



2025 - 2026 National Slopestyle and Big Air Team Selection Criteria

January 12, 2024

1. Preamble and Introduction:

This document explains how Freestyle Canada (FC) selects athletes for the 2025-2026 National Slopestyle and Big Air Teams (“SS/BA”). FC’s High Performance Program (HPP) focuses on preparing athletes to achieve podium results at the Olympic Winter Games and FIS World Championships.

FC’s high-performance staff will assist athletes by providing:

- Personal assessment that will feed a plan to identify each athlete’s strengths and areas for improvement.
- Competitive experience on the international stage to refine technical, tactical and psychological skills and strategies.

2. Definitions and Roles

	Acronym	Role
Freestyle Canada	FC	Governing body for Freestyle skiing in Canada
Chief Executive Officer	CEO	Top staff member of FC; answerable to the Board of Directors
High Performance Program / High Performance Director	HPP / HPD	Performance stream within FC and the Director
FC Leadership Team		Includes FC’s CEO, COO, Director of Sport Science, Sport Medicine and Innovation, High Performance (HP) Director, and HP Manager.
Long-Term Athlete Development	LTAD	Pathway for development of freestyle skiers from grass roots through sport for life
Health Curtailment		A health status or situation approved by the FC Medical team that causes an athlete to miss training or competitive opportunities.
International Ski Federation	FIS	Governing body for Freestyle skiing internationally
FIS World Cup, NorAm	WC, NorAm	FIS competition series
NextGen	NG	Athletes showing evidence of medal potential for the subsequent Olympic Winter Games (up to 7 years ahead)
Sport Science, Sport Medicine, and Innovation	SSSMI	Category of performance services for medical, paramedical, and applied research aimed at enhancing athlete performance
Own the Podium	OTP	Technical agency who makes recommendations to Sport Canada on the funding for all Canadian sports
HP Ranking		A score calculated for each athlete by summing the Placing Value points from their top three results within a rolling 12-month period.
Placing Value		The point value assigned to an athlete’s final placement in a competition, determined by the event’s tier and value.
Event Value		A reduction in score could be applied to an event if there is a low level of competitors or a poorly constructed site with substandard features. See Appendix 1.
Event Tier		The designated level of competition – see Section 6 and Appendix 1

3. Selection Authority and HP Committee Responsibilities

The High Performance Committee (HPC) oversees team selection and ensures alignment with FC's goals. The committee also allocates competitive opportunities and advises the HP Director.

Voting members include the:

- National Team SS/BA Program Lead,
- WC Head Technical Coach, and
- HP Director (chair, tie-breaking vote).

Non-voting members may include other national SS/BA program coaches, FC's CEO, and other FC staff members. The HPC may seek input from other IST members. Meetings are open to committee members and invited experts only. Members abstain from votes impacting their immediate family members.

Team selection details are described in this document; FIS World Cup spot allocations and selection for major events (examples: Olympic Winter Games and World Championships) will be published in separate documents aligned with each event's specific timelines and selection requirements.

4. Selection Process

The 2025-26 Team selection qualification period includes eligible events held between July 1, 2024, and April 15, 2025.

1. The HPC reviews athlete performance and rankings by May 15 each year.
2. Athletes are nominated to tiers (Podium, A, B, NextGen); these nominations are provided to the HP Leadership team for final review.
3. Sensitive decisions (e.g., non-selection) will be communicated directly by the athlete's coach.
4. Nominated athletes have 10 days to accept or decline.

An athlete who may qualify for consideration because of an exceptional circumstance will be considered.

5. Selection Eligibility

OTP provides support under two programs:

1. Enhanced Excellence (World Cup): for athletes on track to medal at the next Olympic Winter Games.
2. NextGen: for athletes projected to medal within eight years.

