



*President: Jim McNally B.Sc. (Hons)*

4 October, 2017

LEN Office

LEN President

LEN Masters Committee

Cem Gorgul  
Former LEN Masters Committee

Dear Sir/Madam:

We, the undersigned wish to express our serious concern at the venue for the LEN European Masters Diving Championships, to be held in Slovenia, from 5 – 8 September 2018. When Slovenia was first put forward as a location for the 2018 LEN Championships, we were led to believe that a new facility was being provided, which would have the standard of boards and facilities that are appropriate for a major diving championships.

Unfortunately, we now understand that the venue for the Diving Championships will be the same complex that was utilised for the LEN European Masters Diving Championships in 2007. This incorporates an outdoor pool, with one 3metre and one 1metre springboard, along with a full set of platforms.

2007 was the last time that only one springboard of each height was provided at the LEN championships, with at least two boards being available at the two heights in Seville (2009), Kiev (2011), Eindhoven (2013) and London (2016). We consider this to be a retrograde step and indicative of a downgrading of the sport by LEN. With the level of entries that should be expected at LEN events, unreasonable delays would occur in training prior to the event and the standard will inevitably diminish.

In addition, the configuration of the pool in Jesenice will not lend itself to the holding of simultaneous events, which will mean more time required to run the same events that were included in 2007. We also note that only four days are scheduled for the diving events, the same amount of time that was provided in London, which could only be managed with the holding of simultaneous events.

In summary, the facilities at Jesenice are not of the standard that we expect at a prestigious event such as the European Championships. Masters Diving has developed significantly since 2007 and this signals a major step backward (10 years) in the way LEN considers diving.

This step backward is further illustrated by the fact that the LEN Championship Diving Schedule was altered in time for the 2013 Championships to incorporate a synchronised diving event and a team event in the programme. This was not done, even though experienced officials indicated that sufficient time could be made available. Further, the London event in 2016, similarly did not include these two events, even though the venue was perfect to run them. It seems that the LEN Masters

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Great Britain Diving Federation

Committee has been happy to pay lip service to the development of masters diving, but unwilling to actually do anything to make that development happen, in marked contrast to FINA, who added mixed synchro at their 2017 championships, with extremely successful results.

It is extremely disappointing that the LEN Masters Committee has no Masters Diving representative to provide an understanding of the needs of masters divers; this is, we feel, a major failing and reflects in the way that our sport is declining in LEN, while the popularity of the sport of diving worldwide is at an all-time high. We ask that this situation is urgently addressed; it is no good simply appointing a member of the TDC to act as a representative for each championship. The needs of masters athletes are in many ways separate and distinct from elite athletes and it requires a particular perspective to effectively represent masters diving on this committee.

Finally, we are aware of the reshuffle of LEN/FINA championships in 2014/15, so that the masters and elite championships can be aligned, ensuring continuity and consistency of facility provision as well as the masters event being able to financially subsidise elite sport. This has happened since 2015, however, it seems that, while British Swimming were prepared to host the 2018 elite championships in Glasgow (swimming etc) and Edinburgh (diving), they were not prepared to host the LEN Masters championships. This is a pity, as the Royal Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh would have made a perfect venue for diving. Instead, we seem to be isolated at a substandard venue in Slovenia, with too little time to operate even a programme for individual events only. This is unacceptable to masters divers and should be unacceptable to LEN. Masters divers are likely to abandon an event which seems determined to lower the status of its championships to the level of an internal regional event.

We ask that urgent consideration be given to:

- Providing assurances that the venue at Jesenice will be upgraded to provide at least two competitive springboards at each height.
- If this is not possible, to consider transferring the diving event to Edinburgh, to take place soon after the elite championships, in line with current operational LEN policy.
- Ascertaining why, after only two events, LEN seems to have abandoned its policy of holding elite and masters championships at the same facility in close time proximity.
- Ensuring that synchronised and team events are part of every LEN championships, as set out in the LEN programme.

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