



2009 SELECTION PHILOSOPHY

ITU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES AND ITU WORLD CUPS

The primary objective for the Triathlon Australia High Performance Team (**TAHPT**) for the 2009-2012 period is - *“To further develop a sustainable High Performance environment that provides Elite Athletes and Coaches with the opportunity to be consistently successful at International competitions with a priority to ITU Olympic distance events”.*

This document sets out the philosophy upon which selection decisions will be made within the framework of its overall primary objective for all ITU junior, under 23 and Olympic distance elite teams in 2009.

TAHPT sees 2009 as the first year in a four year cycle directed at achieving TAHPT's goal of maximising Australia's success at the Triathlon Competitions in the 2012 London Olympic Games.

TAHPT's selection process will be directed at identifying, encouraging and supporting those athletes who have a winning mentality and who demonstrate that they can perform when it counts.

As the first year in the four year cycle, 2009 will have less emphasis on TAHPT's London Olympic Goals, with each successive year becoming more specifically directed at those goals.

The year 2009 will see the introduction of a totally new ITU World Championship Series (WCS). That series will consist of seven 'regular' events together with a World Championship Series Grand Final (WCSGF).

As a result of the introduction of the new ITU World Championship Series, there will no longer be a single day ITU World Championship! ITU World Cups, formerly the basis of the ITU Points Ranking System (and the National Performance Table) will continue to exist, but will play a far less significant role in elite ITU competition. As a result, ITU World Cups will diminish in significance in TAHPT's strategy. In 2009 the National Performance Table will not be used. It is anticipated that the Table will be modified and adapted for the new WCS and again be used in 2010 onwards.

The 2009 ITU World Champion in the Olympic Distance event (both men and women) will be the athlete who accumulates the most points from four events (either WCS events or ITU World Cups) **plus** the WCSGF. An athlete's four events counting towards the 2009 World Championship may include up to two ITU World Cup Events.

The introduction of the new World Championship Series and WCSGF will necessarily impact on the way in which TAHPT selects its representatives for both WCS events (and ITU World Cups) **and** the WCS Grand Final.

TAHPT sees the single most important and prestigious competition in any four year cycle as the Olympic Games. With the introduction of the new WCS and the fact that Triathlon will not be part of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, TAHPT is faced with the challenge of achieving its goals at the 2012 London Olympic Games in the absence of a major single day championship event between the Beijing Olympics and the London Olympic Games.

In the absence of a 'true' one day World Championship Event, TAHPT identifies the ITU WCSGF as the single most important event for the calendar year of 2009. Further, TAHPT identifies the new ITU World Championship Series as the key competition program underpinning the development of Australia's athletes who demonstrate potential to represent Australia at the 2012 Olympic Games. Discretionary selections for the WCSGF and other WCS Events will be directed at exposing those athletes who TAHPT has identified as potential 2012 Olympians to the experience of competing in these Events.

TAHPT will be selecting a **team** for the WCSGF. ITU rules will require athletes to wear a team uniform. TAHPT sees this year's Grand Final, and the Grand Final in successive years leading into 2012 as its only true opportunity to race and compete as a team, an opportunity that needs to be maximised in order to assist TAHPT with its goals for 2012. Accordingly, the Selectors will have the discretion to select an athlete or athletes to play a team role in the Grand Final. This discretion has been part of the selection process for elite teams for some years, particularly 2006 and 2008 Olympic Games.

The ITU World Cups will be used by TAHPT to both create development opportunities for potential 2012 Olympians and to assist identified athletes to gain World Championship points for future selection into WCS Events.

Both the new WCS and the ITU World Cups may, as opportunity presents, be used to extend opportunities to athletes TAHPT identifies as having the potential to develop into 2016 Olympians.

With the introduction of the new WCS, 2009 will be a transition year. The way in which TAHPT approaches the task of achieving its goals for the 2012 London Olympics will necessarily evolve following an evaluation of the new World Championship Series, including an assessment of the venues and courses chosen for all events making up the Series. In future years, it is anticipated that TAHPT will 'target' particular events making up the World Championship Series based on their relevance and compatibility to conditions expected at the London Olympic Games.

It may take some time for TAHPT to evaluate how the new Championship Series will 'work' and therefore how it will impact on TAHPT's goals in the short and long term. In this regard, it must be noted that the ITU has already experienced problems with the new Series requiring the first 2009 Event to be changed to a different venue and a different date. In the short time since the announcement of the new Series, a number of changes have been made to **both** eligibility criteria.

Maximum Quota Positions for London

It is TAHPT's view that in order for it to achieve its goal for the London Olympic Games, Australia must be represented by the maximum number of individuals, both men and women, allowable under the rules (currently 3)! As a consequence, athletes wishing to be part of Triathlon Australia's Team for the WCSGF and other WCS Events *must* show a genuine commitment to competing in ITU World

Championship Series Events and ITU World Cups with the intention of maintaining an ITU World Ranking that will qualify Australia the maximum quota positions for the London Olympic Games. Discretionary selections for WCS Events, the WCSGF and ITU World Cups will therefore necessarily have an emphasis towards athletes who can assist Australia to qualify the maximum quota positions.

Athletes are on notice that TAHPT is considering participation in a minimum number of WCS Events and/or World Cups as an eligibility requirement in the future for High Performance Program funding and selection in WCS Events, the WCSGF and the Olympic Games. That minimum requirement will be expressed in the terms of a High Performance Team Member Agreement that will also set out High Performance expectations and the rights and obligations of athletes.

Athletes, and all stakeholders, should understand that this Philosophy Statement does not form part of the selection criteria for WCS Events, the WCSGF or ITU World Cups. It has been produced as a guide to understanding the rationale behind selection decisions.

Summary

- 2009 the first in a four year plan directed at maximising Australia's performance at 2012 Olympic Games.
- Transitional year given the new WCS.
- 2009 WCSGF single most important event for this year.
- Discretionary selections in WCS and ITU World Cups to be directed at securing Australia maximum quota positions for the 2012 Olympic Games.
- Discretionary selections in WCS and ITU World Cups to be directed at exposing athletes identified as potential 2012 Olympians (and in some cases if opportunity arises 2016 Olympians).
- Discretionary selections based on a team role – achieving a desired outcome for Australia will continue to play a part in selection philosophy.