



PRE-CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR PLAYER SELECTION TO REPRESENT IRELAND IN MASTERS EVENTS.

Purpose:

Tennis Ireland (TI) strives to field the most competitive International Masters Teams for Ireland while also supporting the domestic Irish Masters Tennis circuit and in particular the National Master Events. The objective is to have the strongest possible fields competing in these events. There is significant competition for places on Irish International Masters Teams and a system is in place for selection.

These criteria will apply to the International 4 Nations events and International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Team Championships taking place for the Masters (30, 35, 40 and 45), Masters (50, 55 and 60) and Masters (65, 70, 75, 80, 85 and 90+).

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1. General Eligibility of a Player or Captain to Represent Ireland

To be considered for selection players must fulfill the following minimum criteria as laid down by the ITF:

1.1 Any player or captain who is in good standing with his/her National Association shall be qualified to represent that nation as a player or captain in the ITF Masters World Team Championships if:

1.2 he/she has not previously represented any other nation in the same Official Team Competition in the ITF Masters World Team Championship; and

(i) is a citizen of that nation and holds a current valid passport of that nation; or

(ii) is a citizen of that nation, but in circumstances where that nation does not issue its own passport, holds a qualifying passport issued by or on behalf of that nation which confirms the player or captain's place of birth as that nation; or

(iii) after a consecutive period of two (2) years (24 months) residence in that nation, can provide a genuine reason for being unable to hold or make application to hold a current valid passport where:

(a) he/she was born, or has a parent or grandparent born, in that nation; or

(b) he/she has obtained or procured the right to remain permanently or has been granted humanitarian protection in that nation.

1.3 A National Association may apply to the ITF Internal Adjudication Panel to nominate a player or captain who is not eligible under the above Regulations on the basis that the full circumstances warrant an exception being made. Such an application must be received by the ITF Internal Adjudication Panel at least two months prior to the event for which the player or captain wishes to be nominated.

2. Tennis Ireland (TI) pre-conditions for selection in addition to ITF requirements above.

2.1 Players must comply with ITF requirements in section 1 above.

2.2 Agree to and have read and understood the Tennis Ireland National Policies, including the Anti-Doping Policy, the Disciplinary Policy, and the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program, as amended from time to time. (These can be sourced at <http://www.tennisireland.ie>)

2.3 If selected, players must:

(i) Advise TI if they do not have the current Irish/TI clothing.

(ii) Be fully prepared for the start of the World Team Championships (i.e., be on site early for practice etc.) and available for a full playing commitment for all days of the Team event. and.

(iii) Notify TI/TI Masters Committee as soon as possible if injured or had a relevant medical procedure and satisfy TI that they are fully fit before taking their place in the team; or if any other circumstance arises which prevents them from taking their place in the team.

(iv) Wear the official Irish/TI Clothing as appropriate.

(v) Bear the cost of Clothing, travel to and accommodation at events themselves.
(TI will pay the cost of the ITF Masters Team Entry Fee).

(vi) Recognize that a nomination represents a commitment to compete if selected.

3. International Team Composition

3.1 The standard team composition is four players. One player will be nominated as Captain and/or a non-playing Captain will be nominated as determined by the TI Masters Committee.

3.2 Teams may, in certain exceptional circumstances, be 3 players when deemed appropriate by the TI Masters Committee.

3.3 A player's age is deemed to be their age on the 31st of December of the year that the competition is held.

3.4 Any reserve player/s will not be team members until TI/TI Masters Committee officially invites them to fill a vacancy in the team.

4. Player Nomination Process

4.1. TI /TI Masters Committee will invite players to confirm availability for selection.

- (a) Players who are invited by TI/TI Masters Committee to confirm availability must advise by return of the email whether they are available or not.
- (b) Players must nominate in the age group determined by their date of birth (their own age group); However, TI/TI Masters Committee reserves the right to request players play in a lower age group if that becomes necessary, due to lack of players in a given age group.
- (c) Players must quote their TI PIN and/or ITF IPIN.

4.2 Minimum Selection Criteria:

- (i) A player must be an active tennis player, playing in appropriate official tournaments and leagues.
- (ii) Players must have played in one but preferably should have played in at least two of the following Irish Masters events in their own age group: the Irish National Masters Indoor Championships, Irish National Masters Open, and the Irish National Masters Closed Championships in the past calendar year (prior to the selection process). At least one of those results should be in singles.