To be eligible for selection to the 2025 - 2026 National Slopestyle/Big Air Team program, an athlete needs to meet the following eligibility criteria. An athlete must:

- be a FC member and be current with their personal FC financial account.
- hold a Canadian passport.
- show an upward sport-specific performance trajectory.
- meet FIS age requirement for FIS World Cup competition.
- if requested by FC, agree to be subject to any proceedings taken under the UCCMS, including, without limitation, signing a UCCMS Participant consent form and accepting the jurisdiction of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner/Abuse-Free Sport.
- Returning HP team member’s compliance with the previous year’s training programs and camps may be considered. Non-compliance or lack of commitment to an approved training plan, without an approved release, may result in provisional or conditional selection, or non-selection.

6. HPP SS/BA Ranking

Athletes are ranked based on a sum of their three top ranking points received from eligible competitions. Rankings feed selections which consider event quotas, budgets, and long-term performance goals. Non-HPP athletes must compete in three eligible events to be ranked. Athletes are expected to progress throughout the program, with ranking adjusted for injuries and special circumstances.

The High Performance Director coordinates the HPP SS/BA Rankings related to the selection of the National and NextGen teams, which are presented to the HPC. HP coaches report on each athlete’s skill level and overall progression and commitment over the season.

Athletes will be nominated for selection to the HPP by the HPC. The FC Leadership Team will review the nominations and discuss any concerns with the HPC. Once satisfied with the nominations, the leadership team will ratify them and release staff to contact the athletes with the offer to join (or rejoin) the program.

Athletes aiming for selection to the 2025-26 High Performance SS/BA Program are encouraged to compete in the FIS Canadian Championships.

Score Anomalies - In some circumstances, there are three to four competitive, qualifying events on the same course within a short period of time, often with the same panel of judges. Circumstances such as these can skew rankings (positively or negatively). Scenarios such as these will be reviewed by the HPC and may warrant out of order selections.

2024-2025 Slopestyle/Big Air Competitions that will be used for Ranking Calculations.

Tier 1 Level:	Independent Tier 1:	Tier 2 Level	Tier 3 Level
World Cup	X-Games (Aspen)	NorAm	Canada Cup Events
FIS World Ski Championships		FIS Junior World Ski Championships	
Olympic Winter Games		FIS Canadian Championships	

7. National Team Tiering and Standards

Athletes will be selected to compete on a single slopestyle/big air team and may be given competitive opportunities in either SS or BA events.

World Cup Team Tiers:

- **Podium:**
 - **Criteria:** Three Tier 1 or Independent Tier 1 level event podium finishes in the 2024-2025 season.
 - **Benefits:** Priority entry into World Cup (WC) events and the highest level of FC funding support.
- **A:**
 - **Criteria:** One Tier 1 (or Independent Tier 1) level event podium or two top five Tier 1 (or Independent Tier 1) level event results in the 2024-2025 season:
 - **Benefits:** Priority entry into WC events and a high level of FC funding.
- **B:**
 - **Criteria:**
 - In 2024-2025 FIS Tier 1 level events.
 - Men: 2 - top 10 SS/BA
 - Women: 2 - top 8 SS/BA
 - One of the above two events can be replaced by a top 50% of the field at the Aspen X-Games (Independent Tier 1 Event).
 - Must be ranked in the top 5 by gender and requires two top placings:
 - **Benefits:** Next priority entry into WC events and enhanced FC funding compared to NextGen athletes.

Podium, A & B athletes are expected to be on track to win a major event within four years.

The formation of the team is contingent on resource availability. The HPC may add athletes as discretionary spots or otherwise adjust the team sizes by tier based on skills and circumstances. Levels of funding will be communicated in the summer of 2025, after the OTP/Government of Canada application process and announcements.

- **Next Gen Team (NextGen):**
 - The NextGen team is for athletes showing medal potential within eight years.
 - For 2025-2026, selection is based primarily on the HPP SS/BA Ranking list, but the HPC may consider factors like return from injury or exceptional skills.
 - For 2026-2027, selections are moving towards alignment with the Athlete Development Pathway and the FC published Gold Medal Profile (GMP). The HPC is formulating a selection model that combines a minimum level of competitive performance and a detailed physical and technical skill assessments.
 - The NG team size will be determined after the World Cup team athletes are identified.
 - The HPC may select athletes out of ranking order base on skills and/or injury status.

