

# WHEELCHAIR TENNIS WCP SELECTION POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

The Wheelchair Tennis World Class Programme (the “WCP”) is a performance programme administered by the Lawn Tennis Association (the “LTA”) and designed to support the delivery of success in the sport’s most significant events. Such events include Super Series tournaments, Grand Slams and the Paralympic Games. The LTA’s intention is that any athlete granted a place on the WCP is a potential future Paralympic medallist or Grand Slam winner. Please note however that selection to the WCP does not guarantee an athlete’s selection for the Paralympic Games.

This policy (the “Policy”) sets out how athletes are selected onto the WCP by the LTA, and what levels of support they would be eligible to receive.

## 1 SELECTION PROCESS

### 1.1 Structure and Principles of the Policy

Players must first meet all of the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 1.2 below (the “Eligibility Criteria”). If they do so, in order to be shortlisted for consideration for selection they then must also satisfy at least one of the criteria listed in 1.3.1. All shortlisted players will then be considered for selection against the criteria in the WCP Matrix (Section 2) (the “Selection Criteria”).

The WCP Matrix consists of a range of levels based on performance and development achievements and behavioural qualities. Each level of the WCP Matrix has set selection criteria which athletes must achieve to be considered on the respective level of the WCP.

There is no pre-determined number of places on the WCP. Although the LTA seeks to support all players who are capable of competing at the highest level, selections are made with the intention of maintaining a cohort of players that comprises the best British players and those capable of and committed to progression. Selections for the WCP will have regard to the budget set and the availability of funding support from partner organisations such as UK Sport for the relevant funding period. The overall size of the WCP will need to be commensurate with the available budget, which may change from year to year. It is possible that the business climate may dictate significant differences in player numbers on the WCP year by year. The LTA delegates authority for selecting players for the WCP to a selection panel (the “Selection Panel”) who will decide which players will be selected to the WCP in accordance with the Selection Criteria.

### 1.2 Eligibility Criteria

All players must first meet the Eligibility Criteria set out below before they are assessed against the Selection Criteria. Players are only eligible to be considered for selection to the WCP provided the following is true:



- a. He/she is eligible to compete for Great Britain at the Paralympic Games (i.e. is a British Passport holder and meets ITF Rules relating to Paralympic Games participation); and
- b. He/she is not currently serving a suspension for a doping violation and/or a breach of the anti-corruption rules\*

\*Where a player is serving such a suspension but the suspension is due to end during the period for which selections are being made, the Selection Panel may, at its discretion, choose to consider the player for selection. Should the player be selected, they would only be part of the WCP once their suspension has ended.

All players who meet the Eligibility Criteria set out above can then be considered for shortlisting in line with 1.3.1 for the WCP by the Selection Panel against the Selection Criteria.

### **1.3 The Selection Process**

Selection of players for the WCP is ordinarily for a period of one year, normally running from 01 January to 31 December. In some cases, the Selection Panel may make the selection for a shorter period, with the full year only being granted on achievement of conditions set by the Selection Panel.

The process that the LTA will then follow in order to select players to the WCP is detailed below.

#### **1.3.1 Stage 1 – Shortlisting including LTA Wheelchair National Coach Nominations:**

The Wheelchair World-Class Programme Head Coach (or their nominee) with the support and input from the Wheelchair National Coach and Wheelchair Age Group Performance Coach, will prepare a list of shortlisted individuals for the Selection Panel to consider for selection to the WCP. The list will consist of:

- a) Any player who is currently on the WCP;
- b) Any player who satisfies the ranking requirements in respect of Level E of the WCP Matrix Selection Criteria; and
- c) Any player nominated by a LTA Wheelchair National Coach. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a lack of opportunity for international competition and ranking progression; therefore for 2021 selections only, players may be nominated for shortlisting for WCP funding where there has been significant progression towards the shortlisting targets outlined in 2.2 and 2.3. In such circumstances the Wheelchair WCP Head Coach, Wheelchair National Coach or Wheelchair Age Group Performance Coach can nominate a player to be shortlisted. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2020 (international and relevant domestic events), and, if relevant, evidence of ranking / game progression over the last 12-24 months, as well as why they believe the player should be considered for the WCP funding taking into consideration the shortlisting ranking criteria 2.2 and 2.3.

