



## BIATHLON BC DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND APPEAL POLICY

### Preamble

1. Membership in Biathlon BC (“**BiBC**”) offers many benefits and privileges. It also entails responsibilities and obligations. All Members of BiBC, and the organization itself, are expected to comply with all BiBC by-laws, rules and policies, fulfil contracts and agreements they have entered into and abide by all BiBC decisions which affect them.

2. The BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy addresses BiBC’s obligation to establish mechanisms and procedures for resolving internal disputes. It also provides recourse to members who have valid grounds to appeal certain decisions made by BiBC, and the decisions of those to whom a decision making authority has been delegated by BiBC. The Policy reflects BiBC’s commitment to treat all members fairly and with respect.

3. This Policy encompasses an integrated process that provides sufficient internal options and external alternatives to ensure that issues can be resolved with appropriate transparency and timeliness, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

### Definitions

4. For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

a. Member –refers to all registered participants and clubs of BiBC, as well as to all individuals engaged in activities with BiBC. This includes, but is not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors and officers.

b. Days – in the context of the time by which an action must be complete, refers to total calendar days, irrespective of weekends or holidays.

c. Complainant – refers to the Member who reports a complaint and is seeking redress.

d. Appellant – refers to the Member who is appealing a BiBC decision.

e. Respondent – refers to the individual or body which is the subject of a complaint or whose decision is being appealed.

### BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Processes

5. The processes that comprise the BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy are described briefly as follows:

a. BiBC Dispute Resolution Process. This Process applies to matters in dispute between BiBC and its Members, or between Members, relating to conduct or actions that are alleged to contravene BiBC



by-laws, policies, rules and contracts/agreements. No final decision shall have been made with respect to the matters in dispute at the commencement of this Process. Parties who perceive that decisions rendered by the Panel at the conclusion of this Process are procedurally unfair may appeal such decisions through the BiBC Appeal Process. The BiBC Dispute Resolution Process is set out in detail at Annex A.

b. BiBC Summary Dispute Resolution Process. This Process applies only to individual BiBC Members who have signed a BiBC Athlete Agreement. The BiBC Summary Dispute Resolution Process is a procedure that allows issues to be resolved in a time-sensitive fashion when recourse to the BiBC Dispute Resolution Process is not possible or practical. The Process is intended to facilitate and expedite decision-making when there is a critical lack of time or when decisions may affect an athlete's eligibility for competition or other time-sensitive participation. The process can be used by an athlete to appeal disciplinary sanctions imposed as a result of a breach of the BiBC Code of Conduct, or by BiBC to deal with other specified breaches or disputes. Decisions made pursuant to this process may be appealed in the same manner as specified for the BiBC Dispute Resolution Process (see paragraph 5a above). The BiBC Summary Dispute Resolution Process is set out in detail at Annex B.

c. BiBC Appeal Process. This process provides recourse for a Member to appeal, in limited situations, decisions made by BiBC or any BiBC body or any individual that has been delegated decision-making authority by the BiBC Board. Decisions that may be accepted for an appeal include, but are not limited to, Athlete Assistance Program, contracts, harassment, selection and discipline, as well as decisions made at the conclusion of the BiBC Dispute Resolution Process or Summary Dispute Resolution Process. The BiBC Appeal Process is set out in detail at Annex C. Decisions reached through the BiBC Appeal Process are final and binding on all parties.

### **Understanding the Process**

6. Individuals who are in doubt or who require further elaboration are invited to direct their questions to any member of the BiBC Board, to the or to the Chairperson of the BiBC Program Development Committee.



## **ANNEX A - BiBC DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

### **Scope and Application**

1. This policy applies to matters in dispute between BiBC and Members arising from their respective responsibilities and obligations contained in all by-laws, policies, rules and contracts. No final decision shall have been made with respect to the matters in dispute at the commencement of this process.

### **Reporting a Complaint**

2. Any individual subject to this process (whether a Member or the representative of BiBC) may report a complaint to BiBC's President. Before the process can proceed, a complaint must be submitted in writing, together with a brief summary of the matters in dispute.

### **Screening of Complaint**

3. Within five days of receiving the written notice of the complaint and summary, the President shall determine whether the matters in dispute and the parties to the dispute are properly within the scope and application of this process, or are more properly dealt with pursuant to another provision of the Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy or to another policy of BiBC. In the absence of the President, a designate shall perform this function. This decision regarding jurisdiction is final and may not be appealed.

