

PRINCIPLES OF ATHLETE SELECTION

(Updated January, 2015)

Any championship event that is accessible only to International Federation National Teams will be considered “protected,” e.g. World Championships, Olympic Games, Pan Am Games and Continental Championships. Events which are open to access through other avenues, e.g. individual or team registration (amateur or professional) will not be considered “protected.” Please note that open or invitational events for which USA Cycling receives an invitation for participation by the National Team are NOT considered protected events. In these instances, USA Cycling may elect to select and send a team or may simply make the opportunity available on its website (www.usacycling.org) to any other domestic team on a first come, first serve basis. Please also note that USA Cycling does NOT participate in the World University Games.

USA Cycling will be responsible for the nomination and selection of athletes to participate in all protected events. In fulfilling this obligation, USA Cycling will use the principles described in this document. At all times, within the context of the event, USA Cycling will strive to send the best and most prepared team to compete in protected events.

USA Cycling Selection Committee

USA Cycling will maintain a Selection Committee for the purpose of reviewing and approving the final nominations of individual athletes to specific protected events, e.g. World Championships, Pan Am and Olympic Games. The Selection Committee provides oversight on the nomination process of athletes to protected events and is the de facto body responsible for the final nomination of athletes to respective teams. This obligation includes review and approval of the process by which athletes receive automatic nominations to teams, as well as the review and final approval of athletes nominated by USA Cycling coaching staff according to the USA Cycling Principles of Selection.

This committee will be composed of six to eight volunteers recommended by the USA Cycling Vice President of Athletics, and appointed by the USA Cycling President. Additionally, the USA Cycling representative to the USOC Athletes Advisory Council (AAC) will serve on the committee.

All of the appointed members shall have the following attributes: characteristics:

1. Member must have participated in an Olympic Games or been employed as a professional in one of the Olympic cycling disciplines;
2. Member must not be currently employed as a team director;
3. Member must not be currently coaching U.S. Olympic eligible athletes.
Note, in this case, Olympic eligible refers to athletes who are actively competing at the elite international level.
4. Member must agree to support the USA Cycling Principles of Athlete Selection;

5. Member must agree to declare any potential conflicts of interest in the selection process and will recuse themselves from discussion and or voting if necessary.

The Selection Committee will work within the context of the USA Cycling Selection Philosophy as described in this section, to ensure that selected athletes meet the stated objectives of these Principles as well as the event specific selection criteria.

Importance of Professional and International Competition

At the elite level (age 19 and over), cycling is a professional sport in which the highest level of competition is represented by top-tier professional athletes racing on the UCI International race calendar. Some disciplines and categories of the sport have a more developed professional component than others and, in those cases where professional opportunities are limited (e.g. U23 and Track); USAC programs may play an adjunctive role to the professional teams. However, even for these groups and athletes under the age of 18, results in high-level International competition should be the benchmark for selection. Therefore, whenever possible in the nomination of any athlete to a protected event, performances in top-level, professional and/or international competition will take precedence over performances in domestic competition.

USA Cycling Athlete Selection Criteria and Philosophy

Olympic Games, World Championships and Continental Championships. USA Cycling shall select athletes according to the following priorities. These priorities apply to both automatic and discretionary selections.

1. The FIRST priority is the selection of athletes who have demonstrated that they are medal capable.
2. The SECOND priority is the selection of those athletes who have demonstrated that their presence on the team will have a positive impact on the overall team performance and create a MEDAL CAPABLE team environment.
3. The THIRD priority is the selection of those athletes who have demonstrated the capacity to advance to the level of medal capability in the near future.

If it is necessary for USA Cycling to prioritize or distinguish between championship events due to team size restrictions, budgets, funding decisions, discussions on enhancing team performance, future medal capability, or any other reasons the following shall be the prioritized order of importance for the events.

1. Olympic Games.
2. Olympic events in a World Championship.
3. Non-Olympic events in a World Championship.
4. Olympic events in a Continental Championships.
5. Non-Olympic events in a Continental Championships.

