

**U.S. CURLING ASSOCIATION (USCA)
ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES**

**2022 PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES
WHEELCHAIR CURLING (MIXED)
2/15/2020**

***CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW FOR AMENDMENTS DUE TO QUALIFICATION EVENT
CANCELLATIONS/POSTPOSTMENTS FROM COVID-19 19 MARCH 2020***

1. SELECTION SYSTEM

1.1. Provide the minimum eligibility requirements for an athlete to be considered for nomination to the Team:

1.1.1. Nationality/Passport requirements:

An athlete must be a national of the United States at the time he/she enters the application and registration process for the 2021 US National Team Selection Trials.

Athlete must hold a valid U.S. passport that will not expire for six months after the conclusion of the Games.

1.1.2. Minimum International Paralympic Committee (IPC) standards for participation:

Any competitor in the Paralympic Games must be a national of the country of the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) which is entering such competitor.

1.1.3. Minimum International Federation (IF)

Be internationally classified with a 'Confirmed' sport class status or demonstrate a disability that meets the International Federation classification guidance criteria.

1.1.4. Other requirements (if any):

- Athletes must have successfully completed all Games Registration requirements by stated deadline.
- Payment of required USCA fees. There may be registration entry fees for all individuals per current USCA Championships Rules. See current championship rules on the USCA website, www.usacurl.org.
- Athletes must be a current USCA member and abiding by the current USCA Athlete/Coach Code of Conduct Agreement: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Events/Championships-microsite/Inside-the-Championships/National-Championship-Events/Hosting-Events>
- Athletes must be a dues paying member of a USCA-member club, or alternatively, pay a one-time \$100 (per athlete) USCA administrative fee to be eligible to compete in the Trials and, if they qualify, the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.
- Completion of the application (Section 1.2.2) to the US Team Selection Trials process is an indication to the USCA that all entered athletes intend to compete, if they qualify, at the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.
- General Eligibility. Athlete eligibility is governed by these Selection Procedures and by the current Championship Rules, which also includes competition rules and procedures, the athlete agreement, the code of conduct, and other administrative forms. See current championship rules on the USCA website, www.usacurl.org
- WCF Qualification. The WCF qualification system for the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games can be found at www.worldcurling.org.
- USA must accumulate the required qualification points in order to qualify for the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.
- Any athlete age 18 or older will be required to undergo a background screen in accordance with the current USOPC Background Check Policy.
- Any athlete age 18 or older as of the Closing Ceremony will be required to complete the U.S Center for SafeSport's online training.

1.2. Tryout Events:

- 1.2.1. Provide the event names, dates and locations of all trials, events and camps to be used as part of the selection process.

2022 Paralympic Curling PreTrials Selection Event

Postponed

Location: TBD

Application Deadline: 5:00 PM Central Time, March 9, 2020

US National Team Selection Trials

(2021 National Team and 2022 Paralympic Curling Team Trials)

Postponed

Location: TDB

Application Deadline: (TBD)

Performance Camps (TBD)

Invitational Development Camps (TBD)

Development Clinics (TBD)

International Competitions (TBD)

**The dates, times and locations of all TBD events listed above will be noticed to the applicable athletes via email no later 45 days prior to each event.

- 1.2.2. Provide event names, dates, locations and description of how athletes qualify for the trials, events and camps listed above in 1.2.1. (if any).

2022 Paralympic Curling PreTrials

The 2022 Paralympic Curling PreTrials Selection Event (Paralympic Curling PreTrials) will be held April 16-17, 2020 in Denver, Colorado.

Application to this event is open to all eligible athletes in the United States who have not already been directly invited to the 2021 National Team Trials. The Application is available at the following link:

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Features/2019/October/28/2021-Wheelchair-National-Team-and-2022-Paralympic-Team-Trials-information>.