### **Investigation**

4. Depending on the nature of the reported complaint, the President may appoint an independent individual to conduct an investigation in order to confirm the background and context of the complaint and to ascertain the facts. If an investigation is ordered, the investigator shall carry out the task in a timely manner and at the conclusion shall submit a written report to the President.

### **Hearing Panel**

5. If the President, or designate, is satisfied that this process applies, then within 14 days of having received the original notice of the complaint or within 14 days of receiving the written report of the investigator (if an investigation was carried out), the President shall establish a Hearing Panel (the "Panel") and select the members of the Panel as follows:

a. The Panel shall be comprised of either one or three individuals who shall have no significant relationship with the affected parties, shall have had no involvement with the complaint or the dispute, and shall be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict. The decision regarding the size of the Panel shall be at the sole discretion of the President who must, in coming to the



decision, ensure that the hearing process complies with the principles of natural justice and provides procedural fairness to all parties. The decision regarding Panel size may not be appealed.

b. If the Panel consists of three persons, and if a BiBC Member brings the complaint, one member of the Panel shall be the Member's nominee. The Member may submit a list of three candidates from which the President shall select one candidate to be a member of the Panel. The Member's three nominees shall have had no involvement with the complaint or the dispute, and shall be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.

c. If the Panel consists of three persons, the Panel members shall select a Panel Chairperson.

### **Preliminary Conference**

6. The Panel may determine that the circumstances of the complaint warrant a preliminary conference. In most cases, the preliminary conference shall be conducted by telephone. The issues that may be considered at a preliminary conference include:

a. the format of the hearing, as the hearing may proceed by either a review of documentary evidence, an in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or a combination of these methods. The Panel, in coming to its decision regarding the format of the hearing, must ensure that the hearing process complies with the principles of natural justice and provides procedural fairness to all parties;

b. the date and (if in-person) location of the hearing;

c. the timelines for the exchange of documents and the extent of disclosure required;

d. the clarification of issues in dispute;

e. the clarification of evidence to be presented to the Panel;

f. the order and procedure of the hearing;

g. the identification of witnesses; and

h. any other procedural matter which may assist in expediting the hearing.

7. If the Panel consists of three persons, the Panel may delegate to its Chairperson the authority to deal with any or all of these preliminary matters.

### **Procedure for an Oral Hearing**

8. Where the Panel has determined that the hearing shall be held by way of oral hearing, whether in-person or by telephone, the Panel shall govern the hearing by such procedures as it deems appropriate and fair, subject to the following provisions:

- a. The hearing shall be held within 21 days of the Panel's appointment.
- b. The parties involved shall be given ten days written notice of the date, time, format and place of the hearing.
- c. The parties shall receive a copy of the investigator's report, where an investigation was carried out.
- d. If the decision of the Panel may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to a hearing in their own right, that party shall become a party to the hearing in question.
- e. Any of the parties at the hearing may be accompanied by a representative or advisor, including legal counsel.
- f. The Panel may direct that any other person participate in the hearing.
- g. Subject to Paragraph 8h, a quorum shall be the single Panel member or all three Panel members, as the case may be.
- h. If there are three Panel members, decisions shall be by majority vote, where the Panel Chairperson carries a vote. In the event that a Panel member is unable or unwilling to continue with the Process once initiated, the matter will be concluded by the remaining Panel members. In the event of a split decision in a two member Panel, the Panel Chairperson's vote shall be decisive. The Complainant bears the onus of proof, which must be discharged on a balance of probabilities.

#### **Procedure for a Documentary Hearing**

9. Where the Panel has determined that the hearing shall be held by way of documentary review, it shall govern the hearing by such procedures as it deems appropriate and fair, subject to the following provisions:
  - a. All parties must be given a reasonable opportunity to review the Investigator's report, where an investigation was carried out; to provide written submissions to the Panel; to review the written submissions of the other parties; to provide written rebuttal; and to provide written arguments.
  - b. The applicable principles and timelines set out in Paragraph 8 must be respected.

#### **Evidence Which May Be Considered**

10. As a general rule, the Panel shall consider any evidence that is relevant to the matters in dispute. The normal rules of evidence will be relaxed. The Panel shall have authority to consider hearsay evidence provided the Panel gives to such evidence appropriate weight as might be reasonable in light of the circumstances of its inclusion.

