

# **SPORT CANADA ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA 2023-24**

Carded athlete status is a privilege designated for athletes who have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, outstanding abilities and commitment to the sport of racquetball. Carded athlete status is not a reward for past work but rather it is intended to allow athletes to enter a training and competitive schedule which, by design, will lead to consistent improvement thereby maximizing the likelihood of Team Canada's success at future international racquetball events.

For the 2023-24 carding cycle, Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) support to racquetball athletes is contingent to Racquetball Canada meeting the AAP requirements for NSOs eligibility.

## **1. Introduction**

Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) assists international caliber athletes with their training and competition activities, through the provision of a training allowance and, where applicable, tuition expenses.

In August/September of each year, Racquetball Canada (RC) nominates athletes to Sport Canada's AAP according to criteria developed by Racquetball Canada to meet Sport Canada's AAP requirements. The recommendations come to the RC's Board of Directors through the High-Performance Committee for official approval. Carding nominations are submitted for the top Canadian racquetball athletes based on results from the International Racquetball Federation (IRF) World Championships. To qualify, for SR1 carding, athletes will need to have finished within the top 8, top half of the draw. The athletes are ranked conjunctively and strictly on the criteria listed in this document; that process continues whenever an additional card(s) is available, or a portion of an awarded card becomes available. The recommendations are based on the criteria in this document and support the athletes - male or female - who have the best likelihood of podium performances at future international competitions and continue to demonstrate ongoing improvement. Currently Racquetball Canada has a budget of \$84,720 from Sport Canada to be used for carding. This budget amount may be adjusted by Sport Canada.

The carding cycle for racquetball athletes begins on October 1 and ends on September 30 of the following year.

For complete details of the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP), carded athletes should refer to the document published by Sport Canada, Athlete Assistance Program Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, Athlete Handbook available on the Sport Canada website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

## **2. General Requirements**

To be eligible for consideration under AAP, each athlete must meet all the following general requirements:

- 2.1 As set out in the eligibility criteria of the International Racquetball Federation (IRF), the athlete must be eligible to represent Canada at major international events including the World Championships as of the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated. The IRF rules require that the athlete must verify citizenship with a valid

passport or a letter from their National Olympic Committee stating that they may represent that country in International Competition.

- 2.2 The athlete must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada as of the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated. Permanent residents must have lived in Canada for the full year prior the carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support. The athlete is expected (required) to have participated in NSO-sanctioned programs during that time period. The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships.
- 2.3 The athletes must sign an Athlete/Racquetball Canada Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form.
- 2.4 The athletes must have a clearly articulated program, approved by Racquetball Canada, with appropriate training and competitive opportunities, both domestic and international. The athlete's individualized annual training program must be based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities.
- 2.5 Once an athlete has been carded three (3) years at the Senior National card level (SR & C1), to be eligible for AAP support the athlete must meet the Senior International criteria (SR1/SR2) as described below at 3.2 and 3.3. Carding achieved while still a junior (18 and under) does not impact on this section.

### **3. Carding Criteria**

- 3.1. Senior Cards and Development Cards are awarded individually based on three (3) different sets of criteria:
  - 3.1.1 Senior International Criteria (Senior SR1/SR2 Cards) - Sport Canada sets the International Criteria for Senior Cards. An athlete who meets the International Criteria is eligible to be nominated by Racquetball Canada for two (2) consecutive years, with the card for the first year being referred to as SR1 and the card for the second year being referred to as SR2.
  - 3.1.2 Senior National Criteria (Senior SR/C1 Cards) - Racquetball Canada sets the National Criteria for Senior Cards. Senior Cards based on National Criteria are awarded for one (1) year. The first time an athlete is eligible for a card based on National Criteria the athlete will receive a C1 Card. An athlete who participated in a World Championship in the year that leads to their first Senior nomination will skip the C1 card and go straight to SR status.
  - 3.1.3 Development Criteria (Development Cards) - Racquetball Canada sets the criteria for Development Cards. Development Cards based on Development Criteria are awarded for one (1) year. An athlete who meets the Development Criteria is eligible to be nominated by Racquetball Canada for the upcoming year.
- 3.2. Senior International criteria (SR1)
  - 3.2.1. To be eligible for an AAP Senior SR1 Card, athletes must place in the top 8 and in the top half of the field at the 2022 World Championships.  
\*Placement in the Team Event will not be considered.

