

American Canoe Association
ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES
2026 Paracanoe National Team
Last Modified February 10, 2026

1 Selection System

1.1 Eligibility Requirements

- 1.1.1** Each athlete must meet ICF eligibility rules outlined in the [ICF Paracanoe Competition Rules](#), Section 1.3 - Athlete Eligibility for ICF Competition (Level 1 to 3).
- 1.1.2** Competitors must have an impairment eligible for assignment to a Paracanoe Sport Class Status other than Sport Class Not eligible (see below in section 2, classification procedures)
- 1.1.3** Each athlete must be at least 15-years old by December 31st, 2026.
- 1.1.4** Athletes must be in good standing with ACA and possess a current competition membership and competition license (for those 18 and older) at the Team Selections and all National and International competitions.
- 1.1.5** Any athlete age 18 or older is required to undergo a background screening in accordance with the current ACA Background Check Policy.
- 1.1.6** Any athlete age 18 or older will be required to remain current with the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training requirements.

1.2 Selection Events

- The selection process will take place during the 2026 US Paracanoe Team Selections in Oklahoma City, OK. The selection races will be held on May 30, 2026.
- Selection races will be held for all men's and women's ICF Paracanoe World Championships events in KL1, KL2, KL3, VL1, VL2 and VL3.
- The 2026 US Team Selections are open to all ACA members meeting the requirements stated in Section 1.1.

1.3 Selection Scope

The following selection criteria is intended to select the 2026 US Senior National Paracanoe Team to represent the US/ACA at the following events:

- 2026 Pan American Championships (Montreal, Canada – July 6 – 7, 2026)
- 2026 Paracanoe World Cup (Montreal, Canada – July 9 – 12, 2026)
- 2026 Paracanoe World Championships (Poznan, Poland - August 26-30, 2026)

Representation of the US/ACA at international events other than the World Championships prior to the next national team Selections will be selected based on criteria outlined in Appendix A.

1.4 Team Selection Process

The selection method will be the same for each of the events.

- To be named to the USA Paracanoe National Team, athletes must finish 1st or 2nd in any event at the 2026 Paracanoe Team Selections in Oklahoma City with a time equal to or less than 118% of the 5-year bronze medal average time established for that event listed below.
- If an athlete does not meet the required team criteria, they have still earned the right to compete at the events listed in section 1.3, however they will not be named to the 2026 US Senior National Paracanoe Team and will have minimal support from ACA staff and should discuss what is best for their development with the Head Coach.

Male Boat Categories & Classes									
Event Class	3rd Place Avg	120%	118%	115%	112%	110%	108%	106%	104%
KL1	49.493	59.391	58.401	56.917	55.432	54.442	53.452	52.462	51.472
KL2	43.467	52.161	51.292	49.988	48.684	47.814	46.945	46.076	45.206
KL3	41.261	49.513	48.688	47.450	46.212	45.387	44.562	43.737	42.911
VL1	67.510	81.011	79.661	77.636	75.611	74.260	72.910	71.560	70.210
VL2	54.261	65.114	64.028	62.400	60.773	59.687	58.602	57.517	56.432
VL3	49.441	59.329	58.340	56.857	55.374	54.385	53.396	52.407	51.418
Female Boat Categories & Classes									
Event Class	3rd Place Avg	120%	118%	115%	112%	110%	108%	106%	104%
KL1	55.141	66.169	65.066	63.412	61.758	60.655	59.552	58.449	57.346
KL2	52.754	63.304	62.249	60.667	59.084	58.029	56.974	55.919	54.864
KL3	48.778	58.533	57.558	56.094	54.631	53.655	52.680	51.704	50.729
VL1	89.813	107.775	105.979	103.284	100.590	98.794	96.998	95.201	93.405
VL2	63.445	76.134	74.865	72.961	71.058	69.789	68.520	67.251	65.982
VL3	61.195	73.434	72.210	70.374	68.539	67.315	66.091	64.867	63.643

*Exceptions:

- The top performing athlete in each event, achieving an A-Finals or Top-3 B-Finals at the 2026 ICF Paracanoe World Cup 1 in Brandenburg, Germany and meeting a time standard of 112% of 5-year bronze medal average time established for that event listed above.
 - If two US athletes achieve this standard in the same event at World Cup 1 in Brandenburg, only the top performing athlete will be selected to the 2026 US Senior National Team to compete in the events listed in 1.3
 - In the event that an athlete meets the standard at World Cup 1 in Brandenburg, they may compete at the 2026 Paracanoe Team

Selections but are not required to and will be named to the US National Team regardless of their 2026 Team Selection Result.

- In this scenario, the next best athlete meeting 118% of 5-year bronze medal average time established for that event listed above shall be named to the 2026 Senior National Team and represent the US at the events listed in section 1.3. This brings the total number of National Team athletes in this event to two (2).
- All Others must compete at the 2026 US Team Selections and meet criteria listed above in section 1.4

1.4.1 Replacement of Athletes to the Team

The replacement procedure will be the same for all events.

- If an athlete meets the criteria outlined in 1.4 but declines to compete, or leaves the team for any reason, the appointment will go sequentially to the next athlete from 2026 Team Selections, for a maximum of two entries in each event. Only those athletes who meet the time standard will be named to the 2026 US Senior Paracanoe National Team.