#### **The Decision**



11. Within 14 days of concluding the hearing, the Panel shall issue its written decision, with reasons. The Panel may decide:

a. to uphold the complaint;

b. to deny the complaint;

c. to design a remedy that, in the opinion of the Panel, will resolve the dispute. However, in so doing the Panel is not authorized to change or alter any rule, criteria, policy, procedure or bylaw of BiBC that has been properly passed and implemented by the appropriate governing body. A remedy designed by the Panel may include: an order of specific performance; a written reprimand; removal of certain privileges, including the right to compete, train, coach, manage or provide team support for BiBC, suspension from a BiBC squad, either for specified events or for a specified period of time; dismissal from a BiBC squad, through termination of the BiBC Athlete Agreement; or any other sanction which the Panel considers appropriate in the circumstances; and

d. to determine how costs of the hearing, excluding legal fees and legal disbursements of any of the parties, shall be allocated, if at all.

12. A copy of the decision shall be provided to each of the parties and to the President. The Panel's decision shall be binding on all parties to the dispute. In the case of an athlete who has signed an Athlete Agreement, failure to comply with a decision and remedy shall result in an automatic suspension of all the athlete's privileges, and there shall be no further right to participate in any fashion as a member of a squad until such time as the decision and remedy are complied with.

### **Timelines**

13. If the circumstances of a complaint or a dispute are such that this Process will not allow a timely resolution of the matter, or if the circumstances of a complaint or a dispute are such that the matter cannot be resolved within the timelines dictated in this Process, the President or the Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

### **Confidentiality**

14. As disputes can be highly sensitive, BiBC shall conduct all proceedings under this Process in a confidential manner, except where disclosure is directed by the Panel as part of the remedy to resolve the dispute, is required by law, Canada's Doping Policy or is in the best interests of the public.

15. As a general rule, the decision of the Panel shall become a matter of public record.

### **Location**



16. The hearing shall take place in the location designated by the President, unless the Panel decides the hearing is to be held by way of telephone conference or unless, at the specific request of a party, a different location is mandated by the Panel as a preliminary matter.

### **Appeal Procedure**

18. If a party believes the decision of the Panel rendered pursuant to this Process was procedurally unfair, the decision of the Panel may be appealed pursuant to the BiBC Appeal Process (see Annex C to the BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy). If this option is elected, the decision reached through the BiBC Appeal Process will be final and binding on all parties and there shall be no recourse to any further appeal to a Court on any matter of fact or law.



## **ANNEX B - BiBC SUMMARY DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

### **Scope and Application**

1. This Process is an abbreviated version of the BiBC Dispute Resolution Process. It applies only to individual BiBC members of a squad who have signed a BiBC Athlete Agreement.
2. This Process will only be invoked to deal with issues that arise outside of Canada or at domestic competitions and training camps, where there is a critical lack of time in which to resolve the matter. The term “outside Canada” shall mean any period of time an athlete is out of Canada under the auspices of BiBC, including travelling to competitive events, participating in or training for such events and travelling home after the events.
3. It is anticipated that the use of this Process will be rare. The most likely situation that may require its use will be appeals by athletes regarding team selections and/or the imposition of discipline sanctions resulting from a breach of the BiBC Code of Conduct, particularly where such sanctions will prevent an athlete from competing. The intent is to provide timely access to an authority other than that which imposed the initial sanction in order to seek redress.
4. Other issues which may be dealt with under this Process are breaches of the Athlete Agreement (other than those related to the Code of Conduct) and disputes involving athletes that are within the scope of the BiBC Dispute Resolution Process.

### **The Event Panel**

5. When a dispute arises which falls within the scope and application of this Process, the Trip Leader (normally the senior coach) will contact the BiBC Program Development Committee Chairperson and request that an Event Panel (the “Panel”) be formed to deal with the issue. In situations where the contact the BiBC Program Development Committee Chairperson cannot be contacted, the President or their designate will act to establish the Panel. With due regard for the facts of the dispute, and provided that there are sufficient suitable, unbiased individuals available at the event/camp venue, a three person Panel shall be established, which shall have the full delegated authority to act pursuant to the provisions of this Process. Where there is less scope for selection, a one person Panel shall be established. The panel may be selected from BiBC staff or volunteers in attendance, parents accompanying the trip or, where appropriate, athletes.
6. Notwithstanding any other process within the BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy, nothing shall prevent the Event Panel from assuming jurisdiction when the appeal, breach or dispute arises outside Canada or elsewhere when there is a critical lack of time to respond and to impose or review, in a reasonable and fair manner, sanctions or disciplinary action against an athlete or athletes.

