



# GB Triathlon Tokyo 2020 'Pilot Athlete' Programme



## Executive Summary

The goal of the British Triathlon Olympic Performance Programme is to maximise the potential for medal success in Olympic Competition. The selection of the right individuals to form a team capable of medal delivery is a fundamental component of the overall medal strategy. The identification of a support or 'Pilot' athlete(s) is therefore an important consideration to underpin the achievement of this strategy. A 'Pilot' will be an athlete or athletes who are capable of having a positive impact on British medal success in the Olympic Triathlon. A Pilot athlete's primary role will be to support their teammate(s) prior to and during competition to enhance the chances of medal success.

This document has been developed as a guide for athletes, and their coaches, who wish to be considered for the Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme. It will outline the key attributes for a Pilot Athlete and the process that the BTF will use to identify and support athletes. Further detail explaining the performance factors and physical characteristics the BTF will evaluate can be found in [GB Triathlon 2020 'Pilot Athlete' Programme Performance Considerations](#) on the British Triathlon website. These documents are not Olympic selection documents. It is also important to note that the characteristics and performance factors outlined in performance considerations are not absolutes and will only be used as a guide by the Performance Director (PD) and Head Coach (HC) to assess and evaluate an athlete's suitability for inclusion on the 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme.

The final determination of an athlete's suitability will be at the discretion of the PD and HC. Their decision will be made after evaluating all relevant factors, including the expert opinion of the Olympic Performance Coaching Group (OPG) and identified individual medal delivery athletes. The inclusion of an athlete on the Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme is for a maximum of 12 months at a time and as always is subject to maintenance of agreed performance standards with the PD and HC.

The following circumstances are the reasons the BTF may consider the selection of a Pilot Athlete or Athletes for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics:

- There are not three athletes considered capable of individual medal delivery:
  - The level of performance required to qualify or be selected for the 2020 Olympics as an individual delivery athlete will be defined in the 2020 BTF Olympic Selection Policy
    - The policy will focus on specific events where athletes will have the opportunity to show they are capable of medal delivery performance
    - The performance requirements for qualification or selection will be stringent and based on evidence of performance



- Not all athletes considered capable of individual medal delivery have shown the ability to work cohesively with other GB Team Members as evidenced through performances in WTS, and therefore may put medal chances at risk if selected together
- There is an athlete or athletes eligible for selection (ie satisfy Team GB eligibility criteria and meet ITU ranking requirements) who can perform a Pilot Athlete role that will enhance the chances of British medal success.

This document outlines

- The Key Attributes of a Pilot Athlete
- The timeline to be used for the identification process
- Eligibility for Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme
- WCPP Support of Pilot Athletes

Further detailed information on the performance factors and the physical characteristics that will be used to identify athletes can be found in [GB Triathlon 2020 'Pilot Athlete' Programme Performance Considerations](#).

### **The Key Attributes of a Pilot Athlete**

The BTF will be looking to identify the key attributes of athletes that indicate the ability to meet the minimum requirements of a Pilot athlete. There will be two environments used for the purpose of identifying these capabilities and qualities:

1. The Daily Training Environment (DTE) and the Training Camp Environment

AND

2. The Race Environment.

1. The DTE and Training Camp Environment:

Under direction from the Head Coach and in consultation with individual medal delivery athletes and their coaches a Pilot Athlete would be able to meet the following minimum requirements:

- When required spend time training with team mates in their DTE to



- Work on specific aspects of race delivery and tactics
- Develop an understanding of one another so that race delivery is as smooth and impactful as possible
- Travel to training camps where team mates will be preparing for competitions and follow a training programme set by the Head Coach designed to maximise competition performance delivery
- Follow a training and racing programme directed by the Head Coach that maximizes the chances of successful Olympic delivery
  - This will include the need for alignment with team mates training and racing programme
- In both training and competition planning, forego their own individual performance goals where these may, in the opinion of the Head Coach, conflict with the medal delivery of the team
  - Please see 'Eligibility for Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme point 3, for additional notes on U23 programme athletes and their long term development in relation to the Pilot Role.

## 2. In the Race Environment:

Be an athlete who has shown they are consistently capable of exiting the swim in the front 5-10 athletes. They will then also exhibit the ability when the race situation requires of being able to:

- By their own input and using others in the bunch, accelerate the race to make it difficult for slower swimming competitors to get to the front of the race
- Protect team mates from attacks or crashes in the bunch through good positioning, technical and tactical ability
- Maintain a consistently high pace in the bunch, making it difficult for competitors to attack team mates or for chasing groups to gain time
- In the instance of a poor swim, crash or technical issue, wait or remain with a team mate or team mates and pace them back into a competitive position in the race
- In the instance of the Pilot athlete having a poor swim, position themselves well in any



chasing bunch but not contribute to the chase and wait for the bunch to regain contact with their team mate or team mates

- In the final kilometres of the bike leg, protect a team mate or team mates from any crashes and deliver them into T2 at or near the front of the bunch
- Attack a bunch and force competitors to chase, either to agitate higher speeds or fatigue others
- Remain calm, composed and fully supportive of their team mate or team mates at all times, allowing the individual athletes to focus completely on their performance

### **Eligibility for Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme**

Only athletes eligible to compete for Great Britain in the Olympic Games will be considered for the Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme. Eligible athletes maybe sourced from the following groups:

- Non programme athletes
- Current WCPP senior athletes that have the ability to retrain or refocus to deliver race support
- U23 WCPP athletes with the ability to race in the front pack and potential to develop bike ability to fulfill role
  - Athletes in this category will have a personal development plan in place that ensures that being a part of the Pilot Athlete Programme is a benefit and not a hindrance to their long term development and in line with their individual goals
  - This plan will be designed and agreed by the Athlete, their Personal Coach and the Head Coach.



### **WCPP Support of Pilot Athletes**

- Up to a maximum of 4 athletes may be supported on the Tokyo 2020 Pilot Athlete Programme
- An athlete selected onto the programme by satisfying the 'physical characteristics/capacities guidelines' who does not meet the minimum WCPP criteria would be supported by the BTF WCPP at an equivalent of Band E level APA funding
  - A package of support developed that would include training and racing costs to ensure the athlete is able to meet the performance requirements of a Pilot Athlete and develop an ITU ranking to meet Olympic selection eligibility
- An athlete included on the Pilot programme that has met the individual performance criteria for WCPP funding would receive this APA Band Level and have a package of support developed that would include training and racing costs