Completed applications are due by March 9, 2020. Applications should be emailed to info@usacurl.org. The applications will be reviewed by the Player Selection Committee (The Committee) (Section 2.3). This Committee will rank order, by gender, all applicants based upon their submitted skill shot results, demonstrated past performance over the past two (2) seasons and experience as documented in their submitted application. A minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) athletes will be selected to participate in the Paralympic Curling PreTrials. The skill shot sheet is available at the following link:

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Features/2019/October/28/2021-Wheelchair-National-Team-and-2022-Paralympic-Team-Trials-information>

Applicants that are selected to attend the Paralympic Curling PreTrials will receive an invitation via email no later than March 15, 2020. Acceptance must be sent via email to info@usacurl.org and received by USA Curling no later than 7 days from the date of notification. Should an invitation be declined by a selected athlete or USA Curling not receiving an acceptance within the above time constraint, the next athlete from the rank ordered gender specific listing will be selected and immediately invited.

At the Paralympic Curling PreTrials, athletes will be rank ordered, gender specific, by the Player Staff Selection Committee (Committee) on demonstrated skill via the skill set performance (Attachment A), game knowledge, prior team performance (if applicable) and team dynamics. As Wheelchair Curling is a coed sport, gender will be considered as a selection factor. At least one individual must be selected from each gender. The team's male/female composition percentage will be based upon Committee discussion with the team staff.

A minimum of four (4) athletes will be selected from the Paralympic Curling PreTrials to field a pool of twelve (12) athletes that will be invited to participate in the US National Team Selection Trials.

U.S. National Team Selection Trials

The US National Team Selection Trials (the Trials) will be held in Denver, CO on May 28-29, 2020. A maximum of twelve (12) athletes will be invited to the Trials using the following criteria:

- All eight (8) members of the 2020 National Team who were in good standing per the USA Curling Athlete Code of Conduct (1.1.4) on the date the invitations are sent.
- A minimum of four (4) athletes selected from the Paralympic Curling PreTrials.
- Additional athletes, as required, from the gender specific, rank ordered listing from the Paralympic Curling PreTrials, to fill gaps left by athletes from the prior year's National Team who withdrew, were not considered in good standing or who have received a waiver from attendance.
- Once the Trials field is filled to twelve (12) athletes using the above criteria, should a selected athlete drop out any time for any reason after they have been notified of being selected and have submitted their acceptance, the Committee retains the sole authority of determining if that open spot will be filled based upon discussion with the team staff. If the decision is made to fill the open position, the next ranked athletes from the Paralympic Curling PreTrials lists will be considered per the above criteria and gender order/ranking.
- Current team gender requirements (at least one of each gender) will be considered in all levels of selection to ensure adequate team gender composition as required by World Curling Federation rules of play.

Throughout the US National Team Selection Trials, participants will be assessed and given a gender specific rank by the Committee (Section 2.3) based upon their demonstrated skill, game knowledge and team dynamics. Athletes' prior demonstrated game knowledge and performance may also be used in the final gender specific rankings.

The Trials invitations to the 2020 National Team athletes in good standing will be issued by email within seven (7) days of the publication of these procedures. The athletes who are being invited directly to attend the US National Team Selection Trials must accept or deny the invitation, in writing, received by addressee, no later than April 1, 2020, either by letter to the USCA National Office (5525 Clem's Way, Stevens Point, WI 54482); by fax (715-344-2279) or by email (preferred) to info@usacurl.org. A failure to reply or failure to complete all required registration requirements by April 1, 2020 will be considered a denial of the invitation.

For Petitions of Waiver for US National Team Selection Trials:

The USCA recognizes that extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances may occur which would cause athletes to be unable to participate in or complete one or more steps of the 2022 Paralympic Games selection procedures as described herein.

Procedures for petitioning for a waiver in lieu of competing in or completing the Trials while remaining a viable candidate for the National Team are outlined below. Any such petitions will be critically considered by the Committee in consultation with the USCA CEO. It is anticipated that use of such petitions will be minimal and used as a last resort by the athlete.

All athletes who received an invitation to the Trials who are unable to participate in or complete the US National Team Selection Trials may file a petition for waiver in lieu of competing in or completing the Trials.

