



2027 ASA MOUNTAIN AND TRAIL RUNNING TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

For

**WORLD MOUNTAIN AND TRAIL RUNNING
CHAMPIONSHIP**

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

06 – 10 OCTOBER 2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
1. PURPOSE	3
2. TEAM OBJECTIVE / ASA STATEMENT OF INTENT	3
3. MOUNTAIN & TRAIL EVENTS	3
4. ELIGIBILITY	4
5. QUALIFICATION STANDARDS.....	5
6. SELECTION PROCESS	6
7. TEAM COMPOSITION AND ENTRY LIMITS	7
8. TIMELINE	8
9. APPEALS AND REVIEW.....	8
10. ATHLETE WELFARE AND OBLIGATIONS.....	8
11. AMENDMENTS.....	9

1. PURPOSE

This Selection Criteria ("Criteria") is to establish and set out the eligibility requirements, qualification standards, and selection processes that will be applied in selecting athletes to represent South Africa at the **2027 World Mountain & Trail Running Championships**.

The purpose of these Criteria is to establish transparent, performance-based standards for the selection of **Team Mountain and Trail Running South Africa** to the World Mountain and Trail Running Championships. This policy is intended to ensure fairness, consistency, accountability, and alignment with the long-term athlete development and high-performance objectives of Athletics South Africa.

All athletes seeking selection must satisfy the requirements contained in these Criteria and comply with the applicable rules and regulations of World Athletics and Athletics South Africa. Selection shall be made in accordance with these Criteria by the appointed Selection Panel.

2. TEAM OBJECTIVE / ASA STATEMENT OF INTENT

The World Mountain and Trail Running Championships form a key component of the long-term high-performance strategy for Mountain and Trail Running in South Africa. Participation at the Championships provides athletes with valuable international competition experience and serves as an important benchmark in the development pathway towards future World Championships and other major international events.

This Selection Policy is designed to ensure that South Africa's most talented and competitive Mountain and Trail Running athletes are afforded the opportunity to compete on the world stage. The policy seeks to balance performance excellence with fairness, transparency, accountability, and athlete welfare throughout the selection process.

3. MOUNTAIN & TRAIL EVENTS

TRAIL EVENTS

LONG TRAIL (ELEVATION)	75 – 85KM (DISTANCE)	3500-6000M
SHORT TRAIL (ELEVATION)	35-45KM (DISTANCE)	2000-3000M

MOUNTAIN RUNNING EVENTS

SENIOR CLASSIC	12 - 15KM (DISTANCE)	600-900M (ELEVATION)
U20 CLASSIC	5 – 7KM (DISTANCE)	300-450M (ELEVATION)
SENIOR UPHILL	4 – 7KM (DISTANCE) INCLINE SHOULD BE OVER 10%	700-1000M (ELEVATION,

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1. Citizenship – The athlete must hold a valid South African citizenship to qualify for official national titles or national team selection.

4.2. Minimum Age Requirement

Trail Running	To compete in the senior trail races, an athlete must turn at least 20 years old by December 31st of the competition year. No athlete under the age of 20 years on 31 Dec of the year of the competition may participate in the senior trail races.
Maintain Running	No athlete who is under the age of 18 years on 31 December of the year in which the competition is held shall be eligible to participate in the Senior Mountain Race(s). Athletes in the Under-20 (U20) age category (16–19 years), as defined by the applicable international age-group regulations, are eligible to compete in the U20 category at the World Mountain Running Championships – Mountain Classic discipline.

4.3. Birth Year Cut-off for 2026

Trail Running	For races held in 2026, athletes must be born in 2006 or earlier. Anyone born in 2007 or later is under 20 years old as of 31 December 2026 and is strictly restricted from entering the Senior Short Trail or Long Trail categories.
Mountain Running	For races held in 2026, athletes must be born in 2006 or earlier. Anyone born in 2007 or later is under 20 years old as of 31 December 2026 and is strictly restricted from entering the Classic mountain running categories.

4.4 Good Standing - Athletes must hold a valid, current-year ASA license through an affiliated running club and provincial federation. Your membership

ASA MOUNTAIN AND TRAIL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

fees must be paid up, and you cannot be serving any active disciplinary suspensions.

4.5 National Colours & Anti-Doping - If selected, the Athlete is legally bound to wear the official national kit provided by ASA. The Athlete is subject to random in-competition and out-of-competition drug testing managed by the South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS) and must comply with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) code.