- Skill assessment can occur throughout the season by any of our national program coaches. Skills will be assessed based on the FC GMP.
- The HPC may decide to reduce the team size at the point where a large drop in points occurs between athletes on the ranking list.

NextGen athletes are expected to progress to the World Cup team within four years of being first named to the team. Athletes not showing appropriate progression in performance or skill level may not be offered a renewal of their NextGen position.

Conditional Nomination Status*:

- A nominated athlete may be offered a spot on the team on a conditional basis, pending assessment by FC's medical team to ensure they have no underlying injuries or physical limitations that could affect their training or performance.
- Newly selected athletes will remain provisional until their performance, compliance, and integration are reviewed during their first training camp.

Provisional Nomination by the HPC:

- The HPC may provisionally nominate athletes to the NextGen group. These athletes have met the minimum skill standards but have not yet demonstrated all the technical and athletic traits outlined in FC's Gold Medal Profile framework.
- Provisionally nominated athletes will be given the opportunity to train with the group, with their full selection status to be reviewed following the first training block.
- Provisional athletes must meet their assigned individual benchmarks by October 15 each year to retain their position in the NextGen group.

*Conditional Status is intended for skiers moving into the HP Program for the first time; skiers returning to the program have history with the FC IST staff.

Future Talent Identification

Provincial level athletes who have demonstrated strong skill development and are trending towards NextGen qualification may be invited to a select training opportunity or skill evaluation session that allows the national team coaching staff to work directly with the athlete to evaluate development potential. These opportunities will allow the coaches to better assess specific skills, and overall aptitude for longer term HP prospective while providing direct feedback on expectations to the athlete.

8. Exceptional Circumstances and Special Ranking Considerations

Exceptional Circumstances

The HPC may consider exceptional circumstances to adjust athlete rankings for team selections. These adjustments ensure fairness and alignment with program goals. Decisions will be documented and approved by FC leadership.

Special Ranking Considerations

- Athletes may be selected out of rank order for exceptional reasons, including:
 - Demonstrated exceptional skill performance or physical capability.
 - Outstanding work ethic or progression.
- Any deviations from standard rankings must align with program objectives and be justified in writing.

Health or Family-Related Issues

- Athletes experiencing health-related curtailments or family emergencies may qualify for ranking adjustments if:
 - The situation is documented and approved by FC leadership.
 - The athlete is a current member of the High-Performance Program (HPP).

Non-HPP (PSO) athletes are not eligible to use this clause.

- Previous season results may substitute for missed competitions if:
 - The missed events were due to approved health or family circumstances.
 - The athlete did not voluntarily miss the competition without prior approval.

Health Curtailment Clause

- Athletes with documented injuries may:
 - Have their HP Ranking calculated using select results from equivalent previous-season events to meet ranking requirements.
 - Replace up to five missed starts with prior results, depending on the event tier.
- Health assessments must be validated by FC medical staff to confirm injury severity and recovery timeline.
- Athletes cannot invoke this clause for voluntarily missed events without prior FC approval.

Additional Provisions

- The HPC may extend the selection period backward or make other adjustments for athletes with a significant body of recent high-level results (e.g., World Cup podiums, top 6 or qualifying for final round finishes at major events).
- The HPC, with medical expert input, may restrict an athlete's participation in events if their rehabilitation pace warrants it.

Documentation and Evaluation

- All exceptional circumstances must be clearly documented.
- Medical and performance evaluations will guide decisions to ensure fairness and transparency.

Application of Missed Events

FC calculates the HP Ranking score for each athlete based on five "starts" during the competition season. If an athlete is unable to complete five starts due to a health curtailment (injury), the calculation may use results from the previous season to meet the five-start requirement. This applies only in cases of injury and not for athletes who voluntarily miss events or were not selected.

- When eligible for a Health Curtailment calculation, the most recent event(s) of the same value from the previous season will be counted to meet the five-start requirement.
Examples:
 1. If the athlete missed a Tier 2 event, the most recent Tier 2 or higher event from the previous season would be used.

2. If the athlete missed a Tier 1 event, the equivalent Tier 1 event from the previous season would be used.

If an athlete has five starts in the current season, only those results will be used for the HP Ranking calculation. An athlete cannot opt out of an event and invoke this clause without prior medical and FC approval.

