



## USA Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program Guiding Principles

USA Triathlon (USAT) High Performance (HP) Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the vision, goals and capable of winning Olympic & Paralympic Games medals, while identifying, supporting & developing future Games medalists.

It is important that USAT is investing in High Performance in the most careful and thoughtful ways, in alignment with its strategic initiatives, capturing the important aspects of our development philosophy and high performance investment strategies.

In addition, United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) invests significant financial resources into the USAT High Performance strategies and directly into its athletes. USOPC does so with the belief that USAT athletes are on track to continue winning medals in the Olympic & Paralympic Games. If USAT athletes are not on-track to achieve podium performances in the Games, USAT can expect a reduction in USOPC investment.

The following are areas deemed mission critical to USAT High Performance as we continue preparation for future Olympic & Paralympic Games:

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- **Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program** – Our Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program design should recognize and reward performances and progress towards our mission critical goal of seeing USAT elite athletes on Paralympic podiums. The Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program is not intended to reward the best elite Triathletes in the USA with support and services; it is intended and must be designed to support our strategic mission related to Games medals.
- **Resident Team Program** – the Olympic & Paralympic Training Center based Paratriathlon Resident Team Program is a high priority program for USAT, providing some of our top athletes squad training, world class in-person coaching in Colorado Springs, and access to OPTC resources.
- **Development pathway** – Between our Junior Development Program, Development Race Series, and Development Team Program we are looking to identify upcoming talent who show they may be capable of progressing in their sport class to a world class performance standard that would put them on track for future Games medal performances with the proper support, guidance, coaching, and resources.
- **Project X** – A High Performance support strategy intended to identify and provide strategic investments in the most qualified athletes with the greatest potential of winning future Olympic & Paralympic Games medals. Support will be 100% discretionary, customized to each identified athlete, and is aimed as stimulus support (monetary and non-monetary).

The USA Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program, and the financial support associated, is designed specifically to assist athletes in achieving podium performances at the Paralympic Games. The three-tiered program provides performance-based support to athletes in the form of administrative assistance, travel, training, and race support, performance advisement and allocation of equipment and financial resources. The Program is comprised of athletes with proven performance capability and is designed with three ascending tiers to support athletes as they advance towards their goal of achieving podium performances at the Paralympic Games. Athletes are expected to advance up the levels during their time in the Program with improving international performances reflective of their ability to execute Paralympic podium performances.

- **Tier 1 (A) level** – earned by athletes who can consistently win a World Triathlon Para Series level event or World Championship Para events on any particular day.\*

- **Tier 2 (B) level** – earned by athletes who can achieve a World Triathlon Para Series level podium on any particular day.\*
- **Tier 3 (C) level** – earned by athletes who can achieve a World Triathlon Para Cup level podium and/or top 4 World Triathlon Para Series level performances. Other criteria may include Continental Championship performances (when it includes full & high caliber fields).\*
- **Tier 4 (Development Team) Level** – not a part of the “Elite Paratriathlon National Team program” but a component to the pipeline) – available to athletes showing they may be capable of progressing in their sport class to a world class performance standard that would put them on track for future Games medal performances with the proper support, guidance, coaching, & resources. Recognition for this level, and all support associated, will be 100% discretionary.

*\*Language in each level is representative in nature and is not meant to serve as official criteria language.*

### **Performance Progress – guiding principle**

Athletes who qualify for Tier 1 (A), or Tier 2 (B) will be supported at those levels indefinitely through the term of the Program regardless of time spent in the Program. Athletes who have been a part of the Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program for 2 years or more (consecutively or not) and who only qualify for Tier 3 (C) will not be automatically eligible for the Program. Request for special consideration will be subject to discretionary review (as described below) which will review performance results, data analytics, and age performance analytics with an objective of demonstrating continued progress towards Paralympic medal capacity before being eligible for the Program.

Tier 3 (C) level is the entry level of the Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program and is designed to capture developing athletes on their way to attaining higher levels of National Team status en route to achieving their Paralympic Games medal objectives. Therefore, returning Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program athletes are not expected to remain on Tier 3 for more than 2 years and athletes who have been on Tier 1 & 2 may not be eligible for Tier 3 without special consideration. Athletes who are not confirmed for repeat Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program support will be eligible for other High Performance support resources at the discretion of USAT.

### **D (Development) Team –**

While not a component of the Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program, the Development Team is intended to ensure USAT is making strategic discretionary investments in the most qualified athletes with the greatest potential of winning future Paralympic Games medals. The USAT HP staff will review the Paratriathlon athlete talent pool with a special focus on those who have not earned Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program levels of support. Support will be customized to each athlete, and is aimed as stimulus support (monetary and non-monetary) to support development and bridge the gap to the Elite Paratriathlon National Team Program.

### **Discretionary Evaluation**

USA Triathlon may use discretion to select athletes who have not met the objective criteria for the Program for several reasons. These include, but are not limited to, injury or illness, the occurrence of exceptional circumstances (e.g. earthquakes, cancellation of other World Triathlon events, epidemics, riots), and other unanticipated failure of objective criteria to select an athlete likely to achieve competition results consistent with the program Tiers.

Discretionary nominations, if any, may be based on a variety of factors, including consideration of competition results outside of the selection period and data analytics, to ensure that USA Triathlon is investing in the most qualified athletes with the greatest potential of winning Paralympic Games medals. Discretionary nominations for the Program, along with Tier level and term length, will be determined by a panel of two USA Triathlon High Performance Staff and one elite athlete representative.

National Team Program Guiding Principles primary USAT contacts:

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