**Selection Policy for the British Curling Olympic & Paralympic Programmes 2015-16**

**Purpose of this Document**

This document sets out the process for selecting athletes to the British Curling Olympic and Paralympic Programmes for the year 01 August 2015 – 31st July 2016.

Any further amendments to this document will be published on the British Curling website as soon as possible and notified directly to currently selected British Curling programme athletes.

**Purpose of the Programmes**

The British Curling programmes are comprehensive athlete support programmes aimed at developing highly talented athletes with the potential to become Olympic/Paralympic medallists at the 2018 or 2022 Winter Olympic/Paralympic Games.

British Curling receives a four year funding award from UK Sport to contribute to the costs of operating the WCP for the period 1st Oct. 2014 - 30th Sept. 2018. This typically helps fund such things as WCP training facilities, coaching support, sports science and medicine provision, competition travel and accommodation costs, domestic and overseas training camps, kit and equipment. The programmes are also provided with an agreed number of Athlete Performance Award (APA) Places, administered by UK Sport, which British Curling nominate selected athletes to receive.

In return for funding from UK Sport, British Curling agrees a series of performance targets culminating in the Winter Olympics/ Paralympics. Each year of the cycle in the run up to the Games, targets are agreed for results at major events to track progress towards the Olympics and Paralympics. This is reviewed annually with UK Sport and depending on results, programmes funding and therefore the number athletes that can be supported through the WCP, may increase or decrease.

For this programme year 2015/16, the agreed targets are:

Women’s World Championships – top 4

Men’s World Championships – top 4

Wheelchair World Championships – top 4

**Structure of the Programmes**

The British Curling programme consists of two distinct programme levels, which athletes will be assigned to upon selection, depending on their stage of development.

***The Podium Programme***

* Developing athletes to win Olympic medals **OR** Paralympic Gold medals at the 2018 Winter Olympic/ Paralympic Games.

***The Podium Potential Programme***

* Developing athletes to be competitive in qualifying for the 2018 Winter Olympics, with an overall aim of winning medals in 2018 and/ or 2022 winter Olympics.

**OR**

* Developing athletes to win medals in the 2018 Winter Paralympics, with an overall aim of winning gold medals in the 2022 Winter Paralympics.

**Presently UK Sport’s investment provides for the following APA places:**

**Olympic – 10 Podium and 10 Podium Potential**

**Paralympic - 5 Podium**

**Sport Scotland’s investment provides up to 4 Podium Potential APA places on the Paralympic programme**

**In the season 2014/15, the British programme took the decision to fund a further 6 Podium Potential places in the Olympic programme. The funding source for this was the wider programme funding as described in 4th paragraph of this document.**

**Selection Decisions**

Decisions about which athletes are selected to the WCP for the year 2015/16 will be made by the `WCP Selection Panel’ comprising:

Voting members

* Performance Director (Chair)
* Head of Coaching
* Full time coaches

Non voting Members

* British Curling Board representative
* Support staff/ coaches – as required
* Note taker(s) - as required

Using the procedures set out in this document the British Curling Selection Panel will:

1. Consider existing Programme athletes supported during the year 2014/2015, and either confirm their continued selection and programme level for 2015/2016, or de-select them.
2. Consider prospective new athletes not currently on the Programme, and either confirm their selection and programme level for 2015/2016.
3. If felt necessary, set conditions and targets for each athlete selected to the Programme, some of which may have to be met and reviewed periodically for selection to continue.

As each athlete is considered, panel members will declare any conflict of interest and the Chair will decide if that panel member can contribute to the discussion. In the case that the Chair has a conflict of interest the British Curling Board representative will decide if he/she can contribute to the discussion.

All conflicts of interest will be noted in the minutes of the selection meeting, as will the selection decisions and the reasons for them.

To make their decisions the selection panel will use this document and:

1. their expert knowledge of the sport and the target Games/Championships;
2. where available and/or applicable:

* previous individual conditions and/or targets set for the athlete;
* information included in the Programme Athlete Selection criteria.

**Eligibility for Selection to the British Curling Programme**

To be considered for selection to the Programme, athletes must meet the eligibility criteria set out in ‘UK Sport’s Eligibility and Consequences Policy’, which apply to all athletes in all funded sports. Athletes should check their eligibility against the full criteria by following the link here, but in summary the athlete must:

* meet the eligibility and selection requirements of the IOC, the IPC, the BOA/BPA and the athlete’s International Federation/International Disabled Sport Federation/NGB to compete for TeamGB, ParalympicsGB and to represent or be a member of the GB or Home Nation Teams at International Competitions;
* in the case of Paralympic athletes, have a confirmed international classification or assigned review. Exceptional cases of non-classified athletes will be considered at the discretion of UK Sport.
* be a British national/British passport holder;
* not already be serving a suspension or be ineligible from participating in their sport for any reason;
* not already be ineligible to receive funding from UK Sport;
* not have an unspent conviction for a serious criminal offence in the UK;
* not have a conviction for a serious offence relating to betting, manipulation of results or corrupt conduct;
* not have brought, or bring, through their actions or comments (directly or indirectly) the National Lottery or UK Sport into serious disrepute.