### 1.3.2 Stage 2 – The Selection Meeting

The LTA delegates authority for selection to the WCP to the Selection Panel. The Selection Panel will consist of at least four of the following:

- Head of Performance Operations and Wheelchair WCP (or their nominee) (“The Chair”)
- Wheelchair WCP Head Coach
- Performance Support Lead
- Wheelchair WCP National Coach; or Wheelchair Tennis National Age Group Performance Coach
- Physical Performance Manager – Wheelchair

The Head of Performance Operations and Wheelchair WCP, or their nominee, will chair the Selection Panel and will retain the right of a casting vote in the case of a tie should this be required. The Chair may nominate an additional member(s) of the LTA’s Wheelchair Performance Team to the Selection Panel to provide further relevant expertise from time to time, but this person shall not have voting rights.

A member of the LTA’s legal team may attend meetings of the Selection Panel to advise on procedural issues and adherence to the Policy but shall not have voting rights. A member of the LTA Performance Operations Team may also be invited by the Chair to attend to take notes and record the selection decisions but shall not have voting rights.

The Selection Panel will consider the shortlisted players for selection to the WCP in accordance with this Policy and assess them against the Wheelchair Tennis WCP Matrix Selection Criteria. The Selection Panel will have available to it any evidence, statistics and feedback or other information relevant for the purposes of assessing players in accordance with the Selection Criteria set out in this Policy.

Players currently on the WCP who do not satisfy the Selection Criteria and who are deemed not to be affected by a Performance Limiting Factor (as outlined in section 3) will not be selected.

If more players meet the selection criteria than there are places available and budget allows, the following priority order will be applied to establish a rank order of candidates and the distribution of budget.

If players are tied on the number of criteria they have met and there are more players than there are places (and budget) available the Chair will have the casting vote. In doing so, the Chair will consider, taking into account the evidence presented to and the deliberations of the Selection Panel, which players he or she believes are most likely to achieve the objectives of the WCP.

The Selection Panel may also set conditions and targets for each player on the WCP as part of their Individual Development Plan (IDP). Progress against these will be reviewed and monitored within the quarterly IDP meetings and twice yearly reviews in order to maintain their place on the WCP.

At the start of the Selection Meeting the Selection Panel members will declare any potential conflicts of interest. The Chair will decide if there is a conflict of interest. If there is, that Selection Panel member must leave the meeting during the consideration of that player.

## 1.4 Selection Outcome

Following successful WCP selection, individual players will only be formally accepted onto the WCP once they have signed and returned the Wheelchair Tennis Athlete Agreement (the “Athlete Agreement”) and completed a satisfactory pre-induction medical review (the “Review”) within the agreed timeframes. Every player selected to the WCP will undergo a Review to ensure their potential place on the WCP does not pose significant risk to their health and wellbeing and that they will be able to take part in and complete the WCP.

The Athlete Agreement will include amongst other matters obligations and minimum expectations regarding coaching, physical training and competitions, commitments to anti-doping and anti-corruption and adherence to a code of conduct and disciplinary procedure.

Accepting a WCP place is encouraged but optional. If an athlete chooses to decline the selection for any reason (including failure to sign the Athlete Agreement) they will not be restricted in selection for major competitions, but there will be no form of financial support or, unless approved otherwise by the LTA, access to coaching, sports science/sports medicine or operational services.

## 2 SELECTION CRITERIA

### 2.1 The WCP Matrix Selection Criteria Overview

The tables overleaf outline the Selection Criteria against which shortlisted players will be assessed by the Selection Panel in respect of selection for singles and/or doubles at each level of the WCP.

