



Whitewater Ontario - Slalom
Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2023-2024 Competitive Season

ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA

1.0 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2024-2025 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and operated through the Sport, Recreation & Community Programs Division. The overarching goal of the Quest for Gold – OAAP is directly related to the High-Performance Sport goal of the Canadian Sport Policy – that Canadians are systematically achieving world-class results at the highest levels of international competition – by improving the performance and number of Ontario athletes performing at the national and international level, thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions.

Specific objectives of the program are:

- . To help athletes continue their pursuit of athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition;
- . To encourage athletes to stay in Ontario to live and train;
- . To compensate athletes for earnings lost while training;
- . To enable athletes to successfully pursue excellence in sport while fulfilling their educational goals;
- . To increase athlete access to improved high-performance coaching; and
- . To enhance training and competitive opportunities available to athletes.

The intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes in the sport's Train to Train and Train to Win categories based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to continue to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition. **Only those athletes that meet the required minimum performance standard detailed in this Selection Criteria will be considered for this program.** Ideally an athlete will first receive Quest for Gold for 1 to 3 years, which will allow them to train towards the goal of a national team position in subsequent years. Once an Ontario athlete reaches the national level and becomes a recipient of Sport Canada's carding program, they become eligible for the Quest for Gold "Canada Card". Athletes who are not planning to train towards this level of competition should not apply for this program.

2.0 How does it work?

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, Whitewater Ontario - Slalom develops sport-specific selection criteria and forms a Selection Committee that will apply these criteria. The top-ranked athletes, based on the criteria, will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2023-2024. This Selection Criteria has been approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by MTCS staff. Nominated athletes will be required to

sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Whitewater Ontario - Slalom. Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2024, ending March 31, 2025.

Carded athletes will be required to compete exclusively on behalf of the Province of Ontario at National Championship events and for Canada at International Championship events, for a period of one year from the date carding is approved and acknowledge Ontario as their permanent place of residence on athlete profiles, Media Guides, PSO/NSO and personal websites, and in similar types of public communications.

2.1 For 2024-2025, Whitewater Ontario - Slalom card allocation (TBD and based on funding)

For clarification, Whitewater Ontario - Slalom uses the Canoe Kayak Canada (CKC) ICF Canoe Slalom Competition Rules (2017) section 3.4 to define age categories as follows:

- Junior athletes - from the year in which their 15th birthday falls up to and including the year in which their 18th birthday falls;
- Under 23 (U23) athletes - the year in which their 19th birthday falls up to and including the year in which their 23rd birthday falls;
- Senior athletes - In and beyond the year in which their 24th birthday falls.

2.2 Allocation of “Cards”

For 2023-24, Whitewater Ontario - Slalom is allocating a total of 5 Ontario “cards” (split evenly as 2.5 male and 2.5 female “Cards”).

	Male	Female
Full Cards – 2	1/2	1/2
3 Full Cards = 6 Half Cards (/4)	3/6	3/6

Category	Number of cards
U23	2 Full Cards (1 male, 1 female) *Athletes who have received support through Sport Canada’s Athlete Assistance Program (Full or Development Card) and have subsequently lost that funding are required to wait one funding cycle before they can receive an Ontario “card”.

Junior	3 Full Cards divided into 6 half cards (2 male, 2 female) *all cards if no eligible U23 athletes meet criteria
Senior	Following assessment of eligible U23 and Junior athletes, the equivalent of 1 unassigned card or two half cards may be allocated to a Senior athlete(s) over the age of 23 if eligible based on the priorities outlined in section 6.

Whitewater Ontario - Slalom is not obligated to assign all Ontario Cards if there are an insufficient number of athletes who have demonstrated potential to be considered for future National Teams.

2.2 Funds issued to Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will be allocated as follows: Funding will be determined based on funds received and by selection criteria. The selection committee will determine allocation for funding by February 2024

An athlete's age will be determined as of December 31st, 2023

Whitewater Ontario - Slalom is not obligated to assign funds if there are an insufficient number of athletes who have demonstrated potential to be considered for future National Teams.

2.3 The Selection Committee, as approved by the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Competition Committee, is comprised of the following members:

- 2 Whitewater Ontario members appointed by Competition Committee
- 2 WO competition committee members to be determined at time of selection (Must be free of Conflict of interest)

How much funding is available?