For waivers to be considered prior to April 1, 2020: In order to be considered for a waiver from the Trials, petitions to be addressed by the Committee must be submitted in writing and received by the USCA no later than March 23, 2020. Petitions can be submitted either by letter to the USCA National Office (5525 Clem's Way, Stevens Point, WI 54482); by fax (715-344- 2279) or by email (preferred) to info@usacurl.org. The petition must include the athlete's full name, address, phone number(s) and email address (if available).

The petition must state the specific injury, illness or unusual circumstances which may prohibit the athlete from participating in the Trials process. In the case of a petition based upon an injury or illness, the petition must be accompanied by a physician's statement verifying the injury or illness.

For waivers to be considered after April 1, 2020: If an athlete who has previously registered for the Trials or has filed for a waiver after March 15, 2020 incurred or incurs an injury or illness or unforeseen circumstance that may prevent him/her from competing at or completing the Trials, the athlete must immediately contact the USCA , preferably via phone (715.344.1199). Email may be sent to info@uscacurl.org, but as these are urgent matters, a phone call is highly advised. USCA will contact the National Wheelchair Program Coach via phone or email. If it is an injury or illness, it must be documented by a certified healthcare professional and that documentation must be sent to the National Program Coach as soon as practical who (will forward onto the hearing panel (The Committee).

For either of the above situations, a hearing will be conducted within 48 hours of USCA receiving the waiver and additional documentation. The result of the hearing will be presented to the athlete within 48 hours of the completion of the hearing. The purpose of the hearing is solely to determine the legitimacy of the injury, illness, or unforeseen circumstance and its effect on the individual. The hearing panel (the Committee) has no authority to place an athlete directly onto the National Team.

Athletes that are granted a waiver are not required to attend or complete the Trials. Athletes who have received a waiver will have their known ability compared against the last selected athlete(s) from the Trials on the appropriate gender specific ranking's demonstrated ability. The Committee will then use this information to decide upon the eight (8) 2021 National Team finalists.

The filling of any vacancy at the Trials due to the granting of a waiver is at the discretion of the Committee. If a vacancy is decided to be filled, additional athletes will be selected from the gender-specific rank order listings from the Paralympic Curling PreTrials.

- 1.3. Provide a comprehensive, step-by-step description of the method that explains how athletes will go through the selection process to become Team nominees (include maximum Team size).

The maximum team size for the 2022 Paralympic Curling Team is five (5) athletes. Teams competing in Wheelchair Curling must be comprised of male and female players with gender as determined by the sanctioning body. Each competing team must have a total of four (4) players, at least one of each gender, on the ice at all times for each game.

Athletes competing at the US National Team Selection Trials will participate in individual skill shots, interviews and observed behavior on and off the ice (Attachment A). Throughout these Trials, all athletes will be assessed and given a gender specific rank by the Committee regarding their curling abilities as well as other qualities including on- and off-ice behavior, team dynamics and practice regimen. Athletes' prior demonstrated game knowledge and performance will also be recorded, assessed and rated. The Committee will select eight (8) athletes from the gender specific ranked lists at the end of Trials. Team members will be selected based upon team positional and gender needs with the goal of creating the strongest US National Team. All athletes will be notified of their selection status to the 2021 Team prior to the end of the Trials. Selected athletes will be named to the 2021 US National Wheelchair Curling Team.

The eight (8) selected athletes to the 2021 US National Wheelchair Curling Team will continue to be assessed and evaluated by the National Staff throughout the 2021 season during scheduled High-Performance Camps and competitions, leading up to the 2022 Paralympic Team nomination deadline of December 18, 2021, as stated in Section 8. If the National Coach determines that an athlete is not performing at a level that best allows for competitive success of the 2021 National Team or 2022 Paralympic Team, that athlete may be removed from the National Team (Section 3). Reference USCA Athlete/Coach Code of Conduct Agreement. If a vacancy exists on the National Team for any reason, the National Coach may then nominate to the Committee another athlete for the 2021 National Team (Section 4). In nominating a replacement, the National Coach will refer to the gender-based rank ordered listing of athletes who competed in Trials. From the Trials list, a replacement team member will be selected based upon team positional and gender needs with the goal of creating the strongest US National Team.

