



England seamer James Anderson (above) is set to return to individual training from next week (Getty Images)

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England men's players set to return to individual training next week

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 2.00pm (BST) ON THURSDAY MAY 14 2020

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has confirmed that England men's players will return to individual skills-based training from next week.

By utilising venues across the country for individual sessions, the ECB will be able to provide a controlled environment that ensures adherence to safety protocols and social distancing measures for players and staff as set out by

the Government's elite sport return to training guidance.

The ECB's plan has been designed in line with the Government's guidance, and we will continue to ensure we comply with their regulations as it develops.

From Wednesday, the ECB's Men's Elite Performance Programme will implement an individualised training programme for a number of bowlers, who are centrally contracted and invited through the county system.

After a two-week period, once the bowlers have reached their desired loading efforts, dedicated batsmen and wicketkeepers will start their respective training programmes on an individual basis. The protocols include:

Individual Field-Based Skills

- Players will train individually on a staggered basis with a coach, physio and, where possible, a strength and conditioning coach in attendance.
- Each individual will observe strict social-distancing, hygiene and temperature testing protocols.
- The ECB, working with counties, will request a number of county coaches to assist with one-to-one coaching. The ECB will fund this.
- Players and support staff to arrive in training kit ready to practice.
- Players and support staff temperatures will be taken before they will be allowed to train.
- The physio will have to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) to treat injuries. The PPE will be sourced and funded by the ECB.
- Dressing rooms and other venue facilities will be closed.

The next two phases of training, which will be imposed by the Government in conjunction with the ECB's medical team, will be announced in due course. It is expected the England women's players will resume training in late June.

Ashley Giles, Managing Director - England Men's Cricket, said:

"These are the first steps for players return to training ahead of international cricket potentially resuming later this summer.

"The safety of players, staff and our community is our first priority throughout this protocol. We are committed to adhering to public health guidelines and Government directives intended to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"To be clear, we will only train and potentially play cricket behind closed doors if we know it is absolutely safe to do so and is fully supported by the Government.

"We are in constant dialogue with players, coaches and counties to determine what is possible during this period and what facilities will be available to us. We are thankful that we have a united front across all of cricket's stakeholders to prepare the players in a safe and secure environment."

The ECB will continue to liaise with the 18 first-class counties to ascertain when a 'back-to- training' protocol can be rolled out for the county game. We will expect further updates towards the end of the month, and we would urge people to await further updates from the Government and the ECB.

Media (local, national, international, etc.) will not be allowed any access to the training facilities. The ECB's communications and digital teams will proactively alert media outlets when content will be provided and continue to provide media opportunities and other assets, such as imagery and video from training sessions. If any of these restrictions are lifted, the ECB will communicate this to the media.

Ends

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