



## **US Biathlon Association ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES**

2024-25 World Cup (WC) & IBU Cup (IBUC) Teams

*ICC approved - July 2024*

*Shared with athletes and coaches, pending U.S. Biathlon Board of Directors approval - August 2024*

*U.S. Biathlon Board of Directors-approved - September 2024*

### **Overview**

*The following criteria specify how athletes qualify for competition teams in the 2024-25 Season. The competitions covered in this document are World Championships (WCH's) World Cups (WC's), Open European Championships (OECH's), IBU Cups (IBUC), and associated training camps leading up to these competitions. Team selections are proposed by the US Biathlon High Performance Staff and approved by International Competition Committee (ICC) through the following process (Also, see Appendix, Section 7):*

- 1. US Biathlon High Performance Staff proposes team selections and justifications for any discretionary selections*
- 2. The ICC holds a committee meeting to discuss these proposals and to make any necessary revisions per the committee's input.*
- 3. At the conclusion of the committee meeting, the ICC members vote on the final proposal and team selections are deemed final only when a majority of ICC members have voted in favor.*

**Prequalified athletes:** As approved by the ICC in November 2023, The standard of one (1) top-20 WC or WCH's result in a non-team discipline during the 2023-24 competition season will be used to prequalify an athlete for the European Pre-Season Camp *and* World Cups 1-3 unless this standard results in more than 50% of the team quota size prequalifying. USBA also must adhere to the general rule that no more than 50% of a team can be prequalified for a given trip. In cases where the number of athletes meeting the prequalification standard exceeds 50% of the team size, the team will be filled to the maximum percentage of start spots without exceeding 50% via single best WC or WCH result, in a non-team event, from the 2023/24 season. If there is still a tie, that tie will be broken by the second-best result. The tie-break process will continue until the tie is broken (third-best, fourth-best, etc.).

**For non-prequalified athletes:** The qualifying process begins with two roller ski competitions held in Soldier Hollow, Utah. Following those competitions, the World Cup team quotas will be filled to two athletes per gender based on the prequalification standards and filling additional spots via trials rankings. Trials rankings shall exclude any pre-qualified athletes. In addition to the aforementioned two athletes per gender, a pool of six (6) athletes per gender, hereby referred to as the International Selection Pool, will be selected to attend the European Pre-Season Camp in Europe in November 2024 following the Utah Trials. The final two World Cup roster spots in each gender, and the entire IBU Cup rosters will be selected at this camp. For specific details on the qualification process, please see the “Selection Criteria” section below.

**Movement of athletes between World Cup and IBU Cup:** In addition to roster changes outlined in the Selection Criteria below, all athletes, including prequalified athletes, should expect exchanges, if warranted, between the World Cup and IBU Cup team rosters throughout the season in accordance with Sections 2 and 4 of the Appendix. Accordingly, the National Team coaches will review athlete performance on both the WC and IBUC tours throughout the season and *may* make roster exchange requests to the ICC when appropriate. The review process will follow in accordance with those policies outlined in Sections 2 and 4 of the Appendix. The US Biathlon High Performance Staff and the ICC may undertake additional athlete exchanges at any point in the season if warranted by athlete performances and in accordance with those policies outlined in Section 2 and 4 of the Appendix.

**Provision for Discretionary Athlete Replacement:** In certain circumstances, in accordance with the policies outlined in Section 3 of the Appendix, the ICC may approve the temporary replacement of the lowest-ranked athlete on the IBU Cup team with a top-level World Cup athlete in order to optimize their competitive readiness in preparation for World Championships or the Olympics. This provision can only be undertaken in circumstances where the top athlete has a significant chance at World Championship or Olympic medals, and when their chances at winning the aforementioned medals would be materially improved by participation in certain IBU Cup or Open European Championship events. For further explanation and specific details of this provision, please see Section 3 of the Appendix.

