



Cross Country Ontario (CCO)
***Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2010-2011**
Able-bodied Athlete Selection Criteria

A Program Description

A.1 Objectives

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2010-2011 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport (MHPS), and operated through the Sport, Recreation & Community Programs Branch. The overarching goal of the *Quest for Gold* – OAAP is directly related to the Enhanced Excellence goals of the *Canadian Sport Policy* – to improve the performance and number of Ontario athletes performing at the national and international level; thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions. Specific objectives of the program are:

- a) To help athletes continue their pursuit of athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition;
- b) To encourage athletes to stay in Ontario to live and train;
- c) To compensate athletes for earnings lost while training;
- d) To enable athletes to successfully pursue excellence in sport while fulfilling their educational goals;
- e) To increase athlete access to improved high performance coaching; and
- f) To enhance training and competitive opportunities available to athletes.

The program will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior-aged athletes through an "Ontario Card" designation. "Junior-aged athlete" is defined as those athletes who fall within the eligible age range for the Canada Games - 11 to 22 years of age. A PSO/MSO with a NSO-approved Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTADM) that identifies older athletes in the "Train to Train" and "Train to Compete" categories may apply to MHPS for a variation to this 11-22 age range. A PSO/MSO may choose to allocate a maximum of 30% of its carding allotment to athletes older than 22 years of age who have been identified as a potential next generation national team athlete by the PSO/MSO's selection process.

The intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition.

A.2 How does it work?

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, Cross Country Ontario is responsible for developing sport specific selection criteria and forming a Selection Committee that will apply the criteria to select those athletes who will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2010-2011. The Selection Criteria is approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by MHPS staff. Nominated athletes will be required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Cross Country Ontario. Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2010 ending March 31, 2011.

In 2010-2011, the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport allocated a certain number of OAAP Ontario Cards to each eligible Provincial Sport/Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/MSO). Cross Country Ontario has been allotted a total of 10 Ontario cards (split evenly as 5 male and 5 female cards).

A minimum of 70% of the Ontario cards will be allocated to what the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport defines as junior-aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age). A maximum of 30% of the Ontario cards may be allocated to athletes no longer eligible for "junior athlete" status (i.e., athletes 23 and over).

As a result, the 10 cards issued to Cross Country Ontario will be allocated as follows:

	Male	Female
Full Cards – 10	5	5

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines Cross Country Ontario is responsible for forming a Selection Committee and sport specific selection criteria to nominate the athletes for Ontario carding status in 2010-2011. This selection criteria has been approved by the Cross Country Ontario Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee has been approved by the Cross Country Ontario Board of Directors, and is comprised of the following members:

Brad Jones, Chair, CCO High Performance Committee
Kateri Mills, Ontario Provincial Coach
Jim Steele, CCO Board
Mark Thomas, CCO High Performance Committee

A.3 How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2010-2011 carding year will be determined by the Ministry after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined. Funding will be released prior to March 31, 2011.

A.4 How will the Cross Country Ontario Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The Cross Country Ontario Selection Committee will use both the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated by Cross Country Ontario for Ontario Card status in 2010-2011.

B Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport Eligibility Criteria

B.1 Minimum Eligibility Requirements

All athletes must also meet the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport's minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

1. Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status are not eligible for Ontario Cards.
2. Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant;
3. Athlete must be a permanent resident of Ontario **for one year prior** to his/her nomination for carding status.
4. Athletes must living in and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions may be made **on a case specific basis by the PSO/MSO Selection Committee** providing that the athlete can substantiate in writing at the time of application/nomination for carding status that:
 - o He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province **temporarily** during the year (i.e. due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
 - o He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not offered by an Ontario institution;
 - o It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province.

The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out of province. This information must be received by the Selection Committee by no later than **September 30, 2010** in order to be considered.

5. Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable.
6. Athlete must have entered into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with his or her PSO/MSO and must be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement.
7. Athlete must have met all terms and conditions of any previous *Quest for Gold Sports Organization – Athlete Agreements* to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO in order to be eligible for consideration in 2010/2011;
8. Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program.
9. Athlete must be instructed by a coach who has been trained and certified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Level 2 or equivalent.
10. Athlete must not be under a sanction that prohibits competition as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy;
11. Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. elementary and secondary schools)
 - o Exceptions will be made providing that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g. Athlete with a disability (AWAD))
12. Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be given consideration.
13. If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of the Minister's letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions;
14. Athlete must not receive financial support from any other provincial/territorial athlete assistance program. This does not include academic scholarships, bursaries, student grants, student loans, social assistance, disability pensions, and other forms of financial assistance that have nothing to do with competitive sport;

15. Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for athletes older than 22 years of age who have been identified as a potential next generation national team athlete by the PSO/MSO's selection process.

