

Recruitment & Screening Programs

Programs like the USA Luge slider search enable USA Luge to introduce athletes to the sport and is the main recruitment tool for USA Luge.

Another way athletes are able to make a team is by racing in seeding races and our Jr. & Sr. National Championships. Athletes get training time for these events by joining one of our luge clubs.



*Partially Funded



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THE USA LUGE TEAM STRUCTURE



Member, United States Olympic Committee



U.S. Representative, Fédération Internationale de Luge de Course





USA Luge Team Structure

USA LUGE recruits, trains, selects and supports athletes and teams at all levels of ability. The first step into the program for most new athletes is the summer luge recruitment program known as the USA Luge Slider Search. This program identifies interested athletes that may be seeing a luge sled for the very first time. Ultimately, with the proper training, natural talent and a little luck, this beginning will lead to the fulfillment of the final goal of most athletes...success in Olympic competition. In between this beginning and the end result lies a great deal of hard work and dedication. Teams are selected twice a year (April & December) and athletes hope they will perform successfully in qualifying races and get selected to a higher level team.

Q: What is the current team structure in the USA Luge Program:

A: The current teams within the USA Luge program are:

- Senior National "A" & "B" Teams & Graduating Junior (World Cup, World Championship and Olympic Teams)
- Senior National "C" Team Candidate Select
- Junior National "A" Team
- Junior National "B" Team
- Junior National "C" Team
- Junior National "D" Team

Q: Who selects the teams and how is it done?

A: A Team Selection Committee consisting of members of the Sports Staff (the coaches) approved by the Executive Director and the National Team Committee Chairman are responsible for making team selections.

Team selections are traditionally conducted each April, after the conclusion of the luge sliding season, and in December (around Christmas). Each year a series of Seeding Races (usually 2-3 races) are held, which give athletes a chance to *automatically* make a team (both junior and senior). Competitors are awarded points for their results in each race. At the conclusion of the series, the total points are tallied and the athletes given a ranking (based on their points). The top 1-2 athletes, based on the number of athletes competing in the Seeding Races, can automatically earn a spot on a team.

The Team Selection Committee may then choose to add additional athletes to the teams by discretion.

Q: Who makes these teams and what do the teams do?

A: Senior National "A" Team (SNT)

This team consists of athletes who have won a minimum of one Senior World Cup, World Championship or Olympic medal over the past two seasons. During the Olympic year, most of the Olympic Team athletes get selected from this team. Fully supported by USA LUGE for all training and racing related expenses, including coaching, this team usually spends most of the winter in Europe, Japan and North America representing the US in World Cup and World Championship competitions. During the summer months, the SNT performs intensive physical conditioning and start practice.

Senior National "B" Team (SNT)

This team travels together with the SNT, is fully funded by USA LUGE and competes on the Senior World Cup circuit during the winter. The top one or two athletes, based on the number of athletes racing, from the Senior National seeding races automatically qualify for this team with others being named on a discretionary basis by the Team Selection Committee. During the summer months, the SNTS performs intensive physical conditioning and start practice.

Graduating Junior

Essentially part of the SNT, this team travels together with the SNT, is fully funded by USA LUGE and competes on the Senior World Cup circuit during the winter. Athletes named to this team did not earn their way to Senior "B": Team outright, but no longer meet the age requirements for the Junior category. During the summer months, the SNTS performs intensive physical conditioning and start practice.

Senior National "C" Team Select Candidate

This team consists of athletes who show potential for the sport but either need to meet certain requirements or have not proven themselves on the World Cup circuit. This is a partially funded team. Members of this team are required to participate in all Senior camps.

Junior National "A" Team (JNT)

This is the highest level of junior participation. To be considered a junior athlete you must be under 20 years of age. To be named to the JNT you must have won a minimum of one Junior category (up to 20 years old) Junior World Cup, Junior World Championship or Olympic medal over the last two years. Completely funded for all racing and training related expenses, the JNT also spends most of the winter traveling in Europe and North America representing the US in all international junior level races. athlete (over 20) cannot be selected to a junior team.

During the summer months they attend camps to participate in testing, conditioning and dry-land wheel training. If a Youth A age athlete is good enough, it is possible that he or she maybe selected to the SNTS. However a senior age

Junior National "B" Team (JNT)

This team usually travels and trains together with the JNT. These athletes, who may be partially or fully funded, compete on the Junior World Cup circuit during the winter. The top one or two athletes, based on the number of athletes racing, from the Junior National Seeding races automatically qualify for this team with other athletes being named on a discretionary basis by the Team Selection Committee. During the summer they attend camps to participate in testing, conditioning and dry-land wheel training.

Junior National "C" Team (JCT) East & West

This team is made up of athletes that the coaching staff feels have a chance to qualify for, and successfully race at, the Junior National Team level. It is possible that athletes from this team may receive an invitation to travel with the Junior National Team as either fully funded, partially funded or non-funded athletes. These athletes may spend three months or more training during the winter and are usually offered the opportunity to participate in an organized trip to other tracks for training. During the summer this team usually participates in dry-land wheel training as well as conditioning camps. Athletes on this team are completely responsible for most of their own expenses. These costs include: travel, training, racing and equipment. However, athletes on this team receive room and board at no cost at the Olympic Training Center when training in Lake Placid. These athletes also receive coaching while participating in USA Luge programs and many, if not all, may receive National Team equipment (if available) from USA Luge. Track fees are usually, but not automatically, paid for by USLA/USOC.

Junior National "D" Team (JDT) East & West

The JDT is separated into two groups, but for practical purposes, they are treated as one team. Within the team there are Youth C (up to 12 years old) and Youth B (13-14 years old) categories. In addition, there are 2 separate but equal JDT's based in the east (Lake Placid) and in the west (Park City). Both east and west based athletes have equal stature within USA Luge. This team consists of athletes who show potential for the sport but are young and have not yet had the years of experience on the sled necessary to excel. This team is currently eligible for Olympic Training Center privileges at no cost during training camps in Lake Placid. Equipment, training trips, and training expenses are the responsibility of the individual athlete.