rio 2016 Olympic duet will be given an automatic place in the 2017 squad and are therefore exempt from Phase 1. All other criteria laid out in this document will be tested during phase 2, non-compliance will result in deselection from the squad.

Guidance Information Framework for the England Programme Synchronised Swimming Squads

Input may be gathered from all staff and coaches working with the athletes and any other person the TDO considers necessary to assist in the final decision. The TDO's decision shall be final.

There will be four selection phases with selection for teams decided during phase 4:-

Phase 1: Initial invitation to the squad 17-18th September 2016

Phase 2: ongoing training, improvement and attitude October-November

Phase 3: second invitation to reduce to final squad numbers in December

Phase 4: ongoing training, improvement and attitude January-September

Synchronised Swimming is a complex team sport and selections will be based on synchro technical ability as well as team cohesion.

The selection will draw from information on **strength, speed, fitness, accuracy, consistency, flexibility, coach-ability, attitude, physical appearance**, team fit and the following factors will be considered.

Physical

- Good flexibility, particularly through hips, backs, and shoulders
- Demonstration of good overall body strength
- Good aerobic and anaerobic fitness
- How to use the body and required muscles to perform
- Core strength to support dynamic/stable moves
- Power to project out of the water and propulsion around the pool
- Speed of movement for pattern changes, fast movements, propulsion, sharpness
- Endurance and an ability to sustain long training sessions with focus
- Robustness after hours of training in and out the pool
- Lean and athletic appearance

Technical ability

- Good execution in all routines from beginning to end
- A good understanding of what execution is
- Ability to hold counts for synchronisation
- Move accurately hitting the correct lines
- An ability to learn quickly and change team places and counts easily
- An ability to understand team patterns including spacing and pattern accuracy
- An ability to show heights in figures/routines
- Good extension throughout body during figures/routines
- Ability to perform the choreography and movements accurately
- Ability to perform all movements in a consistent manner
- Highlight consistency and an ability to understand the timing and positioning for lifts

Strategic and Mental Capacity

- Demonstration of Competitiveness
- Perfectionist and determined to get things accurate
- Mental Toughness/Resilient with an ability to maintain optimum performance under pressure and adversity
- Understand and implement recovery strategies
- Ability to absorb many corrections at once
- Thrives under competition conditions
- Focus and concentration to maintain performance during training and competition
- Demonstration of an internal drive and motivation towards excelling in all areas
- Confidence in own ability

Specific Technical markers that the selectors will be looking for:

- Accuracy and ability in figures (Juniors) and team elements (Seniors)
- Good range of splits (in the water)
- Mid-thigh or above Stable Double leg vertical
- Upper Thigh or above in Bent Knee Vertical, Fishtail and all other single/ballet leg positions
- Barracuda and Rocket Split height (ribs or above)
- Spin accuracy (on the spot, line and homogenous)
- Synchronisation/timing - sharpness
- Pattern accuracy
- Body boost, hips and top of thighs dry
- Eggbeater, correct posture (body and legs), fast leg action, collar bones dry
- Head placement, accuracy in arms, neck extension
- Performance and presentation skills

Please note that these technical markers will be considered during routines & figure trial

Compatibility with coaches and other athletes:

- Individual contribution to enhance team dynamics
- Has the ability to appreciate each team member
- Understands the role of the coach
- Accepts corrections
- Retains corrections
- Demonstrates performance attitude
- Team focussed

15+ ENGLAND TRAINING SQUAD TRIAL, 17-18th SEPTEMBER 2016

Phase 1: TRIAL

- Date: 17th to 18th September 2016 – Juniors 17th only, Seniors 17-18th
- Venue: Crystal Palace National Sports Centre
- Number of athletes: minimum 10 athletes in both Junior and Senior
- Junior Selection Criteria: GBR Free Team 2016, Junior Fina Figures, land and pool testing, factors listed in selection areas above.
- Senior Selection Criteria: Flash GBR Tech Team Routine, GBR Free Team 2016, land and pool testing, factors listed in selection areas above.

Phase 2: ONGOING ASSESSMENT

- Follow National Training Plan post selection from September – December 2016
- Commitment to **all** training at Club and England Programme training camps/sessions
- Evidence of adhering to Training Programme in home clubs from Club Coach(es)
- Continuous technical improvement
- Motivated work ethic with positive impact on Team Dynamics, with other squad members and coaches.

