



Date: 15 February 2026

ROWING SOUTH AFRICA (RowSA)

UNDER 19 PATHWAY DOCUMENT 2026

1. FOREWARD

1.1. This policy outlines the selection process, expectations, and key requirements for athletes aiming to represent South Africa at the **2026 World Rowing U19 Championships, Plovdiv, Bulgaria**. The process is performance-based and should be read in conjunction with the RowSA Selection document and U19 National Selection 2026 Timelines as published on the RowSA Website. This document replaces all previous communications on this subject.

2. SELECTION PHILOSOPHY

2.1 The selection process is based on the following principles:

2.1.1. **The Good Faith Principle:** Athletes and coaches must uphold integrity, commitment, and transparency.

2.1.2. **IC Mission and Vision:** Maintain South African rowing's elite competitiveness and foster a fair, structured selection pathway to develop the future pool of elite athletes.

2.2. Target Range:

2.2.1. **Primary Objective:** Qualify athletes to achieve a top 50% finish of field at the 2026 World Rowing U19 Championships.

2.2.2. **Secondary Objective:** Foster positive international racing experiences for athletes and development of High-Performance behaviors.

3. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

3.1 To provide a clear, structured framework for selecting the U19 National Team, ensuring all athletes are evaluated fairly and consistently.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. **RowSA IC:** Rowing South Africa International Commission.

4.2 **Selection Regatta:** Designated Regattas for athlete evaluation.

4.3 **Performance Testing:** A combination of ergometer trials, water assessments, and race performances.

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5. SELECTION PRINCIPLES

5.1 Eligibility for Selection-. As per important dates

- 5.1.1. Registered intent by end November 2025 [link](#)
- 5.1.2 Race the single or pair at the South African Schools Rowing Championship regatta.
- 5.1.2. South African National Championships, Roodeplaat.
- 5.1.3. Must race in the **May National Selection Regatta**.
- 5.1.6. June National Performance Assessment, Roodeplaat Dam
- 5.1.7 Ineligibility applies if an athlete does not compete in the May National Selection Regatta, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

5.2 Assessment Boat classes

- 5.2.1 Any boat classes offered at the U19 World Championship may be presented at the May Selection regatta.
- 5.2.1.1 The IC may change the available boat classes at its discretion.

5.3 Selection Panel

The main policy requires the selection panel to be named in the pathway document.

5.3.1. Selection Panel Pursuant to the RowSA Selection Policy, the U19 Selection Panel consists of:

- **Chairperson:** IC Lead Member- Trevor Dedlow
- **Lead Coach:** Caitlin Dace
- **Additional Selector:** James Thompson.
- **Additional Selector:** Shaun Keeling.

5.4 Selection Process

5.4.1 Selection will be seen in 4 phases:

- Phase 1 - Initial athlete monitoring – November to February
- Phase 2 - High Performance Squad formation - March
- Phase 3 - Crew Formation March – May
- Phase 4 - Junior National Squad Selection and final preparation – May to August

5.4.2 Phase 1: Initial athlete monitoring – November to February

Seasonal performances and results, including water and ergometer assessments, as per the U19 National Selection 2026 Timelines.

5.4.3 Phase 2. High Performance Squad formation March

5.4.3.1 Selection into the Junior High Performance squad will primarily be based on performance at the South African Schools' Championship in March 2026.

5.4.3.2 Athletes in the JM and JW U19 1X and 2- events achieving 3.5% or better of the top performer/crew in these 4 events, will progress into the Junior High Performance Squad.

In the event of all four races not being completed within 30 minutes of each other, or the selection panel deeming conditions to have changed, a second race will be scheduled within 2 weeks.

5.4.3.3 Athletes not achieving the above requirement will be considered by the Selection Panel for progression based on data collected in the monitoring phase.

5.4.4 Phase 3. Crew Formation March to May

5.4.4.1 All athletes qualifying for the Junior High-Performance Squad will participate in a crew formation phase within their provinces, under the direction of the U19 Head Coach, overseen by the selection panel.

5.4.4.2 Crew coaches will be appointed by the Junior Selection Panel throughout this phase.

Performances through the season together with erg data will be used in the initial formation of crews, with particular attention being paid to the discipline through which the athlete is qualified.

5.4.4.3 Seat Racing and additional assessments will be at the discretion of the u19 Head Coach / Selection panel in order to satisfy their crew formation needs.

5.4.4.4. Junior National High Performance Squad crews will proceed to race at the Gauteng Championships and the South African National Championships.