The Selection Criteria have been designed to ensure that only players that are progressing towards achieving, have potential to achieve, or continuing to achieve Paralympic medal performances or Grand Slam titles will be considered on the WCP.

The WCP Selection Criteria are designed to enable players to fully engage in the WCP and meet the necessary training and competition demands associated with progression towards, and success in, the Paralympic Games and Grand Slams.

Save where the Selection Panel has deemed that a Performance Limiting Factor is to be taken into account to justify why a criterion has not been met, all criteria at each level must be satisfied to attain selection at the respective level of the WCP.

## 2.2 WCP Matrix Table – Selection Criteria in respect of singles

Pathway Level		Ranking <sup>1</sup>	Grand Slam & Paralympic Profile <sup>2</sup>	Maximising Performance <sup>5</sup>
ELITE (PODIUM)	A	World Ranking 1-2 Men, Women, Quad	Demonstrable progress to GS/Medal Zone <sup>4</sup> - What It Takes To Win (“WITTW”) Indicators vs Medal Zone	- Support Team Personnel - IDP Engagement - Demonstration of full time training - Elite Behaviours
	B	World Ranking in Medal Zone Medal Zone for divisions: Men & Women = Top 6; Quad = Top 4		
PSP (PODIUM POTENTIAL)	C	Men Top 16 Women Top 12 Quad Top 8		
	D	Men Top 32 Women Top 24 Quad Top 16		
	E	Men Top 64 Women Top 48 Quad Top 32		
Futures	F	N/A		

*\*Elite and PSP funding is normally for players 18 years or older. Therefore if a player under the age of 18 wants to be considered for PSP or Elite funding, they would need to achieve the Men’s, Women’s or Quad’s criteria as set out above.*

*The Wheelchair National Age Group Programme (NAGP) is designed to support our most promising 12-18 year olds.*

### 2.3 WCP Matrix Table – Selection Criteria in respect of doubles

Pathway Level		Ranking <sup>1</sup>	Grand Slam & Paralympic Profile <sup>2</sup>	Maximising Performance <sup>5</sup>
ELITE (PODIUM)	A	Ranked as one of the top 2 pairs of the same nationality (based on Combined Ranking <sup>7</sup> )	On track to medal at Tokyo 2020. Competed as a GB <sup>8</sup> pair in: 50% Super Series during the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support Team Personnel</li> <li>- IDP Engagement</li> <li>- Demonstration of full time training</li> <li>- Elite Behaviours</li> </ul>
	B	Ranked as 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> pairs of the same nationality (based on Combined Ranking <sup>7</sup> )	On track to medal at Tokyo 2020. Competed as a GB <sup>8</sup> pair in: 50% Super Series during the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support Team Personnel</li> <li>- IDP Engagement</li> <li>- Demonstration of full time training</li> <li>- Elite Behaviours</li> </ul>
PSP (PODIUM POTENTIAL)	C	N/A	N/A	N/A
	D	N/A	N/A	N/A
	E	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 2.3 Selection Criteria Notes

### <sup>1</sup> Ranking

The Ranking criteria applies to the ITF World Ranking at the time of the Selection Panel meeting (10<sup>th</sup> November 2020).

### <sup>2</sup> Grand Slam and Tokyo Profile (Singles)

Only players that are progressing towards, or continuing to achieve Grand Slam/Paralympic medal performances will be considered on the WCP. Therefore, players must be able to demonstrate progress to the Medal Zone for Tokyo and/or future Paralympic Games and/or evidence of competing for Grand Slam titles. This progress will be assessed by performances in competition (World Ranking) and skill development (WITTW Indicators).

### <sup>2</sup> Grand Slam and Tokyo Profile (Doubles)

Only players that are progressing towards, or continuing to achieve Paralympic medal performances or competing for Grand Slam titles will be considered on the WCP. Therefore, doubles players must be able to demonstrate progress to the Medal Zone for Tokyo and/or future Paralympic Games and/or evidence of competing for Grand Slam titles. This progress will be assessed by performances in competition at significant events (including as a GB pair), and through skill development (WITTW Indicators).