Residency Exemption for Military Families: The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service and who takes up residence in Ontario during the fiscal year. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see the 2010-2011 *Quest for Gold* Athlete Handbook for details of this exemption, including a list of documents needed to verify eligibility for this waiver of the one-year Ontario residency requirement.

B.2 Important Notes:

- To be deemed a potential next generation national team athlete, the athlete must be age-eligible to compete on the national team in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding.
- All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.
- Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are not eligible to receive OAAP support.
- An athlete that received Sport Canada Carding during any part of MHPS's fiscal year April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010 and/or any part of fiscal year April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive *Quest for Gold* funding during fiscal year 2010-2011 (April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.) The intent of this rule is to prevent athletes whose performance levels and rankings no longer qualify them for Sport Canada carding from taking an Ontario Card from a future national-level athlete. However, exceptions may apply and will be considered by the Ministry on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes (ex. reduction in Sport Canada carding allocation), injuries, etc.
- An athlete can only be nominated to receive *Quest for Gold* funding in one sport.
- The onus is entirely on the athlete to determine the impact of accepting OAAP funding on current or future NCAA eligibility and to decide whether or not to accept OAAP funding. The athlete will be required to acknowledge this onus and responsibility when signing the OAAP Ontario Card application form and agreeing to the related terms and conditions of the program. Athletes are strongly encouraged to contact the NCAA Eligibility Center to determine the impact of *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding on current or future eligibility for a NCAA scholarship or on eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

National Collegiate Athletic Association

www.ncaa.org

NCAA Eligibility Center mailing address:

NCAA Eligibility Center
P.O. Box 7136
Indianapolis, IN 46207

Customer service hours - 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday.
Toll-free phone number (U.S. callers) - Customer service line – 877-262-1492
Phone number (international callers) - Customer service line – 317-223-0700
Fax number - 317-968-5100

- In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between the MHPS eligibility requirements detailed in the MHPS binder provided to PSO/MSOs and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete and the eligibility requirements listed in the PSO/MSO Athlete Selection Criteria Document prepared by the PSO/MSO, the MHPS Binder/Athlete Handbook shall prevail.

C Cross Country Ontario 2010-2011 Sport-Specific Athlete Selection Criteria

This section contains the sport-specific athlete selection criteria to be used in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards. In order to avoid the possibility of a conflict of interest in the OAAP selection process, the Athlete Representative, and any member of the HPC who has a child on the Ontario Ski Team, will not participate in the application of the criteria or the selection process.

C.1 What are the CCO Objectives for OAAP funding?

The CCO HPC is looking to support Ontario athletes who have the best chance of making a national team in the next three years. The determination of who has the best chance of making a national team will be based on an athlete's performance on the Canada Points List (CPL) and their percentage proximity to the International CPL Points Benchmarks (IPB) as posted by CCC.

C.2 CCO Selection Criteria for Full Cards

1. The HPC will rank all Ontario Ski Team athletes, as follows:
 - a) A sprint ranking list and a distance ranking list will be generated. These lists will rank athletes using each athlete's CPL for distance and sprint, and calculate a percentage of the IPB distance and IPB sprint values respectively, for the applicable year of birth.
 - b) The selected athletes will be those five females and five males who have the highest average percentage based on an equal weighting of both the Distance and Sprint percentages.
 - c) The IPB to be used will be the International CPL Points Benchmarks developed by Cross Country Canada advanced to the 2009-2010 year of competition. The CPL used will be the Period 5 list published April 25, 2010.
2. A tie between two or more athletes on the ranking list will be broken by comparing the results of the head-to-head competitions in the common races used to generate the respective CPL numbers for those athletes.

