



USAT PARATRIATHLON PRINCIPLES OF ATHLETE SELECTION

Introduction

USA Triathlon (“USAT”) will be responsible for the nomination and selection of athletes to participate in all high performance events such as the Paralympic Games, Para Pan American Games and International Triathlon Union (“ITU”) Paratriathlon elite events. In fulfilling this obligation, USAT will generally use the principles described in this document. At all times, within the context of the event, USAT will strive to send the best and most prepared team to compete in elite events.

USA Triathlon Elite Paratriathlete Selection Committee

A selection committee will be established by USAT to review and approve discretionary nominations of athletes to ITU Paratriathlon World Events, Continental Championships, World Championships, or other events not including the Paralympics and Para Pan American Games. This committee will be referred to as the Elite Paratriathlete Selection Committee (“EPSC”).

The EPSC will be comprised of three individuals who have expert knowledge of elite paratriathlon. At least one member must be an athlete representative. All EPSC members are required to sign the USAT Conflict of Interest document. EPSC members are also advised to read the USAT Committee Guide which can be found on USAT’s website at <http://www.usatriathlon.org/about-usat/committees.aspx> as well as the principles outlined in this document.

The panel of three members of the EPSC and the Paratriathlon Program Manager, who are void of conflict of interest, shall be convened in a timely manner to review and determine whether to approve a discretionary nomination put forth by the USAT High Performance Department. The nomination will be presented by the Paratriathlon Program Manager.

A decision will be made by majority vote of the committee and a written reasoned decision shall be recorded by USAT and confirmed by the panel.

Conflict of Interest definition: conflict between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust

Note: The Paratriathlon Program Manager will be an ex-officio/non-voting member of the committee.

Importance of Elite and International Competition

Results in the highest level of ITU competition (i.e. World Championships – “WCH”) will be the benchmark for selection. Whenever possible in the nomination of any athlete to an elite event, performances in WCH events will take precedence over performances in lower level competitions such as WPE or CCH.

USA Triathlon Athlete Selection Criteria

ITU Elite events, Para Pan American Games and Paralympic Games

USAT endeavors to select to ITU Elite Events, ParaPan American Games and Paralympic Games only those athletes who, within the context of the event, are:

1. Medal capable of a top three (podium) result; or
2. Considered to be able medal capable in the near future.

Definitions and Criteria

1. **Medal Capable.** A medal capable athlete is one who has demonstrated the ability to produce a medal winning result by:
 - medal finishes at World Championships within 12 months; with demonstration of continued ability to perform at that level or higher based on performances in recent top level international competition; and/or
 - producing medal capable times under certified conditions within the past 12 months; and/or
 - consistently beating the world's best in recent (past 12 months) international competition with top quality fields; and/or
 - other recent historical performances in international competition that would indicate the athlete is capable of a medal winning performance.

In all cases, the athlete in question must demonstrate that they remain capable of a medal capable performance at the time of selection and the time of the event to which the athlete has been selected.

2. **Future Medal Capability.** A future medal capable athlete is one who:
 - demonstrates a trend of improving performance in international competition that, when extended a reasonable distance into the future, intersects the current international performance standard for the event under consideration; and/or
 - despite being new to the sport or competing for a relatively short time, is within a reasonable percentage, of the international performance standard).
3. **ITU top ranked athletes.** The ITU maintains an individual classification for most ITU triathlon events. An athlete is considered to be top ranked if he or she is among the top three (depending upon the sport class) Americans at the end of the calendar year or at the end of a specified time period.

USA Triathlon Principles of Discretion

Discretionary nominations will be used per the above priorities in the event that positions are available after the application of any automatic criteria.

1. The primary purpose of discretionary athlete nomination is to ensure that:
 - a. In the cases of ITU elite para events and Paralympic Games, USAT has the ability to nominate the best physically, psychologically and technically prepared athlete in order to produce medal winning performances. See definition of "medal capable" above.
 - b. In those cases where the primary importance of the event is subsequent qualification of start positions for Para Pan American or Paralympic Games through the ITU ranking system, to ensure that USAT has the ability to nominate the athlete most likely to be

among the ITU ranked athletes at the end of the calendar year or specified time period that will be used to determine our county ranking.

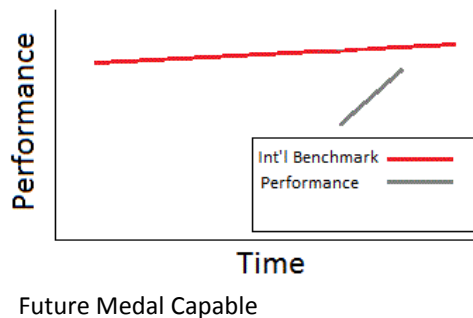
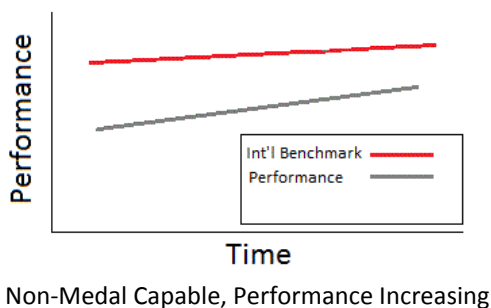
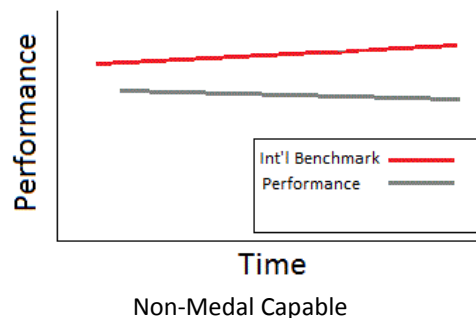
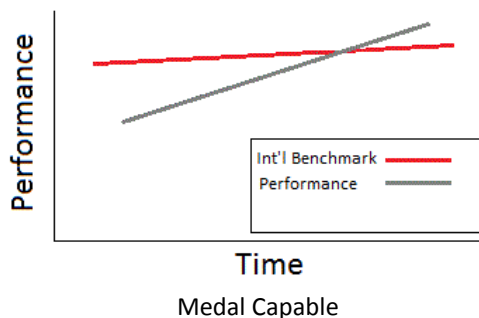
2. The secondary purpose of discretionary athlete nomination is to allow USAT the ability to nominate the best physically, psychologically and technically prepared athlete in order to produce a medal winning performance *in the future* at a given event. See definition of “future medal capability” above, and also continued discussion below.