Additionally, to be, or remain, eligible for the Programme, athletes must meet the following criteria required by British Curling

* be seeking Programme selection for an event which is confirmed on the event programme for the 2018 Winter Olympic/Paralympic Games
* sign and return the Programme Athlete Agreement within 14 days of being offered a WCP place (copy available here);
* be a current member of a Home Nation Curling Governing body (RCCC/ English Curling/ Welsh Curling)

Meeting the eligibility criteria listed above does not mean that an athlete is automatically selected to the programme and awarded an Athlete Personal award (APA). It only means that they meet the essential requirements to be considered for selection and can proceed for further assessment against the Performance Standards described below. There may well be the situation that there is more players eligible than there is APA places available to award.

**Performance Standards for Selection to the British Curling Programme**

Once confirmed as eligible, athletes are assessed for a programme place and level against the performance standards contained in the Performance Matrix below. These standards apply to selection of new athletes, and retention of existing athletes, at the various levels of the Programme for the 2015/16 year. Please note that meeting the stated criteria does not mean automatically that an APA award will be made. This is especially relevant in the situation where more curlers than places available exist

**Performance Matrix for Olympic Programme (Men/ Women) Year 2015/16**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Programme Level** | | **Performance Standard** |
| **Podium** | **A** | 2014 Sochi Olympic Games medalist  2015 Men/ Women World Championships Gold Medalist  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to maintain this position at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games |
| **B** | 2015 World Championship Top 6 finish;  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a medal at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games |
| **C** | 2014 European Championships medalist  2015 World Championship – top 8 finish  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a medal at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games |
| **Podium Potential** | **D** | This level of athlete must be considered a potential 2018 Winter Olympic Qualifier and 2022 Winter Olympic medalist through:  Have demonstrated ability already in a British programme team, who have competed internationally.  And  WCP coach assessment of potential against relevant athlete profile/parameters showing clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a medal at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games |
| **E** | This is the entry level to the WCP. This level of athlete must be considered a potential 2018 Winter Olympic Qualifier and 2022 Winter Olympic medalist  2015 Junior World Championships top 4  2015 Winter University Games Semi finalists  And/or  WCP coach assessment of potential against relevant athlete profile/parameters shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a medal at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games |

**Performance Matrix for Paralympic Programme (Wheelchair Curling) Year 2015/16**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Programme Level** | | **Performance Standard** |
| **Podium** | **A** | 2014 Sochi Paralympic Games Gold medalist  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to maintain this position at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Games |
| **B** | 2014 Sochi Paralympic Games semifinalist  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a Gold Medal at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Games |
| **C** | Emerging international talent as demonstrated by WCP coach assessment of potential against relevant athlete profile/parameters contained in the Programme Athlete Evaluation Template  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a Gold medal at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Games |
| **Podium Potential** | **D** | 2014 Sochi Paralympic Games semifinalist  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to maintain this position at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Gamesand gold medal at 2022 Winter Paralympic Games |
| **E** | Emerging international talent as demonstrated by WCP coach assessment of potential against relevant athlete profile/parameters contained in the WCP Athlete Evaluation Template  **AND**  Shows clear potential and has processes in place to improve in order to achieve a Gold medal at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Games |

*Note: Awards will be assigned to athletes depending on their individual track record and future team placements, i.e. If team A wins a medal at Olympics/ World Championships and then athlete B leaves the team and is replaced by athlete C.*

*The 3-4 remaining members of Team A will receive a Podium A or B level award. Athlete C will receive a Podium C or Podium Potential level D or E award and athlete B’s level of award will depend on the level of team they join.*

*5th players at Championships – level of award they will be considered for will depend on the role they have played in the team over the year and Championships. E.g. a 5th player who has been an integral part of the team throughout the year and played in various competitions etc would be considered for the same level of award as the 4 players who played in the championship. Whereas, a 5th player who was drafted into the team only for the specific championship and did not play in any competitive games would not be considered at the same level as the playing 4 members of the team.*

Details of APA levels at Podium and Podium Potential levels, and the breakdown of proportions attributed to living costs, sporting costs, base and ‘top up’ levels can be found on the accompanying UK Sport document explaining APAs.