Phase 3: REVIEW OF SQUAD

- Date: 10th to 11th December 2016
- Venue: Crystal Palace National Sports Centre
- **Review of athletes - bench mark testing and routine Trial**
- Number of athletes as in phase 1

Phase 4: TEAM SELECTION & ONGOING ASSEMENT

- Follow National Training Plan from January-September 2017
- Commitment to **all** training at Club and England Programme training camps/sessions
- Commitment to all competitions selected for
- Evidence of adhering to Training Programme in home clubs from Club Coach(es)
- Continuous technical improvement
- Motivated work ethic with positive impact on Team Dynamics, with other squad members and coaches.

Athletes may register for both Junior and Senior Trial. Athletes that do not demonstrate sufficient improvements during the phases and testing may be deselected from the squad.

The Role of the Club Coaches

The England Programme Synchro Team of the TDO and Squad Coaches will be liaising directly with the Club Coaches on all Synchro technical related information. This is to ensure the correct information can be passed to the technical experts working with athletes during their home programmes.

Upon selection to the squad, Club Coaches will be required to act on their athletes behalf. Feedback sessions/information, details of home training developments, screening, national training requirements and any other sport related topics will be communicated and monitored through the Club Coaches. Athletes will receive a copy of results/correspondence but emails from parents requesting specific technical information will need to go via the Club Coach.

Results of selection will be emailed to athletes and Club Coaches following the Trial. Club Coaches only, are welcome to request additional feedback regarding their athletes results and any specific technical improvements, within 24 hours of the results being received.

Parents are reminded that all training sessions are open after the trial and further information about this will be detailed in the Athletes Training Manual post selection.

Use of Video equipment is a valuable aid to coaching the team and is taken by the Team staff and coaches with the permission of the pool operator. Athletes, parents/carers should be aware that filming is used as a coaching tool, and is carried out in accordance with guidance in the ASA's child safeguarding policies and procedures document – Wavepower. We kindly request that filming and photography during training is not carried out by any unauthorised person. Permission will only be granted on a case by case basis and is further subject to the rules and policy of the pool operator. Further information about this will be detailed in the Athletes Training Manual post selection.

Feedback will be given at regular intervals, this will either be verbal or written, personally or generic, it is the responsibility of the athlete and club coach to follow up anything with the squad coach after a feedback session. Further information about this will be detailed in the Athletes Training Manual post selection.

To Register for England Training Squad 2017

**Please complete the registration form at https://asa.formstack.com/forms/synchro_trials
Closing date for registration is 12 noon, Saturday 3rd September 2016**

On receipt of your registration form you will receive – further information about the Trial including music, video links, timetable and kit list.

The Trial fee is £85, to help cover the pool costs, paid via the online registration system or by post making cheques payable to the ‘Amateur Swimming Association’ – **please ensure the name of the swimmer and the following code is on the reverse of the cheque: ASTAL-TSY-1410-TRI**

For all Senior Trial athletes accommodation and evening meal is provided on 17th and breakfast on 18th September, please bring packed lunch on 17th September.

For Juniors please bring a packed lunch for 17th no accommodation is included.

Travel and all other costs will be at the athlete’s expense.

Parents or those with parental responsibility, will be required to attend the parent workshop and drop off and pick up only. The selection Trials are a **closed event**, to reduce external pressure on the athletes.

Club Coaches are welcome and encouraged to attend at the club/own cost – they must be responsible for booking accommodation with Joan.Miles@GLL.ORG however they must inform TDO of attendance karen.thorpe@swimming.org

Results of selection will be emailed to athletes and Club Coaches following the Trial. Club Coaches only, are welcome to request additional feedback regarding their athletes results and any specific technical improvements, this must be done within 24 hours of the results being received.

Selected athlete are required to attend all training dates. The Athlete Contribution will be payable upon acceptance of place on the 2017 Squad.

Provisional Yearly Plan Training and Competitions

Training 2016/2017

Day to day training within club programmes following national training plan, a minimum of 20 hours per week

1-3 day centralised training session alternate weeks until end of season Sept 2017

3-5 day training camps monthly from October 2016 until end of 2017 competitions (when planned)

Provisional 2017 Competition dates Junior/Senior

(Please note this doesn’t include training/travel dates)

Senior German Open – duet(s)/Solo(ists) only – Bonn 2nd-5th March

Senior French Open – full Senior programme – Paris 9th-12th March

Senior European Cup – full Senior programme (TBC) – May (no dates/venue released)

Senior World Champ – full Senior programme (TBC) – Budapest 13-23rd July

Junior European Champs – full Junior programme (TBC) - Belgrade August (no specific dates released)

There shall be no right of appeal if an athlete is unsuccessful in attaining a place on the England Programme. Please note that all training plans and competitions are marked as provisional, this is due to unknown factors, funding constraints and facility accessibility.