Discussion of Future Medal Capability

In most situations, athletes who perform consistently at the medal capable level are easily identified. On the other hand, one of the greatest challenges in the talent identification and selection process is discriminating among athletes currently performing below the level of medal capability. Ideally, one would like to identify those athletes who represent an investment in future medal performances over those that do not. In an effort to make such discrimination possible, USA Triathlon has designated performance trends as a key component in the talent identification and selection process. Performance trends are determined by plotting an historical record of a given athlete’s performances on a graph where the x-axis is time (weeks, months, years); and the y-axis is event specific performances (times, place finishes, etc). These graphs can then be used to identify trends in an athlete’s performance in order to predict future performance potential.

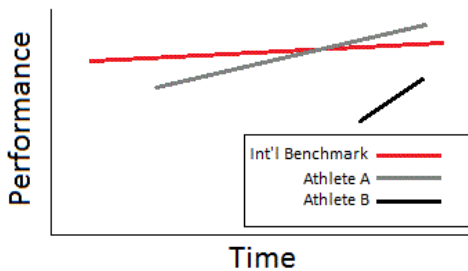
For example, an athlete whose performance is trending up (positive slope) is suggestive of the potential for future improvements in performance. On the other hand, an athlete with a decreasing performance trend (negative slope) or stable trend (zero slope) over time indicates little or no potential for future improvements.

The following graphs illustrate the differences in the performance trends of medal capable and non medal capable athletes:

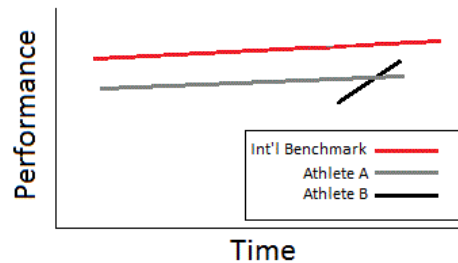


Many factors need to be considered when evaluating athletes with this technique, e.g. length of time over which the trend has been developed, number of years in the sport, slope of the trend, and so on. However, with regard to selection, as stated in the above criteria, it is desirable to preferentially select athletes who demonstrate substantial future ability (positive slope) over those athletes who demonstrate stable or decreasing potential. This is particularly true when extrapolation of the current performance trend over a reasonable period of time (2 to 4 years) indicates the potential to achieve an international medal capable standard.

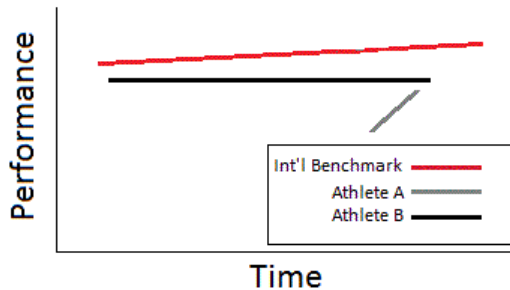
The following graphs illustrate the differences between athletes without future medal capability versus athletes that demonstrate future medal potential:



Athlete A medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable: Select Athlete A



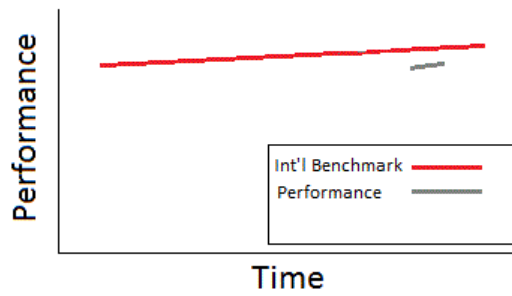
Athlete A not medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable and outperforms A: Select Athlete B



Athlete A not medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable but does not outperform A: Select Athlete B.

Another important consideration in evaluating the future performance potential of an athlete is the relationship of their "time in the sport," i.e., how long have they been competing; their stage of biological development and adaptation; and their current performance level. In the case of an athlete who is new to the sport, there are not enough data points to plot an accurate performance trend. However, if such an athlete is within a reasonable distance of the international benchmark such that when their anticipated physical development and/or their general adaptation response is expected to put them at or over the international medal benchmark, then they may be considered to have future medal capability.

Although the magnitude of the expected improvement in performance is dependent upon many factors, e.g., biological development, body type and etc., it is generally assumed that, without evidence to the contrary, a reasonable performance deficit may be overcome in a reasonable amount of time by an athlete that new to the sport with a greater deficit for an athlete that is biologically immature.



"New" or young athlete; within 5% of international benchmark = future medal capability

This document has been adapted from the USA Cycling Principles of Athlete Selection document that has been so successful in guiding USA Cycling coaching staff in their selection of athletes. Thank you to Jim Miller, Director of Athletics for USA Cycling, for sharing the USAC document and giving permission for this adaptation.