

GB FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

SELECTION AND APPEALS POLICY

A. SELECTION POLICY

1. SELECTION GOALS

- 1.1. The goal of the GB Fastpitch Softball Programme will always be to select the best teams possible to compete for Great Britain in ESF or WBSC competitions.
- 1.2. Objective criteria derived from physical and skills testing, performance statistics, video evidence etc will be used to select players, but subjective criteria such as previous and current performance, experience, projected development or improvement, positional requirements, leadership and team cohesion will also be used in the selection of individual players and the team as a whole.
- 1.3. It is understood that in making selections to create the best team, it is possible that the best individual athletes may not be selected.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTION

- 2.1. Requirements for a player to be considered for selection to a Great Britain Fastpitch Softball National Team are:
 - a) The player must be a British citizen with a British passport, although players with dual citizenship who are in the process of applying for a British passport can be considered for selection on a provisional basis. Players must hold a British passport that expires at least six months after any competitions that they are selected for in a given year and must undertake, if necessary, to renew passports accordingly.
 - b) The player must meet any age, nationality, anti-doping or eligibility requirements as set out by the ESF or WBSC in respect of any ESF or WBSC competition or qualifying competition.
 - c) The player must be in good standing with the British Softball Federation and its affiliated leagues, clubs and teams.
 - d) The player must be available and committed to compete in events run or sanctioned by the ESF or WBSC for which they are trialling.
 - e) The player must sign a GB Softball Athlete Agreement and, with regard to the Olympic Games only, a BOA Team Member's Agreement.
 - f) The player must complete the GB Softball Player Application Form and return it to the GB Management Committee prior to their participation in any selection event. Copies of relevant Player Application Forms will be forwarded to team selectors prior to selection events.

- g) Upon receiving notice of selection, the player must declare any current or potential injury or condition which may impair or prohibit performance.

3. THE SELECTION PANEL

- 3.1. With regard to any GB National Fastpitch Team, the Head Coach will have the final authority for all selection decisions, including player de-selection and selection of replacement athletes.
- 3.2. In making selections, the Head Coach will consult with all assistant coaches on the team, with an independent Talent Evaluator proposed by the GB Management Committee and with an External Selector, also proposed by the GB Management Committee, whose role is to ensure due process. All these persons will together form the Selection Panel. The Head Coach will have the final say on selection decisions.
- 3.3. All team coaches and other members of Selection Panels are required to declare any potential conflicts of interests to the GB Management Committee with respect to any athletes under consideration by that Selection Panel.
- 3.4. The Selection Panel must ensure that GB teams have a balanced group of athletes, including for specialist playing positions, giving teams the best chance to meet desired programme outcomes and strategies.
- 3.5. All successful and unsuccessful members of the team or pool being selected for will be contacted by members of the Selection Panel prior to formal announcement of the team.

4. SELECTION EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- 4.1. The selection year for GB Fastpitch Softball National Teams is assumed to run from 1 November of the previous year to 30 October in the relevant year of competition.
- 4.2. For players based in Great Britain, sub-clauses 4.3 to 4.5 are mandatory elements during the year of selection.
- 4.3. Events
 - a) Attendance at one or more advertised trial events.
 - b) Attendance at a specified percentage of Academy and (where relevant) High Performance Academy sessions.
 - c) Participation in the GBFL season (or an equivalent competition approved by GB coaches).
 - d) Participation in the London Cup (if selected) or any equivalent competition hosted in Great Britain during the current selection year.
 - e) Participation, if selected, in invitational tournaments in Europe attended by GB, GB Select or GB Development teams that fall within the selection period. Allowances can be made, on application, for factors that may limit participation, including costs and specific clashes between tournament dates and school exams. In general, however, athletes are expected to anticipate and manage requirements for study and softball participation so that neither

suffers unduly.

- f) Other selection events may be added at the discretion of National Team Head Coaches.

4.4. Activities

- a) Athletes must meet the individual physical requirements set by the Head Coach of their team or the GB Fastpitch Softball programme during the year of selection, which will be provided before or near the commencement of the year.
- b) Athletes must fulfil and report on assigned training and Strength & Conditioning programmes.
- c) Athletes must make time for interviews with team coaches on request.

4.5. A player unable to participate in selection events or activities may be approved for selection, on a case-by-case basis, under the following conditions or circumstances:

- a) A performance-limiting injury or illness, verified by medical certificate or documentation.
- b) Overseas training, work or education commitments that prevented participation in selection events (though fulfilment of selection activities is still required).

