

COVID-19 Easing of Restrictions

In General over the last three months amateur athletes, professional athletes, coaches, officials, sponsors, suppliers and all stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago echoed the same sentiments as our International counterparts **“COVID-19 has halted virtually all formal participation in sport and exercise”**.

Restrictions on travel, physical activity and mass gatherings had major implications for athletes and players. In particular restrictions on access to training venues, cancellation of events and loss of earnings may have long term implications for Elite Athletes who rely on sport as their main source of Income.

As you would appreciate the prolonged stay at home order significantly impacted our planned 2020 calendar of events especially the Carifta Games which was scheduled in April 2020. Although many of the games were postponed to 2021 many of the amateur athletes who would have previously qualified may be moving on to another age group which of course we will also have to treat in the coming months.

In the earlier part of the pandemic we sought to grant access to those athletes who were set to compete in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. However as the pandemic heightened this too was dispelled and an informed decision was taken to cancel the remainder of the 2019-2020 season.

As venues were not allowed to operate the NAAA's provided inhouse support during the shutdown period to the track and field community through online webinars by our Kids Athletics Coordinator and other local coaches. In early April we engaged our International Partners for online resources through their Bridge Athletics Platform for those athletes and coaches training at home.

In the vein of being our brother's keeper we initiated a COVID 19 relief drive with one of our major partners and distributed over One Hundred Hampers to aid those families most in need of assistance in Trinidad and Tobago.

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As the latest infection and transmission results in Trinidad and Tobago are continuing to give the Government confidence in easing restrictions the NAAA is working tirelessly and has embarked on a number of strategies to reboot our sport within the next four (4) months, most notably:

1. A Return to Training Safety Guidelines for all involved in the sport, this will be distributed in both hard and soft copy
2. Promoting the 2020-2021 Track and Field Season as early as November with the following suggested events a road race, one (1) lap Savannah, a cross country event and development track and field meets.
3. Targeted Capacity Building Online Interactive Sessions on:
 - a. Anti-Doping
 - b. Nutrition
 - c. Technical Official Education and Training
 - d. Coaching Education-Periodization
4. Publishing of a book History of Athletics in Trinidad and Tobago
5. Online Webinars with our local partners (UTT, Ministry of Sport, SPORTT, TTOC) – Periodization, Strength Mental Health, Stress and Psychological effects due to COVID_19.
6. Online Webinars with our Regional and International Partners (UWI, MJP)
7. Rebranding of the NAAA's website

The NAAA will continue to consult with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (SporTT) with regard to the reopening of Sporting Facilities under their purview. We will be in contact with the national community as the situation changes and asks that all stakeholders have patience with us during this process.

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