The amount of funding is dependent on the allocation for Quest for Gold funding from the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries to Canoe Kayak. In 2023 the funding received was \$20,000.00, or \$4000 per "card". This figure is for information purposes only. Typically in Quest for Gold (Q4G) Support is not announced until the new year. The selection committee will none-the-less apply the criteria to create a list of eligible athletes for 2024/2025. The precise level of funding will be announced when the allocation from the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries is received and distributed by Canoe Kayak Ontario.

How will the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The Canoe Ontario - Slalom Selection Committee will use the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated for Ontario Card status in 2023-2024:

3.0 Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Eligibility Criteria:

All athletes must meet the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident (previously known as a Landed Immigrant).
- Athlete must be a permanent resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status, (and continue to be a permanent resident throughout the term of the agreement).
- Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status (carded by Sport Canada) are **not eligible** for Ontario Cards.
- Athletes must be living in and continuing to train in Ontario.

3.1 Residency Exceptions:

Exceptions to these criteria, known as a "Residency Exception" will be considered on a case specific basis by the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Selection Committee provided that the athlete can substantiate in writing that:

- (a) He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province temporarily during the year (i.e., due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
- (b) He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province either because the course of study is not offered by an Ontario institution; or
- (c) It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province.

Any change in an athlete's residency status must be communicated in writing to the PSO/MSO (provincial sport organization/multi-sport organization) immediately.

The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out-of-province for one of the above reasons. The athlete must submit written documentation to the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom by no later than Jan 15, 2024 clearly indicating how they meet a residency exception(s).

Athlete's applying for a Residency Exception related to exception (a) above, who are training at an NSO-approved National Training Centre MUST include a letter from the NSO outlining their support for the athlete, the progress the athlete is making and the athlete's potential to make the national team level. Additional documentation may include, but shall not be limited to an explanation of why the athlete is training out of province, whether or not the athlete was formally invited by the NSO, what additional opportunities are being made available beyond those provided in Ontario; and any other information that will illustrate that the athlete is receiving enhanced training while still meeting all obligations of the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom

3.2 Length of time living outside Ontario:

Athletes living outside Ontario for more than 30 consecutive days within the ministry fiscal year 2023-2024 for athletic or academic purposes must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO (Provincial Sports Organization/ Multi-Sports Organization) Selection Committee that appropriate training programs are in place and are being monitored by the PSO/MSO. The onus is on the athlete to:

1. Provide a written plan outlining their training and competition plans to the PSO/MSO prior to their departure from Ontario, as part of their Residency Exception request.
2. Adhere to the PSO/MSO-approved competition and training plan throughout the carding cycle. At a minimum, this requires regular (quarterly) contact by the athlete with the PSO/MSO (, Q4G Committee Member identified); and

3. Submit regular (quarterly) training logs to the PSO/MSO to track progress against the PSO/MSO-approved competition and training plan.

***Athletes who were formally invited to and are currently participating in their NSO's national team training program are exempt from this requirement. ***

3.3 Ministry criteria continued:

- Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO (National Sports Organization) where applicable;
- Athlete must have entered into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with his or her PSO/MSO and must be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement;
- Athlete must have met all terms and conditions of any previous Quest for Gold Sports Organization – Athlete Agreements to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO in order to be eligible for consideration in 2023-2024;
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program, the goal of which is to continue to train towards a national team position and Sport Canada carding;
- Athlete's coach should be minimum Level 2 NCCP certified or trained status Competition Stream or the sport's equivalent in the Instruction Stream, or be engaged in completing this training, as determined by the PSO;
- Athlete must not be under a sanction that prohibits competition as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy;
- Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. elementary and secondary schools):
 - Exceptions will be made provided that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g., Athlete with a disability (AWAD) athlete);
 - Full time enrollment means a minimum of 4 courses. In the case of Varsity athletes, it means a minimum of 3 courses.
- Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be considered;
- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete solely for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of the Minister's letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions;
- Athlete must not receive financial support from any other provincial/territorial athlete assistance program. This does not include academic scholarships, bursaries, student grants, student loans, social assistance, disability pensions, and other forms of financial assistance that have nothing to do with competitive sport.
- Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes, ages 11-22* ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for athletes older than 22 years of age** who have been identified as a potential next generation national team athlete by the PSO/MSO's selection process.
 - *For canoe slalom, the age categories are identified in accordance with ICF rules inclusive of Junior, U23 and Senior age categories

3.4 Residency Exemption for Military Families:

The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service and who takes up residence in Ontario during the fiscal year. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please contact Whitewater Ontario - Slalom for more information if you are applying for this exemption.