4.6. For players based overseas who are unable to travel to Great Britain for trials, sub-clauses 4.7 and 4.8 will form part of the selection process.

4.7. Activities

- a) Provision of statistical performance information as requested.
- b) Provision of skills videos as requested and (if possible) game video footage.
- c) Provision of contact information for current and previous coaches.
- d) Meeting individual physical requirements set by the Head Coach or the GB Softball programme.
- e) Fulfilment of and reporting on assigned training and Strength & Conditioning programmes.
- f) Interviews with team coaches via phone or Skype.

4.8. Where possible, GB Softball will ask a qualified person based near an overseas player to meet the player and watch them play. In such cases, the information and recommendations supplied by the qualified person will also form part of the selection process.

5. SELECTION CRITERIA

5.1. In selecting athletes for any GB Fastpitch National Team, GB Softball will consider both current and historical objective and subjective information that pertains to the criteria listed below:

5.2. Offensive Performance

- a) Batting:
 - 1. Batting statistics.
 - 2. Ability to make contact and adjustments.
 - 3. Ability to hit the ball hard (power) and consistently.
 - 4. Situational hitting (bunting, advancing runners etc).
- b) Baserunning:
 - 1. Speed.
 - 2. Technique.
 - 3. Awareness.

5.3. Defensive Performance

- a) Fielding:
 - 1. Hands and arm strength.
 - 2. Range.
 - 3. Throwing accuracy and power.
 - 4. Judgment and consistency.
- b) Communication with other players.
- c) Instincts for necessary adjustments and positioning.

5.4. Pitching Performance

- a) Pitch speed.
- b) Pitch location and ball movement.
- c) Variety and command of pitches.
- d) Situational pitching.
- e) Ability to adjust to game situations.
- f) Communication with catcher and defensive players.
- g) Presence and demeanour in the circle.
- h) Judgment.
- i) Communication with coaches.
- j) Instincts for necessary adjustments and positioning.

5.5. Catching Performance

- a) Throwing:
 - 1. Pop time.
 - 2. Arm strength.
 - 3. Footwork.
 - 4. Accuracy.

- b) Pitch reception:
 1. Framing.
 2. Blocking.
- c) Game management:
 1. Communication with coaches.
 2. Communication with pitchers.
 3. Situational communication with fielders.
 4. Pitch-calling.

5.6. Strength and Conditioning

- a) Physical strength.
- b) Conditioning performance.

5.7. Based on the above-listed criteria, athletes will be ranked based on the number of athletes competing for a particular position. The highest-ranked player by position will be ranked with a score of 1, the next with 2 etc.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6.1. Other considerations that will play a significant role in player rankings and selection decisions will include:

- a) Teamwork: willingness to accept roles that lead to team success.
- b) Enthusiasm: energy, support of teammates and contribution to team chemistry.
- c) Versatility: balance between offense and defense as well as the ability to play other positions and fill multiple roles.
- d) Development: projected improvement.
- e) Maturity: the ability to adjust to situations, deal with adversity, accept things that don't go well and react appropriately.
- f) Reliability:
 1. For GB-based players: communication and attendance at team training sessions and other events as specified by coaches.
 2. For overseas-based players: communication, provision of information and video as requested and adherence to prescribed training and conditioning programmes.
- g) Team composition: the intended direction or needs of a particular team.

6.2. In selecting members of a GB Squad, the Selection Panel may select up to 25 athletes who will remain under consideration for nomination for final selection to a Competition Team.

6.3. In selecting members of a GB Competition Team, the Selection Panel will initially select a "Core Group" of players based on evaluations and rankings made by coaches,

including the Other Considerations listed in clause 6.1. The “Core Group” is defined as those athletes who rank #1 in the nine positions. The Selection Panel will then identify the remaining members of the team (up to allowable competition roster limits) based on the Core Group previously selected and the need for specific utility and other position players, based on rankings and Selection Criteria.

- 6.4. As noted above, the Head Coach also has the discretion to name an athlete to a final squad or competition team even though that athlete may not have participated in advertised trials or other selection activities due to injury, illness or other reasons that the Head Coach considers to be valid.
- 6.5. Unless expressly requested by the Selection Panel, players have no right to make submissions or representations to, or appear before, the Selection Panel. Any right or claim to natural justice in regard to selection can only be exercised through the appeal process set out below.
- 6.6. A selected female player, or a female player being considered for selection, must notify the Head Coach of her team of the fact that she is pregnant immediately upon becoming aware of that circumstance. Upon receipt of that notification, the GB Management Committee will determine what further action (if any) should be taken with respect to the player’s participation in accordance with the British Softball Federation’s Pregnancy Guidelines.