As stated in the Performance Matrix, **achievement of past competitive results alone does not guarantee selection**. Athletes must demonstrate they are capable of **maintaining existing Olympic/Paralympic/World level medal winning performances, or improving to achieve them**. This is assessed in a consistent manner for all athletes using the range of factors contained in The Programme Athlete Selection criteria – Appendix 1 to this document.

The Programme Athlete Selection criteria is completed for all current and prospective new athletes by the Coaching Team, with an overall score and final rank order determined for each athlete in consultation with the Performance Director.

For new athletes, the template is completed during an interview with the Coaching team.

As stated earlier in this document, a limited number of places are available for each programme and athletes will be in competition with others in the same programme. Places will be offered to athletes based on their final rank order (as decided using the Programme Athlete selection criteria), from highest to lowest in sequence, until all available places are allocated.

**It must also be recognized though, that Curling is a team sport, and whilst this policy defines the parameters that will be considered and recognizes athletes as individuals, ultimately the athletes have to have the ability to realize their potential and perform within a team. Acknowledgement is made that in selecting for a team sport, combinations of athletes, the balance of the squad, and the ability of athletes to play in more than 1 position are also considered alongside individual abilities.**

One of the stated priorities of the programme is to develop ‘efficiently operating teams’. To achieve this aim means the programme has to be committed to the longer term development of teams over a period time; therefore athletes will be selected as individuals, and formed into teams by the Coaching staff.

Podium Programme places are prioritised on the basis of existing Olympic or senior World medallists in an Olympic/Paralympic discipline who are considered capable of maintaining performance to 2018, or athletes whose rate of progression and current performance is such that they could reach a medal winning performance for 2018.

**The Selection Panel, at its sole discretion, may not allocate all available Programme places in circumstances where athletes are not assessed as being genuine medal potential at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games/Gold medal potential at the 2018 Winter Paralympic Games, or where it feels it is not in the interest of the Programme achieving its overall purpose and agreed performance targets with UK Sport.**

**Programme Support and Benefits**

Athletes selected to the Programme will have access to a range of support supplied by British Curling primarily via the **sport**scotland Institute of Sport. Support will be tailored to the needs of each athlete in varying quantity and frequency but will generally include:

* Training & Competition Planning & Review;
* Coaching Support;
* Clothing
* Sports Science Support;
* Medical Services inc membership of the UK Sport Athlete Medical Scheme.
* Lifestyle, Career & Education Support;
* Travel & Accommodation expenses at designated camps & events;
* Olympic/Paralympic Programme Information & Advice;
* BOA/BPA Passport Scheme;
* Athlete Performance Award funding (provided by UK Sport).

Athletes who are selected to the Programme and who meet the performance standards for A-E described in the Performance Matrix will be nominated to UK Sport for a for an individual Athlete Performance Award (APA). Upon acceptance of the nomination, UK Sport will conduct a financial need assessment and offer the athlete an award for up to 12 months, paid directly to their bank account each month.

**Short Term and Long Term Injuries impact on APAs (Olympic/Paralympic)**

In the event of short term injury/illness, and if an athlete is likely to recover to full fitness for training and competition, the athlete may continue to receive their full APA allowance up to a maximum of three months from the point of injury.

To continue to receive funding during a **performance limiting injury/illness[[1]](#footnote-1)**, the athlete would have to agree an appropriate rehabilitation/training and (if appropriate) competition programme with the Performance Director that would timetable and plot the return of the athlete after the injury/illness to full competitive level and to participate fully in the Programme as per the Programme Selection Criteria.

At the end of the three-month period of injury/illness, the Performance Director would be required to undertake a review with the athlete to assess the commitment and progress of the athlete against the agreed programme. If the athlete, during this three-month period had shown neither commitment nor progress against the agreed programme, the athlete would be given a notice period before being removed from APA support.

**Pregnancy impact on APAs (Olympic/Paralympic)**

To continue to receive funding during pregnancy (and after childbirth), the athlete would have to agree an appropriate training and competition programme with the Performance Director that would timetable and plot the return of the athlete after childbirth to full competitive level and to participate fully in the Programme as per the Programme Selection Criteria.

At the end of a three-month period after the childbirth, the Performance Director would be required to undertake a review with the athlete to assess the commitment and progress of the athlete against agreed performance targets. If this commitment were not demonstrated by the time of the three-month review, the athlete would be given a notice period (dependent on her time spent on the Programme) before being removed from APA support.

**Transitional APA Funding (Olympic/Paralympic)**

From notification by 15th May 2015, any de selected athlete will continue to receive their APA until 31st July 2015.

