



**NATIONAL SKELETON PROGRAM
2023-24 NSP SELECTION PROCESS & CRITERIA**

**FOR SELECTING CANADIAN SKELETON ATHLETES TO THE
SENIOR SKELETON TEAM (SST), DEVELOPMENT SKELETON TEAM (DST),
AND NSP ATHLETE POOL (AP)**

&

**FOR DESIGNATING CANADIAN SKELETON ATHLETES AS
EXCELLENCE SKELETON ATHLETES (ESA) AND
NEXTGEN SKELETON ATHLETES (NGSA)**

Final DRAFT: September/20/2023

PURPOSE AND INENT

This **Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton (BCS)** National Skeleton Program (NSP) Selection Process & Criteria (SP&C) outlines the process & criteria by which athletes become eligible and are nominated for selection to the Senior Skeleton Team (SST), Development Skeleton Team (DST), and NSP Athlete Pool (AP) along with Excellence Skeleton Athlete (ESA) and NextGen Skeleton Athlete (NGSA) designation.

The SP&C is intended to reflect the current structure of the IBSF quota allocation, rule set, and qualification for major events. The goal of the SP&C is to provide an athlete centric approach in prioritizing an athlete's individual progression plan (IPP) based on performance during the qualification period and past results. Except for the World Cup and Major events, all IBSF sectioned events should be seen as development opportunities and should not be seen in any hierarchy. Athletes must work with the Technical Lead/Head Coach and staff to complete an agreed upon YTP/IPP that maximizes their development prior to the start of the qualification period (NSP-QP).

This NSP SP&C has been designed in alignment of BCS' Mission:

Bobsleigh CANADA Skeleton develops World and Olympic Champions.

In keeping with BCS' Mission, fairness, equal opportunity, and the desire to field competitive teams for international competition are the guiding principles of this NSP SP&C, which are based on the latest information available to BCS.

POLICY AUTHORITY AND QUESTIONS

Any questions regarding this NSP SP&C, its interpretation or application shall be directed to the Head Coach and Technical Lead (Joe Cecchini: Jcecchini@bobcanskel.ca).

ATHLETE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & ACCEPTANCE

By participating in the NSP Selection Process, Athletes acknowledge, accept and agree to be bound by this NSP SP&C and other BCS policies, as applicable, which can be found on the BCS website: <https://www.bobsleighcanadaskelton.ca/en/>

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

1.1. TECHNICAL LEAD

The Technical Lead will assume the decision-making authority to implement this NSP SP&C.

1.1.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TECHNICAL LEAD,

- 1) interpreting and applying these NSP SP&C;
- 2) confirming the number of IBSF quota spots qualified by BCS;
- 3) considering the pool of NSP athletes with respect to eligibility, qualification, and nomination;
- 4) nominating eligible athletes to the SC for review and ratification;
- 5) discussing and reviewing with the SC the list of eligible athletes; and/or
- 6) notifying the athletes of the confirmation of their selection to the National Team and National Athlete Pool.

1.2. SELECTION COMMITTEE

1.2.1. Composition of the SC

The SC will be comprised of:

- BCS Board Member (Chair);
- Skeleton Advisory Group Member
- Athletes Representative - Bobsleigh; and
- Independent participant.

Note: At the sole discretion of the Chair:

- *If any named member is not available, the SC may continue without that individual or a replacement may be designated; and*
- *Other technical staff and/or key personnel, as applicable, may be invited to participate in a portion of the SC's meeting(s).*

1.2.2. Responsibilities of the SC

The SC shall review this NSP SP&C, the nomination(s) of the Technical Lead, any supporting information presented by the Technical Lead and/or such other information as the SC may deem appropriate, and make such enquiries of the Technical and/or invited persons (as specified herein), in order to review such nomination(s) and to ensure that the nomination(s) are in accordance with this NSP SP&C and ratify the nomination(s) for selection to the National Team and National Athlete Pool.

