

USCA Athletes Advisory Council (AAC)

Purpose:

The purpose of the AAC is to provide comprehensive guidance, recommendations, or both, to the United States Curling Association (“USCA”) on any issue relating to elite athlete curlers. The AAC will provide a formal means of USCA compliance to the United States Olympic Committee (“USOC”) twenty percent (20%) Athlete Representation Mandate by providing a pool of peer-elected athletes to serve on the USCA Board of Directors and Board committees as defined in Article 9A of the USCA Bylaws, as may be amended from time to time.

In addition, the AAC will facilitate the election of the USOC/AAC Representative and Alternate to the USOC Athletes Advisory Council.

Mission:

The mission of the AAC is to represent the interests and promote the rights of elite athlete curlers within the USCA; provide guidance to the USCA as the collective voice of elite athlete curlers in the United States; and partner with the USCA to advance the competitive efforts of the United States in international competitions.

Scope:

Any issue related to competitive curling is within the scope of the AAC. Although primarily a council that is responsive to the USCA on issues, the AAC also proactively discusses, provides advice and opinions and makes recommendations to the USCA whenever elite athlete curlers are affected.

USCA AAC BYLAWS

I. Composition of the AAC

A. The AAC is composed of nine representatives elected by the pool of eligible voters, as applicable to the representative, defined in Section I.C. They are as follows:

- **Three (3) Male Athletes** elected as Athletes-at-Large
- **Three (3) Female Athletes** elected as Athletes-at-Large
- **One (1) USOC/AAC Representative**
- **One (1) USOC/AAC Alternate**
- **One (1) Para Athlete**

B. The Para Athlete representative will have a voice on all matters before the AAC, but no vote, unless the vote specifically affects the pool of athletes that elected the representative and will not be eligible for any AAC officer or USCA Director and Committee positions, as referenced in Section II.C.

C. Only those athletes eligible to vote for AAC representatives are eligible to stand for election to the AAC. To be eligible to vote for AAC representatives or stand for election, an athlete must meet the following criteria:

1. *Members-at-Large*. Must have finished in the top half of the field **to a maximum of 8 teams** of the Men's, Women's or Mixed Doubles National Curling Championship/World Team Trials within the preceding two (2) years, or have represented the United States and actively competed in the Men's, Women's or Mixed Doubles World Curling Championship or the Olympic Winter Games within the preceding ten (10) years, as measured from the date of the closing ceremonies of the qualifying event to the date of the election.
2. *USOC/AAC Representative and Alternate*. Must have represented the United States and actively competed in the Men's, Women's or Mixed Doubles World Curling Championship or the Olympic Winter Games within the preceding ten (10) years, as specifically measured from the first USOC/AAC meeting of the Quadrennium. A Quadrennium is deemed to start on January 1 of the year following the year in which the summer Olympic Games is scheduled to be held, and end on December 31 of the year in which the next edition of the summer Olympic Games is scheduled to be held.
3. *Para Representative*. Must have represented the United States and actively competed in the World Wheelchair Championship or the Paralympic Winter Games within the preceding ten (10) years, as measured from the date of the closing ceremonies of the qualifying event to the date of the election.

II. Election Procedures of the AAC

A. Members-at-Large

1. To be included in the AAC election, eligible athletes must self-nominate by the end of April or the conclusion of the Men's and Women's National Championship or Mixed Doubles Championship, whichever is later. Self-nominations will be accepted via email by USCA staff. A Member-at-Large whose term is not up for election may be designated by the AAC to facilitate election procedures. Each self-nomination should include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - How the candidate qualifies for election to the AAC (finish at Nationals, appearance at World Championships or Olympic Games)
 - Expected level of commitment
 - Position Statement
2. At the conclusion of the self-nominating period, a ballot will be emailed to all eligible voters. Staff will count the votes. Only those eligible to run for the AAC, as defined in Section I.C, are eligible to vote in AAC elections.
3. The election procedures will be available on usacurl.org (USCA web site). The election results will be announced via email and on the web site in advance of the annual AAC Spring Meeting.
4. Members-at-Large are elected to two (2) year terms.
5. The AAC will audit Member-at-Large elections as necessary.

B. Para Representative

1. To be included in the AAC Para Representative election, eligible athletes must self-nominate by the end of April or the conclusion of the Men's and Women's or Mixed Doubles National Championship. Self-nominations will be accepted via email by USCA staff. Each self-nomination should include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - How the candidate qualifies for election to the AAC (appearance at World Championships or Olympic Games)
 - Expected level of commitment
 - Position Statement
2. At the conclusion of the self-nominating period, a ballot will be emailed to all eligible voters. Staff will count the votes. Only those eligible to run for the AAC Para Representative, as defined in Section I.C.3, are eligible to vote in the election.