Therefore, players selected on the WCP for Doubles must play 50% of Super Series events (if both players qualify) with a GB player.

### <sup>3</sup> Demonstrable Progress to Medal Zone

Ranking &/OR WITTW (What It Takes To Win) Indicators vs Medal Zone

#### Ranking

World Ranking is the key indicator for Paralympic Games and Grand Slam success. Research tracking past and current medal prospects (ranked in the “Medal Zone”) provides a guide to how medallists improve their ranking over time – the results of this research form the benchmarks of assessment – these can be seen in Appendix 2.

The ranking progressions of WCP players will be assessed against this.

The current Medal Zones are as follows: Men - Top 6, Women - Top 6, Quad - Top 4

#### WITTW Indicators vs Medal Zone (MZ)

Skill and competency development provides players with the tools to improve performance and achieve results. These skills / competencies are captured in the WITTW model – the performances of GB and international players are assessed against these, providing world standards, as well as indicators of individual strengths and weaknesses. The indicators are as follows:

1st Contact	Optimal Gamestyle	Adaptive Performer	Go Long
Serving, Returning	Building Pressure, Create, Convert, Physical Profile	Big Points, Environment, Gameplan	Availability, Long matches, Tour consistency

### <sup>4</sup> Maximising Performance/Minimum Expectations

Refers to the necessary quality and quantity of training to provide the greatest opportunity of success in competition. Assessment of this is as follows:

Elite & PSP (Podium & Podium Potential)
- Support Team Personnel  LTA Accredited+ Individual Coach, SSSM Practitioners to be qualified, if part of team
- IDP Engagement  Player and individual team engage with the agreed IDP, including the development goals and recommendations within it.

<p>- Demonstration of full time training</p> <p>Player is a “professional athlete”, and as such, commits to being a full-time tennis player, demonstrated through the player’s IDP and training programme.</p> <p>The player is able to train throughout the year at indoor facility with gym access.</p>
<p>- Elite Behaviours</p> <p>Player demonstrates elite player behaviours through preparation &amp; recovery, goal-setting &amp; reviewing and living a professional athlete lifestyle, in line with WCP expectations in the player’s IDP and the LTA Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Disciplinary matters will be taken into account.</p>

**<sup>6</sup> Combined World Ranking**

The combined world ranking as a pair in comparison with other nationality pairs is critical to being a Paralympic Games medal contender and/or Grand Slam winner. This will be assessed as follows:

- A level: Combined World Ranking as a GB Pair that ensures a doubles team ranking of 1 or 2
- B level: Combined World Ranking as a GB Pair that ensures a doubles team ranking of 3 or 4

**<sup>7</sup> On track to Medal as a Pair**

Performances in Super Series tournaments during the year of selection will be used to demonstrate whether a GB pair is on track to compete for Grand Slam titles and medal at a future Paralympic Games.

**2.4 Matrix Support**

The level of support to be provided by the LTA at each level of the matrix will be announced in due course.

Athletes who are selected to the WCP may also be eligible to receive an athlete performance award (“APA”) from UK Sport as set out below. This is subject as always to UK Sport’s terms and conditions in respect of APAs.

Level	APA
A	£28,000
B	£21,500
C	£15,000
D	£12,000
E	£8,000
F	-



### **3 GUIDELINES FOR RETENTION OF ATHLETES AFFECTED BY PERFORMANCE LIMITING FACTORS**

In the event that a player is suffering from a Performance Limiting Factor, the Selection Panel will use the following guidelines.

#### **3.1 Performance Limiting Factor Guidelines**

A "Performance Limiting Factor" is either:

- a. an injury or illness (or combination of injuries and illnesses) or other exceptional circumstance which results in significant interruption or impact upon training for at least 3 months – intermittent or continuous, or
- b. an injury or illness, or other exceptional circumstance which occurs at such a time that it significantly impacts on a player's ability to deliver performances that would qualify them for consideration for selection to the WCP based on the Selection Criteria.