2. **NSP - SELECTION PROCESS**

2.1. **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to participate in, and at all times throughout, the NSP Selection Process, including testing camps (as applicable) and the Selection Race Series (SRS), candidates must fulfill the following conditions:

- 1) If a candidate is:
 - a. a National Team Athlete, be in good standing as such; or
 - b. if an Athlete is not a National Team Athlete but is a member of the candidate's
 - i. respective Provincial Sport Organization (PSO), be in good standing as such;
- 2) have paid all outstanding fees;
- 3) have a passport valid for a period of at least 6 months beyond the end of the upcoming competitive season;
- 4) meet the eligibility requirements to obtain a BCS IBSF license;
- 5) not have a current sanction imposed resulting from an anti-doping rule violation;
- 6) have demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Technical Lead, on-ice sliding proficiency;
- 7) have completed all BCS pre-sliding requirements including but not limited to receiving clearance for impact sport by a physician, completing concussion baseline testing and having enrolled in the CAIP (<https://mkirsch.ca/home-caip/>);
- 8) confirm, if requested, Competitive Readiness in accordance with this NSP SP&C, as set out in **section 10.**; and

Note: For the avoidance of doubt, to be a National Team Athlete in good standing with BCS, the candidate must be fulfilling all obligations of National Team Athlete status at all material times, including but not limited to having a valid fully executed BCS Athlete Agreement, committed to BCS or BCS approved programming, including but not limited to the athlete's Individual Progression Plan (IPP), as applicable, paid all outstanding fees owing to BCS and fulfilling such other associated obligations from time to time.

2.2. SELECTION RACE SERIES (SRS)

For the 2023-24 NSP Selection Process, BCS plans to conduct two (2) distinct races. For the avoidance of doubt, the SRS rankings may be used for other purposes by BCS, at its sole discretion.

Each respective race consists of one (1) race per discipline (i.e., men’s and women’s) to be conducted on the Whistler track where respective **SRS Points** are earned.

	SRS Race 1	SRS Race 2
Eligibility to Participate	Athletes who meet the requirements set out in section 2.1. and section 5. and Other athletes who meet the requirements set out in section 2.1. who may be invited* to participate as identified at the sole discretion of the Technical Lead,	Athletes who meet the requirements set out in section 2.1. and section 5. and Other athletes who meet the requirements set out in section 2.1. who may be invited* to participate as identified at the sole discretion of the Technical Lead.
Planned Location	Whistler	Whistler
Race Format	World Cup (2 heats over 1 day)	World Cup (2 heats over 1 day)
Start Order Heat 1	By rank according to the most recent IBSF ranking and IBSF Rules. Athletes without an IBSF ranking will be drawn at the end of the field.	By rank according to the most recent IBSF ranking and IBSF Rules. Athletes without an IBSF ranking will be drawn at the end of the field.
Start Order Heat 2	Reverse order according to the ranking of Heat 1.	Reverse order according to the ranking of Heat 1.
<i>Note: "By rank" means by highest rank first i.e., athletes who finish first, then second, then third etc.</i>		

Table 1

**For the avoidance of doubt an invitation to participate and/or participation in an SRS Race does not invalidate any of the eligibility requirements for nomination to the DST or SST i.e. invitation/participation does not cause an athlete to be eligible for nomination to the respective team (DST or SST) if the athlete does not otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for such nomination(s).*

2.3. CONDUCT OF THE SRS

The SRS will be conducted in accordance with the IBSF rules in force at the time of the SRS, where applicable, with any modifications to the SRS Rules to be announced at the pre-race

meeting(s)/draw(s). Athletes are responsible for representing themselves at these meetings.