### **Hearing and Decision**



7. At a minimum, the Panel shall, in a procedurally fair manner, hear the athlete's version of events and also hear from all other affected parties before imposing any sanction, discipline or remedy. In making its decision, the Panel is not authorized to change or alter any rule, criteria, policy, procedure or by-law of BiBC that has been properly passed and implemented by the appropriate governing body. A sanction, discipline or remedy imposed by the Panel must be reasonable and proportionate to the issue in dispute, and may include: voiding or confirming a sanction which is being appealed; an order of specific performance; a written reprimand; removal of certain privileges; suspension from a BiBC squad either for specified events or for a specified period of time; dismissal from a BiBC squad through termination of the BiBC Athlete Agreement; or any other sanction which the Panel considers appropriate in the circumstances.

8. Where a decision is made by the Event Panel that results in the removal of an athlete from a competition or a team, such a decision may only be implemented after the Event Panel consults with the President. The President must ratify the decision of the Event Panel before it can be implemented. In the event that the President cannot be contacted, the BiBC Program Development Committee Chairperson will contact another Board member to perform this function.

9. The decisions of the Event Panel shall be binding on all athletes who have signed the BiBC Athlete Agreement. Failure by an athlete to comply with a decision and remedy properly imposed by the Event Panel shall result in an automatic suspension of all the athlete's privileges and there shall be no further right to participate as a member of the BiBC Program, until such time as the sanctions, discipline or other remedies are complied with.

### **Confidentiality**

10. As disputes can be highly sensitive, BiBC shall conduct all proceedings under this Process in a confidential manner, except where disclosure is directed by the Event Panel as part of the remedy to resolve the dispute, is required by law, Canada's Doping Policy or is in the best interests of the public.

11. As a general rule, the decision of the Panel shall become a matter of public record.

### **Appeal Procedure**

12. If a party believes the decision of the Event Panel, rendered pursuant to this Process, was procedurally unfair, the decision may be appealed pursuant to the BiBC Appeal Process (see Annex C to the BiBC Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy). If this option is elected, the decision reached through the BiBC Appeal Process will be final and binding on all parties and there shall be no recourse to any further appeal to a Court on any matter of fact or law. In the alternative, if the Appellant and the Respondent and all affected parties mutually agree to take part in an alternative appeal process, and if all parties sign an arbitration agreement confirming their intent to submit to binding arbitration, the appeal may be referred to arbitration. In that case, arbitration will be final



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and binding on all matters in dispute and there shall be no recourse to any further appeal to a Court on any matter of fact or law.



## **ANNEX C - BiBC APPEAL PROCESS**

### **Scope and Application**

1. Any member of BiBC who is affected by a decision of the Board of Directors, of any Committee of the Board of Directors or Operational Committee, or of any body or individual who has been delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board of Directors, shall have the right to appeal that decision, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out in Paragraph 2 below. Such decisions may include, but are not limited to, carding, contract matters, harassment, selection and discipline.

2. A decision cannot be appealed simply because a different result is sought. An appeal may be heard only if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. Appeals which are deemed to have sufficient grounds include those which allege that the Respondent made one of the following procedural errors:

- a. made a decision without the appropriate authority or jurisdiction as set out in governing documents;
- b. failed to follow procedures as laid out in the bylaws or approved policies of BiBC;
- c. made a decision which was influenced by bias, where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision-maker is unable to consider other views;
- d. exercised discretion for an improper purpose; or
- e. made a decision which was grossly unreasonable.

3. This Process shall not apply to matters relating to employment disputes or to the relevant rules of biathlon, which may not be appealed.

### **Submitting an Appeal**

4. Members who wish to appeal a decision shall have 21 days from the date on which they received notice of the decision to submit written notice of their intention to appeal, along with detailed reasons for the appeal, to the President.

5. Any party wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the 21 day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to this requirement. The decision to allow or not allow an appeal outside the 21 day period shall be at the sole discretion of the President and may not be appealed.

### **Screening of Appeal**

6. Within five days of receiving the written notice of appeal, the President shall decide whether or not the appeal appears to be within the scope of this Process and is based on one or more of the

categories of possible errors by the Respondent as set out in Paragraph 2. The President shall not determine if an error has been made, only if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal to proceed. In the absence of the President, a designated member of the BiBC Board of Directors shall perform this function.

7. If the appeal is denied on the basis of insufficient grounds, the Appellant shall be notified of this decision in writing, giving reasons. This decision is at the sole discretion of the President, or designate, and may not be appealed.