9. Injured Athlete Carryover from Previous Season

It may occur that it is inappropriate for a High-Performance Program athlete, by reason of a health-related curtailment of activities, to participate in HPP training and competition activities for an entire program year. In such a situation, the following shall apply:

- Any such determination shall be made collectively by the athlete, the athlete's personal physician, the FC HPD, and FC's Chief Physician.
- The athlete shall remain a member of the High-Performance Program and shall purchase a FC membership and an International Competitor's License.
- The athlete shall remain eligible for any available HPP clothing and other supplier pool goods, shall continue to be promoted through FC Media activities, and shall continue to be eligible for Sport Canada carding and Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network (COPSIN) services.
- A rehabilitation program for the athlete shall be developed jointly, by the athlete and the FC. The rehabilitation program shall be monitored by the FC and evaluated on a regular basis. The athlete's return to full HPP participation shall be, in part, dependent on satisfactory completion of the rehabilitation program.
 - The rehabilitation program may include formal HPP training and entry into competitions, as well as physiotherapy, individual training, and other rehabilitative measures.
 - Any formal HPP training or entry into competitions shall be for rehabilitative purposes only. Evaluations or results from such training or entry into competitions shall not be used for the ranking of the athlete for HPP Team selections.
 - The athlete shall be eligible to return to full HPP participation only after the FC determines that the rehabilitation program has been successfully completed.

10. Appeal and Hearing Process

Athletes may appeal through the FC Appeal Policy if they believe an error occurred in applying these criteria. If an athlete feels an error was made in the application of this criteria, they should immediately contact their HPP Director. If the situation is not resolved through this discussion an athlete may file an appeal through the regular Freestyle Canada process ([Appeal Policy](#)).

Appendix 1: Calculation of the SS/BA Ranking

Each athlete in the Freestyle Canada High Performance system is ranked based the point values he or she receives from results achieved in competitions.

The sum of an athletes three best point values from either slopestyle or big air competitions, between July 1, 2024, and April 15, 2025, determines an athlete's rank value. The points available from each competition are based on the Event Tier and the Event Value.

Event Tier: Each level of competition correlates to a different Tier value. Tiers have identified values for each placing; each tier has an R value that creates a diminishing point value for each placing, from first to last place. Events are tiered based on their level:

- Tier 1: FIS World Cups, FIS World Championships and Olympic Winter Games
- Tier 1 – Independent: Aspen X-Games only for 2025-26.
- Tier 2: FIS NorAms and identified independent events
- Tier 3: Canada Cups (excluding Jr Nationals) and identified independent events

Event Value: Halfpipe, Slopestyle and Big Air events can be “neutral” (standard) or “depreciated”; The points available in each competition are referred to as the “Event Value”.

- **Neutral** or Standard Value Events are those that meet the standards set out by the FIS. It is expected that all WC events meet these standards and will receive 100% of the calculation in the HP Ranking.
- **Depreciated Value Events** are those that do not meet FIS standards or can be seen as “not up to par”. Results from Depreciated Value Events provide athletes reduced HP Ranking points in each tier.
Depreciated Value Events can be reduced by either 7.5% or 15% based on a variety of factors including:
 - Venue: Quality of course/pipe/transition/jump; course feature/layout/flow.
 - Event Format: # of runs within a heat/phase; counting runs – leading to the possibility for an easier win.
 - Field Caliber: presence of top skiers, number of countries, size of field, etc.
 - Weather Conditions: delays, lower level skills being performed due to limiting conditions.
- Value of events are determined by:
 - Tier 1 and Independent Tier 1: The SS/BA HPC will determine the value of these events.
 - Tier 2 and 3: The HPAD advisory group will value the Tier 2 and 3 events.
- Event values will usually be established before the event start to ensure an unbiased determination is made of the quality and value of the event.

The HPC may determine that an event will not be recognized for ranking or selection purposes up to two weeks prior to the first training day if the event had depreciated greater than 15%.