2.3.1 General race format:

- 1) Race draws will be held following the final training heats;
- 2) Ties in individual race ranks will be broken by the athletes' respective cumulative push times for the respective race. The athlete with the *lowest* cumulative push time will be deemed to be the athlete of higher rank;
- 3) All equipment (sleds, runners, race suits, footwear, helmets, etc.) must conform to the current IBSF rules, pass the appropriate technical inspections and equivalent equipment must be available to the athlete for the entire season;
- 4) Specific race protocols will be announced at the race draw, to reflect the race conditions (times, weather, etc.); and
- 5) Protests must be made verbally to a jury member within five minutes of the race ending and must be submitted in writing within twenty minutes of the race conclusion, along with a non-refundable \$100 CAD protest fee.

2.4. SRS POINTS & ATHLETE RANKING

SRS Points will be awarded in accordance with the WC Skeleton IBSF Ranking List – Points system as per the current IBSF International Skeleton Rules in force at the time of the SRS.

Total combined SRS Points will be used to determine athletes' rank based on SRS results for the purposes of **section 5**.

In the event of a tie in total SRS Points, the tie will be broken by the athletes' respective cumulative push times over all SRS Race heats. The athlete with the *lowest* cumulative push time will be deemed to be the athlete of higher rank.

2.5. UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

Unforeseen, intervening circumstances (weather, budget, etc.) may occur, including but not limited to:

- 1) If a scheduled SRS Race or portion thereof cannot be held or must be interrupted, BCS will first try to re-schedule the SRS Race or portion thereof;
- 2) If a venue change is feasible, BCS will attempt to change the venue but will not guarantee funding for travel to the new venue; and/or
- 3) If a venue change is not feasible, ranking will be based first on the portion of that SRS Race completed or if no portion has been completed, then ranking will be established at the sole discretion of the Technical Lead.

In the event a SRS Race cannot be held, athlete ranking for the purposes of this NSP SP&C will then be established at the sole discretion of the Technical Lead.

3. IBSF PARTICIPATION QUOTA

For the 2023-24 season, BCS has qualified the following IBSF participation quotas for Skeleton:

Circuit	Men’s Quota	Women’s Quota
World Cup (WC)	2	3
Europa Cup (EC)	4	4
North American Cup (NAC)	6	6

Table 2

4. QUALIFICATION PERIOD

The NSP-QP shall be:
September 27th, 2023 to October 30rd, 2023.

5. NSP - SELECTION CRITERIA

The long-term development of the athlete will be considered in all nominations and the SRS will not be the sole deciding factor in team selections. A performance analysis of the race and rank will be conducted and evaluated on its merit. The athlete must demonstrate that they meet the performance pathway associated with the nomination. Athletes will be continually evaluated throughout the season and afforded opportunities based on performance.

5.1. SENIOR SKELETON TEAM SELECTION (SST)

The number of athletes that may be selected to the SST is at the discretion of BCS and may or may not reflect the combined BCS WC quota spots as set out in **section 3**. For the avoidance of doubt, BCS may select fewer or more athletes than the maximum allocated quota spots and will be based on performance merits of the individual athlete.

5.1.1. SST - Eligibility:

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements as per **section 2.1**. at the time of nomination, to be selected to the SST, candidates must have fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) be deemed eligible to compete safely on the WC Circuit under the current IBSF rules based on experience or competency as assessed by the Technical Lead/National Coach and staff.
- (2) Meet the push threshold of;
 - 4.75 Men
 - 5.20 Women

5.1.2. SST - Position Allocations:

In accordance with this NSP SP&C, and not later than the completion of the NSP-QP, eligible athletes shall be nominated to the SC.

5.2. DEVELOPMENT SKELETON TEAM SELECTION (DST)

The number of athletes that may be selected to the DST is at the discretion of BCS and may or may not reflect the combined BCS NAC and EC quota spots as set out in **section 3**.

For the avoidance of doubt, BCS may select fewer or more athletes than the maximum allocated quota spots and will be based on performance merits of the individual athlete.