Players who are suffering from or have suffered a Performance Limiting Factor prior to selection may be considered for selection on the WCP if:

- a. the Selection Panel considers that, when fully fit (and in its assessment the Selection Panel shall take into consideration the seriousness of and time lost to the Performance Limiting Factor), the player still merits selection to the WCP based on their on-going realistic potential to win a medal at the Paralympic Games or challenge for Grand Slam titles; and
- b. the player is and has been fully compliant with their rehabilitation programme (if applicable), as set and amended from time to time by the LTA, and in the opinion of the LTA has not, whether by an act or omission, intentionally or otherwise, jeopardised their own recovery; and
- c. the Selection Panel does not consider the Performance Limiting Factor took place due to unacceptable behaviour or decision making by the player outside of training/performance; and
- d. the Selection Panel considers the other circumstance which impacted on the player's ability to meet the criteria was out of their control, and had it not occurred, the player would in all likelihood meet the criteria and therefore merits selection to the WCP.

### **4 RESELECTION AND NON – RENEWAL OF EXISTING WCP PLAYERS**

At the end of each player's agreement period, each player will be formally reviewed by the Selection Panel in the selection meeting. A player will then either have their agreement renewed or not. In making this decision the Panel will be asked to consider:

1. A player's ranking trajectory against the shortlisting targets outlined in section 2.2 and 2.3; and
2. A player's progress against their IDP

As per the player's contract, funding levels may be reviewed as part of this process. All decisions will be recorded and players notified as outlined in section 5

To reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, all players receiving Podium or Podium Potential funding in 2020 will automatically be given an extension of one year unless they have a long term injury or illness which means (as determined by the Performance team, including the Wheelchair and Medical teams) that they are unable to return to professional tennis, as such they are unable to return to a full training and competition schedule relevant for a WCP player of their age and stage. As part of this extension the funding levels may be reviewed in line with 1.1 of this policy.

## **5. WCP INDUCTION AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)**

Once decisions have been communicated, successful candidates will be invited to a WCP induction, which is a mandatory condition of accepting WCP support.

### **5.1 Induction**

The induction for all players will normally take place during December and is mandatory for all players. This will be a multi-disciplinary induction and will be led by the Wheelchair WCP Head Coach, Performance Support Lead and Physical Performance Manager - Wheelchair. This will clearly explain the relationship the LTA would like to have with the player and their support team for the duration of the player's involvement on the programme. It will also explain what players and their support teams should expect from the LTA Wheelchair WCP Team as well as provide important information on areas such as safeguarding, wellbeing & player representation. Players are expected to attend the induction.

### **5.2 Individual Development Plan (IDP)**

As part of the induction process each player, together with their team and an assigned LTA Wheelchair WCP National Coach, will be required to develop and agree an IDP with a minimum of three clearly defined and detailed development goals for the year. This will form the basis for allocating and finalising support, as well as tracking and monitoring progress during the year.

## **6 CONTINUING SUPPORT**

Players selected in accordance with this policy must continue to meet the relevant 'Maximising Performance/Minimum Expectations Criteria' throughout the year and adhere to the Athlete Agreement in order to continue to receive support.



## **7 NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION DECISIONS**

Each decision to select or not to select will be recorded on a Selection Record Form. The form is provided in Appendix 1.

The Chair of the Selection Panel will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all shortlisted players are notified within two weeks of the conclusion of the selection meeting through the LTA Wheelchair WCP Management Team.