Placings Eligible for Ranking Use

For Tiers 1, 2 and 3, counting results must be in the top 2/3 of the competition field including DSQ and DNF skiers but not DNS: international (non-Canadian) athletes on the event's final result sheet will be included in all field size calculations. For Tier 1 Independent events, counting results must be in the top 50% of the competition field. A competition is defined as a FIS event with a unique FIS code. Counting placings are also subject to a maximum per tier as per the chart below.

	SS/BA	
Event Tier Level	Men	Women
FIS Tier 1	(Top 2/3 Field Size review for 2026-27)	(Top 2/3 Field Size review for 2026-27)
Independent Tier 1	Top ½ Field Size	Top ½ Field Size
Tier 2	25	20
Tier 3	16	12

*Available placings will be reviewed annually considering field sizes for each gender.

HPP SS/BA Placing Value Ranking (“HP Ranking”) Process

- HP ranking scores for each athlete are calculated as a sum of each athlete’s three highest Placing Values.
- Placing values are unique to each tier of competition: Tier 1 / Independent Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3.
- A Placing Value per competition based on the athlete’s final ranking (considering Event Tier and Event Value) will be assigned and available to be used for ranking purposes.
- If a two or more athletes have Ranking Scores that are the same, the tie will be broken by comparing each athlete’s best placing result within the same event tier. If the tie remains, the next placing results will be compared, and so on. The better placing will prevail.
- Additional skill assessment: The national team coaching staff keeps an ongoing record of skill progression for athletes in the program. The coaching staff:
 - Will perform a detailed skill assessment on any athlete who may be affected by an out of rank order nomination. These skill assessments may be used to compare athlete progression in a head-to-head manner.
 - May perform a detailed skill assessment on any athlete who falls into consideration as an Exceptional Circumstance.
 - May perform detailed skill assessments on any athlete who is deemed to be in question of achieving their performance / skill progression targets or who have poor, unexcused attendance record at camps. This assessment will determine if continued investment by FC can be justified and if their re-selection is warranted.

Athletes will be nominated for selection to the HPP by the HPC. The FC Leadership Team will review the nominations and discuss any concerns with the HPC. Once satisfied with the nominations, the leadership team will ratify them and release staff to contact the athletes with the offer to join (or rejoin) the program.

Appendix 2 – Placing Value Charts

Samples (Truncated for readability, partial chart shown to give concept of placing values) Women

Women

Tier 1: WC and Similar					Tier 2: FIS NORAM, Gold AFP, etc					Tier 3: Canada Cup, Silver AFP, etc					
ADJUSTMENT		EVENT VALUE			ADJUSTMENT		EVENT VALUE			ADJUSTMENT		EVENT VALUE			
+15		1000			+15		776			+15		575			
+7.5		968			+7.5		726			+7.5		538			
Bench		900			Bench		675			Bench		500			
-7.5		833			-7.5		624			-7.5		463			
-15		765			-15		574			-15		425			
R Value		0.020			R Value		0.020			R Value		0.020			
+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	test Plac
Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	
1000	968	900	833	765	776	726	675	624	574	575	538	500	463	425	1
980	948	882	816	750	761	711	662	612	562	564	527	490	453	417	2
960	929	864	800	735	746	697	648	600	551	552	516	480	444	408	3
941	911	847	784	720	731	683	635	588	540	541	506	471	435	400	4
922	892	830	768	706	716	669	623	576	529	530	496	461	427	392	5
904	875	814	753	691	702	656	610	564	519	520	486	452	418	384	6
886	857	797	737	678	688	643	598	553	508	509	476	443	410	376	7
868	840	781	723	664	674	630	586	542	498	499	467	434	402	369	8
851	823	766	708	651	660	617	574	531	488	489	457	425	393	362	9
834	807	750	694	638	647	605	563	521	478	479	448	417	386	354	10
817	791	735	680	625	634	593	552	510	469	470	439	409	378	347	11
801	775	721	667	613	622	581	540	500	459	460	430	400	370	340	12
785	759	706	653	600	609	569	530	490	450	451	422	392	363	334	13
769	744	692	640	588	597	558	519	480	441	442	413	385	356	327	14
754	729	678	627	577	585	547	509	471	432	433	405	377	349	320	15
739	715	665	615	565	573	536	499	461	424	425	397	369	342	314	16
724	700	651	603	554	562	525	489	452	415	416	389	362	335	308	17
709	686	638	591	543	551	515	479	443	407	408	381	355	328	301	18
695	673	626	579	532	540	504	469	434	399	400	374	348	322	295	19
681	659	613	567	521	529	494	460	425	391	392	366	341	315	290	20

