

Future Best Athlete Assistance Program

updated: August '08

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Introduction:

Being on a national team or representing their country is a dream come true for many Saskatchewan athletes. The realization of this dream does not come without many challenges, personal sacrifices and financial hardships. The Future Best program is specifically designed to assist those athletes who are in the "gap". The "gap" is defined as the high performance developmental phase of an athlete's career where they are involved in an intense level of training and competition with the personal goals and realistic potential of becoming a National Senior Team member, yet they have not reached carding status or been named to the National Senior Team.

Future Best receives on-going support from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund, however, thanks to the generous support 2005 Canada Games Host Society and the creation of the **Canada Games Building Dreams and Champions Legacy Program**, the fund will receive four years of additional funding support. The first goal of the legacy program is to inspire dreams in Canada's youth and encourage them to participate in sport and physical activity. The second goal is to build champions by providing the programs, tools and support young athletes need to reach and succeed at higher levels. This program supports the Canada Games movement as it broadens its focus from "Games only" to "Games and between Games" initiatives.

Due to the 2005 Canada Games legacy program and the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund, Future Best will receive \$150,000 again this year. This will result in more athletes receiving more support through the Future Best program. Our hope is to continue to **Build Dreams and Inspire Champions!**

Purpose:

To support the developmental needs of Saskatchewan athletes who have been identified by the National Sport Organization as clearly demonstrating the potential to become a national senior team member and those who are seriously committed to attain this status through intense training, technical development and competitive success. In keeping with the Canadian Sport Policy, athletes who compete in sports on the most current calendar of the Olympic, Paralympic and Pan Am Games will be given priority in the review process

Eligibility:

To be eligible athletes must meet the following conditions:

- a) be a legal resident of Saskatchewan (hold a valid Saskatchewan Health Card) and be an active member in good standing with their Provincial Sport Organization;
- b) athletes who are pursuing a full time course of study at a Post Secondary Institution outside of Saskatchewan, or are training outside of Saskatchewan are eligible as long as all of the other eligibility criteria are fully met;
- c) be committed to making their sport's national senior team and/or representing Canada at the international level.
- d) receive endorsement from their National Sport Organization, via the Future Best NSO Questionnaire, which verifies that they have been identified through a national talent identification process and are highly ranked on the National Team depth chart;
- e) Future Best is designed to support those athletes that are "in the gap", therefore athletes who have already made **their National Senior Team will be deemed ineligible**. Official National Senior Team status may vary from sport to sport so if you are unclear please contact Rob Kennedy or your staff liaison for clarification.
- f) To be eligible athletes must meet one or more of the following performance criteria:
 - have been identified as part of the developmental ("espoir") team/pool at a National Senior Team level;
 - have demonstrated outstanding performance at the most recent National Championships or other recognized national/international senior level competitions;
 - have represented Canada as a member of a National Junior Team or have been recently named to the National Junior Team;
 - have demonstrated outstanding performance at the most recent National Junior Championships or other recognized national/international Junior level competitions.
- g) The Sport in which the athlete participates must have a clearly articulated national team program with appropriate training and competitive opportunities (both domestic and international) and the NSO must conduct a formal process for selecting athletes for national teams.
- h) All athletes who are receiving support from the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (carding) before January 1, 2008, will not be eligible to receive funding from the Future Best program. All athletes who receive support from the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (carding) after January 1, 2008 will be allowed to keep their Future Best funding.

New Programming Change If an athlete is carded at the application deadline but loses their carding status after January 1, 2008 they will be eligible to apply for***

financial support directly to the Canadian Sport Centre Saskatchewan (CSCS) at any time throughout the year. These athletes will require support from their NSO confirming they are still on track to make the Senior National Team and have a strong opportunity to receive carding support again in the future. The CSCS Management Committee will determine the funding level the athlete is eligible to receive based on several factors including the number of months leading up to the next application deadline and the confirmation that the athlete is still on track to make the Senior National Team.

Application Procedure:

- a) Deadline for applications is October 1, 2008;
- b) Provincial Sport Organizations will be responsible for distributing application forms to those athletes who they identify as fully meeting the eligibility criteria;
- c) Athletes will be responsible for completing the application and forwarding it to their PSO who will forward it to Sask Sport Inc. for review. The PSO is responsible for ensuring the completed NSO questionnaire includes information on the athlete. Applications without the NSO questionnaire will be considered incomplete and ineligible.
- d) A volunteer committee of Sask Sport Inc. (consisting of a cross section of sport volunteers) will review all applications received. All applicants and the PSO will be notified as to the results of the review.