The decisions that will be formally notified to athletes are:

- (i) Confirmation of selection to the WCP and the respective WCP Pathway Level;
- (ii) Confirmation that an existing WCP player has not been selected
- (iii) Confirmation that a shortlisted player has not been selected

## **8. APPEALS**

Shortlisted players who have not been selected by the Selection Panel are entitled to appeal against the Selection Panel's decision. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons and supporting evidence) within 7 days of the applicant receiving his/her written selection decision to the nominated member of the LTA Executive Team or their nominee (the Appeal Chair) but only on one or both of the following grounds:

- a) There has been a failure by the Selection Panel to follow this selection policy (i.e. there has been a procedural defect); and / or
- b) The decision has been reached on the basis of an error of fact.

The Appeal Chair can decide, based on the written appeal and any supporting written evidence provided, to either:

- 1. To set aside the Selection Panel's decision as it was based on an error of fact or procedurally flawed and remit the matter to the Selection Panel for reconsideration; or
- 2. To uphold the Selection Panel's decision.

The applicant will be informed of the appeal decision in writing.

Should a decision be set aside and be re-considered by the Selection Panel which has an effect on a selection decision taken in relation to another player, that decision in relation to the other player may also be re-considered and changed if necessary.

For the avoidance of doubt, players who are not shortlisted for any reason, including Performance Limiting Factor (as outlined in 3.1) or not receiving a LTA National Coach Nomination (as outlined in 1.3; Stage 1) are not eligible to appeal.

## **9. CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS TO THIS PROCEDURE**

The LTA will be entitled to amend this procedure from time to time and such amendments will take effect from the first date of publication of the complete amended procedure on the LTA website.

## Appendix 1

### Selection Record Form

#### Panel Information

Date of Selection Panel Meeting	
Chairperson	
Panel Members	

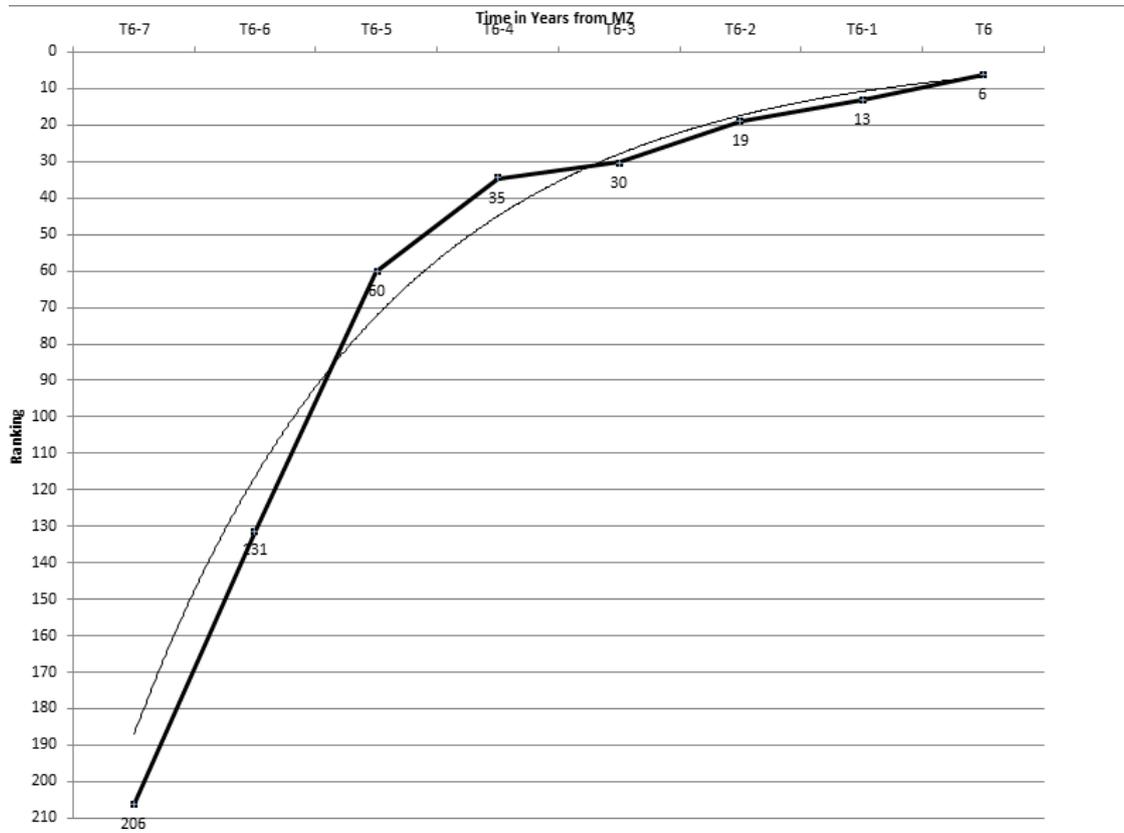
The Selection Panel will use the below table to evidence player achievements against the WCP Matrix Selection Criteria for the respective levels of the Pathway.