#### **World Championships:**

The prequalification spots for the World Championship team will be determined at the conclusion of World Cup 6 (Antholz, ITA). Any WC athletes not prequalified for WCH at the conclusion of WC 6 will travel to OECH’s and compete. At the conclusion of OECH, the rest of the World Championships team roster will be filled.

#### **Practical Note:**

*USBA will send a team to IBU Cup 3 in Obertilliach, AUT but will also conduct a December IBU Cup Trials during the same week. As such, some IBU Cup 2 team members will EITHER qualify for IBUC 3 through their IBUC 1 and 2 results OR will need to compete in December IBU Cup trials in order to qualify for IBU Cups 4-5.*

## **Trials Event Information**

### **October World Cup & Selection Pool Trials:**

Two roller ski races will be held at Soldier Hollow, in Midway, Utah in October. Point lists rankings will be calculated using the USBA percent-back system counting both races. The point base for each race will include only American athletes and exclude athletes pre-qualified for the early season World Cups.

**December IBU Cup Trials:**

All athletes not qualified for World Cup 3 or IBU Cup 3, may qualify for subsequent IBU Cups and OECH by competing at the December IBU Cup trials. The race series will consist of three races spanning the four-day period between Dec. 19-22, 2024. The results of those trials will determine the remaining spots on the roster for the IBU Cups 4 and 5 and OECH's.

***Formats and dates for trials races:***

***October World Cup & IBU Cup Trials:***

- Location: Soldier Hollow, UT*
- Formats: Sprint then Mass Start held within the following 3-day period*
- Dates: Oct. 4-6, 2024*

***December IBU Cup Trials:***

- Location: Craftsbury, VT*
- Formats TBD: 3 races held within the following 4 day period*
- Dates: Dec. 17-20, 2024*

**Selection Criteria**

Note: If any athlete declines their position on any team the ICC reserves the option to name a replacement athlete by discretion (see Point 3 of the Appendix - **USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection**).

Note: In the event that trials are postponed or canceled due to weather conditions or other issues, the ICC will follow the contingency planning process outlined in Point 4 of the Appendix – **Contingency Procedures for Trials Events**.

Note: IBU Event names, numbers and dates are those available as of the publication of this document. Any changes made by IBU could result in changes to these procedures as determined by the US Biathlon ICC.

**On-snow European Pre-Season Camp:**

Dates: ~Nov. 8-27, 2024.

**Women & Men**

Team Size: 8 per gender

- All athletes meeting the pre qualification standard for WC 1-3 as described in “Pre-qualified athletes” section above.
- The top ranked athlete(s) on the Utah Trials points list, excluding those who are pre qualified for WC 1-3, will be named until a team size of 6 per gender is reached.

- 2 additional athletes per gender will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.

### **World Cups 1-3:**

World Cup 1 in Kontiolahti, FIN: Nov. 27 – Dec. 8, 2024

World Cup 2 in Hochfilzen, AUT: Dec. 9-15, 2024

World Cup 3 in Annecy, FRA: Dec. 16-22, 2024

### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- All athletes meeting the pre-qualification standard for WC 1-3 as described in “Prequalified athletes” section above.
- If less than a team size of 2 is reached through the above criteria, the top ranked athlete(s) on the Utah Trials points list will be named until a team size of 2 per gender is reached. Pre-qualified athletes are excluded from the trials rankings.
- 2 additional athletes per gender will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection at the end of the On-snow European Pre-Season Camp. Discretionary decisions will incorporate an assessment of general performance *throughout* the Pre-Season Camp and not limited to only time trial(s).

### **IBU Cups 1 and 2:**

IBU Cup 1 in Idre, SWE: Nov 25 – Dec. 1, 2024

IBU Cup 2 in Sjusjoen, NOR: Dec. 2-8, 2024

### **Men & Women**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- Any athlete participating in the On-Snow Pre-season Camp who is not selected to WC 1-3 will be named to the team.