Follow-up Statement:

- a) The follow-up for this grant program will require your completed Program follow-up report and a copy of your audited financial statement(s). The audited financial statement must be submitted to the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund within 90 days of your association's fiscal year end. This grant program must be clearly identifiable as a line item in the revenue and expense summaries within your audited financial statement. The grant will be considered complete upon satisfactory review of the above follow-up requirements.

Program Criteria:

- a) Athletes may receive up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year. The amount of support granted in any given year will depend upon the number of athletes identified for support and the total amount of funds available for distribution;
- b) Support will be determined based on the athlete's rank at the national level, their commitment to training and competition, and their financial need;

- c) Funds must be used for any portion of training, coaching, equipment, competition and travel costs, not currently funded by any other funding source (scholarships, NSO or PSO support);
- d) Athletes receiving financial support will be required to sign an agreement confirming their commitment to comply with all conditions;

Appeal Process:

The purpose of the appeal process is to enable disputes between applicants and Sask Sport Inc. to be dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably, without recourse to formal legal and court-like procedures.

If an appeal is being considered contact the Sask Sport Inc. office to obtain a copy of the appeal policy. Applicants have until 30 days from the written confirmation of their application status to file their appeal. To be considered the PSO must support the appeal.

Responsibilities:

Athlete Responsibilities:

Athletes applying for Future Best support must commit to the following responsibilities:

- a) submit the completed application, along with support documentation, to Sask Sport Inc. via their Provincial Sport Organization for review;
- b) provide true statements in their application, follow up and supporting documents and to verify these statements if requested by Sask Sport Inc.;
- c) Athletes who have received Future Best funding in previous years must provide a clear indication of continued improvement.

If approved, athletes must:

- a) adhere to the competition and training program as outlined in the application;
- b) immediately advise Sask Sport Inc. of any change to the information provided in the original application. This is needed to ensure compliance is still maintained and for the timely receipt of program information;
- c) abide by the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport and the policy of the PSO and/or NSO related to the use of banned performance-enhancing substances, doping controls and sporting contacts with other countries;
- d) refund any assistance provided if the athlete does not fulfil their obligations as outlined in the athlete agreement and/or their agreed upon training and competitive program.
- e) if approached, participate in sport-related, non-commercial, promotional activities designed to assist in the promotion of the benefits of sport, and/or the Future Best program. These activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;
- f) complete & submit a follow up report upon duration of the agreement;
- g) sign an agreement confirming their commitment to comply with all conditions; and

- h) agree to represent Saskatchewan at National championships and/or multi-sport games.
- i) It is the responsibility of the athlete to notify the Future Best committee of changes in their status as it relates to the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program.

Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) Responsibilities:

The PSO plays a key role in ensuring that deserving athletes get an opportunity to access support. In doing so, the PSO agrees to:

- a) at least one month prior to the application deadline, distribute Future Best application forms and criteria to those athletes who fully meet the eligibility criteria;
- b) develop internal criteria and standards by which athletes will be identified for Future Best eligibility (it is recommended that the NSO be approached to assist in this area);
- c) complete the personal information section of the NSO Questionnaire and forward to the NSO for each athlete who will be applying; this questionnaire will then be sent back to the PSO and then forwarded to Sask Sport Inc. (510 Cynthia Street)
- d) sign the athletes completed Future Best application, make five (5) copies, and forward them to Sask Sport Inc. (510 Cynthia Street)
- e) assist in monitoring the athletes progress and advise Sask Sport Inc. immediately if they become aware that the athlete is failing to fulfil their obligations and/or commitments to the program;
- f) distribute funding directly to athletes once it is approved and released by Sask Sport;
- g) distribute the follow up information to approved applicants, and assist the athlete (if necessary) in completing the report; assist in the promotion of the Future Best program.
- h) It is the responsibility of the PSO's to notify the Future Best committee of changes in an athletes status as it relates to the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program.
- i) **It is the responsibility of the PSO to utilize all existing, reliable and objective ranking information systems (ie. Carding lists, etc) in the FB process; please ensure the NSO is involved in developing this ranking.**
- j) Sports are strongly encouraged to develop clear guidelines to determine who is eligible to apply for the Future Best program.

Sask Sport Inc.'s Responsibilities:

Sask Sport Inc. agrees to do the following:

- a) provide the PSO with Future Best materials (application, follow up, eligibility criteria, NSO questionnaire, program guidelines, etc.)
- b) establish a volunteer committee to adjudicate all applications in a fair and unbiased manner;
- c) approve and arrange payments in accordance with the program guidelines;
- d) advise all applicants (and PSOs) as to the status of their application;
- e) work with the athletes and the PSO to ensure that due process is followed in the selection of athletes, preparation of applications and follow ups, and fulfillment of obligations and commitments;
- f) promote the Future Best program to businesses and individuals as a cause worthy of support.