Prior to December 18, 2021 the Committee will meet and nominate to the 2022 Paralympic Curling Team five (5) athletes from the pool of eight (8) athletes.

2. DISCRETIONARY SELECTION (if applicable)

2.1. Provide rationale for utilizing discretionary selection (if any):

Discretionary selection will be used to ensure USCA puts forth the most competitive team at the 2022 Paralympic Games.

2.2. List the discretionary criteria and explain how they will be used:

The discretionary method and qualifications outlined in Section 1.3 will be used to select the 2022 Paralympic Team.

2.3. Provide the name of the committee that will be responsible for making discretionary selections, along with a complete list of the members' titles currently serving on the committee:

Player Selection Committee (C o m m i t t e e)

National Wheelchair Curling Coach
Team Leader or HP Director
USOPC AAC Rep, or designated alternate
Prior US Curling National Team Athlete, any discipline

2.3.1. Specify the process that will be used to identify and handle any potential conflicts of interest involving a member of the committee.

Any member of the selection committee that has a possible conflict of interest must disclose it. If such conflict exists, the selection committee member must recuse him/herself from committee discussions and voting. Further, the committee member should not otherwise influence other members of the committee in the nomination process. However, a committee member who recused him/herself, but who has relevant and necessary information with respect to athlete performance, for example a national team coach or high performance director, may, if requested by the selection committee, provide such information to the committee so long as such information is provided in a fair and unbiased manner.

3. REMOVAL OF ATHLETES

- 3.1. Prior to acceptance of nominations by the USOPC, USCA has jurisdiction over potential nominees.

An athlete who is to be nominated to the Team by USCA may be removed as a nominee for any of the following reasons, as determined by USCA:

- 3.1.1. Voluntary withdrawal. Athlete must submit a written letter to the USCA Executive Director.
- 3.1.2. Injury or illness as certified by a physician (or medical staff) approved by USCA. If an athlete refuses verification of his/her illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff) approved by the USCA, his/her injury will be assumed to be disabling and he/she may be removed.
- 3.1.3. Failure to participate in Mandatory Training and/or Competition as defined in Section 9 of these procedures
- 3.1.4. Violation of USCA Athlete/Coach Agreement or the USCA Athlete/Coach Code of Conduct Agreement (<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Events/Championships-microsite/Inside-the-Championships>)
- 3.1.5. Re-classification by the IPC/IF such that the athlete's qualifying performance would not have qualified him or her for the Team.
- 3.1.6. Removal by the IPC/IF of the event in which the athlete qualified for the Team from the program of the Paralympic Games.
- 3.1.7. Determination by the National Coach that a selected athlete is no longer performing at a level that best allows for competitive success of the 2021 National Team or 2022 Paralympic Team.

An athlete who is removed from the Team pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per the NGB's Bylaws (See Athlete/Coach Code of Conduct Agreement) and the USOPC's Bylaws, Section 9.

- 3.2. Once an athlete nomination is accepted by the USOPC, the USOPC has jurisdiction over the Team, at which time, in addition to any applicable USCA Code of Conduct, the USOPC's Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures apply. The USOPC's Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures can be found at:

<http://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Resources/Athlete-Ombudsman>

- 3.3. An athlete may be removed as a nominee to the Team or from the Team for an adjudicated violation of IPC, WADA, IF, USADA and/or USOPC anti-

doping protocol, policies and procedures, as applicable.

4. REPLACEMENT OF ATHLETES

4.1. Describe the selection and approval process for determining replacement athlete(s) should a vacancy occur:

4.1.1. Prior to submission of Entries by Name to the Local Organizing Committee, including any applicable group or committee:

The athletes competing in the US National Team Selection Trials will be assessed and ranked by the Player Selection Committee (Section 2.3). This ranking will serve as the initial guideline to the National Coach to determine replacement athlete(s) should a vacancy occur.

