



Disability Swimming

Introduction

Exmouth Swimming and Life Saving Society has made the commitment to integrating members of all abilities whenever possible. To this end;

- The club has adopted and communicated the ASA approved Equity Policy
- The club has completed a DDA Self Assessment
- Lead coaches and a current member of the club's management committee have undertaken an ASA approved Equity Course
- The club works in partnership with local disability organisations
- Structures are in place to include disabled swimmers

Teaching and Coaching Swimmers with a Disability

Exmouth Swimming and Life Saving Society subscribes to the view that all swimmers deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Teaching and Coaching swimming is about focussing on a swimmer's abilities rather than on disabilities; and creating the best learning/training environment for that swimmer to progress.

Where possible, Exmouth Swimming and Life Saving Society will do its utmost to provide an inclusive teaching/coaching environment and ensure swimmers with a disability are integrated seamlessly into the 'mainstream' of the club. We have had a swimmer with a disability who has represented the club in the Speedo National Swimming League and represented his country at the Paralympics.

Teaching and coaching swimmers who have a disability is no different to teaching and coaching non-disabled swimmers. The basic principles of BLABT (Body position, Legs, Arms, Breathing, Timing) still apply and it is merely a case of adjusting and adapting the learning and training process according to the swimmers' abilities. Only from a health and safety point of view is it important to acknowledge what the specific impairment factors are.

Including Disabled Swimmers

All swimmers, whatever their abilities, should receive appropriate levels of teaching and coaching and pool-time relative to the level at which they are performing.

Currently, when inducting new members into the club, swimmers are assessed in the water according to their abilities; and on that basis allocated to the group or squad that is most appropriate to their needs. Swimmers with a disability are no different and are treated in



exactly the same way. There are very few disabilities that would not allow a swimmer to be included in regular club training programmes

Communication

Teaching and coaching relies on good communication.

In all sports it is necessary for the teacher or coach to adapt their communication style to the athletes they work with. Disability swimming is no different and the swimmers will very quickly help to identify how they best communicate. There are some obvious modifications for different impairment groups, for example visually impaired swimmers will require good verbal instruction and discover by feel, while swimmers with little or no hearing will require good visual demonstrations.

All the regular communication guidelines such as clear and simple instructions, offering feedback, two way communication all apply the same as in any sport or life environment.

Classification

Classification is the grouping of swimmers to ensure that there is a fair playing field. It is based on an individual swimmers functional ability to swim a particular stroke. It is important to note that swimmers who are said to have the same disability have many individual differences. Their abilities and impairment factors will vary making it impossible to pigeonhole swimmers and create guidelines on a one-size-fits-all basis.

This is very evident in classifications where swimmers with the same disability can be classified into different classification groups.

Other local Disability Swimming Opportunities

Although we will do our utmost to promote equality and inclusion for all within the club, and will never exclude membership on discriminatory grounds, we do however, need to recognise that there could be occasions when for whatever reason, we may be unable to cater for someone's specific special needs and may need to refer them elsewhere, using DotCommunity.co.uk, which is a site that lists the activities available in the area.