3. The election procedures will be available on usacurl.org (USCA web site). The election results will be announced via email and on the web site in advance of the annual AAC Spring Meeting.
4. The Para Representative is elected to a two (2) year term.
5. The AAC will audit Para Representative elections as necessary.

C. AAC Officers and USCA Director and Committee Positions

1. Election for the following positions will take place during or immediately following the USCA Board of Directors Meeting held in the second quarter:
 - a. AAC Chair
 - b. AAC Vice Chair
 - c. Two (2) USCA Directors
2. AAC representatives can nominate themselves as candidates for these positions prior to the second quarter USCA Board Meeting. When only one candidate comes forward for a position, they will be considered elected by acclamation and no election is necessary. When elections are necessary, USCA staff will manage the voting procedures. Current AAC representatives will be allowed to vote on the positions stated above.
3. The Chair, Vice Chair, and USCA Directors will each serve a one year term. The term for each position will begin following the second quarter meeting.
4. The elected Chair and Vice Chair and the elected USOC-AAC Representative automatically become USCA Directors.
5. The number of USCA Directors elected is determined by the how many are needed to bring the USCA Board to a composition that has 20% athlete-elected Directors.
6. From the AAC representatives who are USCA Directors, the USCA Nominating/Governance Committee will nominate a candidate to the Audit/Finance Committee. From the remaining AAC representatives who are USCA Directors, the Chair of the Board will appoint one to the Human Resources Committee.
7. The three remaining AAC representatives that are not USCA Directors will populate the Judicial, Ethics and Nominating/Governance Committees, as required by Article 9A of the USCA Bylaws.

D. USOC-AAC Representative/Alternate

1. The USOC-AAC Representative and Alternate will be elected via email ballot during November of the year preceding the start of the four-year term. To be included in the USOC-AAC election, eligible athletes will be invited to self-nominate. When elections are necessary, USCA staff will manage the voting procedures. Only those athletes eligible to run for USOC-AAC Representative or Alternate are eligible to vote for candidates for this position.

III. Appointments and Terms

A. Appointments:

1. AAC representatives are appointed to each designated USCA committee in a number that provides a minimum of 20% athlete representation on each such committee.
 - a. Non-designated committee athlete representation may include athletes that meet the below definition but such athlete appointment must be approved, in writing, by the current Chair of the AAC.
 - b. Non-designated committee athlete representatives. An individual who has, within twenty-four (24) months before selection, competed in a USCA sanctioned National Championship which is not age restricted and which does require participants to have qualified on the ice for the opportunity to compete in the National Championship. For example, this would exclude any National Championship which permits all competitors who wish to compete to sign-up and play in the National Championship.
2. When an AAC member vacates their position before their term is completed, the AAC may appoint an eligible athlete to complete the term.
3. One additional At-Large member may be appointed by the AAC at its discretion at any duly called meeting.

B. Terms of office are as follows:

1. *At-Large Representatives (Three (3) Males, Three (3) Females)* serve two (2) year terms. When an At-Large member is appointed by the AAC at its discretion under Article III.A.2 above, the term for that member will be one (1) year and will end at the commencement of the upcoming self-nominating period.
2. *USOC/AAC Representative and Alternate* serve four (4) year terms as defined in I.C.2 and the USOC AAC bylaws.
3. *AAC Officers* (Chair, Vice Chair, USCA Directors) serve one (1) year terms.
4. *Para Representative* serves a two (2) year term.
5. There are no term limits. As long as an athlete remains eligible to run based on qualifying competitive results, they are eligible to run for election.

IV. Meetings.

- A. AAC meetings will be held biannually, concurrent with an USCA Board of Directors meeting.
- B. Other meetings, in person or via conference call will be called and held as deemed necessary by the Chair or Vice Chair. Elections or amendments to these bylaws may be conducted via email.

- C. If an AAC Representative is unable to attend two (2) consecutive meetings, the AAC may remove the representative if two-thirds (2/3) of the AAC representatives vote to take such action.
- D. At any AAC meeting, a quorum of two-thirds (2/3) must be present for any vote to take place. In matters requiring immediate action by the AAC, the Chair can act on behalf of the AAC after consulting with at least two (2) other representatives of the AAC. Any action taken in this manner is subject to ratification at the next duly called AAC meeting.
- E. Roberts Rules of Order will, in general, be followed.

V. Rules of Conduct.

- A. AAC Representatives will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, both on and off the ice.
- B. AAC Representatives cannot be paid employees of the USCA or the USOC.
- C. An AAC Representative must recuse him or herself from votes or discussions that immediately and directly impact him or her, or the team(s) on which he or she competes.

VI. Amendments to the AAC Bylaws

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the current AAC Representatives.