

USA Fencing Athlete Advisory Council Policy and Procedures Manual

“The Athlete Council shall establish procedures for the selection of athletes to positions in the USFA that are reserved for athletes; shall advise the President and the Board of Directors with respect to issues of concern to athletes; and shall undertake such projects as the Athlete Council shall determine to be in the interest of USFA athletes and as are assigned to it by the USFA” – Mandate per the USA Fencing Bylaws

1. The USA Fencing Athlete Advisory Council (AAC) shall be composed of nine or ten athletes as follows:
 - a. Term: Members of the Athlete Council shall be selected following the selection of the USOC Athlete Advisory Council Representative and Alternate. Members of the Athlete Council shall be seated for one Quadrennium or until replaced, whichever is later. For purposes of these Bylaws, a Quadrennium is deemed to start on January 1 of the year following that in which the summer Olympic or Paralympic Games are scheduled to be held, and end on December 31 of the year in which the next edition of the summer Olympic and Paralympic Games are scheduled to be held.
 - b. Classification of Members: Members of the Athlete Council shall fall into the following categories:
 - b.i. USOC Athlete Advisory Council Representative and Alternate.
 - b.ii. Weapon Representatives: One member of the Athlete Council shall be selected to represent each of the six internationally recognized weapon and gender categories, making a total of six Weapon Representatives. Such members shall be selected by those athletes qualified to serve in each recognized weapon and gender category as specified in Section 1.c below.
 - b.iii. Wheelchair Representative: One Wheelchair Representative shall be selected by all wheelchair fencers who are qualified to serve as specified in Section 1.c below.
 - b.iv. Should a member of the Athlete Advisory Council be elected to serve as a member of the USOC AAC Leadership group, that member shall become an ex-officio member of the Athlete Advisory Council for the duration of their term on the USOC AAC Leadership group.
 - c. Qualification to Serve: All members of the Athlete Council shall (1) have been ranked in the top 32 of the USFA Senior Rolling Point Standings at the conclusion of the USFA Division I National Championships in the year preceding the start of the term; or (2) shall satisfy the criteria set forth in Section 8.8.2(c)(1) of the Bylaws of the United States Olympic Committee; or (3) shall within the ten (10) years preceding election, have represented the United States in the Paralympic Games or an IPC-recognized World Championship in events on the Paralympic Games program.
 - d. Compositional Requirement: At least six members of the Athlete Council must satisfy the criteria set forth in Section 8.8.2(c)(1) or (3) of the Bylaws of the United States Olympic Committee.
 - e. Order of and Limits on Selection: To assure proper composition of the Athlete Council, the Weapon Representatives shall be elected before selection of the Incumbent Members. If at the conclusion of balloting for Weapon Representatives, fewer than three of the top vote recipients from each category satisfy the criteria set forth in Section 8.8.2(c)(1) or (3) of the Bylaws of the United States Olympic Committee, then the following procedure

shall be used to satisfy the compositional requirement set forth in the preceding subsection:

- e.i. The candidates who received the most votes in each weapon and gender category shall be ranked in order of total votes received. The candidate who received the fewest votes who does not satisfy the compositional requirement will not be elected. Instead, the candidate in that weapon and gender category who does satisfy the compositional requirement will be declared the Weapon Representative for his or her category.
 - e.ii. If after application of the procedure stated in preceding subparagraph there are still fewer than three Weapons Representatives who meet the compositional requirement, then the procedure described in that subparagraph shall be applied again, and so on until three Weapon Representatives who meet that requirement have been chosen.
 - e.iii. Selection of Incumbent Members shall follow selection of Weapon Representative Members. The Incumbent Members of the incoming Athlete Council shall include a sufficient number of individuals who meet the criteria set forth in Section 8.8.2(c)(1) or (3) of the Bylaws of the United States Olympic Committee to fully satisfy the compositional requirement set forth in Section 2(d) of this Article, if it has not been otherwise met.
- f. Vacancies: Vacancies in the membership of the Athlete Council that arise for any reason other than the expiration of member's term shall be filled by a vote of the remaining members of the Athlete Council. Such selection shall assure compliance with the requirements set forth in Section 2.b or 2.c of this Article. Individuals selected to fill vacant positions shall serve the remainder of the term to which they are elected.
2. The Chair shall be elected as follows:
- a. The outgoing Chair will solicit nominations from the AAC for the chair. Self-nominations as well as peer nominations will be accepted.
 - b. The outgoing Chair will confirm all nominations.
 - c. An election will be held utilizing a ranking vote in which the first choice votes are counted.
 - d. The outgoing Chair and the person of highest rank in the AAC (ex. USOC AAC representative) will tally the votes.
 - e. If no one candidate has a majority, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated and the second choice votes from that candidate are counted. This process is repeated until someone has an absolute majority.
 - f. In the case of a tie, the person with the highest rank in the AAC (ex. USOC AAC representative) will break the tie.
3. The AAC shall meet in person at least twice annually: once at the annual Board of Directors meeting in September and once at another point which is deemed convenient and appropriate by the majority of the council. The Chair may call other meetings, in person or via conference call, on an as needed basis.
4. The AAC is responsible for appointing athlete representatives to vacant athlete positions on all committees and commissions within USA Fencing.
5. The AAC serves those athletes on the Cadet, Junior, and Senior national points lists.
- a. At the beginning of each competitive season, the AAC will get an updated email list from USA Fencing of all those athletes whom the committee serves.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the Chair to insure that all email lists are obtained.
6. Each Weapon representative is responsible for reaching out to their respective athletes:
- a. All athletes: at the beginning of each season.

- b. Cadets and Juniors: after the completion of Junior Olympics.
 - c. Seniors: after the completion of Senior Nationals.
 - d. As each weapon representative sees fit throughout the course of the season.
- 7. The responsibilities of the AAC to their respective athletes include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Answering questions regarding the Athlete Handbook.
 - b. Serving as a potential first point of contact should an issue regarding a teammate, designated coach, or National coach arise at a world cup.
 - c. Serving as a potential first point of contact between a fencer and the National Office.
 - d. Serving as the athlete advocate and voice in concert with the athlete representatives to the Board of Directors to help guide voting and motion presentations on that body to best support athlete performance and protection.
- 8. The AAC is responsible for updating their respective athletes regarding handbook and rule changes.
- 9. The AAC is responsible for reviewing the Selection Criteria as put forward by the High Performance Director.
 - a. Once published, the AAC is responsible for communicating the Selection Criteria to their respective athletes and answering any questions therein.
- 10. The AAC is responsible for conducting athlete surveys after the Cadet and Junior World Championships as well as after the Senior World Championships.
- 11. Should a National Coach wish to bring a replacement athlete (i.e. an athlete who is not ranked in the top 4 of the national point standings) for the Team event of Pan Am Championships or World Championships, the USOC AAC representative must inform the USA Fencing AAC representative of that weapon OR, if the substitution directly involves the given representative, the USA Fencing AAC representative of the same weapon but of the opposite gender, prior to discussing the issue with the High Performance Director and National Coach.