### **Appeal Panel**

8. If the President is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, then within 14 days of having received the original notice of appeal the President shall establish an Appeal Panel (the "**Panel**") as follows:

a. The Panel shall be comprised of three individuals who shall have no significant relationship with the affected parties, shall have had no involvement with the decision being appealed, and shall be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.

b. At least one of the Panel members shall be from among the Appellant's peers. The Appellant may submit a list of three candidates from which the President shall select one candidate to be a member of the Panel, provided that individual satisfies the criteria in Paragraph 8a above.

c. Should the Appellant not recommend an acceptable Panel member as set out in Paragraph 8b above within five days, the President shall appoint the peer member of the Panel.

d. The Panel shall select a Panel Chairperson.

### **Preliminary Conference**

9. The Panel may determine that the circumstances of the dispute warrant a preliminary conference. In most cases, the preliminary conference shall be conducted by telephone. The issues that may be considered at a preliminary conference include:

a. the format of the appeal hearing, as the hearing may proceed by either an in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone conference call, a video teleconference or a combination of these methods. The Panel, in coming to a decision on format, must ensure that the hearing process complies with the principles of natural justice, provides procedural fairness to all parties, and keeps costs to a reasonable level;

b. the date and (if in-person) location of hearing;

c. the timelines for exchange of documents and extent of disclosure required;

- d. the clarification of issues in dispute;
- e. the identification of witnesses;
- f. remedies being sought; and
- g. any procedural matter, order and procedure of hearing, or any other matter which may assist in expediting the appeal proceedings.

10. Any party to the appeal may request that the Panel conduct the appeal by way of documentary evidence. The Panel may seek agreement from the other parties to proceed in this fashion. If agreement is not forthcoming, the Panel shall decide whether the appeal shall proceed by way of documentary evidence or in-person hearing as a preliminary matter.

11. The Panel may delegate to its Chairperson the authority to deal with these preliminary matters.

### **Procedure for the Appeal**

12. The Panel shall govern the appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate, subject to the following provisions:

- a. The appeal hearing shall be held within 21 days of the Panel's appointment.
- b. The Appellant, Respondent and affected parties shall be given ten days written notice of the date, time, format and place of the appeal hearing.
- c. A quorum shall be all three Panel members, subject to Paragraph 12i below.
- d. Copies of any written documents which any of the parties would like the Panel to consider shall be provided to the Panel, and to all other parties, at least five days in advance of the hearing.
- e. Any of the parties may be accompanied by a representative or advisor, including legal counsel.
- f. If the matter under appeal relates to team selection, any person potentially affected by the decision of the Panel shall become a party to the appeal.
- g. The Panel may direct that any other individual participate in the appeal.
- h. The Appellant bears the onus of proof that must be discharged on a balance of probabilities. Decisions shall be by majority vote, where the Panel Chairperson carries a vote.
- i. In the event that one of the Panel members is unable or unwilling to continue with the appeal, the matter will be concluded by the remaining two Panel members. In the event of a split decision on a two member Panel, the Panel Chairperson's vote shall be decisive.

j. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, there shall be no communication between Panel members and the parties except in the presence of, or by copy to, the other parties.

### **Appeal Decision**

13. Within 14 days of concluding the appeal hearing, the Panel shall issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Panel shall have no greater authority than that of the original decision-maker. The Panel may decide:

- a. to void or confirm the decision being appealed;
- b. to vary the decision, only where it is found that an error occurred and such an error cannot be corrected by the original decision-maker for reasons which include, but are not limited to, lack of clear procedure, lack of time, or lack of neutrality;
- c. to refer the matter back to the initial decision-maker for a new decision; and/or
- d. to determine how costs of the appeal shall be allocated, if at all.

14. A copy of this decision shall be provided to each of the parties and to the President.

### **Timelines**

15. If the circumstances of the dispute are such that this Process will not allow a timely appeal, the Panel may direct that these timelines be abridged. If the circumstances of the dispute are such the appeal cannot be concluded within the timelines dictated in this Process, the Panel may direct that these timelines be extended.

### **Confidentiality**

16. As disputes can be highly sensitive, BiBC shall conduct all proceedings under this Process in a confidential manner, except where disclosure is directed by the Panel as part of the remedy to resolve the dispute, is required by law, Canada's Doping Policy or is in the best interests of the public.

17. As a general rule, the decision of the Panel shall become a matter of public record.

### **Location**

18. The hearing shall take place in the location designated by the Panel Chairperson, unless the Panel decides the hearing is to be held by way of telephone conference or unless, at the specific request of a party, a different location is mandated by the Panel as a preliminary matter.

### **Jurisdiction**



19. This Process shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the Province of British Columbia.

**Decision Final**

20. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final and binding on all parties with regard to all matters in dispute, and there shall be no recourse to any further appeal to a Court on a question of either fact or law.