5.2.1. DST - Eligibility:

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements as per **section 2.1.**, at the time of nomination, to be selected to the DST, candidates must have fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) be eligible to compete on the NAC and EC Circuits under the current IBSF rules;
- (2) not be nominated to the 2022-23 SST;
- (3) be eligible for the current Season's NGS Designation; and
- (4) in prior Seasons, have never been either:
 - (a) selected to the SST; or
 - (b) nominated to the Sport Canada AAP at the Senior International Level (SR1/SR2).

5.2.2. DST - Position Allocations:

In accordance with this NSP SP&C, and not later than the completion of the NSP-QP, eligible athletes shall be nominated to the SC.

5.4 FINAL SELECTION PROCESS

5.4.1 Review & Ratification by the SC

Following the nomination(s) from the Technical Lead, the SC will convene, review and ratify the nomination(s) in accordance with its responsibilities as set out in this NSP SP&C.

If for any reason, the SC does not ratify the nomination(s), the SC shall return the matter to the Technical Lead for re-consideration and re-nomination to the SC for consideration/ratification.

5.4.2 Selection Confirmation

Following ratification of the nomination(s), eligible athletes must complete the following to confirm their selection and extend or acquire (as applicable) National Skeleton Team Athlete status:

- (1) have a valid fully executed BCS Athlete Agreement (Term: August 01, 2023 – July 30,2024);
- (2) commit to BCS or BCS approved programming, including but not limited to a YTP and IPP, as applicable;
- (3) complete all necessary administrative, medical and other forms and documents;
- (4) have paid or pay the National Team Athlete Membership Fee, respective Athlete Program Fee, as applicable, and all other outstanding fees owing to BCS; and
- (5) fulfill all such other obligations as may be required from time to time.

For the avoidance of doubt:

- (1) a candidate is not "named", "selected" or "designated" and does not acquire National Team Athlete status until such time as the requirements in this **section 5.4.2.** are completed; and

- (2) only those athletes who are selected to the SST, DST, or designated as a NGSA meet the requirements of this **section 5.5.2.** and remain in good standing with BCS are considered National Skeleton Team Athletes.

6. NSP – DESIGNATIONS

6.1. EXCELLENCE SKELETON ATHLETE DESIGNATION (ESA)

6.1.1. ESA - Eligibility:

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements as per **section 2.1.**, at the time of nomination, to be eligible for the ESA designation, candidates must have fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) unless a written exemption is granted by the Technical Lead in advance, have participated in the SRS, if eligible and qualified to do so;
- (2) As determined by funding partners based on podium results tracking and the athlete demonstration medal potential within a performance funnel.

For the avoidance of doubt, athletes may be nominated and/or selected to any team and concurrently be designated as an ESA.

6.2. NEXTGEN SKELETON ATHLETE DESIGNATION (NGSA)

BCS may designate an unlimited number of candidates as **NGSAs**.

6.2.1. NGSA - Eligibility:

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements as per **section 2.1.**, at the time of nomination, to be eligible for the NGSA designation, candidates must have fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) unless a written exemption is granted by the Technical Lead in advance, have participated in the SRS, if eligible and qualified to do so;
- (2) have met their respective NGSA Age Requirement according to *Table 1* of **Appendix A**; or
- (3) not currently nominated to the Sport Canada AAP at the Senior International Level (SR1/SR2).
- (4) Meet the push threshold of;
 - 4.85 Men
 - 5.25 Women

For the avoidance of doubt, athletes may be nominated and/or selected to any team and concurrently be designated as a NGSA.

7. NATIONAL ATHLETE POOL

7.1. NSP Athlete Pool (AP)

The number of athletes that may be included in the AP is at the discretion of BCS and may or may not reflect the combined BCS WC, NAC, and EC quota spots as set out in **section 3.**

7.1.1. AP - Eligibility:

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements as per **section 2.1.**, candidates must have fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) be eligible to compete on the NAC and EC Circuits under the current IBSF rules;
- (2) not be nominated to the 2023-24 SST; or
- (3) not be nominated to the 2023-24 DST; or
- (4) not be eligible for the current Season's NGSA Designation; and
- (5) have participated in the SRS

7.1.2. AP – IBSF Race Allocations:

Unused IBSF quota spots may be allocated to athletes within the AP based on technical staff assessments of the athlete's potential to meet DST and SST eligibility.

