



U.S. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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2026 Selection Criteria

I. Purpose

The U.S. National Development Program (“USNDP”) is a program developed by the United States Golf Association (“USGA”), the national governing body of golf, to provide resources and opportunities to promising American golfers, including pathways for development and success to reach their full playing potential. One focus of the USNDP is to identify talented junior, amateur and young professional athletes who may compete on behalf of the United States as members of our National Teams and Programs.

The USNDP Selection Criteria (“Selection Criteria”) outlines the criteria used by the USGA to identify athletes for selection to its National Development Teams and Programs. Through this Selection Criteria, the USGA aims to establish and provide clear, transparent, and consistent eligibility criteria and selection processes, and outline the processes and timing for naming athletes to the National Teams and Programs.

This Selection Criteria will be reviewed and updated annually. The current Selection Criteria will be available on www.usga.org/usndp.

II. National Development Teams and Programs

The USNDP is comprised of three tiers of National Teams and Programs – Junior, Amateur, and Young Professional.

Athletes selected to the National Junior Team, Elite Amateur Program and Young Professional Program are provided the opportunity to participate for a one (1) year period, beginning January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. However, the USGA may adjust an athlete’s term at any time, in its sole discretion, including early removal from such team or program for violation of USNDP policies. For any subsequent years, current members of the National Development Teams and Programs will be re-evaluated for selection to a team for additional one (1) year periods. There is no guarantee that an athlete will be selected for a team in subsequent years.

The 2026 National Junior Team shall consist of a girls’ team and boys’ team, each consisting of at least ten (10) team members but may include additional team members. The 2026 Elite Amateur Program shall consist of a women’s group and a men’s group, each consisting of at least three (3) members but may include additional members. The 2026 Young Professional Program shall consist of a women’s group and a men’s group, with the number of team members to be determined in January 2026. The number of athletes selected for each team or program shall be determined by USGA, in its discretion, and may be adjusted throughout the year.

III. USNDP Selection Committee



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Athletes will be evaluated and selected by the USNDP Selection Committee, which will consist of USGA staff members who are part of the USNDP, including, but not limited to, the Managing Director Player Relations and Development, USNDP Head Coach and USNDP Senior Athlete Development Specialist. The Committee will select and invite athletes to participate on the National Teams or Programs in accordance with the eligibility criteria and evaluation processes set forth below, in its sole discretion. However, in limited circumstances, the USNDP Selection Committee may consider athletes outside the scope of the eligibility criteria, subject to the approval of the U.S. National Development Program Committee.

IV. Eligibility Criteria

A. USNDP Team/Program Eligibility: In order to be eligible for selection to any National Team or Program, an athlete must satisfy the following requirements:

- **Nationality:** An athlete must be a United States citizen, currently residing in the United States. Athletes with dual citizenship must comply with the IGF Nationality Policy.
- **Conduct:** An athlete must not currently be under suspension or subject to other sanctions or disciplinary process from the USGA, an Allied Golf Association (“AGA”) or any other golf organization or event organizers.

B. National Junior Team Eligibility: In addition to the eligibility criteria set forth in Section IV(A), in order to be eligible for selection to the National Junior Team, an athlete must also satisfy the following requirements:

- **Age:** An athlete must be at least 14 years old as of January 1, 2026, and not older than 18 years old as of July 19, 2026.
- **Amateur Status:** An athlete must be an amateur under the current [Rules of Amateur Status](#) and there may be no current or pending matters that may impact their amateur status.
- **Education and Graduation Year:** An athlete must be currently enrolled in high school, with an anticipated high school graduation date no earlier than January 1, 2026. Athletes who have graduated high school and meet all other eligibility requirements may also be considered by the USNDP Selection Committee.

C. Elite Amateur Program Eligibility: In addition to the eligibility criteria set forth in Section IV(A), in order to be eligible for selection to the Elite Amateur Program, an athlete must also satisfy the following requirements:



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- **Amateur Status:** An athlete must be an amateur under the current [Rules of Amateur Status](#) and there may be no current or pending matters that may impact their amateur status.

D. Young Professional Program: In addition to the eligibility criteria set forth in Section IV(A), in order to be eligible for selection to the Young Professional Program, an athlete must also satisfy the following requirements:

- **Professional Status:** An athlete must be a non-amateur under the current [Rules of Amateur Status](#).

V. Evaluation Process

The USNDP Selection Committee will evaluate eligible athletes who it identifies to be considered for selection to National Teams and Programs based on the following factors:

- **Rankings** – The Committee will consider the current and previous rankings (as applicable within the last 12-24 months) of athletes from various publicly available rankings, which may include, but is not limited to, Junior Golf Scoreboard, Rolex American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) Rankings, World Amateur Golf Rankings (WAGR), Official World Golf Rankings (OWGR), Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings (RWWGR) and applicable state rankings and/or head-to-head rankings.
- **Scoring** – The Committee will consider factors related to the athlete's scoring ability and scoring history, which may include, but may not be limited to, scoring average, scoring consistency, ability to post low scores, and hole-by-hole patterns.
- **Results** – The Committee will review the athlete's competitive play results, including, but not limited to, finish positions, difficulty of schedule, golf course length, and head-to-head results in any high-level competitions or events, including any USGA Championships. American athletes who win the below USGA Championships will be invited to join the National Junior Team or Elite Amateur Program provided they meet all other eligibility criteria set forth herein and other requirements for participation.
 - U.S. Girls' Junior Championship
 - U.S. Junior Amateur Championship
 - U.S. Women's Amateur Championship
 - U.S. Amateur Championship
- **Statistics** – When available, the Committee will review the athlete's round statistics and other play metrics, such as ball speed and clubhead speed.
- **Sportsmanship** – The Committee will consider various factors relating to the athlete's sportsmanship, including, but not limited to, the athlete's work ethic, attitude, desire to be part of the National Team Program, coachability, ability to positively represent the USGA



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and the United States and be a good teammate.

- **Commitment** – Demonstration by the athlete of intent to advance to the next level and/or excel at the highest level (professional competition),

To aid the Committee in these evaluations, information may be gathered from various sources, including, but not limited to AGAs, clubs, coaches and other similar entities or persons with knowledge of an athlete's performance and capabilities.

VI. Selection Process

The USNDP will issue invitations to athletes selected for the 2026 National Junior Team, Elite Amateur Program and Young Professional Program. Invitations, along with an Athlete Agreement, will be sent via email to the athlete and/or athlete's parent/guardian no later than January 31, 2026. Athletes and their parent/guardian (as applicable) will have two (2) weeks to accept the invitation and return the Athlete Agreement. Athletes may request additional time if needed.

Questions regarding the Selection Criteria and processes set forth herein can be addressed to the U.S. National Development Program via email at usndp@usga.org.