



Northern Ireland Wheelchair Basketball Academy

3x3 Wheelchair Basketball
XXIII Commonwealth Games
IWBF Europe Zonal Qualification
2nd – 5th April 2026,
Nottingham, England

Women's Selection Policy & Standards (February 2026)

Approved by the Board of Directors of Disability Sport NI 25.11.25

INTRODUCTION

Disability Sport NI (DSNI) are responsible for the development and preparation of Northern Irish Wheelchair Basketball squads in line with the Commonwealth Games, in the 3x3 format of the game.

This selection policy has been approved by DSNI'S Board and lodged with Commonwealth Games Northern Ireland (CWGNI). It provides details on the process by which DSNI will select a Women's team to represent Northern Ireland at the Commonwealth Games Europe Zonal Qualifier being held at the University of Nottingham, England from the 2nd-5th April 2026.

The objective of this Selection Policy and Process is to select the best individuals, who combined, form the best team, to maximise the chances of success at the IWBF Europe Zonal Qualifier

1. COMPETITION INFORMATION & FORMAT

- 1.1 The Women's IWBF Europe Zonal Qualifier (The Competition) will consist of (up to) 5 teams, including: Cyprus, Malta, England, Wales, Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 Teams will consist of (up to) 4 players, with a maximum of 3 players on court at any one time.
- 1.3 Games will be played to the following classification on court: 8.5 points cannot be exceeded, and in-line with the 2025 (or most recent) IWBF 3x3 Official Wheelchair Basketball Rules: <https://www.iwbf.org/3x3/3x3-rules>
- 1.4 The competition will begin on 2nd April 2026 and ends on 5th April 2026, with the IWBF Europe Zonal Qualifier taking place on 4th April 2026.
- 1.5 The competition will be held at the University of Nottingham, England.
- 1.6 All kit will be provided by DSNI. Athletes must wear the kit provided by DSNI during the competition.

2. TEAM & STAFF SIZE

- 2.1 DSNI will select a squad of 4 players, with the remaining athletes on the long-list being named as reserves for the Women's team, up until the day before the competition take place.
- 2.2 The final complement of Wheelchair Basketball team staff attending the Tournament will ultimately depend upon team numbers and composition and will be determined by DSNI.

3. ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

- 3.1 All athletes on the Women's Training Group, as advised to athletes per the selection letter on 16/5/25, must sign the DSNi Code of Conduct (Appendix 1). In signing the Code of Conduct, athletes commit to making a positive contribution to the behaviours and culture of the team. Athletes who do not agree to sign the Code of Conduct will not be eligible for nomination to the Europe Zonal Qualifier team.
- 3.2 All athletes on the Women's Training Group, must undertake a full training programme as agreed by DSNi.
- 3.3 All players are subject to fitness monitoring throughout the selection period (May 2025 – January 2026) which will be linked to a player's ability to meet the demands of the 3x3 game format. Fitness assessments will be monitored in partnership with Sport NI, BWB, Sports Institute support staff.
- 3.4 If qualification at the Europe Zonal Qualifier is achieved, the Women's Training Group will continue to train as part of the preparation programme until the final Commonwealth Games nomination, expected in May 2026.
- 3.5 It is recognised that the circumstances of athletes are varied and may change. In some instances, athletes may be based away from Northern Ireland. Consideration will be given to athletes based away from Northern Ireland, with the Selection Criteria being central to any final decision which is made.

4. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Potential athletes to be selected must;

- i. Meet the eligibility criteria of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) Byelaw 16 (Appendix 2).
- ii. Be internationally classified with a confirmed sport class status or review with a fixed review date of 2027 or later at the sport entries deadline of 23 June 2026.
- iii. Not currently be disqualified or suspended by the CGF, their CGA, the IWBF or under the World Anti-Doping Code.
- iv. Have complied with all applicable rules and regulations of the CGF, IWBF and the World Anti-Doping Code as may be modified and applied by the CGF to ensure that the overriding principles of the Commonwealth Games are observed.
- v. Have complied with the minimum age regulations as stipulated by IWBF.
- vi. Be a member of British Wheelchair Basketball.

5. LONG LIST, SELECTION PROCESS & SELECTION CRITERIA

Athletes will be selected in relation to their eligibility, selection criteria and subjective assessment by the selection panel.

