



Schools Water Polo South Africa

22nd June 2020

To the South African Schools Water Polo Playing Community

The Facebook video from the National Water Polo head coach regarding training and registration has created a flurry of interest among parents and players!

From a South African Schools perspective the video and registration requirement only refers to U16, U17 and U18 players who were included in the SA Squads that were announced earlier this year. Only players in these squads will be issued permits by Swimming South Africa (SSA) for conditioning-based training. Currently no Aquatic Sport has yet been gazetted to commence training.

The first point is that training venues need to be Covid-19 accredited by SSA and the respective Provincial Aquatics bodies. As you are aware the majority of venues are based at schools; this adds another dynamic as the Department of Basic Education (DBE) have priority jurisdiction over the venues at State schools.

The current ruling is that there is no school sport for the remainder of 2020. However, there is a chance that school governing bodies, headmasters / mistresses may have some leeway to amend their own situation. But, there is NO provision at this point for players from one school playing at another school. So, given the current Government Regulations, it is extremely unlikely for there to be any competitive schools' polo this year.

Also, at the moment there are no accredited venues in South Africa. A number of schools are embarking on the accreditation procedure, but it is an arduous process with multiple steps that have to be addressed in great detail. It will likely take time to complete the process and with no guaranteed successful outcome.

However, as with many of the lockdown regulations, things are fluid and can be amended/enforced further at any time.

Players in the SA Age Group Squads will be issued with a permit to train but they need to be registered with the national body and belong to a club for the 2020/21 season (May 2020 to April 2021).

We kindly request that all our players remain patient as we are all very eager to return to training and playing water polo but as the safety of our players, coaches, managers and supporters are paramount, we will only return to full play once legally allowed to do so.

In the meantime, please remember to practice social distancing, wear your mask, wash your hands and most importantly stay safe.

Yours faithfully

Richard Irvine
Chairman: Schools Water Polo South Africa