



Talent Squad Selection Event and briefing on squads, awards & membership

Dear N&R Committee members, Coaches and Welfare Officers, (and readers of the British Wrestling website)

Members of the Nations & Regions Committee, Coaches and Welfare Officers are invited to attend one of two briefing sessions that will cover:

- A new Talent/Development Squad structure
- A new British Wrestling White Award that will align with the FILA colour awards
- A new Recreational Membership level

The briefing Q&A sessions will be at:

- Wigan and Leigh in parallel to weighing-in on 4th Sept at 7:30-8:30
- Leytonstone, in parallel to Referees Course, 12th Sept 12:30-13:30
- British Wrestling Academy, Salford, on 19th Sept 12:30-13:30, alongside the Development Squad event

After the first briefing session I will circulate a summary of the briefing and Q/As that came up there.

Below, is a short summary on each topic:-

Talent/Development Squad structure

In line with the performance pathways in all other Olympic sports, there will be a talent, development and performance squad structure. It is also intended to have a regionally based Club/School squads for 10-13years. As well as having a consistent pathway, it is important that to ensure we have a transparent selection and development process for our young athletes who are aspiring to achieve domestic and international success.

The current Performance structure remains unchanged, at Salford. However, the current Development Squad will be disbanded and replaced by a Talent Squad (14-19yrs) and new Development Squad (18+ yrs). These national squads will be brought together on a regular basis, approx 5-6 times per year. The finer detail of the logistics and dates of the squads coming together across the year has still to be worked through, but it is expected that athletes would arrive on Friday night, train on Saturday, have a short session on Sunday and return home. Only athletes who are part of these squads will be considered for international tournaments

Club Coaches that want athletes to be considered for the new Talent Squad should send them up to attend the last current Development Squad date of 19th September, (for males & females), where they will be assessed by a panel consisting of Performance Director, National Coach, Scottish Coach and Steven McKeown. This panel will be part of an overall assessment as they will also consider previous performance, and performance in international tournaments. To ensure that only those eligible come to the session, athletes should have finished in the top 3 at the British Junior Championships and the minimum age that will be assessed is 14, (and those coming up for 14 by British Juniors in May 2010). Also, athletes need to be eligible for international weight classes (min 40kg male, 36kg female). Detailed selection criteria for all squads, is given below.

Coaches need to communicate about these changes and the 19th September selection event to their athletes and parents. Current Development Squad parents should also receive a letter by end-August.



British Wrestling White Award

This award is intended as an introduction to the FILA Award scheme and gives an attainable target for school sessions and the earlier club sessions. Children are then well placed with a more standard foundation knowledge of grips, stance, basic exercises and moves, which will equip them progress in clubs to the FILA Yellow Award and upwards. Some athletes who have already been wrestling for a few months will not necessarily take the White Award but go straight to the yellow FILA Award. Any present Level 2 coach will be able to assess the White Award. However, assessors of the initial stages of the FILA awards need to be Level 2 coaches qualified under the new scheme. Link to June website announcement <http://britishwrestling.org/plibrary/docs/FILAawards09.pdf>

Recreational Membership level

This level of BWA membership will be required for people taking part in the British Wrestling White Award, (to be eligible for a British Wrestling Award, an athlete needs to be a member of the BWA). It will lead to a consistent approach to membership and consistent application of the White Award. It is expected that many on current Block Memberships will transfer to the Recreational Membership. Current competitive membership remains unchanged and Recreational Memberships applies to the FILA Awards as it does to the White Award if an athlete does not compete at competitions. Recreational membership will cost £5, with £4 being returned to the Regions, £1 being retained for postage and administrative costs etc.

I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you at the briefings, but any immediate questions on the above should be addressed, in the first instance, to the BWA Administrator.

Colin Nicholson
Interim Chief Executive
7th August 2009

Squad Selection Criteria:

Selection for National Talent Squad (NTS)

a) Athletes must be no younger than 14 yrs and no older than 19 yrs of age to be considered for selection

b) Athletes will only be considered for selection if they are above 40 kgs, i.e. they are able to complete in an internationally recognised weight class for the Cadet or Junior levels.

c) Athletes will be required to compete in the British and / or the English Junior Championships. Those finishing in the top three places of each weight class may be invited to attend the squad sessions at the discretion of the national coaching staff. Selection as a member of the National Talent squad will be based on assessment by the national coaching staff using the following criteria:

- * consistency of performances and current rate of improvement
- * past achievements at major domestic events
- * potential to compete successfully at international competition
- * current level of physical fitness and current medical/injury status
- * suitability as a team member (past behaviour)

d) All members of the talent squad will be required to attend each squad session. More than two unauthorised absence within a six month period may result in an athlete's membership of the development squad being terminated.

e) Athletes within the 14 to 19 age group can only be selected for international competition if they are members of the NTS.

f) Selection for international competition will be based firstly on the athlete being the first ranked wrestler in the weight class. Additionally, the athlete will only be selected for international competitions if, in the opinion of the coaching staff, they have the ability to successfully compete at an international level.

g) The national coaching staff, reserve the right to invite any athlete onto the NTS where it is believed the athlete has the ability to develop and succeed at an international level. This situation will only apply when an athlete has been unable to compete in both the relevant English and British Championships due to illness, injury or other exceptional circumstances.

Selection for the National Development Squad (NDS)(18+)

a) Athletes will be required to compete in the British and / or the English Senior Championships. Those finishing in the top three places of each weight class may be invited to attend the squad sessions at the discretion of the national coaching staff. Selection as a member of the National Development squad will be based on assessment by the national coaching staff using the following criteria:

- * consistency of performances and current rate of improvement
- * past achievements at major domestic events
- * potential to compete successfully at international competition
- * current level of physical fitness and current medical/injury status
- * suitability as a team member (past behaviour)

b) All members of the NDS will be required to attend all squad sessions. More than two unauthorised absence within a six month period may result in an athlete's membership of the senior squad being terminated.

- c) Athletes can only be selected for international competition if they are members of the NDS.
- d) Athletes will only be selected for international competitions if, in the opinion of the coaching staff, they have the ability to successfully compete at an international level.
- e) The national coaching staff, reserve the right to invite any athlete onto the NDS where it is believed the athlete has the ability to develop and succeed at an international level. This situation will only apply when an athlete has been unable to compete in both the relevant English and British Championships due to illness, injury or other exceptional circumstances.

Selection to the National Performance Squad (NPS)

- a) Those aspiring to be members of the NPS will be required to be members of the NTS or NDS as a pre-requisite to selection.
- b) Athletes who finish in the top six in more than one FILA international tournament within a twelve month period will then be invited to attend a twelve week trial period with the NPS. Other athletes may be invited to attend a twelve week trial period with the NPS at the discretion of the national performance coaching staff, if they fall within the below categories:
 - Have previously demonstrated success at FILA Junior and Cadet level and/or senior competition.
 - Have the required technical, tactical and mental ability to qualify for and achieve a podium finish World or European Championships.
 - Be prepared to commit to a training and competition programme aimed at developing them into successful world class athletes.
- c) During the trial period the athlete will be exposed to the full training and competition regime of the performance squad. The athlete will be assessed on commitment, physical, technical and tactical improvement.
- d) At the end of the twelve week trial period the athlete will undergo a formal review chaired by the Performance Director incorporating the input of relevant support and coaching staff. At this time it will be decided whether to confirm the athlete as a member of the NPS, alternatively extend or terminate the trial period.
- e) The NTS and NDS will aim to progress at least 2 athletes into the NPS per year.