**General Conditions**

The British Curling Programme is a progressive programme. Consequently, athletes cannot move downwards from Podium level to Podium Potential level. Movement throughout the levels in Podium is permitted, for example, if an athlete does not maintain the standard required for Podium A, but achieves the performance standards for B or C and is still considered Olympic medal potential/Paralympic Gold medal potential for 2108.

Athletes previously on the Podium Programme will only be considered for the Podium Potential Programme if they have changed teams and are still deemed to have genuine medal potential at the 2018 Olympic Games/Gold medal potential at the 2018 Paralympic Games and can satisfy the performance standards contained in the Performance Matrix within 6 months.

**Notification of Selection**

The review of existing Programme athletes occurs in May of each year after the major targeted event of the season. Assessment of potential new athletes will be concluded in May. All selected athletes will be notified of their Programme selection and indicative APA level (subject to further financial assessment and final confirmation by UK Sport) by 15th May 2015, with Programme membership and APA support commencing on 01 August 2015.

Athletes will not normally be considered for selection to Programme for the year 2015/16 year after 15th May 2015, unless under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Selection Panel.

Selection to the British Curling Programme is encouraged but optional. If an athlete chooses to decline their selection, they will not be restricted in selection for events to represent the GB/ SCO/ ENG/ WAL, but there will be no form of financial or support services provided outside of any direct Championship support.

**Appeals Relating to British Curling Programme Selection Decisions**

The following procedures have been adopted by British Curling in consideration of any appeal made by or on behalf of any athlete wishing to appeal his or her non-nomination to/ de-selection from the British Curling Programme 2015/16, and can be found in appendix 2

Any athlete seeking a review of a non-nomination/de-selection decision should be aware of the time limits contained in the policy which are designed with the intention of resolving issues in a timely, fair and transparent manner.

All athletes should read this policy carefully and satisfy themselves that they are eligible to appeal in the first instance. Any appeals which do not satisfy the grounds of appeals will be dismissed automatically.

The parties agree not to commence, continue, maintain any legal challenge to any matter falling under the jurisdiction of the review panel before any court of law or dispute resolution body without first following this procedure.

Appendix 1: British Curling Selection Criteria

**1. Performance Delivery**

This is an athlete’s ability to deliver a performance when it counts and will therefore be measured by the athlete’s track record.

Taken into account are results from major Championships (in order):

* Winter Olympic/ Paralympic Games
* World Championships (over the previous 2 years)
* European Championships (over the previous 2 years)

**2. Performance Potential**

Key areas used for gauging potential are (in no order of importance):

* Junior World Championships
* World University Games
* Grand Slam Events
* WCT & CCT Events/ International Bonspiels
* Evidence of sustained progression in key skills/ characteristics.
* Performances from National Finals
* Performance Statistics from identified international events
* Results from ‘Trial’ and/ or GB Ranking sessions
* Training history

All within the previous 2 years

**3. Commitment/ mindset**

‘Evidence that the athlete is making choices that maximize their potential to develop and improve their performance.’

When assessing Commitment/ mindset, if the athlete is planning on making significant commitments outside of their development as an Olympic athlete, retiring within the Olympic cycle or deciding to live in a location which makes it extremely difficult/ impossible for the programme to make a positive performance impact on the athlete etc - these factors will be taken into account within the review and selection process.

Appendix 2:

**Decision Review Process**

1. An athlete may request a review of a selection decision by submitting a written request to the Performance Director for a review within 3 working days of the announcement of the selection decision, stating the grounds for the review.
2. Reviews will only be considered on the grounds of;
   1. The selection policy process was not followed.
   2. Misconduct of selectors

There are no appeals allowed against the content of the published selection criteria and therefore against the actions of the selection panel, provided they follow the selection criteria. The criteria for appeal may not include any alleged error of judgment of the selectors.

1. The review will be coordinated by Performance Director and comprise of a panel consisting of the COO of British Curling/CEO of the Royal Club (who in normal circumstances will chair the process); The Chairs of British Curling & the respective Home Nation Curling NGB(s) (or an agreed representative of either) within 7 days of receipt of the request for a review and may at the Review Panel’s absolute discretion, include a meeting with the relevant athlete/ Coach(es).
2. The Review. Panel can make one of two decisions can be made at this stage. The panel can:

* Uphold the appeal and request the Selection Panel to reconsider it selections
* Reject the appeal.

The Review Panel must make full justification of any decision made.

1. The decision of the Review Panel is final and binding on all parties, as the review process is an exercise of discretion in the matter of selection. It is not a disciplinary or ‘judicial’ finding and as such, is not subject to further appeal.

1. A performance limiting injury/illness is considered as an injury or illness that results in partial or no training for at least three months (intermittent or continuous) in any single year. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)