4.3 Additional Information

- (i) If a player has not been able to comply with 4.2(ii) above due to extenuating circumstances, then the player should detail these circumstances to the TI/TI Masters Committee. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, injury, illness, or other justifiable circumstances at the time of the event. Players in this category should provide supporting information in their letter.
- (ii) If a player has ITF Masters tournament results or other results, they believe to be more significant than the 3 Irish National Tournaments then they should detail those to the TI/TI Masters Committee.
- (iii) Player results will be sourced from itftennis.com/masters rankings list and TI Tournament Software, TI Masters Rankings, or other reliable sources. In close circumstances head-to -heads will also be searched.

4.4 Players replies will close on a date and time fixed by TI. Players submitting late replies will not be considered for selection except under circumstances provided for in Clause 6.3

5. Team Selection Process

Selections will be made by TI Masters Committee in accordance with the TI terms of reference for the committee and TI strategy. Selectors on the committee who have been nominated for selection may provide input initially on all nominees, after which involvement in their age group will be restricted to answering queries, if required, from other members of the panel. The said selectors will be excluded from final decisions regarding the composition of the team for which they have been selected. If this results in none or only one selector being able to participate in the final decision making, the selections for that age group will be made by the TI or their authorised nominee/s, as necessary, provided always that none of these persons so nominated are in contention for selection for the age group in question.

5.1 The TI Masters Committee will take a number of factors into consideration when selecting players for each team, including but not limited to:

(i) The players overall performance over the previous 12 months in Masters events with particular emphasis on the Irish National Masters Open, the Irish National Masters Indoor Open Championships and the Irish National Masters Closed Championships, ITF Cups, World Championships and other ITF or TI sanctioned Masters tournaments.

Please refer to Section 4.2 above for the minimum selection criteria.

Team Selections will take place in December each year based on that year's Masters results.

(ii) Performance in other Irish and International Masters competitions and the Inter-Provincial Championships over the previous 12 months: Where there are players of similar ability competing for a place then the results and participation in the National Masters Events/Championships "would be the deciding factor".

(iii) The player's current ITF ranking, World Tennis Number (WTN), TI Masters singles and doubles rankings.

(iv) An exception may be made should there be an individual of exceptional ability/standard who may not meet the minimum selection criteria detailed at Section 4.2 above but who played in other notable events in the previous 12 months and achieved exceptional results as detailed by that player. *It should be noted the decision whether firstly a player is significantly stronger and secondly whether to select on that basis is entirely at the discretion of the Masters Committee.*

The Masters Committee will also consider genuine injury, illness or other extenuating circumstances detailed by a player, under clause 4.3(i) above.

Any exception under this clause is to be limited to one player per team.

(v) A presumption in favour of selecting from within a 5-year age group will be weighed against choosing the strongest teams in certain circumstances; eg. whether or not Ireland is represented at the older age group at the time. (Most relevant to the 4 Nations events)

(vi) The TI Masters Committee will also take into consideration a player's overall suitability to represent Ireland, having regard to past conduct and sportsmanship both on and off the court, the limited spots available and the overall composition of the team.

5.2 TI Masters Committee will forward their selections to TI within a timeframe as stipulated by TI.

5.3 Any TI Masters Committee' correspondence, deliberations, discussions, and notes containing personal and other confidential information are not required to be shared with any person other than the relevant TI officials appointed by TI.

6. Post Selection Procedures/Announcing the Teams:

6.1 TI may perform an overview of selected teams to ensure Selection Policy adherence, consistency, and transparency and in doing so TI may at its discretion ask the TI Masters Committee for further clarification or background influencing factors regarding certain proposed selections.

(i) TI may perform other administrative duties as prescribed in this Selection Process.

(ii) The TI Masters Committee must send the proposed selections to Tennis Ireland before they are announced.

6.2 During the Selection process and after the teams are announced, TI representatives and TI Masters Committee should not enter any further discussion or correspondence concerning selections with any persons outside the TI Masters Committee.

6.3 If a player or players withdraw after selection and acceptance procedures have been completed and teams announced, then the TI Masters Committee will select a replacement/reserve player or players from the next available highest ranked player or players who meet the criteria at that time. If any vacancies are still not filled after exhausting the list of eligible players who have nominated within a particular age group, then the TI Masters Committee reserves the right to select replacements from players who may not have nominated and/or who do not meet the minimum selection criteria at 4.2. This may include players from a higher age group.

6.4 If a player is selected and withdraws due to illness or injury, **a medical certificate must be supplied** to TI in accordance with ITF regulations.