7. DE-SELECTION

- 7.1. An athlete may be de-selected from a GB Team at any time prior to the Technical Meeting before an ESF or WBSC competition where the athlete:
 - a) Is unable to meet performance expectations due to, for example, a loss in form.
 - b) Is unable to perform due to injury, illness or other medical reasons, including pregnancy.
 - c) Is unable to commit to a sufficient percentage of team activities.
 - d) Repeatedly fails to communicate within a reasonable timeframe when requested to do so by team staff.
 - e) Materially violates team rules.
 - f) Exhibits conduct that is determined to be detrimental to the image of the GB Softball programme and the British Softball Federation.
 - g) Becomes non-financial with respect to the team or any other element of British Softball.
- 7.2. A player who is not selected to a GB Team, or who is de-selected prior to the relevant competition, may appeal that decision in accordance with the appeal procedure set out below.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 8.1. All players shall keep all selection decisions and matters related to the team

chosen for an ESF, WBSC or Olympic tournament confidential until an announcement has been made by the British Softball Federation or (where relevant) the British Olympic Association.

B. APPEALS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The following procedures have been adopted by the British Softball Federation ("BSF") in consideration of any appeal made by or on behalf of any athlete wishing to appeal by virtue of their non-nomination or de-selection for any GB Fastpitch Softball National Team competing for Great Britain in ESF or WBSC competitions.
- 1.2. Any athlete seeking a review of a non-nomination/de-selection decision should be aware of the time limits contained in this Policy, which are designed with the intention of resolving issues in a timely, fair and transparent manner. All athletes should read this policy carefully and satisfy themselves that they are eligible to appeal in the first instance. Any appeals which do not satisfy the grounds of appeal below will be dismissed automatically.
- 1.3. This Policy forms the entire agreement between each athlete in a GB Fastpitch Softball National Team programme and the British Softball Federation (the "Parties") as to how National Team selection and de-selection decisions are to be challenged. The Parties agree to submit any dispute concerning any matter connected with or arising out of selection or de-selection issues to binding arbitration as provided for by the provisions of this Appeals Policy. The Parties further agree that they will not commence, continue or maintain any legal challenge to any matter falling under the jurisdiction of this Policy, or any decision made under this Policy, before any court of law or other dispute resolution body, including the Sports Dispute Resolution Panel (the SDRP) and the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).
- 1.4. The Parties will treat all decisions under this Appeals Policy as final and binding upon them.

2. GROUNDS OF APPEAL

- 2.1. An athlete may appeal against a nomination decision only on the grounds that:
 - a. There has been a failure to apply the applicable selection criteria.
 - b. There has been a failure to adhere to the procedure set out in the applicable selection policy.
 - c. A selection or de-selection decision has been made based on a material error of fact.
- 2.2. An athlete does not have a right of appeal against any judgement or discretion exercised in the course of making nomination decisions, or against the content of the applicable selection criteria.

3. NOTICE OF APPEAL

- 3.1. This Appeals Policy is commenced when an athlete affected by a selection decision submits a formal written appeal by email (the Notice of Appeal) to the British

Softball Federation's National Teams Officer (nto@britishsoftball.org).

- 3.2. The Notice of Appeal must be received by the BSF National Teams Officer within 72 hours of the selection decision being announced or communicated to the athlete, whichever is later.
- 3.3. If the athlete fails to submit the Notice of Appeal within the time limit set out in this Appeals Policy, they will have lost their right of appeal.
- 3.4. The Notice of Appeal must set out full details of the athlete's ground(s) of appeal and include:
 - a. Details of the decision which the athlete is appealing.
 - b. Details of the ground(s) of appeal upon which the athlete relies, including the precise manner in which the athlete alleges that the selection criteria have not been applied or in which the procedure set out in the applicable selection policy has not been followed or in which a material error of fact has played a part in the decision.
 - c. Any documents or written evidence upon which the athlete relies in support of their appeal. These documents must be relevant specifically to the athlete's grounds of appeal.
- 3.5. The Notice of Appeal must be accompanied by a deposit of £250 payable to the British Softball Federation as a contribution towards the administrative costs of processing the Appeal.