However, when replacing an athlete, the National Coach retains the discretion to select the athlete which best competes the team should it be determined that the next highest ranked athlete's behavior, team dynamics, practice regimen and/or health has decreased to the point that it negatively impacts the overall Team performance. The gender of the athlete being replaced must also be taken into consideration, as each team competing in the Paralympics must have both genders competing on the ice in every game.

4.1.2. After submission of Entries by Name to the Local Organizing Committee, including any applicable group or committee:

The athletes competing in the US National Team Selection Trials will be assessed and ranked by the Player Selection Committee (Section 2.3). This ranking will serve as the initial guideline to the National Coach to determine replacement athlete(s) should a vacancy occur.

However, when replacing an athlete the National Coach retains the discretion to select the athlete which best competes the team should it be determined that the next highest ranked athlete's behavior, team dynamics, practice regimen and/or health has decreased to the point that it negatively impacts the overall Team performance. The gender of the athlete being replaced must also be taken into consideration, as each team competing in the Paralympics must have both genders competing on the ice in every game.

5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

USCA will retain the approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents, including scouting or evaluation forms, etc., and data from the selection process for six months past the date of the Closing Ceremony of the Games.

6. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

In addition to the USOPC Code of Conduct, the following documents are required to be signed by an athlete as a condition of nomination to the Paralympic Games and are included as attachments. USCA National Team Athlete Agreement and Code of Conduct which can be found at: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Events/Championships-microsite/Inside-the-Championships>

7. PUBLICITY/DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEDURES

The USOPC approved Selection Procedures (complete and unaltered) will be posted/published by USCA in the following locations:

7.1. USCA Web site: www.usacurl.org

These procedures will be posted as soon as possible, but not more than five business days following notice of approval by the USOPC.

7.2. Other:

The USCA will publish a link to the complete U.S. Paralympic Team Selection Procedures online at www.usacurl.org. If publication deadlines allow this notice may also be published in print or online versions of the U.S. Curling News.

8. DATE OF NOMINATION

The Nomination of Athletes form, including replacements, will be announced to all athletes and submitted to the USOPC on or before:

December 18, 2021

9. MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPETITION

The athlete training and competition schedule between the US National Team Selection Trials and the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games will be developed by the USCA National Wheelchair Curling Program coaches and team leader.

The athletes selected for the 2021 National Team and subsequently selected to the 2022 Paralympic Team will be subject to mandatory on- and off-ice training events and competitions. Team training will include a travel and time commitment. The National Coach will develop a custom and formalized High-Performance Plan to best meet the Team's needs. Team members will be held accountable to the National Wheelchair Curling Program coaches and team leader. The team High Performance Plan will include:

- Team, coach and team leader maintain constant and formal communication
- Team commits to an on and off-ice training plan
- Team commits to work with their Paralympic Team Coach
- Team has a competition plan that includes international competition, if available
- Team attends High Performance Clinics/Camps, if scheduled
- Team reports their training and competition results to the National Coach
- Team will participate in the USADA Testing per USADA direction
- Team will adhere to all applicable anti-doping protocols
- Team cooperates to conclude all handicapped-related WCF documentation

Considering the high level of training and competition required to maximize the Team's chances to medal at the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games, all athletes are advised to keep their schedules open and flexible between the conclusion of the US National Team Selection Trials and throughout the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.

