**General Para Selection Criteria**

There is no obligation to have a maximum or minimum number of players in the National Squad

Members of the National Squad may not always receive the same levels of support, financial or

otherwise

In no way limiting the discretion of the Head Coach the following criteria will be taken into account when he/she is making selections for the National Squad:.

* An athlete’s current playing level (Recent results, performances, Irish Ranking, World ranking, regularity of participation etc.)
* An athlete’s training environment (Volume of training hours, level of practise partners, level of coaching received etc.)
* An athlete’s level of physical ability (Athleticism, Fitness, hand-eye or other coordination skills etc.)
* An athlete’s dedication/attitude (Commitment to success, work ethic, team spirit, sportsmanship, pride in representing Ireland etc,)
* An athlete’s persona; environment (parental involvement/support, current and future living conditions (availability of training)
* An athlete’s future success potential (Playing Style, Prioritisation of table tennis, progression rate.)

**Specific Selection criteria**

There are three levels of players within the National Squad - Development, Pathway and Performance, each with their own programme. As the overall Para project develops and expands over time these programmes will become broader and the strands will be split into more categories e.g., development will be participation development and pre pathway development.

Development

It is very important to have little to no barriers to entry into the Development Squad. Players, who are referred for consideration of joining the Development Squad, will attend at least one national training camp and will be assessed by the Head Coach for the purposes of joining the Squad or remaining with their club for further improvement before being re-assessed. Where provincial development squads exist such players will be expected to attend provincial training camps.

The Development Squad will travel to international events which are deemed appropriate by the Head Coach. The Development Squad will travel to between 2-4 events per season/at least 2. These events will be offered to all Development Squad players by way of an expression of interest model. The Head Coach will notify the Squad members of suitable tournaments and players will be free to attend these events if they wish. There are a number of criteria in play in order that a player may receive an invitation to express an interest in participating in an event, namely;

* Be an affiliated member of TTI
* Be a permanent resident on the island of Ireland or be an Irish citizen
* Maintain a 80% attendance rate at national training camps (when provincial camps are operational this criterion may be applied to hem rather than the national camps)
* Be willing to make adaptations to style of play and take on board technical advice from coaches
* Demonstrate the ability to work well in a team/group environment with his/her peers
* Be training in a serious manner for a minimum of 5 hours per week
* Show enthusiasm and a good attitude at training camps
* Show improvements technically and physically throughout the year/season
* Should be expressing interest in travelling and being selected
* Participate in national tournaments able-bodied and para events – at least two events per season (players must enter the para event and at least one able-bodied event where the schedule allows)
* Participate in at least two provincial tournaments per season – unless these events clash with internationals or national events, which take precedence
* Be financially unencumbered by TTI (Unless otherwise agreed at Board level).

Pathway (NB. New Pathway Programme Criteria issued November 2024)

The goal of the Pathway programme is to engage the players in a programme that is challenging and requires commitment and dedication but does not ask too much of them too early. This programme will become more demanding of the players in the next three years with the aim to increase the numbers of players in the Performance Squad with aspirations to qualify for the Paralympic Games.

The Pathway programme will focus on providing our players with realistic performance and training goals and with this in mind will concentrate on making the players more active regarding competitive match play. Players will travel not only to ITTF events but British GP events as well as other European events deemed appropriate by the Head Coach.

In addition to the criteria contained in the New Pathway Programme Criteria the following criteria will apply for consideration of selection to the Pathway programme. Players must:

* Attend all national camps unless able to provide good reason for absence. Exceptions can be made if reasons are deemed legitimate by the Head Coach.
* Be practising at least 7 hours per week in a focussed and serious manner
* Prepare weekly training reports and share with the Head Coach on the agreed upon day every week. (late submittal of reports may be tolerated when communicated in advance)
* Participate in national tournaments (and where deemed appropriate, provincial tournaments) able-bodied and para events – at least 5 events per season
* Engage with training programmes developed in conjunction with the national coach and should be showing visible improvements at monthly camps.
* Engage with an strength and conditioning programme at least twice per week - showing that they are trying to maximise their physical ability and potential.
* Be selected for and attend a minimum of two international events per season – in theory players will be selected between two and six times per season for various events. Players are encouraged to make maximum effort to attend all events or as many as possible.
* Demonstrate the ability to be competitive at ITTF ranking level
* Adhere to Anti-Doping guidelines as set out by Sport Ireland
* Be in constant communication with the head coach regarding event plans, training programme and physical/psychology programmes

Performance

In order to be a Performance player (in addition to the above), players must:

* Maintain a training programme consisting of minimum 12 hours per week, focussed and planned training, agreed upon with the Head Coach.
* Demonstrate the ability and results to potentially qualify for the Paralympic games
* Engage with the Head Coach and Paralympics Ireland as requested

General

Both national and international classification is necessary for all players to participate in ITTF ranking competitions. For classes 1-10 Paralympics Ireland will be responsible for national classification while international classification can be achieved through assessment at any international competitions where classes 1-10 classification is offered.

For class 11 players completion of a primary eligibility check through Paralympics Ireland will be required and a and table tennis skills assessment at any international competition where class 11 classification is offered – **the TTI Criteria & Process for Class 11 Player Classification document refers**. Players in all classes will not be nominated for international competitions for the sole purpose of classification only. They must fulfil the criteria set out in this document and be selected by the Head Coach.

In order for players to transcend their current squad level they must meet all of the criteria for a period of six months or, alternatively, exceed the criteria for their current level for a period of four months.