

British Fencing World Class Programme – Selection Criteria

Background

British Fencing spent the last year working with UK Sport as we developed our Project Rio business case. Part of the application process included identifying athletes we thought were capable of meeting the stringent criteria for support as defined by UK Sport. UK Sport definitions are as follows:

- Podium Athlete / Team – Demonstrated through detailed objective analysis of performances that an athlete / team **WILL** win a medal in 2016
- Podium Potential Athlete / Team – Demonstrated through detailed objective analysis of performances and potential ability that an athlete / team **WILL** qualify for Rio and deliver a medal in 2020

Following detailed analysis and discussions about our athletes, our current programme and our future plans, UK Sport have decided to award 12 'Podium Potential' places for the Rio cycle.

Selection Criteria for Year One Podium Potential Places

Membership of the WCP in year one of the cycle will be determined by evaluating a fencer against performances and world ranking (individual and team) in addition to a detailed assessment of the characteristics below:

- Performances / World Ranking (competition results, Top 50 individual / Top 10 Team with a rising profile)
- Physical ability (age, physiological tests, fencing specific tests)
- Mental aptitude (commitment, desire, application, learning ability, mental skill)
- Skills (technical & tactical ability)
- Personal circumstances (living arrangements, lifestyle)
- Rate of Progression (rates of improvements and progression on all the above factors)

Additional Selection Criteria

Admission to the WCP is also reliant on the following:

- There is a place available
- The weapon is identified as being targeted in Year One (Men's Foil, Women's Foil,

Women's Epee)

- The athlete has been assessed as having medal potential at Olympic level in 2016 (fast track in year one) or in Men's Foil a medal in 2020
- Those athletes joining the programme must aspire to win medals and not simply to be on the WCP

Maximising the Opportunity

In addition to the APA each nominated athlete receives directly from UK Sport, British Fencing will invest around £50,000 per year in their development as an athlete. These are significant sums of money. We are looking to work with athletes who are fully committed to maximising the opportunity afforded to them by the Programme. Athletes can give themselves every opportunity to succeed by making sure they follow these things every day:

- They train and compete like an Olympic Champion - easy to say, hard to do. No shortcuts, and no excuses. They ensure they will get the most out of every training session and competition that they do
- They take responsibility for their own progress and results and make sure they understand exactly what is needed to do to improve and then make sure they do it
- They learn faster than anyone else, watch the best fencers and question coaches to help them understand the sport better and so learn faster
- They show commitment and respect – they are always on time, organised and professional
- They continuously want to improve. They ask the question 'Have I genuinely done my best to improve today?' and every day they are able to answer 'yes'

How will an athlete know they are continuously improving?

When an athlete joins the programme they will be assessed and given an individual Performance Profile. This will highlight their strengths and areas for improvement. The higher scores will show the strengths and the lower scores where / how an athlete can improve.

Each athlete will be set some targets by the Programme, which are designed to ensure we are investing public money in an accountable manner. The Programme will also work together with the athlete to set motivating targets that will drive their continued improvement. At six months every athlete will have a meeting or Performance Review to check progress. This will happen again at 12 months as part of the annual review process.

How does an athlete stay on this Programme?

To stay on this programme an athlete will be expected to adhere to an agreed programme of training and competition and continuously improve and get results. By improving continuously and getting results they will move up the programme levels. Continuous improvement will also show that they are staying on the pathway towards winning medals at Olympics and World Championships within the next four to eight years.

An athlete who does not meet their goals / targets and who are not showing improvement will be removed from the WCP.