For the avoidance of doubt, athletes nominated to the NSP Athlete pool are not considered to be on the National Team but are considered a part of the National Skeleton Program.

8. TEAM POSITION RE-ALLOCATION

BCS may re-allocate designated Positions (SST, DST) at certain times during the current Season. For avoidance of doubt, all competitive results may be taken into consideration for the purposes of In Season Re-Allocation.

For the avoidance of doubt, all factors including icehouse push threshold and competitive results based on the size and strength of field, percent back from leader, push differential, and other technical and tactical parameter will be analyzed a performance review when considering in season team re-allocation. Athletes will only be considered for Team re-allocation if the Technical Lead/Head Coach and staff believe the allocation is the best interest of the long-term development of the athlete.

9. IBSF CIRCUIT QUOTA SPOT ALLOCATION

BCS's WC, NAC and EC IBSF circuit quota spots are allocated and may be changed from time to time at the sole discretion of BCS taking into consideration the NSP development and competition plans and/or such other factors as BCS may deem relevant from time to time.

The NSP development and competition plans will be made and/or modified at the sole discretion of BCS, in consultation with the athletes, taking into consideration factors, including but not limited to, the respective Athlete's IPP and Position priority, the season and/or long term goals of the individual athlete and/or the NSP, competitive results, NGSA, injuries, Competitive Readiness, quota spot strategies, the IBSF competition calendar, In Season Position Re-Allocation, unforeseen circumstances and/or such other factors as BCS may deem relevant from time to time.

9.1. QUOTA PRIORITY

Following completion of the Final Selection Process, the priorities for allocation of BCS's IBSF circuit quota spots will be considered based on an agreed upon YTP in the following order:

7.1.1 Athletes selected to the:
(1) SST; then
(2) DST; then

7.1.2 Athletes designated as a:
(3) NGSAs;

7.1.3 Athletes designated as a:
(4) NSP-AP;

9.2. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION(S)

Following the completion of competitions, a performance evaluation will take place and performances will be reviewed by the Technical Lead/National Coach and staff.

When reviewing the performance of athletes, at the sole discretion of BCS, in situations where it is warranted, quota spots allocated to athletes following the SRS may be re-allocated to other athletes who participated in the SRS if those athletes have demonstrated that they meet the performance pathway associated with the event. All changes to the athlete's YTP do not change the team in which they were selected to.

9.2.1. Consideration for open quota allocation:

The Technical Lead/Head coach and staff will review the performance of all NSP athletes and will consider athletes for open quota allocation on the following minimum performance basis:

- (1) EC to World Cup
 - a. 1 top 3 Result and 3 top 6 results
- (2) NAC to World Cup
 - a. 5 top 3 Results
- (3) AP to IBSF Competitions
 - a. Performance analysis demonstrating proficiency to compete in selected competition
 - b. Active participation in NSP
 - c. Demonstrated progression along the podium pathway

For the avoidance of doubt, all factors including size and strength of field, percent back from leader, push differential, and other technical and tactical parameter will be analyzed in the performance review. Athletes will only be considered if the Technical Lead/Head Coach and staff believe the allocation is in the best interest of the long-term development of the athlete and the NSP.

Note: BCS, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to fill and/or change the number of quota spots filled on each of the circuits (WC, NAC and/or EC) at any time throughout the competitive season, including but not limited to not filling all quota spots on any circuit or in any competition at any time.

10. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES & USE OF DISCRETION

10.1. CIRCUMSTANCES

In addition to the specific circumstances set out in this NSP SP&C, it may be appropriate for BCS to use or consider using discretion. In determining whether to use discretion and the application of any discretion used, it shall be done in keeping with the Purpose and Guiding Principles set out herein as well as in the event of the following non-exhaustive circumstances:

- 1) Injury or long term sickness resulting in missed SRS Race(s) and/or IBSF Competitions and/or other events;
- 2) In the event of a tie that is not broken;
- 3) "Acts of God" - adverse weather conditions or other external factors resulting in modified or cancelled SRS Race(s) and/or other events;
- 4) "IBSF Rulings" - decisions made by the IBSF which impact the nations rankings or athlete results or qualification standards; and/or
- 5) Such other circumstances and/or events that in the determination of the SC and/or Technical Lead/Head Coach or staff, as appropriate, warrants the use of discretion, as set out in this NSP SP&C herein.

10.2. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

The SC and/or Technical Lead may consider all relevant factors including but not limited to the following:

Performance Indicators including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Individual Push Testing results;
- 2) Competitive experience and results;
- 3) Competitive Readiness;
- 4) Analysis of physical, psychological, technical, and tactical parameters relative to the appropriate stage within the LTAD in accordance to the podium pathway and gold medal profile;
- 5) SRS results, as applicable;
- 6) Participation in all sanctioned BCS events; and/or
- 7) Commitment to a BCS approved IPP/YTP, as applicable.

For the avoidance of doubt, no particular factor or performance indicator will be determinative in the use of discretion and other factors may be considered as deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

11. COMPETITIVE READINESS

Throughout the NSP-QP and nomination process and current season, athletes are required to maintain Competitive Readiness and to immediately report to the Technical Lead/Head Coach or staff without delay any injury, illness, mental health concern, or change in training that could affect their ability to compete at their highest level.

"**Competitive Readiness**" is defined as: the ability of the athlete to achieve equal or superior performance(s) during the NSP-QP at SRS Race(s), international competitions, and other events throughout the current season, as compared to the athlete's personal bests in relation to factors as set out in **section 8.2.** and/or performance benchmarks identified through the IPP process, as applicable.

Physical and Mental Health & Competitive Readiness Assessment

All athletes may, at the BCS Medical Lead, IST Lead, Technical Lead or coaching staff's discretion, have their health status assessed by the BCS Medical Lead or designate.

The final decision on Competitive Readiness will be made by the Technical Lead, in its sole discretion, using such available information as the Technical Lead deems appropriate, including but not limited to: behaviors in the DTE, adhering to the team values, performance results and progress throughout the current Season, the suitability of the training and commitment to the athlete's IPP, fitness and other Competitive Readiness indicators, submitted medical documentation, consultation with relevant personnel, and/or any other relevant performance related information.

11.1. Not Competitive Ready PRIOR TO Nomination to the SC

In the event that an athlete is deemed injured, ill or not Competitive Ready prior to the nomination by the Technical Lead to the SC, the Technical Lead, in consultation with the BCS Medical Lead, as appropriate and such other persons as the Technical Lead may deem appropriate in the Technical Lead's sole discretion, shall determine whether the athlete will be sufficiently recovered to compete at their highest level during the current Season in order to warrant the athlete's nomination.

Injured, ill or not Competitive Ready athletes may, at the Technical Lead's sole discretion, be subject to a proof of fitness and/or Competitive Readiness test to be determined by the Technical Lead. This test will consist of a controlled performance such as a competition or observed test with a predetermined expected outcome. These athletes will not be eligible for a team (SST, DST) nomination or designation (NGSA or ESA) until this requirement has been satisfied.

12. APPEALS - INTERNAL

Any dispute in relation to this NSP SP&C shall be conducted in accordance with the BCS Appeals Policy available on the BCS website:

<https://www.bobsleighcanadaskelton.ca/en/team/policies/>

APPENDIX A – NGSА designation TABLES

NGSA Age Requirement	
Men:	Born in 1994 or later
Women:	Born in 1994 or later

Table 1