### **IBU Cup 3**

IBU Cup 3 in Obertilliach, AUT: Dec. 16-22, 2024

### **Women & Men**

Team Size: Up to 3 per gender

- Up to 3 athletes per gender can qualify by one (1) top-30 result in IBUC 1 or 2.
  - If more than 3 athletes per gender meet the above criteria, athletes will be named by single best IBUC 1-2 non-team result until a team size of 3 per gender is reached.
- If the above criteria results in a team size of less than 3;
  - Additional athletes may be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection, until a *maximum* team size of 3 is reached. This means that there may be a team size of 2 or less, depending on what the ICC decides.
  - NOTE: Any athlete(s) from the IBUC 2 roster who do not qualify for IBUC 3 will have the opportunity to participate in December IBU Cup trials.

### **World Cups 4-6**

World Cup 4 in Oberhof, GER: Jan. 6-12, 2025

World Cup 5 in Ruhpolding, GER: Jan. 13-19, 2025

World Cup 6 in Antholz, ITA: Jan. 20-26, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- Up to 2 athletes per gender can qualify by (2) top-40 performances at WC 1-3.
  - If more than 2 athletes meet the above criterion, the 2 athletes with the highest single-best non-team WC result will qualify. If a tie exists, the tie break will be resolved by second-best non-team result from WC 1-3, and if still tied, ranked by their third-best non-team result from WC 1-3. The tie-break process will continue in this manner until the tie is broken.
  - If fewer than 2 athletes meet the above criterion, the remaining start spots will be filled by single-best non-team World Cup placing in World Cups 1-3 until a team size of 2 is reached. If a tie exists, the tie break will be resolved by second-best non-team result from WC 1-3, and if still tied, ranked by their third-best non-team result from WC 1-3. The tie-break process will continue in this manner until the tie is broken.
- 2 additional athletes will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection

### **IBU Cups 4 - 5**

IBU Cup 4 in Arber, GER: Jan. 6-12, 2025

IBU Cup 5 in Brezno-Osrblie, SVK: Jan. 13-18, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- Any athletes from the WC 3 team who have not been named to the WC 4-6 Team will be named.
- Any athletes from the IBUC 3 team will be named.
- The winner by trials ranking of December IBU Cup Trials will be named.
- If the above criteria results in a team size of less than 4, athletes will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection until a team size of 4 is reached.

### **Open European Championships**

Held in Martell, ITA: Jan. 26 – Feb. 2, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 6 per gender

- Any athletes from the WC 6 (Antholz) team who have not qualified for WCH's following WC 6, will be named.

- The 3 athletes, excluding any athletes who may have already been selected to the WCH's roster following WC 6, with the highest single best non-team result from IBU Cups 4-5 will qualify.
- 1 athlete per gender will be named by ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.
- If the above criteria results in a team size less than 6, athletes will be named by ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection until a team size of 6 is reached.

### **IBU Cup 6**

Held in Ridnaun, ITA: Feb. 3-9, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- 3 athletes from each gender, excluding those that qualify for WCH's, in rank order, based on IBU Cup points earned at the OECH's, will be named.
- 1 additional athlete from each gender will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon High Performance Staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.
- NOTE: Due to IBU-defined team quota size differences between OECH and IBUC 6, it is likely that one or more athletes from the OECH roster will not be named to the IBUC 6 roster and therefore would only get International race starts at OECH but not at IBUC 6.