C.3 CCO Selection Process

The athletes who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and the CCO selection criteria as set out above are invited to apply for OAAP carding through an online application process. Information provided to Cross Country Ontario must include:

1. A detailed training plan. The plan must show the athlete's current training and racing plan and the steps they intend on following to achieve national and international success. The plan must be approved by their personal or club coach, and the Ontario Coach.
2. A written record of the athlete's training log demonstrating adherence to the above plan, including proof of attendance at appropriate, specific training camps or events through the 2010-2011 dryland season.
3. A commitment to sign an Athlete Agreement, which will be sent to eligible athletes. The agreement covers the athlete's obligations and commitments for the period of funding. This agreement will include a commitment to engage the services of a qualified coach, and to participate in a number of specified training camps and races over the carding period, of April 1st, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

D Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons (Force Majeure)

Athletes who, for strictly health-related reasons, have not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status **may** be considered for nomination under the following conditions:

- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- Cross Country Ontario, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.

Athletes who apply for OAAP carding consideration under Force Majeure will be ranked against one another, and the other athletes on the standard CCO OAAP ranking list as follows:

1. A performance figure for the Force Majeure candidate will be determined based on the average of the CPL for the best two distance races and the best two sprint races attained by that athlete in the competitive season where training and/or competition was curtailed or restricted for health reasons.
2. This performance measure will be used to generate an OAAP ranking for the Force Majeure athlete(s) in the same manner (i.e., proximity from IPB based on year of birth) that is used for all other eligible athletes on the OAAP ranking list.
3. The addition of a male Force Majeure athlete to the ranking list will not affect the selection process for female athletes and vice versa.
4. A maximum of two Force Majeure appeals (one male and one female) will be accommodated in any one OAAP carding cycle.
5. A Force Majeure athlete must demonstrate a performance figure on the CCO OAAP ranking list that would put them in the top half of the ranking list for the available number of cards in their gender.
6. The CCO HPC reserves the right to revert to the CPL performance history from the previous year of competition in the case where a Force Majeure candidate was not able to participate in the minimum number of races specified in criteria # 1 above.

E Alternates

Cross Country Ontario will also nominate alternates to those athletes nominated for Ontario Card status. Alternates will be those athletes who are ranked directly behind those athletes nominated for the allotment of Ontario Cards in a particular category/discipline. The names of alternates will

be published along with the names of nominated athletes. If an athlete drops out or is removed from the OAAP an alternate will be substituted into that athlete's position, provided that:

- Alternate is substituted within 2010-2011 fiscal year;
- An alternate is available from the same category/discipline/card level (Full/Half);
- Funding for athlete being substituted is still available within fiscal year (e.g. full funding for card has not already been paid out to athlete no longer in program).

F To Apply

Nominated athletes will be invited to apply online at www.questforgold.ca.
This must be completed by October 25th, 2010.

Athlete agreements and proof of ON residency should be mailed to:

Name: Liz Inkila
Email: admin@xco.org
Address: 738 River St, Thunder Bay, ON, P7A 3S8
Phone number: 807-768-4617
Fax number: 807-768-8368

and received not later than **November 12th, 2010**. The CCO OAAP Athlete Agreement will only come into effect if an athlete is selected and accepts carding status through the OAAP program.

Cross Country Ontario will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than **October 13, 2010**.

G Appeals

Appeals will be allowed from athletes who have not been nominated by a PSO/MSO for Ontario Card status. Appeals will only be accepted directly from athletes (or from their parent/guardian for athletes under 18 years of age). Appeals will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to issues related to:

A) Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with its own published selection criteria and related procedures;

B) Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
2. Deny the appeal; or
3. Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The appeals will only be accepted on the MHPS-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. Appeals must be received by MHPS by 5 p.m. on the deadline day as posted below. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted. The Appeals Committee will discuss all appeals at once, after PSO/MSOs

publish their list of nominated athletes. Appeals received in advance of the PSO/MSO announcing nominees will not be reviewed until after the Appeals deadline.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is

Cycle One: **October 25, 2010**

Appeals must be completed on the template below and will be directed to:

Quest for Gold Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee
c/o Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport,
777 Bay Street, Suite 702
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1S5

2010/2011 *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeal Template

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 25, 2010 for Cycle 1 and January 26, 2011 for Cycle 2. Appeals will only be accepted on the MHPS-provided template. **Please refer to the appeals section of your PSO/MSO's Athlete Selection Criteria document prior to completing this form.**

Full Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sport / PSO: _____

Reason for Appeal (Check one only):

Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;

Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

Provide a two-line summary of the reason for the appeal:

In the space below (continue on to next page as needed), provide a detailed account of the situation to allow the Appeals Committee to understand the basis of the appeal (please submit additional pages/supporting documentation if necessary):

Print Name of Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.