Continental Championships

Attendance and selection for these events can prove to be problematic, even though they have protected status, since medal-winning performances in these events may have little intrinsic value. However, in the context of the UCI international point system, these events can be of tremendous importance in qualifying nation start positions for USA Cycling athletes at World Championships and Olympic Games. For this reason, it is of utmost importance to send our top UCI ranked athletes, or those athletes that we expect to be our top-ranked athletes, to these events so they have the opportunity to earn additional International points that impact our UCI Nations Ranking and ultimately our qualification of start positions for World Championships and/or Olympic Games. Another important consideration is that the winner of some Continental Championship events may receive an automatic entry (by name) to the next World Championships; this entry is in addition to the normal quota. This aspect is very important for qualifying additional USA Cycling Athletes to World Championship events that have typically small quotas. For these reasons in certain Continental Championship events USA Cycling may choose to select athletes via automatic or discretionary criteria with the following as the 1st and 2nd priority:

1. Those athletes who are expected to be top-ranked Americans on the individual UCI Ranking list for the event in question at the end of the year or other specific time period, such that their performance will have a positive impact on the qualification of World Championship and/or Olympic Games start positions (see section on Olympic and World Championship events for specific events).
2. Those athletes capable of a winning (first place) performance in an event that also serves as an additional automatic qualifier to the upcoming World Championships.

Definitions and Criteria

1. **Medal Capable.** A medal capable athlete is one who has demonstrated the ability to produce a medal winning result by:
 - medal finish(es) at the most recent World Championships or Olympic Games ; with demonstration of continued ability to perform at that level or higher based on performances in recent top-level international competition; and/or
 - producing medal capable times under certified conditions within the past 12 months; and/or
 - consistently beating the World's best in recent (past 12 months) international competition with top-quality fields; and/or
 - other historical performances in International competition that would indicate the athlete is capable of a medal winning performance.

In all cases, the athlete in question must demonstrate that they have the capacity for a medal capable performance at the time of selection and the time of the event to which the athlete has been selected.

2. **Enhancing Team Performance.** An athlete who can enhance team performance is one who, based on their international experience and current level of international performance, is expected to contribute substantially to the overall team performance or to the performance of a medal capable team. In the case of USA Cycling selection philosophy, this is deemed to be particularly important in the case where a medal capable individual has been selected to the team and an athlete's contribution may assist that medal capable athlete in a medal-winning performance.

This effect also is of primary importance when nominating athletes for team-based events (Men's Road Race, Women's Road Race, Team Pursuit, Team Sprint, and Madison) where the synergy of the team members and/or the ability to play a strong support role is critical to the success of the team. For example, even though the Road Race event is scored individually, athletes who "sacrifice themselves" to execute a team strategy for the designated team leaders can have a profound impact on the ability of the medal capable team leaders to achieve a medal winning performance.

3. **Future Medal Capability.** A future medal capable athlete is one who:
 - demonstrates a trend of improving performance in international competition that, when extended a reasonable distance into the future, intersects the current international performance standard for the event under consideration (see discussion and examples below); and/or
 - despite being "new" to the sport or competing a relatively short time in the sport, is within a reasonable percentage, of the international performance standard (see discussion and example below); and/or
 - despite being biologically immature, is within a reasonable percentage, of the international performance standard (see discussion and example below).
4. **UCI top-ranked athletes.** The UCI maintains an individual classification for most cycling events. An athlete can typically be considered as top-ranked if he/she is among the top-five (depending upon the event) USA Cycling Athletes at the end of the calendar year or at the end of a specified time period, and meets the criteria also of being ranked in the top positions of the list such as the top 50 or 100 overall.

USA Cycling Principles of Discretion

Discretionary Nominations and Selections

Discretionary nominations may be employed in the event that positions are available after the application of any automatic criteria. Discretion may also be used when nominating athletes for the team-based events (Men's Road Race, Women's Road Race, Team Pursuit, Team Sprint, and Madison) where the ability to play a strong support role is absolutely critical to the success of the team.

The primary purpose of discretionary athlete nomination is to ensure that:

- a. USA Cycling has the ability to nominate the best physically, psychologically and technically prepared athlete in order to produce medal-winning performances.
- b. USA Cycling has the ability to nominate the athlete most likely to be among the UCI ranked athletes at the end of the calendar year or specified time period that will be used to determine our Nations Ranking in cases where the primary importance of the event is subsequent qualification of start positions for World Championships or Olympic Games through the UCI Nations Ranking system.
- c. USA Cycling has the ability to nominate the physically, psychologically and technically prepared athlete in order to produce a winning or qualifying performance in those cases where the primary importance of the event is to qualify additional riders to USA Cycling quota for the Olympic Games or World Championships.