7. Disciplinary/Sanctions & Appeals:

7.1 Disciplinary/Sanctions:

- (i) Players should note that withdrawals after selection may impact unfavorably on their future selection aspirations if such selection is deemed to have been for an anticipated and/or avoidable reason.
- (ii) Any breaches of Tennis Ireland National Policies, including the Anti-Doping Policy, the Disciplinary Policy and the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program will result in a player facing Disciplinary procedures and/or Sanctions in accordance with standard TI procedures. (These procedures as mentioned at 2.2 above can be sourced at <http://www.tennisireland.ie>)
- (iii) The TI Masters Committee reserves the right to remove a selected player from a team if, in its opinion, the selected player fails to maintain a designated level of fitness and standard of competitiveness prior to the event for which they have been selected.

7.2 Appeals:

7.2.1 A player may appeal against a decision of the TI Masters Committee regarding their selection or non-selection in accordance with this clause, but no appeal lies in respect of a decision by TI to not send a team in any age group.

7.2.2 The sole grounds for any appeal are that the TI Masters Committee has selected a player who does not meet the selection criteria set out in this Selection Policy.

7.2.3 A player:

- (i) does not have any other rights of appeal other than as set out in this policy; and
- (ii) must not institute or maintain proceedings in any court or tribunal in respect to matters which are covered by this policy.

7.2.4 The appeal process is as follows:

- (i) If a player wishes to appeal a decision of the TI Masters Committee, the player must send a Written Statement of Appeal to the TI Executive by 12 noon on the fourth day following the day that the player was advised of the decision against which the appeal is being made. The Written Statement of Appeal must set out the name of the player, the player's contact details, full details of the player's grounds of appeal which must relate to the grounds of appeal set out in clause 6(b) and a non-refundable payment of €20 payable to TI.
- (ii) TI must provide a copy of the Written Statement of Appeal to the TI Masters Committee and all members of the relevant team immediately.
- (iii) Within 5 days of the player submitting their Written Statement of Appeal, the Selectors/TI Masters Committee must provide TI with a written reply explaining the reasons for the decision against which the appeal is made (Written Reply).
- (iv) On receipt of the Written Statement of Appeal and Written Reply, TI must **within 5 day**

convene an Appeals Committee (comprised of three persons - a chairperson (who shall be a person with considerable previous experience in the legal aspects of an appeals committee; a person with a thorough knowledge of tennis; and a person of experience and skills suitable to the function of an Appeals Committee, provided such person may not include a person who is a member of the TI Masters Committee or a person who would, by reason of relationship with the appellant be reasonably considered to be other than impartial)) for the purposes of considering the information and determining the appeal. TI must provide the Appeal committee with the Written Statement of Appeal and the Written Reply, and any other relevant documents reasonably requested by the Appeals committee.

- (v) As the Selection correspondence, deliberations, discussions, and notes are strictly confidential and contain personal information, the player making the appeal is not entitled to a copy of the selection correspondence, deliberations, discussions and note or the Written Reply.
- (vi) When conducting the appeal, the Appeals Committee:
 - (a) Must take into consideration the Written Statement of Appeal and Written Reply.
 - (b) Is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself as to any matter in such manner as it thinks fit.
 - (c) Will conduct its review with as little formality and with as much expedition as the proper consideration of the matter permits, including the use of telephone or video conferencing, or otherwise if appropriate. The suggested timeframe for this process is 2 weeks.
 - (d) May rely on the written submissions or request the opportunity to hear from such people as it considers necessary; and
 - (e) Will not allow the parties to be represented by a barrister or solicitor.

7.2.5 The following provisions relate to decisions of the Appeal Committee:

- (i) Any decision of the Appeals Committee must be supported by at least 2 of the 3 members of Appeals Committee.
- (ii) The Appeals Committee must give its decision on any appeal **within 5 days** after the hearing and must provide the player, the TI Masters Committee, and the TI Executive with a written statement of the reasons for its decision.
- (iii) The Appeals Committee must dismiss the appeal if it forms the view that the relevant player has failed to establish the grounds of appeal.
- (iv) If the decision of the TI Masters Committee which is the subject of appeal was within the discretion of the TI Masters Committee acting reasonably and applying the Selection Policy, then the Appeals Committee must dismiss the appeal.

8. Changes:

8.1 This selection policy supersedes and replaces any previous versions of this policy. This policy may be amended, replaced, or revoked by the TI Executive at any time.

As approved by the TI Board on 2 March 2023