- To be deemed a potential next generation national team athlete, the athlete must be age-eligible to compete on the national team in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding.
- All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.
- An athlete can only be nominated to receive Quest for Gold funding in one sport.

4.0 Athletes funded through the Sport Canada AAP:

Ontario athletes who have been nominated and accepted for funding through Sport Canada's AAP within the government of Ontario's fiscal year (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024) and who continue to meet AAP and OAAP eligibility requirements will automatically be considered for a Quest for Gold 'Canada Card'. MTCS will contact those athletes directly at the mailing and email addresses the athlete provided to Sport Canada. Athletes are solely responsible for ensuring that their contact information is kept accurate and up to date at all times.

An athlete who received Sport Canada AAP carding during any part of MTCS' fiscal year April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 and/or any part of fiscal year April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive Quest for Gold funding during fiscal year 2023-2024 (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.)

The intent of this rule is to prevent athletes whose performance levels and rankings no longer qualify them for Sport Canada carding from taking an Ontario Card from a future national-level athlete.

4.1 Canada Card Exception (CCE)

Exceptions may apply to this rule (known as a Canada Card Exception (CCE)) and will be considered by the Ministry on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes (e.g. reduction in Sport Canada carding allocation), injuries, etc.

It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to contact Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Selection Committee prior to Jan 15, 2024 to request a CCE. The athlete must submit, in writing, an explanation of why they have not been, or do not expect to be re-carded by their NSO. The submission must include a statement from the NSO, signed and dated on their letterhead, confirming that the athlete still has potential to return to the NSO's carding program in the future. It is the responsibility of the athlete to submit this letter to the PSO; Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will not obtain this letter from the NSO on the athlete's behalf.

Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will then contact MTCS in writing prior to the submission of the Athlete Nomination Form to seek individual Canada Card Exceptions. Whitewater Ontario - Slalom is not responsible for seeking a CCE for any athlete unless requested to do so by the athlete as detailed above.

5. Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Athlete Selection Criteria:

The following sport specific athlete selection criteria will be used in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards:

Age categories are aligned with the International Canoe Federation rule 3.4:

The first year a competitor can compete in an ICF or International competition is the year that their 15th birthday falls in. The last year they can compete in a Junior category is the year that their 18th birthday falls in. The last year he/she can compete in Under 23 category is the year that their 23rd birthday falls in.

The results from the following race will be considered:

National Championships in Minden Ontario 2023

The 2023 National Interclass rankings as determined by the Canoe Kayak Canada will be used by the Whitewater Ontario-Slalom selection committee to prioritize and allocate Q4G funding when it meets by January 30, 2024 or after Sport Canada funding has been announced; whichever comes last, will be applied..

Event	Phase	Location	Country	Date
Age Race	Run 1	Minden	CAN	TBD
Age Race	Run 2	Minden	CAN	TBD
Open Race	Run 1	Minden	CAN	TBD
Open Race	Run 2	Minden	CAN	TBD

The Canoe Kayak Canada Senior National Interclass Ranking will be used to establish an overall ranking for all eligible paddlers that compete in any of the four national ranking races. As a result, it allows for the assessment of paddlers across the Canoe Slalom events on an absolute basis. The four races will include the National Championships age-group race runs 1 and 2 in addition to the Open National Championships Semi-Final and Final race runs. The Senior National Interclass Ranking will be determined by averaging the best 3 of 4 adjusted interclass percentage scores. The paddler with the lowest total is ranked ahead of the second lowest, and so on.