4. INITIAL DETERMINATION OF THE APPEAL

- 4.1. Upon receipt of a Notice of Appeal, the BSF National Teams Officer shall determine whether the Notice of Appeal is valid and whether the athlete's complaint should be heard by an Appeals Panel, having regard to the following matters:
 - a. Whether the Notice of Appeal has been served in time.
 - b. Whether the Notice of Appeal is based on an applicable ground of appeal as set out above.
 - c. Whether the Notice of Appeal discloses a *prima facie* case that the appeal could succeed.
 - d. Whether the case raised by the Notice of Appeal is so trivial or technical that even if proved correct there is no realistic prospect that the matter complained of would have had an effect on the nomination or de-selection decision.
- 4.2. In determining these issues, the National Teams Officer is to give the benefit of any doubt to the athlete.
- 4.3. In determining whether to transfer the case on to an Appeals Panel, the National Teams Officer is not judging whether the athlete's appeal should or would succeed, only that the athlete has raised a proper case that could succeed. The National Teams Officer is entitled to consider such matters as appear to them to be relevant, including (but not limited to) their assessment of the truth or accuracy of any facts relied on by the athlete.

5. APPEALS PANEL AND CONDUCT OF APPEAL

- 5.1. Should the British Softball Federation National Teams Officer determine that the Notice of Appeal should be heard by an Appeals Panel, this Panel will consist of three [3] people selected by the National Teams Officer in accordance with the provisions set out below, plus two [2] alternative members.
- 5.2. The Appeals Panel will be chaired by an independent barrister or solicitor (or, where such a person cannot be identified within the necessary timeframe, a person whom both parties agree and consider to be independent). This Chairperson will be joined by two [2] other people, only one of whom shall be an Officer of or a person employed by the British Softball Federation. The remaining place will be filled by a person who appears to the National Teams Officer to be suitably qualified and capable of making an independent assessment of the matters in dispute.
- 5.3. The Appeals Panel will not include anyone who was involved in any way in the original nomination or de-selection procedure, or any person related to or otherwise connected to the Selectors, the Head Coach or the athlete who has lodged the Appeal.
- 5.4. Upon receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the Chair of the Appeal Panel will convene a hearing to take place as soon as practical, and in any event within five working days of receipt of the Notice of Appeal by the British Softball Federation, at which the Appeal Panel will consider the Notice of Appeal.
- 5.5. The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall consider whether the interests of any athlete(s) other than the Appellant (the Interested Party or Interested Parties) may be affected by the nomination or de-selection decision under consideration and may direct that such Interested Party/Interested Parties are joined to the Appeal. Where any Interested Parties are so joined, the Appeal Panel will determine the rights of the Interested Parties and they shall be prohibited from raising matters already ruled upon as separate or further appeals.
- 5.6. The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall give and communicate in a timely fashion such directions as are appropriate for consideration of the matter, in particular:
 - a. The date and place at which the Appeal Panel shall meet to determine the Appeal.
 - b. Whether the Appeal will proceed by way of written submission or an oral hearing.
 - c. Whether the parties and Interested Parties should be required to submit statements of their evidence and/or written submissions prior to the hearing, and if so, a timetable for doing so.
- 5.7. The Appeals Panel will consider the grounds set out in the Notice of Appeal and establish to its reasonable satisfaction whether or not there has been a failure to apply the applicable selection criteria and/or there has been a failure to adhere to the procedure set out in the applicable Selection Policy and/or there was a material error of fact that affected the selection decision.
- 5.8. The Appeal Panel shall be entitled to:

- a. Confirm the nomination or de-selection decision under appeal and reject the Appeal; or
 - b. Allow the Appeal, quash the nomination or de-selection decision under appeal and remit the matter back to the original decision-maker(s), identifying the errors they have discovered in the conduct of the selection process and requesting that a new decision is made within 48 hours.
- 5.9. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be reached by majority vote, and the Parties will treat all decisions under this Appeals Policy as final and binding upon them, with no further right of appeal.
- 5.10. In the event an Appeal is allowed, the original selection decision will not be reversed. However, the selectors will be asked to reconsider their original selection by applying the selection criteria correctly and rectifying any flaws in the original process.
- 5.11. An allowed appeal does not mean that the original selection decision was incorrect; it is a recognition that the process set out in the original selection policy was not followed. Selectors are not obliged to come to a different decision, but they are required to ensure that they follow the correct process, correct any flaws and consider the correct information. It is quite possible (and often the case) that selectors will reach the same decision.
- 5.12. If the Appeal is allowed, the £250 deposit will be refunded in full to the athlete.

VERSION 2

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