



**OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC
ATHLETE ENDORSEMENT GUIDELINES
June 9, 2015**

Endorsement Contract with U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Sponsors (including TOP Sponsors)

The U.S. Olympic Committee (“USOC”) allows U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Sponsors (“Sponsors”) to use Olympic and Paralympic trademarks and/or imagery (“Marks”) for promotion and advertising purposes. Those Sponsors must submit proposed ads, press releases, athlete appearances or other promotions through USOC Marketing for review and approval prior to release.

Endorsement Contract with Unaffiliated Third Party

In order to ensure that unaffiliated third parties (those who have no official relationship with the USOC or “Non-Sponsors”) do not create the false impression that they are a Sponsor of the Games and/or Team USA, athletes endorsing Non-Sponsors should make certain that advertising, web sites, promotions, etc. focus on the athlete and his/her achievements rather than on the Olympic or Paralympic Games (“Games”). The USOC will not tolerate ambush marketing by companies that are not Sponsors.

Non-Sponsors may not use OLYMPIC, PARALYMPIC, RIO 2016 or other Marks in any commercial context without the USOC’s permission before, during or after the Games.

Non-Sponsors may submit for USOC approval ads containing biographical references to athletes as Olympians or Paralympians. Such ads are more likely to be approved if the Olympic or Paralympic reference is balanced by non-Olympic or non-Paralympic achievements.

Photography or video footage of athletes from the Games or U.S. Team Trials or of athletes with their medals or U.S. Team apparel may not be used for commercial purposes without the USOC’s approval.

Compliance with Athlete Advertising Blackout Period

No athlete participating in the Games may allow his or her person, name, picture or sports performance to be used for advertising purposes during the blackout period for each Games (which generally corresponds with the period of time that the Olympic or Paralympic Village is open) unless a waiver is sought from and granted by the USOC. These IOC and IPC rules affect athlete eligibility and are enforced by the USOC.

All commercial activity by U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Team members not approved by the USOC must cease during the blackout period of the respective Games. Please see the USOC’s separate guidance on obtaining Rule 40 waivers.

Athlete Apparel

As described in the Athlete Code of Conduct, U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Team athletes must wear the Team USA apparel issued to them at all official USOC functions including but not limited to: the Games, USOC Media Summit, Sponsor Workshops, Medal Ceremonies, Opening/Closing Ceremonies, press conferences arranged by the USOC and/or hosted by the USOC, IOC, IPC, RIO 2016, White House visit and other engagements arranged by the USOC. At these official functions, athletes may not wear branded apparel or accessories that are not part of the U.S. Team apparel issued by the USOC. In addition, during the Opening/Closing Ceremonies and Medal Ceremonies (except in those instances in which medals are awarded at the venue immediately following the competition and the USOC has granted a waiver for the athlete to wear his or her competition apparel on the podium), athletes must wear the USOC issued gear for such ceremony in full, including shoes, hats, ball caps, sunglasses, or other apparel and accessories that are provided and required.

Specialized Equipment

An athlete has the right to select his or her Specialized Equipment for use in the Olympic, Paralympic and Pan American Games.

The USOC shall have the sole authority to determine what equipment constitutes Specialized Equipment (aka "personal competitive gear") for each sport. The list of USOC approved equipment is located at <http://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Resources/Athlete-Ombudsman/Resources/Commercial-Terms>.

The USOC may require an athlete to cover sponsor logos on Specialized Equipment (other than manufacturers' logos complying with Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter) at events where a "Clean Venue" is required (e.g., Games, Team Trials, etc.).

Fundraising

Do not use OLYMPIC, OLYMPIAN, PARALYMPIC, PARALYMPIAN or other Marks, symbols or terminology that looks in any way like a trademark, (e.g., banner headline, part of a domain name, in large or prominent letters) anywhere on fundraising letters, a web site, or on promotional merchandise (t-shirts, bumper stickers, mugs, key chains, etc.).

Athletes may use Olympic or Paralympic terminology in text to describe their aspirations (e.g., "my goal is to compete at the Paralympic Games in Rio.") or accomplishments ("e.g., Olympic Gold medalist – 400m Relay.").

These parameters apply to ALL Marks owned by the USOC such as Team USA, Go For The Gold, Let The Games Begin, Rio 2016, Road To Rio and other trademarks that specifically refer to the Games.

Web sites

Athlete web sites should follow the general rules regarding permissible uses of the Marks and the restrictions on Non-Sponsors. Athletes must separate the Non-Sponsors from all Olympic or Paralympic references (including photographs from the Games) on the web site. This can be done, for example, by putting the athlete's sponsors who are not Sponsors on the home page but keeping all Olympic or Paralympic references in a separate section/page of the web site that does not feature any commercial entity.

If an athlete seeks donations or other financial support on his/her web site, to the extent possible the fundraising portion of the site should be separate from Marks and imagery, including Games photos. Factual Olympic and Paralympic references should be made in small type, for example to describe the athlete's goals or achievements, rather than used in banner headlines.

Fan web sites should be informational and not sponsored by third parties. Web sites with commercial affiliation must not use Marks without permission from the USOC.

Olympic and Paralympic Footage

Neither athletes nor third parties may use footage of U.S. Team Trials or Games competition without the express consent of the USOC. This requirement includes but is not limited to: use of footage on web sites or public exhibition of any kind, whether for any personal, commercial or charitable purposes. Please note that the Games broadcaster controls all footage for the Games for a period of time thereafter. For the 2016 Olympic Games, NBC controls the footage through December 31, 2016.

Philanthropy

Athletes are encouraged to participate in other philanthropic organizations. Those organizations may use Olympic and Paralympic biographical references that are specific to the athlete and balanced with other non-Olympic/Paralympic accomplishments. Such organizations cannot use Olympic or Paralympic-themed materials, Games footage, medal imagery or photographs of the athlete from the Games in their fund raising efforts, operations or activities.

Athlete Ombudsman:

The Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act mandates that the USOC hire an Athlete Ombudsman to advise athletes of their rights. Athletes are encouraged to contact her if they have questions.

Kacie Wallace, Athlete Ombudsman
Phone: 888-ATHLETE
Email: athlete.ombudsman@usoc.org
www.athleteombudsman.org
www.twitter.com/USOCCombudsman
www.facebook.com/AthleteOmbudsman

Questions and Approval, Please Contact:

Christopher Coleman, Athlete Marketing
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