

# Breaking News English.com

## Swimmers angry over afro Soul Cap Olympics ban – 5th July, 2021

### Level 4

The Black Swimming Association is angry because FINA, swimming's regulatory body, rejected a swim cap for the Tokyo Olympics. The "Soul Cap" allows people with afros, dreadlocks, hair extensions, and thick and curly hair to swim comfortably. FINA said it would not allow the Soul Cap because a cap "of such size" has never been used before. FINA also stated it would not permit the cap because "it didn't fit the natural form of the head".

The BSA warned the decision was a step backwards and would drive away swimmers from diverse backgrounds. A spokeswoman said: "This will affect younger and up-and-coming swimmers who might want to take up elite swimming." She added: "At the highest level, we're hearing that, 'we want the sport to be inclusive;...we want to have people of colour in the sport'....[but] by and large, hair is a significant barrier, especially for women."

### Level 5

The Black Swimming Association is angry over a ban on the use of a swim cap at the Tokyo Olympics. FINA, swimming's regulatory body, has rejected an application from the brand SOUL CAP. Its cap accommodates diverse hairstyles and hair types. The company wants to help swimmers with afros, dreadlocks, hair extensions, and thick and curly hair. FINA said it would not permit the Soul Cap because swimmers have never used a cap "of such size" before. FINA also stated it would not permit the cap because "it didn't fit the natural form of the head".

The BSA was shocked at the decision. It warned it was a step backwards for black swimmers and would drive away swimmers from diverse backgrounds. A BSA spokeswoman said: "This will affect younger and up-and-coming swimmers who might want to take up elite swimming." She added: "At the highest level, we're hearing that, 'we want the sport to be inclusive and representative; we want to have people of colour in the sport'....This will affect their decision because by and large, hair is a significant barrier, especially for women."

### Level 6

The Black Swimming Association is up in arms over a ban on the use of a swim cap at the upcoming Tokyo Olympics. FINA, the body that regulates international swimming, has rejected an application from the brand SOUL CAP. Its product is a cap that accommodates diverse hairstyles and hair types. The company wants the cap certified for competition swimming. It wants to help swimmers with afros, braids, dreadlocks, hair extensions, weaves, and thick and curly hair. FINA said it would not permit the Soul Cap because swimmers have never used a cap "of such size and configuration" before. FINA stated it would not be permitted because "it didn't fit the natural form of the head".

The Black Swimming Association was aghast at the decision and called it a step backwards for black swimmers. It warned it would drive away swimmers from diverse backgrounds. BSA spokeswoman Danielle Obe said: "This will affect younger and up-and-coming swimmers who might want to consider taking up elite swimming." She added: "At the highest level, we're hearing that, 'we want the sport to be inclusive and representative; we want to have people of colour in the sport, but we want them to join on our terms'. This will affect their decision because by and large, hair is a significant barrier, especially for women." The caps are allowed at all Swim England clubs and competitions.