9.1 Specify the location, schedule and duration of mandatory training and/or competition:

- Monthly High-Performance Camps as scheduled in the High-Performance Plan
- 2020 World Wheelchair Curling B Championship, Oct 2020, Lohja, Finland.
- 2021 World Wheelchair Curling Championships, March 2021, Beijing, China.
- Emerging training and competition event dates will be noticed to athletes at least 30 days prior to the training or competition event

10. ANTI-DOPING REQUIREMENTS

Athletes must adhere to all IOC, IPC, PASO, WADA, IF, USADA and USOPC antidoping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing as required by the IOC, IPC, PASO, WADA, IF, USADA and USOPC Rules, as applicable.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTION PROCEDURES

The following committee/group (include names and titles) was responsible for creating these Selection Procedures:

Russell J. Schieber, USA Wheelchair Curling National Coach
Marc DePerno, USA Wheelchair Curling Team Leader
Dean Gemmell, USOPC AAC Rep
Justin Marshall, Former USA National Team Member/2018 Paralympian
Rich Lepping, USCA Interim CEO

12. NGB/HPMO BYLAWS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The USCA By Laws and Grievance Procedures can be found at: www.usacurl.org

13. INTERNATIONAL DISCLAIMER

These procedures are based on IPC, as applicable, and/or World Curling Federation rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the selection procedures caused by a change in IPC, as applicable, and/or World Curling Federation rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USCA. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency.

If any force of nature, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the selection events listed in this document, these selection procedures will be revised, pursuant to their resubmission to the USOPC.

14. ATHLETE OMBUDSMAN

The Athlete Ombudsman provides cost-free, independent and confidential advice regarding athlete rights, grievance procedures and any other related guidance pertaining to selection procedures and can assist in mediating disputes between athletes and their NGB/HPMO.

To contact the Athlete Ombudsman
 Office: PHONE: (719) 866-5000
 EMAIL: ombudsman@usathlete.org
www.usathlete.org

15. NGB/HPMO SIGNATURES

I certify that I have read and understand the standards/criteria set by our IF and/or CF (PAG/PPAG only) and incorporated those standards/criteria into our Selection Procedures. I further certify that the information provided herein regarding Athlete Selection Procedures represents the method approved by USCA.

Position	Print Name	Signature	Date
NGB/HPMO President or CEO/Executive Director	Jeffrey S. Plush		
Nat. Team Coach, Head Coach, or Nat. Program Director	Russell J. Schieber		
USOPC Athletes' Advisory Council Representative*	Dean Gemmell		

* If the USOPC AAC Representative has delegated authority to the Alternate AAC Representative to sign the Selection Procedures, attach a letter from the AAC Representative indicating the reason he/she has delegated authority.

* Signature by the Athlete Representative constitutes that he/she has read and understands the Selection Procedures. If the Athlete Representative reads and does not agree with the Athlete Selection Procedures being submitted by the NGB/HPMO, he/she may submit those reasons in writing to his/her Sport Performance Team.

* If, for some reason, a sport does not have an elected USOPC AAC Representative, the NGB/HPMO must designate an athlete from that sport to review and sign the Selection Procedures.

Attachment A: U.S. Paralympics Wheelchair Curler Assessment Criteria

Definitions:

Prior Demonstrated Game Knowledge:

The collective net accumulation of all aspects of game knowledge as demonstrated at our various National Camps, Clinics, International competitive events or other events. Subjective.

Prior Demonstrated Performance:

The collective net accumulation of individual performance, on and off the ice, as demonstrated at our various National Camps, Clinics, International competitive events, on-line meetings, reportable skill sets, Personal Coaching Sessions and other team activities. Participation in team activities as well as results are considered. Positive and negative team/athlete interactions/discipline will also be considered. Team Dynamics and team interaction will be considered. Subjective.

Personal Interview and Evaluation

Evaluation of team positional needs fit and the athlete's ability to handle adverse situations while remaining a strong team player will be considered. Athlete's goals and commitment will be explored and considered. The interview also serves as a purpose to evaluate the athletes training plans and their hurdles to improvement. Game knowledge can also be assessed via the interview. Subjective.

Demonstrated Skill

To be evaluated using a scripted set of drills. Scoring is objective. Drills will be scored using an objective scoring system. Hits, Draws, clockwise and counterclockwise turns will be presented and scored. Objective.

Team Dynamics

Athlete's outwardly demonstrated team dynamics and actions/reactions will be observed and recorded subjectively. Also reflected in the Prior Demonstrated Performance for returning athletes. Subjective.