2 Classification Procedures

National Classification will be provided at the Team Selections for new athletes. ICF Classification will be provided at a 2026 World Cup or World Championships for any athlete without an ICF class status of confirmed. For both National and International Classification, athletes must have an eligible impairment with an eligible underlying health condition and meet the minimum impairment criteria. More information about Paracanoe Classification, including required documents and forms, may be found on the [ICF Classification Website](#).

- [Paracanoe athletes diagnosis form](#)
- [Paracanoe athletes certificate of diagnosis](#) (*Must be signed by a physician)
- [Paracanoe athletes information and consent](#)
- [Declaration of medical complications and emergency measures](#)
- [Equipment passport](#)
- [Strapping waiver](#)
- [PFD waiver](#)

3 Removal of Athletes

An athlete who is nominated to the 2026 US Senior National Paracanoe Team by the ACA may be removed for any of the following reasons, as determined by the ACA:

- 3.1** Voluntary withdrawal. Athletes must submit a written letter to the ACA Executive Director and the ACA Competition Director.
- 3.2** Injury or illness as certified by a physician (or medical staff) approved by the ACA. If an athlete refuses verification of his/her illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff) approved by the ACA, his/her injury will be assumed to be debilitating, and he/she may be removed.

3.3 Violation of the ACA Athlete [Code of Conduct](#)

3.4 Non-compliance with the eligibility requirements listed in Section 1.1 of these selection procedures.

3.5 An athlete may be removed as a nominee to the Team or from the Team for an adjudicated violation of Panam Sports, APC, WADA, ICF, USADA and/or USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies and procedures, as well as the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code and the ACA's SafeSport policies, as applicable.

4 Replacement of Athletes

Should a replacement be necessary, the procedures outlined in Section 1.4.1 will be used to nominate a replacement athlete.

5 Publicity/Distribution of Procedures

The approved selection procedures will be available before February 15th, 2026 at the following public location:

- [ACA Website - Paracanoe Page](#)

6 Anti-Doping Requirements

Athletes must adhere to all Panam Sports, APC, WADA, IF, USADA and USOPC anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing as required by the Panam Sports, APC, WADA, IF, USADA and USOPC rules, as applicable. The ICF requires the successful completion of doping education prior to racing.

- <https://www.canoeicf.com/anti-doping-education>
- Therapeutic Use Exemptions must be applied for prior to 2026 Team Selections and approved before competing at an ICF International Competition.

7 Development of Selection Procedures

The following people were responsible for creating these Selection Procedures:

- Kaitlyn McElroy – Paracanoe Head Coach
- Deborah Page – Paracanoe Committee. Chaiman Emeritus
- Jed Hinkley – ACA Competition Director

8 Grievance Procedures

The ACA's grievance procedures can be found at:

- [ACA Grievance Policy](#)

9 Athlete Ombuds Office

The Athlete Ombuds Office provides cost-free, independent and confidential advice regarding athlete rights, grievance procedures and any other related guidance pertaining to selection procedures and can assist in mediating disputes between athletes and their NGB.

To contact the Athlete Ombuds Office:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000

EMAIL: ombudsman@usathlete.org WEBSITE: www.usathlete.org

10 ACA Signatures

Position	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Executive Director of the ACA	Beth Spilman	<i>Beth Spilman</i>	2/23/26
Competition Director of the ACA	Jed Hinkley	<i>Jed Hinkley</i>	2/23/26
Team USA AC Representative	Jonas Ecker	<i>Jonas Ecker</i>	2/21/2026

Appendix A

Paracanoe Selection Criteria for 2026 World Cup 1 in Brandenburg, Germany

Eligibility Requirements:

- **Competed at 2025 World Championships**
 - Athletes who raced at the 2025 Paracanoe World Championships in Milan are eligible for selection, or
- **Time Standard (Video or Official Time)**
 - **Official time** from the 2026 Sprint Selections being held in Chula Vista, CA, April 16-19, 2026.
 - Time from Official Paracanoe Camp being held April 20-27, 2026 in OKC
 - **Time trial video** (on non-moving water) **with GPS data**

* All times above must be **within 118%** of 5-year bronze medal average time established for that event. (see table below).

- **Multiple Entries**
 - If more than two (2) athletes wish to enter and event, the **head coach** will decide, prioritizing results in the following order:
 - **Racing at the 2025 World Championships**
 - **Times from 2026 Sprint Team Selections being held in Chula Vista on April 16 – 19**
 - **Times from Official Paracanoe Camp being held on April 20-27**
 - **Time Trial Video with GPS data**

5-year bronze medal average time established for that event

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VL1	89.813	107.775	105.979	103.284	100.590	98.794	96.998	95.201	93.405
VL2	63.445	76.134	74.865	72.961	71.058	69.789	68.520	67.251	65.982
VL3	61.195	73.434	72.210	70.374	68.539	67.315	66.091	64.867	63.643

Actionable Steps for Applicants:

- Race at 2026 Sprint Team Selections, or
 - Attend Official Paracanoë Camp in OKC in April, or
 - Prepare a time trial video (on non-moving water) that is less **118%** of 5-year bronze medal average time established for that event.
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- Submit your video and GPS data for review by the head coach and competition director to jhinkley@americancanoe.org, **no later than April 27, 2026.**