- 3.3. Senior international maintenance criteria (SR2)
  - 3.3.1. To be eligible for SR2, an athlete must have an SR1 card in 2022-2023 and be selected to the National Elite Team for the 2023-2024 season.
- 3.4. Senior national criteria (SR/C1)
  - 3.4.1. If there are cards remaining after the application of the Senior International Criteria (SR1/SR2), an athlete may be eligible for a Senior (SR/C1) card by being selected onto the National Elite Team for the 2023-2024 season. Maximum allowable carding years at Senior National criteria is three (3) years, excluding any years of carding as a Junior Athlete (18U) and must demonstrate improvement and progress.
- 3.5. Development Criteria
  - 3.5.1. If there are cards remaining after the application of the Senior International and Senior National Criteria, an athlete may be eligible for a Development Card by being selected onto the National Development Team for the 2023-2024 season. Maximum number of years an athlete can be nominated for a Development card is three (3) years.
  - 3.5.2. Normally, a Development Card cannot be allocated to an athlete previously carded at the Senior Card level (C1, SR, SR1, SR2) for more than two (2) years. An exception may be made for an athlete carded at the Senior Card level while still at the IRF Junior age category.

## **4. Carding Nomination**

- 4.1. Cards will be allocated to eligible athletes in the following order of priority:
  - 1. Athletes eligible for "SR1" cards;
  - 2. Athletes eligible for "SR2" cards;
  - 3. Athletes eligible for Injury carding under section 5.
  - 4. Athletes eligible for "SR" or "C1" cards;
  - 5. Athletes eligible for "D" cards;
- 4.2. If at any of those prioritization levels listed in 4.1 there are more athletes qualifying than there is carding available, the priority will go to the athlete(s) who had:
  - 1. The best result at the 2022 World Championships provided the result is in the Top 8 and top half of the draw;  
**if a tie remains:**
  - 2. The highest finish according to the 2023-2024 National Elite Team selection order;  
**if a tie remains:**
  - 3. The best result in Singles at the most recent National Championships;  
**if a tie remains:**
  - 4. The best result in Singles at the most recent Selection Event;  
**if a tie remains:**

5. The best result in Doubles at the most recent National Championships; or  
**if a tie remains:**
  6. Highest rank in the Racquetball Canada National Ranking after the most recent National Championships:  
**if a tie remains:**
  7. Gender: if carding remains at 4 cards and there are three of either gender and the tie has one male and one female then the card will be awarded to the gender that has not been nominated for carding.
- 4.3 If during the carding cycle the carding status of an athlete is withdrawn, the remainder of the carding support will be assigned to the next eligible athlete based on the 2023-2024 carding criteria, if at least four (4) months of AAP are available irrespective of gender.

## ***5. Illness, Injury or Pregnancy***

A SR1 carded athlete who at the end of the carding cycle has not achieved the standard required for the renewal of carding status strictly because of health-related reasons may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:

- 5.1 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 or is continuing a rehabilitation program approved by the Racquetball Canada Administrator of High Performance/Sport Development;
- 5.2 Racquetball Canada determined that the athlete's failure to attain the applicable carding standards is strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy;
- 5.3 Racquetball Canada, based on its technical judgment and that of its 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;
- 5.4 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;
- 5.5 Racquetball Canada is provided evidence that the above requirements are being met to nominate athletes for carding based on the above provisions.

## ***6. Appeal Process***

Appeals of Racquetball Canada AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or of a Racquetball Canada's recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through the Racquetball Canada's Appeal Policy, which may include an appeal application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).

Appeals of AAP Decision made under [Section 6 \(Application for and Approval of Cards\)](#) or [Section 11 \(Withdrawal of Carding Status\)](#) may be pursued through [Section 13](#) of the [AAP Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#).

## ***7. Other Considerations***

Racquetball Canada is carefully following the evolution of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it may impact the AAP carding criteria for 2023-24. With the approval of Sport Canada, Racquetball Canada reserves the right to modify the published AAP criteria based on the best available information. Any modifications will be made promptly and will be communicated to all affected individuals as soon as possible.