1. SENIOR NATIONAL INTERCLASS RANKING SYSTEM

- 1.1. The Senior National Interclass Ranking will be used to establish an overall ranking for all eligible paddlers that compete in any of the four national ranking races. As a result, it allows for the assessment of paddlers across the Canoe Slalom events on an absolute basis. The four races will include the National Championships age-group race runs 1 and 2 in addition to the Open National Championships Semi-Final and Final race runs.
- 1.2. The interclass rankings will be compiled by CKC and verified by the HPC and published as a final ranking following the national selection races.
- 1.3. The Senior National Interclass Ranking will be determined by averaging the best 3 of 4 adjusted interclass percentage scores. The paddler with the lowest total is ranked ahead of the second lowest, and so on.
- 1.4. All ties for ranking will be broken and won by the competitor with the best interclass percentage score in the Open National Championships Final.
- 1.5. The interclass ranking coefficients are as follows:

Event	Interclass Ranking Coefficient
K1M	1.00
K1W	1.13
C1M	1.06
C1W	1.26

2. RESULT RELATIVE TO THE COMPETITIVE FIELD

- 2.1. Result relative to the Competitive Field will be determined based on the following formula:

$$\left(\frac{\text{Athletes or Crews' Final Result}}{\text{Competitive Field}} \right) \times 100\% = \text{percentage relative to the Competitive Field}$$

- 2.2. Calculations will be rounded to the nearest 100th and 1, 2, 3, 4 are rounded down and 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are rounded up.
- 2.3. The paddler with the lower percentage relative to the Competitive Field will rank higher.

Example Calculations

Calculation of the result relative to the Competitive Field for a K1M paddler who places 15th in a field of 101 paddlers.

$$\left(\frac{15}{101} \right) \times 100\% = 14.85\% \text{ of Competitive Field}$$

Calculation of the result relative to the Competitive Field for a C1W paddler who places 9th in a field of 67 paddlers.

6. Gender Balanced Distribution

The selection committee will try to achieve gender balance with card distribution but will nominate the next athlete regardless of male/female ratio if minimum performance benchmarks have not been met or if there are no eligible male or female athletes who have demonstrated a consistent and committed performance as part of their regular training group.

7. Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Athlete Requirements in order to receive Quest for Gold Funding:

- Athletes must commit to following a yearlong training program under the direction of a provincial or national team coach for the 2023-2024 competitive/training year.

- This includes making the commitment to attending training camps with the National or Provincial team on a regular basis in preparation for the 2024 competitive season.
- This includes paying coaching fees (if required to be a member of good standing in the coaching program) to the local club, provincial, or national canoe slalom association.
- This includes committing to racing at international events in which the athlete qualifies for in the 2024 year at the respective age categories National Team Trials.
- Athletes must commit to racing at the 2023 Provincial Championships
- Athletes must agree to contributing 20 hours of community service to their club or directly to WO over the next competitive year. They must pick at least one of the following ways to volunteer their time:
 - Gate and training site maintenance
 - Coaching of the development slalom groups
 - Organizing and volunteering at club events or club projects (eg. the Cookie Race, Annual Club Banquets, development river runs, volunteer work for the Whitewater Ontario board or ORR Board, etc.
 - Volunteer commitments will be monitored and tracked by the provincial coach to ensure commitments are fulfilled. Fulfillment of annual volunteer commitments by current year awardees will be taken into consideration for eligibility for future awards

8.0 Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons

Athletes who, for strictly health-related reasons, have not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status may be considered for nomination under the following conditions:

- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- That Whitewater Ontario - Slalom, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.
- Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will use results from the previous season or (if more applicable) the most recent, high level event (National Championships or U23 or Junior World Championships result) to determine performance and carding eligibility. The committee will consult with the athlete's primary coach to support their application for carding.

9 Any athlete requesting a "Residency Exception" must submit this information by December 31, 2023

10.0 It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to provide a full and complete application that meets all stated requirements. Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will neither review applications in advance of the deadline in order to make applicants aware of any missing/incorrect information and/or attachments nor make corrections on behalf of the athlete. Any revisions on the part of the athlete will only be accepted prior to the posted submission deadline.

Applications that are sent directly to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport rather than to Whitewater Ontario - Slalom will not be considered valid or to have been received by the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom deadline.

10.1 An email will be sent confirming receipt of acceptance or declination and a signed athlete agreement.

The Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement will only come into effect if an athlete is selected and accepts carding status through the OAAP program. Athletes who fail to return a signed Athlete Agreement by the deadline date will not be carded.

11.0 Appeals

Athletes who have not been nominated for an Ontario Card by the Whitewater Ontario - Slalom Selection Committee or who have been nominated for a 'Half Card' versus a 'Full Card', where applicable will be allowed to appeal that decision by filing a "Notice of Appeal" with Alex Maggs, President of Whitewater Ontario acmc.whitewater@gmail.com.