### **World Championships (and Pre-WCH Camp)**

Pre-WCH Camp (location TBD): ~Jan. 26-Feb. 4, 2024

Held in Lenzerheide, SUI: Feb 10-23, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 5 per gender

- 3 athletes with the highest overall WC ranking following WC 6 (Antholz, ITA) will be named.
  - If fewer than three athletes meet the above criterion, then all athletes with WC points will qualify, and the single-best non-team WC placing in the current season will be used until a team size of 3 athletes per gender is reached. Ties will be resolved by second best personal WC placing, then third-best ranking, and so-on, until the tie is resolved.
- 1 athlete of each gender will be named by the ICC after the conclusion of WC 6, in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection. NOTE: As a reminder, discretionary selection is not necessarily limited to the current World Cup roster. Therefore, this selection could come from the IBU Cup or domestic athlete pool.
- 1 athlete of each gender will be named by the ICC after the conclusion of OECH, in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection. NOTE: This discretionary selection will take into account results at OECH, and will only depart from the mathematical OECH IBU Cup Point Winner (by rank) when it is

reasonable beyond doubt that illness or injury has prevented another athlete from winning that ranking.

- NOTE: In the event that the team size exceeds the number of starts quotas for a given race, the head coaches will decide which athletes race by evaluating the performance capabilities of each athlete at that time.

### **World Cups 7-8**

WC 7 in Nove Mesto, CZE: Mar. 3-9, 2025

WC 8 in Pokljuka, SLO: Mar. 10-16, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- Up to 2 athletes per gender can qualify by one (1) top-20 result in WCH.
  - If more than 2 athletes per gender meet the above criteria, athletes will be named by best WCH non-team result until a team size of 2 per gender is reached.
  - If less than 2 athletes per gender qualify, athletes will be named by highest non-team result ranking at WCH until a team size of 2 per gender is reached.
  - The third athlete will be named by highest single-best non-team result from the 24/25 World Cup Season.
  - A fourth athlete will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.

### **IBU Cups 7-8**

IBU Cups 7 and 8, Otepaa, EST: Mar. 3-15, 2025

#### **Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- One athlete per gender that attended World Championships but is not qualified for World Cups 7-8 will be named.
- Up to 2 athletes will be named by achieving (1) top-30 result at either OECH or IBUC 6 until a team size of 3 per gender is reached.
  - If more than 2 athletes meet this criterion, athletes will be named by single-best non-team result from OECH or IBUC 6 until a team size of 3 per gender is filled. Any ties will be resolved by second-best non-team result ranking, then third-best ranking, and so-on, until the tie is resolved.
  - If less than 2 athletes meet the above criteria, athletes will be named by single-best non-team result from OECH and IBUC 6 until a team size of 3 per gender is reached. Any ties will be resolved by second-best non-team result ranking, then third-best ranking, and so-on, until the tie is resolved.
- A fourth athlete will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.

### **World Cups 9**

WC 9 in Oslo, NOR: Mar. 17-23, 2025

**Women & Men**

Team Size: 4 per gender

- Up to 2 athletes per gender can qualify by one (1) top-20 result in WCH.
  - If more than 2 athletes per gender meet the above criteria, athletes will be named by best WCH non-team result until a team size of 2 per gender is reached.
  - If less than 2 athletes per gender qualify, athletes will be named by highest non-team result ranking at WCH until a team size of 2 per gender is reached.
  - The third athlete will be named by highest single-best non-team result from the 24/25 World Cup Season.
  - A fourth athlete will be named by the ICC in consultation with US Biathlon staff, in accordance with the USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection.



## **Appendix A: Policies & Rules**

### **1. USBA Percent-Back System**

An athlete's percent-back in a race is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Athlete's Percent-Back} = 2 - (\text{Athlete's time} / \text{Average time of the top three finishers scored})$$

If there are only two finishers that can be scored, the average of their times shall be used as the denominator in the formula above. If only one finisher can be scored, that athlete shall receive a percent-back of 100%.

### **2. Movement between World Cup & IBU Cup**

The National Team coaching staff may use the following guidelines to recommend to the ICC that athletes from the IBU Cup move to the World Cup, and vice versa:

1. Athletes achieving top results on the IBU Cup may be moved up to the World Cup provided there are open start positions.
2. Athletes placing outside the top-40 in individual starts on the World Cup may be brought down to the IBU Cup at any time or released from the World Cup Team.
3. Athletes who have been injured or sick for lengthy periods of time may be released from the team or brought to a different competition level.

