



## Canoe Slalom International Panel (IP) 2021 Selection – COVID-19 Update

This statement follows the publication of the 2021 selection policies in mid-December 2020 and the update issued on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and aims to provide an update following the recent updates from Home Nation Governments on 'road maps' out of lockdown.

The 'road maps' enable cautious optimism towards being able to run a selection process in 2021 but it does remain an uncertain landscape for the next few months and the dates given are for guidance only.

Discussions are ongoing with all parties necessary to stage events both within the canoeing community but also with external bodies such as local health boards but we do wish to provide the following updates:

### **2021 Senior Selection:**

In our last update, we shared that we were exploring holding the event on 24/25 April at Lee Valley. Following the recent announcements it is clear that it may have been possible to stage a very restricted event under strict DCMS guidance but the April senior selection series will NOT proceed for the following reasons:

- Whilst Lee Valley Whitewater Centre may re-open to the public on 29<sup>th</sup> March to local users, all Home Nation guidance continues to restrict travel around the UK through this period.
- The Panel unanimously agreed that whilst an event could be staged under strict control measures to comply with government requirements, the ability to provide any training time ahead of an event was not possible due to ongoing travel restrictions.
- Accommodation options in the area would be very restricted as only self-catering or self-contained units (like Caravans) can be used and already demand on self-catering accommodation has stripped availability.

For these reasons it will be necessary to invoke the decision to use the outcome of the 2019 senior team spring selection series in the selection of the 2021 senior team 3<sup>rd</sup> boat and reserves until such time as a 2021 senior team selection process can be completed. This adjustment to the policy is undertaken in line with exceptional circumstances outlined in section 1.5 item 6 of the published 2021 policy.

The Panel are currently considering two options:

1. To run senior selection alongside junior & U23 selection in May – This may be possible but has a number of possible implications to consider:
  - potential requirements to quarantine following the Europeans
  - Olympic reserves attending a Tokyo training camp
  - proximity to the 1<sup>st</sup> World Cup for logistics purposes
  - concerns over increasing numbers that may threaten the viability of the event or the ability to extend the junior field.
2. To hold a single weekend event in early August – this would allow a much fairer block of training for all paddlers and would still enable selection for the key events of the year – the senior worlds and 2 World Cups leading in. This also fits around the junior & U23 International calendar.

Further updates will be issued once alternative options have been worked through are agreed with the various stakeholders involved. Once any proposal is finalised, the detail of any policy changes and clarifications will also be confirmed.

**Junior & U23 Selection:**

The IP continue to be cautiously optimistic of junior & U23 selection being able to go ahead as planned in May 2021 at Holme Pierrepont. We continue to work with all parties involved to identify how we can enable this to happen and this includes the size of the start lines permitted.

**General Update:**

It is the intention of the IP to hold a selection series for each age range as soon as it is safe and permitted to do so. The intention of any series will be twofold:

- To provide an objective process to select 2021 GBR representative teams
- To provide a transparent opportunity to reassess relative performance for athletes to enable ongoing athlete assessment.

Decisions on the appropriateness of attendance at each International race opportunity will be made on a race by race basis following the same principles agreed in 2020 and approved by the BC Board for application across the whole organisation. The final decision to attend each race will be based on a satisfactory assessment of risk and the option to opt out of travelling to an event will always be available.

Extreme Slalom – Linked to the above, team size will be a consideration in determining appropriateness of travel to International events. For this reason it is intended that entries for 2021 Extreme Slalom international events will come from within the selected team already travelling to the event.

The IP know that you all want certainty to plan and we continue to work behind the scenes to provide clarity. We will commit to another update near the end of March. In the meantime, please ensure that you register by 3rd March 2021 [here](#). We will continue to review the landscape and will continue to base our decisions on the safety of athletes, volunteers and staff, compliance with government guidelines and setting a transparent process under challenging circumstances.

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**1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**