

# United States *Luge* Association

## NATIONAL TEAM OPERATION

"National Team Operation" deals with the rules that all various national team members are expected to follow. These rules apply to all officially recognized Teams of the USLA.

- I. The National Team Committee and the Sports Program Director are empowered to make and enforce strict regulations in regards to the use of Mt. Van Hoevenberg, the Utah Olympic Park, the Olympic Training Center, or any facility or area in use by the USLA.
- II. The National Team Committee is empowered to make and enforce strict training, racing, travel, and conduct rules for all participating Team members.

### III. Participation

#### A. Team Functions - Disciplinary Action

All athletes who are team members must participate in all team functions unless excused prior to the function by the applicable team Manager. Failure to comply with any team function responsibility or rule will result in disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal from the team.

#### B. Non – Participation

If any team member or doubles team is unable to participate in any team membership, prior to the start of the teams functions, for any reason, another athlete or team will be considered to fill that vacancy by the applicable Team Selection Committee.

#### C. Illness or Injury

If any athlete, while a member of any team, becomes injured or ill to such an extent that he or she is unable to train or compete to the satisfaction of the applicable team staff, that athlete will not lose his or her team membership due to the illness or injury until the next regularly scheduled team selection or seeding.

#### D. Vacancies

If an athlete or doubles team loses its team membership, either voluntarily or through expulsion, while in training as a member of a team, no athlete will be selected to fill the vacancy unless approved by the applicable Team Selection Committee.

#### E. Junior Members

In the case of Senior National Team or Senior National Team Select members who are also junior age competitors, these members may be excused from their "senior" obligations in order to compete in Junior competitions. At an appropriate time in the off season (April or May), athletes who have earned spots concurrently on both the Junior National Team and either the Senior National Team or Senior National Team Select will be asked, and required, to choose either one of the two positions. The athlete's decision will be irrevocable until the next regularly scheduled team selection or seeding.

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F. Additional Doubles Partner

In the case of any team member who is a men's singles competitor and who failed to qualify in the doubles discipline, and who actively sought to qualify in the doubles discipline, and has a doubles ranking; then and only then may this team athlete's doubles partner accompany the applicable team, at his complete own expense, on European or North American training trips, or special US team training trips, if and only if his presence does not displace a current team member, or lowers the quality or amount of training for that current team. The applicable team member, whose partner is with him, is still subject to all duties and responsibilities of that team's membership before participating in the doubles training or competition, and at no time may he enter the doubles portion of any international race at the expense of his singles driving. It is also understood that his partner, while not a member of the applicable team, is still subject to all of the restrictions, responsibilities and regulations of that team's membership while accompanying the team.

G. Physical

All eligible athletes, prior to being granted membership on their applicable team, must provide the USLA with a signed letter or physical from their doctor (doctor's phone number must be noted) stating that the athlete is fit for luge competition as well as for physical training.

H. Agreement

All team members must agree to abide by all regulations set forth by the USLA and the National Team Committee. A signed agreement is required.

I. Minimum Stay

All trips, where any of the expenses are paid by the USLA, will have a minimum stay requirement. Special cases for shorter stays will be considered on a one to one basis by the applicable team staff, after discussion with, and notification to the Sports Program Director. In the event that the minimum stay requirement cannot be met, and requests for special considerations are rejected, the athlete may be removed from the applicable team and lose all of the privileges normally associated with the position.

J. Additional People

Any athlete request for a change in his/her team status must be directed to the National Team Committee. The National Team Committee shall review all requests in light of current policies and procedures and make any applicable recommendations. The National Team committee shall then refer those requests and recommendations on to the respective Team Selection Committee for review on an athlete and logistical basis. The respective Team Selection Committee shall make their final decision on a timely basis. Only those non- athletes (or athletes and non-athletes of other countries) approved by the National Team Committee may accompany an applicable team on any trip.

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K. Non - Team Training

Non-team members who arrive at the same track as any USLA sanctioned team will not be eligible for any USLA services. However, the applicable team Head Coach, in conjunction with the Executive Director may (but are not required) grant such services in an objective manner to ONLY those athletes passing the USLA physical test as per the policy statement 40-05.XB where "X" simply refers to the version of the policy in effect at the time.

L. Official Race Entry

The official US team entries for any international race shall be determined by the applicable team staff present at the time race entries are due, without regard to current team make-up, but if more than one team is present, the highest ranking team staff will have ultimate authority on race entries. All athletes entered must have passed that year's physical test as per the policy statement 40-05.XB where "X" simply refers to the version of the policy in effect at the time.

M. Complaints

A committee of three will be selected to hear any and all complaints brought forward when a team is not in either Lake Placid or Negaunee, as the situation applies. If any of the three members is involved in the charge then the "alternate" joins the committee while the involved party is re-moved from the committee until the issue is resolved.

1. *If the team contains at least a Coach and a Manager:*

The committee will be comprised of a coach, a manager and one athlete. The one athlete will be chosen from all of the team members. An "alternate" will be chosen the same way.

2. *If the team contains one staff person:*

The committee will be comprised of the staff person and two athletes. One of the athletes will be a male chosen from amongst all of the male athletes and the other athlete will be a female chosen from amongst all of the female athletes. The alternate will be chosen from amongst the entire team.

N. Incidents

If there is no rule to cover an incident, then the applicable Team Manager and/or Team Coach will use their best judgment to make a decision until a rule can be formally adopted to cover that incident.

O. Citizenship

Non-citizens of the U.S. are only eligible to try out for the Luge Teams of the U.S. in the quadrennial that their five year waiting period for citizenship is due to expire. They are also required to have established Permanent Residency, as defined by the Immigration Laws of the U.S., prior to trying out for any team.

P. Additional Weight

The International Luge Federation rulebook for the sport allows for athletes to wear 'additional' weight as a method of handicapping. It is the position of USA Luge that all athletes must race at a weight that is within 2 Kg of the total weight they are permitted for each race (the sum total of their body weight, their clothing allowance (4 Kg), and their 'additional' weight, as computed by the FIL after the athlete weighs in, and noted in its rulebook).

Youth Exception: Youth that race in a higher class (juniors or general) will not be required to race with the additional weight required in that higher class, except that they must still race in the higher class race within 2 Kg of the their Youth Class weight.

Junior Exception: Juniors that race in a higher class (general) will not be required to race with the additional weight required in the higher class except that they must still race in the higher class race within 2 Kg of the their Junior Class weight.

*Editors Note: No penalties for non-compliance with P. are contemplated at this time. The '08-'09 season will be used as an educational period by the coaches, and if necessary, this clause will be updated during the '09 off-season to reflect actual experience.*