In addition, IBU Cup athletes will be considered to fill open World Cup start positions when the logistics of getting an athlete to the event can be managed without excessive costs, and the coaching staff sees the need and/or benefit of;

- a) fielding a complete relay team, or,
- b) filling an open spot vacated for any reason, or,
- c) gathering further performance comparisons between two athletes that would allow for a more informed future team nomination. In this instance, a team size exceeding the start quota may be named.

### **3. Provision for Discretionary Athlete Replacement**

#### **1. Discretionary Replacement Authority**

US Biathlon reserves the right to replace an athlete on the IBU Cup team roster with a top-ranked athlete from the World Cup team roster for one or more IBU Cup or Open European Championships competitions. This is to provide the top athlete with additional and critical preparation opportunities for the World Championships or the Olympics.

#### **2. Conditions for Replacement**

The following conditions must be met for a replacement to occur:

- The athlete to be replaced must be designated through ICC majority vote at the time of his or her team nomination, and notified of the *possibility* that they may be replaced and of which specific competitions would qualify for a replacement scenario. *NOTE: This notification does not mean the replacement will happen; it just informs that the replacement may happen and for what specific competitions.*
- The replacement decision must be made with the intent to enhance the preparation of the top athlete for the World Championships or Olympics.
- The top athlete must be deemed capable of winning an individual medal or contributing to a team medal at the World Championships or Olympics.
- The athlete being added to the IBU Cup competition must be a qualified member of the World Cup and/or World Championships team roster.

### **3. Notification Process**

- The affected athlete and coaching staff shall be notified of a replacement at least seven days in advance of the intended competition(s) unless the team nomination occurs less than seven days prior to the competition. In that case, the affected athlete shall be notified at the time of nomination.
- The notification will include the rationale for the replacement and the expected duration of the absence from competition.

### **4. Duration of Replacement**

- The top athlete may use the start spot for one or more competitions as determined necessary by the ICC.
- The specific races where replacement will take place will be specified in the initial notification.

### **5. Reinstatement**

- The affected athlete will be reinstated to the IBU Cup team roster following the conclusion of the replacement period, and/or during the replacement period, in the event that another athlete is unable to race, or the replacement athlete does not race in a given race.
- Where appropriate, and at the discretion of the ICC, US Biathlon may compensate the replaced athlete for some or all out-of-pocket expenses incurred during a given trip in which they were prevented from racing due to a roster replacement.

### **4. USBA Principles of Discretionary Selection**

The purpose of a discretionary choice is to ensure selection of the most competitive team. Creating watertight, finite criteria for discretionary choices is impossible, since by their very nature they are meant to account for the unanticipated circumstances, which inevitably elude the principles of objective criteria. Based on the context of the situation, the ICC will select the athlete(s) that has the best chance of producing the best result based on the following factors. Note: This list is not in any order of priority:

- History of performance in a specific competition type (e.g., Relay or Individual) over the current and previous two competitive seasons
- Recent improvements in results or performance parameters such as ski speed and shooting performance (both in training and competition), prioritizing ski speed over shooting performance.
- Recent positive trend of competition results or performance parameters, such as ski speed and shooting, prioritizing ski speed over shooting performance, indicating a potential for Olympic success. This includes indication of medal potential in future Olympic or World Championship competition that would be materially enhanced by selection to the Team.
- Performance/participation in the qualification process affected by illness or injury as confirmed by USBA
- Ability to effectively contribute to a relay

If an athlete declines or is unable to attend the competition(s) for which (s)he has qualified, the ICC will rely upon the above Principles of Discretionary Selection to fill the spot. The ICC also reserves the right to not fill the vacated spot.