Data to Support Discretionary Nominations and Selections

Data to be considered in making discretionary nominations may include any or all of the following in no specific order of priority. The inclusion and order of priority for any data set may be different from event to event as determined by the USA Cycling Coaching staff and USA Cycling Selection Committee.

1. Race results in top international competition;
2. Race results in top domestic competition;
3. Head to head competition results between multiple athletes in consideration for a discretionary position;
4. Athlete's ability to enhance team performance;
5. Athlete's future medal capability;
6. Technological data on athlete and or event. By way of example this could include but is not limited to: times on similar courses or events, athlete power data, aerodynamic drag data (if relevant) or event demand data.

Discussion of Future Medal Capability

In most situations, athletes who perform consistently at the medal capable level are easily identified. One of the greatest challenges, however, in the talent identification and selection process is discriminating among athletes currently performing below the level of medal capability. Ideally, one would like to identify those athletes which represent an “investment” in future medal performances over those that do not. In an effort to make such discrimination possible, USA Cycling has designated “performance trends” as a key component in the talent identification and selection process. Performance trends are determined by plotting a historical record of an athlete’s performance on a graph where the x-axis is time (weeks, months, years); and the y-axis is event specific performances (times, placing, etc.). These graphs can then be used to identify trends in an athlete’s performance in order to predict future performance potential. For example, an athlete whose performance is trending up (positive slope) is suggestive of the potential for future improvements in performance. On the other hand, an athlete with a decreasing performance trend (negative slope) or stable trend (zero slope) over time indicates little or no potential for future improvements. The following graphs illustrate the differences in the performance trends of medal capable and non-medal capable athletes:

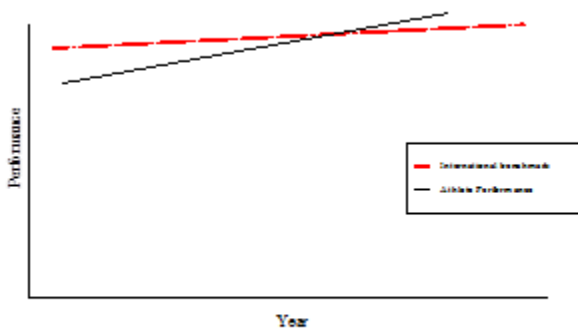


Figure 2 - Medal capable athlete

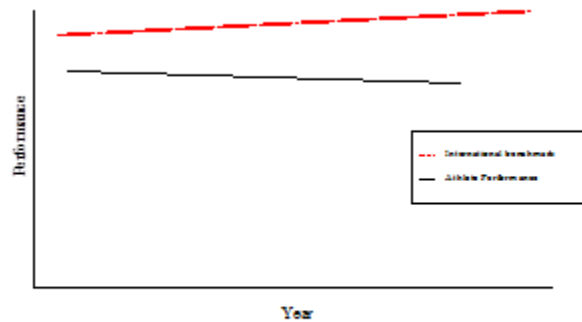


Figure 2 - Not medal capable; performance decreasing

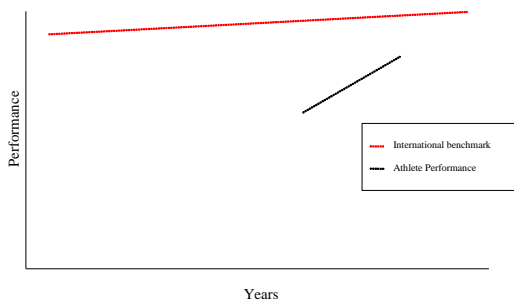


Figure 2 - Future medal capable athlete

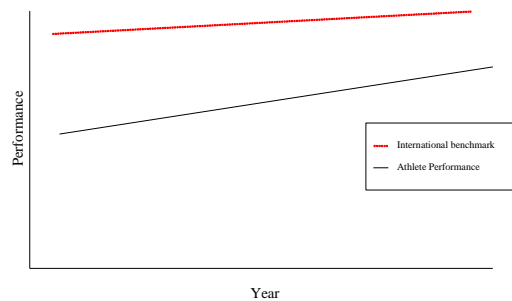


Figure 1 - Not medal capable; performance increasing

Obviously many factors need to be considered when evaluating athletes with this technique, e.g. length of time over which the trend has been developed, number of years in the sport, slope of the trend, and so forth. However, with regard to selection, as stated in the above criteria, USA Cycling believes that it is desirable to preferentially select athletes who demonstrate substantial future ability (positive slope) over those athletes who demonstrate stable or decreasing potential. This is particularly true when extrapolation of the current performance trend over a reasonable period of time (two to four years) indicates the potential to achieve an international medal capable standard. The following graphs illustrate the differences between athletes without future medal capability versus athletes that demonstrate future medal potential:

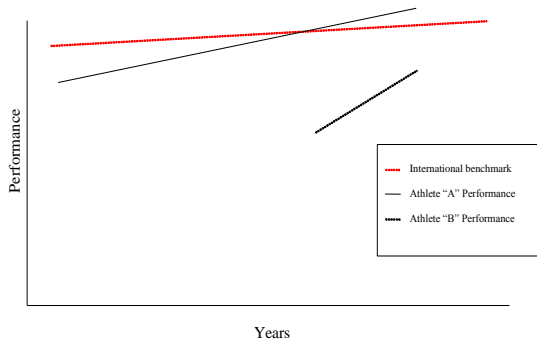


Figure 4 - Athlete A medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable: Select Athlete A

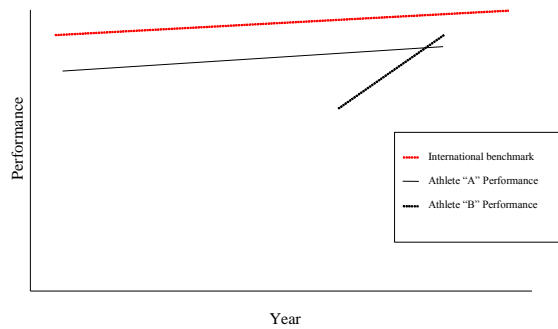


Figure 4 - Athlete A not medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable and outperforms A: Select Athlete B

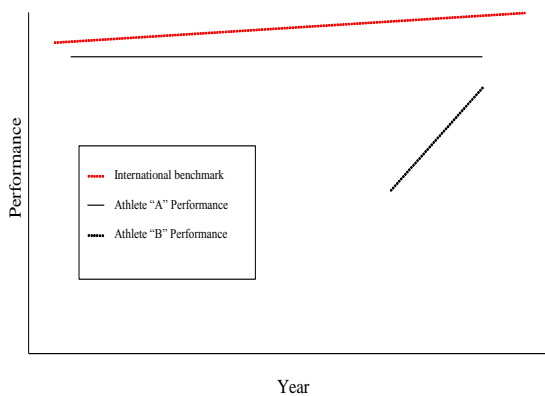


Figure 5 - Athlete A not medal capable; Athlete B future medal capable but does not outperform A: Select Athlete B.

As pointed out above, another important consideration in evaluating the future performance potential of an athlete is the relationship of their “time in the sport,” i.e., how long have they been competing; their stage of biological development and adaptation; and their current performance level. In the case of an athlete who is new to the sport, there are not enough data points to plot an accurate performance trend. However, if such an athlete is within a reasonable distance of the international benchmark such that when their anticipated physical development and/or their general adaptation response is expected to put them at or over the international medal benchmark, then they may be considered to have future medal capability. Although the magnitude of the expected improvement in performance is dependent upon many factors, e.g., biological development, body type and etc., it is generally assumed that, without evidence to the contrary, a reasonable performance deficit may be overcome in a reasonable amount of time by an athlete that “new to the sport” with a greater deficit for an athlete that is biologically immature.

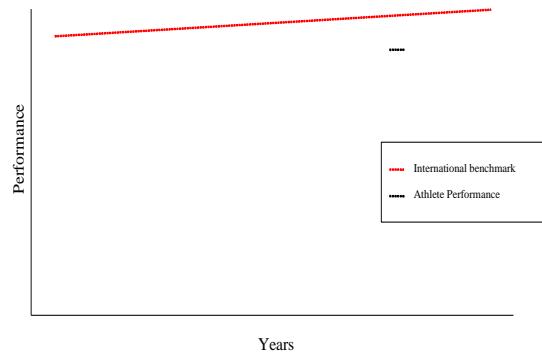


Figure 6 - "New" or young athlete; within 3-5% of international benchmark = future medal capability