5.4.4.5. Crews that demonstrate a suitable standard of performance across training and racing will be invited to attend the May Selection regatta.

5.4.5 Cox selection:

5.4.5.1 Unless an 8+ is progressed, there are no coxed boats at the World Rowing U19 Championships. Therefore no coxswains will be progressed to the High-Performance Squad. Provinces may select coxswains for the Gauteng and South African National Championships if an eight is raced.

5.4.6 Phase 4: Junior National Squad Selection and final preparation – May to August

The May National Selection Regatta

5.4.6.1 Primary Selection Event for U19 athletes.

5.4.6.2 Athletes must complete three 2000m races.

5.4.6.3 Race Schedule: One race on Friday, two on Saturday, and a possible fourth on Sunday.

5.4.6.4 Attendance is mandatory with the belief that the athlete meets the standards to qualify their crew/boat.

5.4.6.5 Participation acknowledges readiness and suitability for qualification.

5.4.6.6 Equipment: Each athlete is responsible for arranging their own boats and oars; RowSA may on occasion allow use of the National Team Boats when it falls within the parameters RowSA Equipment usage policy.

5.4.6.7 The RowSA IC may request any athlete to race in any boat class or crew to find the best combinations.

5.4.6.8 Qualification Standard: To qualify for the 2026 World Rowing U19 Championships, an athlete or crew must finish within **2.5 percent of the fastest boat class** in two (2) of the three (3) races at the May National Selection Regatta (across all age categories: U19, students, U23, and senior athletes).

Special note: All boat classes are assessed against world best time with the exception of the JM4- which will use a 100% time of 05:53:00

5.4.6.9 The Selection panel reserves the right to select crews or athletes, who do not strictly achieve the prognostic requirement.

5.4.6.10 Athletes or crews who meet the prognostic standards at the May Selection Regatta will be selected to the Junior National Squad to compete at the 2026 World Rowing U19 Championship. Crew coaches will be appointed by the IC in the selection announcement made after the May Selection Regatta.

5.5 The June National Performance Regatta

5.5.1 All athletes who qualify in May shall race at the National Performance Regatta for a progress assessment.

5.5.2 Crews and coaches will be evaluated by the selection panel.

5.5.3 The U19 Head National coach may request any athlete to race in any boat class or crew to find the best combinations.

5.6 Appeals

5.6.1 Appeals against a selection decision need to be considered and submitted as per the IC appeals published on the RowSA Website.

5.6.2 Athletes are reminded of the strict timelines laid out in this document.

5.7 Additional Assessments

5.7.1 The Head Coach, with approval from the Selection Panel, reserves the right to organize additional assessments, ad hoc trials, or crew formation races with reasonable notice.

5.7.2 The Selection Panel also retains the right to make unilateral changes to crew compositions if internal racing results or internal testing suggest a faster combination can be formed.

5.8 Expectations & Requirements

5.8.1 **Commitment to Excellence:** Consistent high performance in training, testing, and racing.

5.8.2 **Performance Data Submission:** Complete all required ergometer and water trials within deadlines.

5.8.3 **Attendance:** Required at key selection regattas and subsequent training camps.

5.8.4 **Coachability & Adaptability:** Must work within the integrated system under the guidance of the U19 National Coach and RowSA IC.

5.8.5 **Teamwork & Sportsmanship:** Essential collaboration, mutual respect, and alignment with team goals.

5.8.6 **Ethics:** Must be available for drug testing in accordance with WADA guidelines.

5.8.7 **Health Management:** Must submit a medical certificate confirming fitness to the U19 National Coach by 1 May 2026.

5.8.8 **Financial Responsibility:** The athlete is responsible for all costs associated with the U19 World Championship tour (travel, accommodation, etc.).

5.9 Attendance and Absence Reporting

5.9.1 If an athlete cannot participate in a trial, assessment, or race due to medical or other exceptional reasons, they must submit their case in writing to the U19 National Head Coach.

5.9.2 **Deadline:** This representation must be received at least 12 hours before the selection event begins.

5.9.3 **Requirement:** No representations will be considered if made after the event has commenced.

5.9.4 **Medical Evidence:** A medical certificate from a doctor nominated or approved by the Head Coach must be provided for all illness/injury claims.

5.10 IMPORTANT DATES AND DOCUMENTS

5.10.1 ROWING SOUTH AFRICA SELECTION POLICY - 2026 & Important Dates: <https://rowsa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026-IC-Important-dates.pdf>

5.11 FINAL NOTE

5.11.1 All selection dates are subject to change at the discretion of the RowSA IC, subject to exigencies and due notice to all registered athletes.