#### **5. Contingency Procedures for Trials Events**

In the event that weather conditions or other issues prevent a trials series from being held at the planned time and place, or in the planned format, the ICC reserves the right to change the location, date, and/or format of the trials series. In the event that one or more events are canceled, cannot be held, or are in the view of the ICC held under grossly unfair conditions and not rescheduled by the ICC, the ICC may undertake contingencies in order to nominate a team.

#### **6. Non-Endorsed Participation in International Events**

If any athlete desires to race at an International IBU event which has not been officially represented in the criteria, the athlete must petition the ICC and gain approval before being allowed to compete there.

#### **7. IBU Performance Standards for Starting at the World Championships and World Cup**

##### **Quoted from the current IBU Event & Competition Rules at time of approval:**

1.5.3.2 World Championships (WCH) As the minimum qualification requirement to compete in WCH events a competitor must have 180 IBU qualifying points or less at the end of the last trimester before the WCH, or fulfill one of the following criteria during the current or previous season:

- Compete in at least one competition earning 150 IBU qualifying points or less at an IBU Cup, OECH, WC or OWG in the Sprint or Individual, or
- One finish in the top half at the JWCH (not Youth).

All members of Relay teams must also have met this individual qualification requirement.

1.5.3.3 World Cup (WC) The World Cup season consists of three trimesters generally made up of three WC events each, usually WC 1-3, WC 4-6 and WC 7-9. As the minimum qualification requirement to compete in WC events, a competitor must have 150 IBU qualifying points or less at the end of the last trimester, or fulfill one of the following criteria:

- a. Compete in at least one competition earning 125 IBU qualifying points or less at an IBU Cup, OECH, WCH or OWG in the Sprint or Individual during the current or preceding trimester; or
- b. One finish in the top half at the most recent JWCH (not Youth).

All members of Relay teams must also have met this individual qualification requirement.

## **8. Athlete Co-Pay Policy**

US Biathlon will cover joint expenses of events as well as the individual travel expenses of athletes except as noted in the selection criteria above or stated in other documents provided to athletes contending for the team. For athletes who are selected to teams on a co-pay basis, US Biathlon has the following policies depending upon the nature of the event:

- For athletes who are bearing their own individual travel expenses, athletes may be billed for their prorated share of lodging, food, and transportation. Where possible, athletes may pay their shares directly to the vendor, in which case athletes should keep copies of all receipts. In many cases, athletes may be expected to book and pay upfront for their own air transportation. Participation grant money from the IBU for competitions where athletes only bear their own expenses will be used by US Biathlon to pay for joint expenses and organizational overhead, and not paid or shared with athletes.
- For athletes who are also required to share in the joint costs of staffing the event, the travel expenses, material costs, and any prorated contract labor payments of coaching and service support will be aggregated as the total joint cost, and then divided equally among athletes attending to pay. For such trips, participation grant money from the IBU will be split evenly among athletes to help them offset these joint costs.
- A separate scholarship fund, the Need-Based Athlete Support Fund, will be available to athletes that incur co-pay expenses for USBA trips. Scholarship funds will be disbursed to athletes to help defer some or all travel and co-pay costs. ICC will review scholarship applications and funds will be dispersed according to the ICC's recommendation. In order to qualify, each athlete will be required to apply for specific funding periods and satisfy a set of specific criteria.

US Biathlon will provide estimates of co-pay expenses in advance for the events described in this document to help athletes budget accordingly.

## **9. USBA International Competition Committee (ICC)**

### **ICC Members are:**

Chair: Jay T. Kearney

USOPC Athletes' Advisory Council Athlete Representative: Kelly Kjorlien

Athlete's Representative: Max Durtschi

US Biathlon High Performance Director: Lowell Bailey

National Guard Biathlon Coach: Drew Gelinas

US Biathlon National Team Head Coach Women: Armin Auchentaller (for WC/IBU Cup and OWGs/WCHs/OECHs team naming)

US Biathlon Junior National Team Coach: Tim Burke (for Junior IBU Cup/YJWCHs team naming)