Men

Tier 1: WC and Similar					Tier 2: FIS NORAM, Gold AFP, etc					Tier 3: Canada Cup, Silver AFP, etc					
Slide Value		Event Value			Slide Value		Event Value			Slide Value		Event Value			
+15		1000			+15		776			+15		575			
+7.5		968			+7.5		726			+7.5		538			
Bench		900			Bench		675			Bench		500			
-7.5		833			-7.5		624			-7.5		463			
-15		765			-15		574			-15		425			
R Value		0.010			R Value		0.015			R Value		0.025			
+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	+15	+7.5	Bench	-7.5	-15	Contest Placing
Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	
1000	968	900	833	765	776	726	675	624	574	575	538	500	463	425	1
990	958	891	824	757	765	715	665	615	565	561	524	488	451	414	2
980	948	882	816	750	753	704	655	606	557	547	511	475	440	404	3
970	939	873	808	742	742	693	645	597	548	533	498	463	429	394	4
961	929	865	800	735	731	683	635	588	540	520	486	452	418	384	5
951	920	856	792	728	720	673	626	579	532	507	474	441	408	374	6
941	911	847	784	720	709	663	616	570	524	494	462	430	397	365	7
932	902	839	776	713	698	653	607	562	516	482	450	419	387	356	8
923	893	830	768	706	688	643	598	553	508	470	439	408	378	347	9
914	884	822	761	699	678	633	589	545	501	458	428	398	368	338	10
904	875	814	753	692	667	624	580	537	493	446	417	388	359	330	11
895	866	806	745	685	657	614	572	529	486	435	407	378	350	322	12
886	858	798	738	678	647	605	563	521	479	424	397	369	341	314	13
878	849	790	731	671	638	596	555	513	471	414	387	360	333	306	14
869	841	782	723	665	628	587	546	505	464	403	377	351	324	298	15
860	832	774	716	658	619	578	538	498	457	393	368	342	316	291	16
851	824	766	709	651	610	570	530	490	451	383	358	333	308	283	17
843	816	759	702	645	600	561	522	483	444	374	350	325	301	276	18
835	807	751	695	638	591	553	514	476	437	365	341	317	293	269	19
826	799	744	688	632	582	545	507	469	431	355	332	309	286	263	20

Appendix 3: Skill Assessment Guide

SCALE GUIDE:		
Comparable to current top performers		Consistency: completing skills
Not competition ready	1	0-49%
Doing in competition but not quality of top 50% of field	2	50-69%
Finals round quality	3	70-89%
Top 5 quality	4	90-100%

SLOPESTYLE SKILL ANALYSIS - WC spot allocation											
NAME	JUMP DD	QUALITY	RAIL DD	QUALITY	CREATIVITY: line, grabs, innovation, variety, features	QUALITY	CONSISTENCY: % achieving quality-full runs	SCORE	FULL RUN IMPRESSION	TOTAL SCORE	ATHLETE RANK
EXAMPLE	sw-L-dub-14 & L-dub16-belt	3	6on / 1-ski slide w switch up / flip off	2	one & only rail skill, variety in features,	4	85%	3	3	15	
Current WC top skills will be entered to compare											

BIG AIR SKILL ANALYSIS - WC Spot allocation											
NAME	JUMP 1 DD	QUALITY	JUMP 2 DD	QUALITY	CREATIVITY: style, grabs, height?	QUALITY	CONSISTENCY: % achieving quality jumps	SCORE	OVERALL IMPRESSION	TOTAL SCORE	ATHLETE RANK
EXAMPLE	R-trip16-2xocto	3	sw-L-dub-14 Buick grab	2		3	85%	3	4	15	
Current WC top skills will be entered to compare											