Player	Singles or Doubles Funded	Current Matrix Level	Actual Ranking	Milestone Results	Grand Slam & Paralympic Profile	Maximising Performance/Minimum Expectations	PLF?	Agreed Matrix Level
Notes								

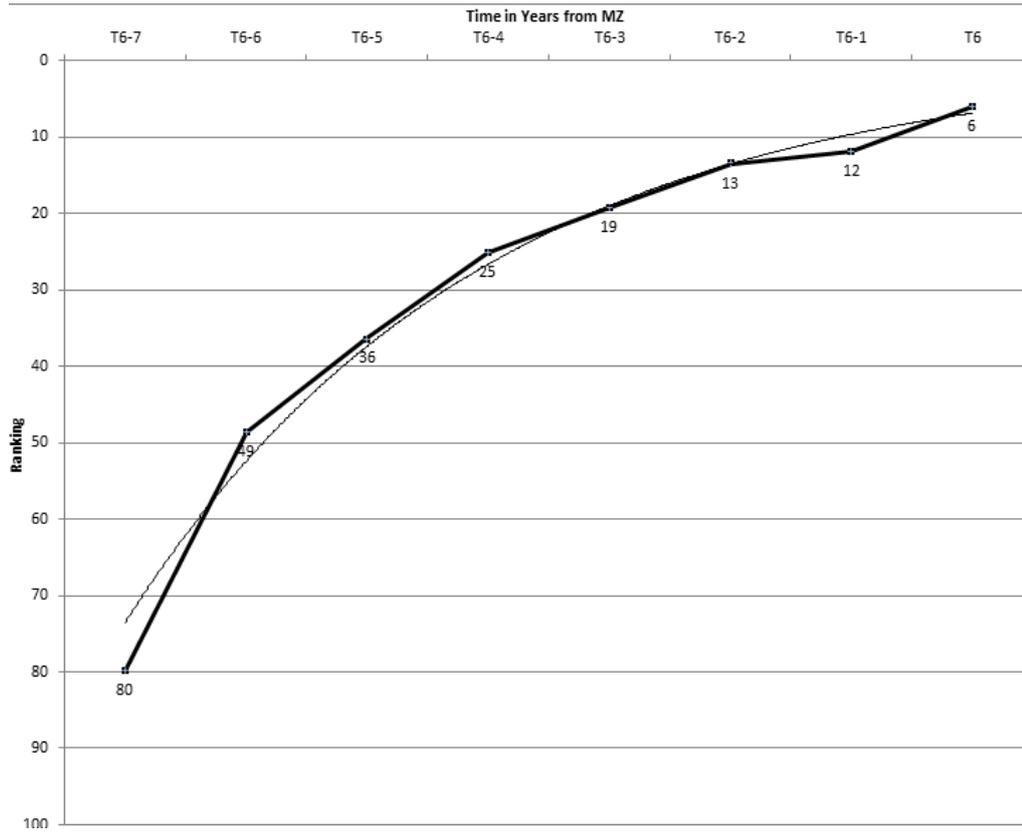
## Appendix 2

### Ranking Progression Pathway to Medal Zone

#### Men



## Women



# Quad