Selection for the Europe Zonal Qualifier will not result in automatic nomination to CWGNI for selection to the Glasgow Commonwealth Games if the team qualifies, or if the team is successful in qualifying via Bipartite.

5.1 Long List:

Only athletes on the “Long List” will be assessed. The Long List will consist of athletes who:

- i. *Meet the Athlete Eligibility criteria*
- ii. *Form part of the Women’s Training Group, as advised to athletes per the selection letter on 16/5/25.*

The Long List of each squad will be compiled by the DSNI Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball), with the number of athletes selected to form the Long List of each squad being at the discretion of DSNI.

5.2 Selection Process:

A selection meeting for the Women’s team will take place on: Monday 2nd February 2026

All athletes will be notified of their position by: Friday 6th February 2026

The selection process will be coordinated by the DSNI Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball) and overseen by the DSNI Performance Pathways Manager (Maternity Cover). The Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball), alongside the NI Academy Coach will present and report adequate athlete information to the selection panel. The role of the selection panel is to check and challenge the team selection and rationale of the Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball) and NI Academy Coach, through analysis of the information presented, playing the role of ‘critical friend’.

The selection panel will consist of:

- *DSNI Performance Pathways Manager (Maternity Cover)*
- *DSNI Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball)*
- *NI Academy Coach*
- *External Performance Sport Expert*
- *DSNI Board Member*

All members of the selection panel are required to declare any conflict of interest.

5.3 Selection Criteria:

When making athlete selections, the selection panel will consider the following information provided within the DSNi Performance Pathway Officer & NI Academy Coach's presentation and report:

- *Rationale for selection aligned to specific competition environment requirements, playing style/game model and the classification balance of the team.*
- *Current form, as demonstrated through quality, quantity, and performances within training camps and within domestic/international leagues.*
- *Previous relevant playing experience.*
- *An assessment of the player against player characteristics as set out in NI 3x3 Player Characteristics document (Appendix 3).*
- *Any other factors which the selection panel consider relevant for the event.*

6. ATHLETE WITHDRAWAL

In the event of an athlete withdrawing following selection, DSNi reserves the right to select a player from the Long List not previously selected. Selection considerations and selection process as laid out in 5.2 – 5.3 will be implemented in such an event.

7. TEAM WITHDRAWAL

In the event of not being able to enter a team that meets the classification requirements of the 3x3 format, or if a team fails to be physically and/or technically ready to compete at an International level, that team will be withdrawn from the IWBF Europe Zonal Qualifier.

This will be at the discretion of the selection panel.

8. DE-SELECTION

8.1 Any athletes originally selected may be de-selected by the selection panel at any stage prior to or after the selection meeting, including but not limited to any of the following issues:

- Demonstration of a lack of commitment to training requirements and competition preparations.*
- Demonstration of a decline in competition standards.*
- Failure to agree to or abide by DSNi's Code of Conduct.*
- Ongoing or concluded anti-doping violation allegations.*
- Failure to hold, maintain or acquire a confirmed classification, or review with a fixed review date of 2027 or later at the sport entries deadline of 23 June 2026, by the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF).*

- vi. *Disqualification or suspension by the CGF, their CGA, The IWBF or under the World Anti- Doping Code.*
- vii. *Incurring an illness or an injury that, in the opinion of the selection panel, could inhibit their performance at the competition. Where injury issues are identified a fitness assessment may be used to determine whether the athlete can perform to the level required for the competition. The assessment will be carried out by one or more of the following: a doctor, physiotherapist, S&C Coach and DSNi Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball). The assessments will be agreed with the athlete in advance. Any selection or de-selection decision, following such a test, will be final.*

8.2 At any time prior to travelling to the Europe Zonal Qualifier, DSNi reserves the right to withdraw an athlete should they no longer be eligible or deemed unfit to participate.

8.3 De-selection may also happen due to the outcome of a successful appeal.

8.4 Any de-selected athletes will be informed of the de-selection by email. Any de-selected athletes can receive feedback from the selection panel to clarify the de-selection decision. These discussions will be documented and a copy will be kept on record. A de-selected athlete has the right to appeal the decision (See 11. Appeals Process).

9. UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

In the event of this policy being silent on any matter which arises in the administration or application or interpretation of any selection process or decision, then DSNi shall have discretion to determine any issue as they deem fit so long as it is exercised fairly.

10. AMENDMENTS

DSNi reserves the right to make changes to this policy which, in its discretion, are necessary. No such changes shall be made 48 Hours prior to the selection meeting, unless the changes relate to DSNi exercising its discretion under the 'Unforeseen Circumstances' provisions.

DSNi reserves the right to review and modify this policy or a decision related to the selection process in the case of rule or policy changes from BWB, CGF/CGA and/or IWBF that affect the criteria set out in this policy.

Any changes to this policy shall be communicated to those involved via email and published on the DSNi website: www.dsni.co.uk

11. APPEALS PROCESS

Athletes will be selected in relation to their eligibility, selection criteria and subjective assessment by the selection panel. Athletes who have not been selected and do not think the above selection process has been followed, may appeal against their non-selection.

This must be a written appeal, including grounds upon which the appeal is made. This is to be sent to DSNI's Performance Pathways Manager (Maternity Cover) no later than 48 hours after the receipt of a non-selection email. An administration fee of £150 will be charged for a written appeal. This fee will be reimbursed in the event of a successful appeal.

In the event of an appeal DSNI's Performance Pathways Manager (Maternity Cover) will organise an appeals panel consisting of the Disability Sport NI CEO and two Disability Sport NI Board members. The appeals panel will not include members of the selection panel. The decision of the appeals panel will be communicated to the appellant by email, within 24 hours of their decision.

Where the decision of the appeals panel, is to confirm the original decision, the appellant may apply for Leave to Appeal against the decision of the Selection Panel. This must be done in writing via an email to the Disability Sport NI Chief Executive Officer (koneill@dsni.co.uk) not later than two working days after the date of notification of the decision of the appeals panel.

Upon receipt of an application for Leave to Appeal the Disability Sport NI Chief Executive Officer shall refer matters to Sport Resolutions UK (a trading name for the Sports Dispute Resolutions Panel Ltd – Company No. 3351039) for final and binding arbitration in accordance with the Arbitration Act 1996 and Sport Resolutions UK's Arbitration Rules, which rules are deemed to be incorporated by reference to this clause.

Sport Resolutions UK will respond in writing by email to the athlete within 2 working days of receipt of the Notice of Appeal to notify the athlete if there are grounds for an appeal and if so:

- Whether the appeal will proceed by way of written submissions or an oral hearing and set a date for the hearing;
- Whether the parties (athlete and Disability Sport NI) should be required to submit statements of their evidence and/or written submissions prior to the hearing and, if so, a timetable for doing so and the procedure for exchanging such statements and written submissions;



- In the case that there may be an 'affected athlete' whether they will be included in the appeal hearing and/or be invited to make a representation at the appeal hearing.

Sport Resolutions UK will notify the athlete and Disability Sport NI of the decision on the day of the hearing. Written reasons for the decision shall follow no later than one working day following the hearing. The decision of Sport Resolutions UK will be final and binding.

Disability Sport NI will also have the right to appeal to CWGNI if athletes have been nominated by Disability Sport NI and are not selected. This will be completed within twenty-four hours of CWGNI notification of non-selection. All CWGNI appeal decisions will be made ahead of final announcement of the team. Athletes do not have the right to appeal directly to CWGNI.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Selection can be a stressful experience for athletes. The contact names and details below may support athletes during this time.

DSNI Performance Pathways Manager (Maternity Cover)

Alan Crooks

Telephone (Daytime): 028 9046 9925 | Evening/Weekends: 07894614324

Email: acrooks@dsni.co.uk

DSNI Performance Pathway Officer (Wheelchair Basketball)

Danny Cooper

Telephone (Daytime): 028 9046 9925 | Evening/Weekends: 07979281316

Email: dcooper@dsni.co.uk

DSNI Safeguarding Lead

Judith Cooper, Performance Pathways Officer

Telephone (Daytime): 028 9046 9925 | Evening/Weekends: 07747106852

Email: jcooper@dsni.co.uk

DSNI Safeguarding Lead

Terry Conroy, Performance Pathways Officer (Boccia)

Telephone (Daytime): 028 9046 9925 | Evening/Weekends: 07887955065

Email: tconroy@dsni.co.uk