



2019 Playing Programme – Update from PE Board

Since the decision at our Board Meeting last month on our 2019 Playing Programme and its publication, we have received feedback through various channels on a few matters.

The PE Board always considers the views of our members, although we always have to make a judgment whether such views are representative of our wider membership. Our members rarely speak with one voice.

The Board takes its responsibilities seriously and ultimately is motivated by taking decisions which it believes are in the best interests and management of our sport.

Having received and considered the feedback, the PE Board fully accepts points made about the issues around the 2019 National Calendar. We issued a draft to our regions at the end of last year, but outstanding matters with our Playing Programme and the emergence of new clashes beyond our control meant that some minor adjustments made at our January Board Meeting had knock-on effects that we would have wished to avoid.

Domestic and international events are multiplying (and differ from year to year), creating real problems for the management of the Calendar. We are clear that we must start the calendar planning process earlier and we are now working on our 2020 Playing Programme. In doing so, we wish to take account of non-PE competitions, particularly those that attract quality international involvement and we invite the organisers of these competitions to work with us now as we plan for next year.

Secondly, on further review, we realised that a new clause in our National Selection Criteria regarding players unsuccessful in national selection pursuing public challenges or criticisms of selection decisions made by PE officials should be more properly considered a Code of Conduct matter and not a selection matter. We have therefore decided to remove that clause in its entirety from our National Selection Criteria.

Finally, we have received representations that players ranked first and second in our 2019 National Rankings for Men and Women should be 'guaranteed' selection for the Men's Triples European Championships (Bulgaria) and the Women's World European Championships (Cambodia), with the other two positions in the respective teams made by selection. The current 2019 Playing Programme and our 2019 Rules indicate that selection will be made from the top 6 ranked players and that these players will be given the opportunity of an interview before a final decision is made.

We would like to explore this further and as a result we have indicated our willingness to meet early next month with a representative group of our members to discuss this issue further. We will go into such discussions with an open mind and we are playing no role in the composition of the group of PE members with whom we will meet. At this meeting, we would welcome a discussion and receive feedback about the 2020 Playing Programme and the PE Board's decision (also made at the January 2019 meeting) that it wishes to move towards a squad-based selection system for our Men and Women.

PE Board

11.2.19