

SELECTION POLICY CHANGES

SCOTTISH CURLING

DETAILS AND COMMENTARY

The Scottish curling community has had many recent moments to be proud of the curling teams representing Scotland and Great Britain in international competitions. Olympic gold, World and European Champions and several teams in the top world rankings, all being highlights.

This has all been achieved through a professional approach to athlete preparation and selection - and sometimes the selection side comes with very tough choices.

Scottish Curling, in conjunction with British Curling, have been considering the 2026 Winter Olympics, the 2026 World Championships and the 2026 Scottish Championships.

There are difficult choices to be made if our athletes are to be as well prepared as possible for the world events and navigate logistical challenges caused by timings.



After much careful consideration the following has been decided:

1) The winners of the Scottish Championship in 2026 will not have a bearing on the world championship selection which will be made in January 2026 well before the Scottish Championship is held;

2) Those (male & female) selected for the Olympics will not be considered for selection for the 2026 World Curling Championships;

3) Those selected for Olympics will not be required to (but may choose, if logistics allow, to) play in the Scottish Championship save that alternates at the Olympics will be required to play (ordinarily the professional teams are required to do so);

4) Those selected for the Worlds will be required to play in the Scottish Championship.

It is appreciated that these decisions involve difficult choices. They are made with the intention of assisting our curling athletes in representing Great Britain and Scotland on the global stage.

By way of explanation of these decisions here are some Questions and Answers:



Q1) who picks the teams?

A) Teams will be selected in line with the approved International Selection Policy 2022-2026. The selection panel will consist of three voting members, one of whom is the Scottish Curling representative while the other two are the Executive Performance Director of British Curling and the Olympic Head Coach.

Q2) what basis is selection made on?

A) Selection is based on the criteria within the approved International Selection Policy 2022-2026 but in this case data from the Scottish Championships which would normally be immediately prior to the Selection Date will not be available and not form part of the process.

Q3) why can't the Scottish be scheduled earlier to impact selections?

A) We have carried out a full review of the Competitions Schedule and it is not possible to find suitable dates to hold the Scottish Championships at an earlier date. Scottish Curling also wish to maximise impact of the public interest usually generated around the Winter Olympics and see hosting the Scottish Championships immediately after the Winter Olympics as giving Curling throughout Scotland a further opportunity to promote the sport.

Q4) why can't the Olympians go to the worlds?

A) It has been agreed with British Curling that the selected Olympic Teams will not be considered for selection to the 2026 World Championships. This allows for better preparation arrangements for both teams and ensures that fatigue whether physical or mental does not inhibit performance.

All athletes were advised of this decision in late 2022. The International Selection Policy 2022-2026 makes provision for the objective of selection to better prepare teams towards the 2030 Winter Olympics. The non selection of Olympic Teams serves this objective.

Q5) what happens to alternates?

A) Alternates to the Olympic Teams will be considered for selection in line with the International Selection Policy 2022-2026. An alternate to an Olympic team who is selected for the Worlds will still be part of the Worlds team even if they play at the Olympics. If an athlete selected for the Olympic team (not an alternate) does not play at the Olympics, the Worlds selection will not be changed.

Q6) Why does selection have to take place prior to the Scottish Championship when that has not happened in previous years?

A) We consider making selections early will give performance benefits in terms of preparation for the selected teams. Early selection will also greatly assist in logistical planning around kit and travel etc.

Q7) If the Scottish Championship is not relevant to selection and the Olympic team may not participate, why hold a Scottish Championship in 2026 at all?

A) These are tough decisions but Scottish Curling is not seeking to devalue the Scottish Championship. The annual tradition of hosting a Scottish Championship and producing a Scottish Champion is very important and part of the fabric of the game in Scotland. The Championship will also provide performance preparation for the team selected for the Worlds when other competitive alternatives are not available. As above, a Scottish Championship held close after the 2026 Olympics gives a strong window to showcase the domestic game

Q8) Is this a one off or will it become a regular feature?

A) The current intention is that it is a one off in the context of the Cortina Olympics. If a performance benefit is evident, then it may be considered when future selection criteria is considered.

Conclusion: it is hoped that these tough choices will give our athletes the best chances to compete successfully at the Olympic and the Worlds.



Signed - The Board of Directors:

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