4.6 Administrative Submissions – The Athlete must proactively submit all paperwork before the official cutoff dates. This typically includes a copy of your South African passport, an ASA athlete profile (biodata), signed medical clearance and safeguarding certificate.

5. QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

5.1 Performance Standard – Athletes must achieve the World Mountain and Trail entry standards within the qualification window (see Appendix 1 of the Standard).

5.2 ASA Mountain and Trail running: Selection Window:

Trail Running	Short Trail: October 2026 – Apr 2027
	Long Trail: October 2026 - Apr 2027
Mountain Running	Classic: October 2026 – Apr 2027
	Uphill: October 2026 - Apr 2027

5.3 Approved Competitions – Standards must be achieved at:

ASA Mountain and Trail run-sanctioned competitions, or World Mountain and Trail running Athletics-recognized meets listed on the 2026 Global Calendar (with electronic timing and doping control).

6. SELECTION PROCESS

6.1 Automatic Selection

Participation at the National Trials is compulsory.

Trail Running	6.1.1. The first four eligible men and women to finish in the National Trials will be automatically selected, provided they have achieved the required qualifying standard as outlined in Appendix 1 – Standards.
	6.1.2. If the top 4 finishers do not fill the maximum squad allocation, selectors will look at global rankings (such as the ITRA or World Athletics index scores). They will select additional high-ranking athletes to build out a competitive team, provided those athletes have successfully finished and recorded a result in at least one of the designated South African National Championship trial races.
Mountain Running	6.1.3. The first Two eligible men and women to finish in the National Trials will be automatically selected, provided they have achieved the required qualifying standard as outlined in Appendix 1 – Standards.
	6.1.4. If the top 2 finishers do not fill the maximum squad allocation, selectors will look at global rankings (such as the ITRA or World Athletics index scores). They will select additional high-ranking athletes to build out a competitive team, provided those athletes have successfully finished and recorded a result in at least one of the designated South African National Championship trial races.

6.2 Discretionary Selections

Trail Running	The 5th and 6th athlete slots for both the Short and Long Trail categories will be decided based on global rankings. To be considered for these final discretionary positions, athletes must meet the following conditions: 1. Hold a highly competitive position on the official World Trail Running rankings. 2. Have successfully finished and recorded a result in at least one of the designated South African National Championship trial races. 3. Placed on the official global ranking list as of October 2026. Meeting the minimum qualification benchmarks set by the World Mountain and Trail Running Championships
----------------------	--

ASA MOUNTAIN AND TRAIL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

Mountain Running	The selection of the third and fourth athletes in each event may be based on demonstrated performance in the relevant Mountain Classic or Vertical discipline. To be considered for these final discretionary positions, athletes must meet the following conditions: 1. Hold a highly competitive position on the official World Mountain Running rankings. 2. Have successfully finished and recorded a result in at least one of the designated South African National Championship trial races. 3. Placed on the official global ranking list as of October 2026. Meeting the minimum qualification benchmarks set by the World Mountain and Trail Running Championships.
-------------------------	---

6.3 Exemption Requests

- 7.3.1 If the Athlete is unable to race at National Trials a formal written request with valid justification must be submitted to Team Service at teamservices@athleticssa.co.za
- 7.3.2 Tie-Breaking Criteria: Evaluating season-long consistency, head-to-head racing records, and current physical fitness for championship competition.
- 7.3.3 Ultimate Discretion: All final team selections will be submitted to the ASA Board for approval and will also be subject to financial considerations.

7. TEAM COMPOSITION AND ENTRY LIMITS

- 7.1 National team sizes per event will strictly mirror the official World Mountain and Trail Running limits.
- 7.2 Entry quotas for each race category will comply directly with maximum allocations set by the international governing body.
- 7.3 Athlete numbers per discipline are restricted to the maximum cap permitted under World Mountain and Trail Running regulations which is 6 Athletes per event in the Trail Short course and Long Course categories. The ultimate team structure will match quotas and open entry allocations.

8. TIMELINE

TRAIL RUNNING QUALIFICATION PERIOD & EVENTS	
QUALIFICATION PERIOD STARTS	OCTOBER 2026
QUALIFICATION PERIOD ENDS	30 APRIL 2027
NATIONAL LONG TRAIL TRIALS	Western Cape, 20 - 22 November 2026
NATIONAL SHORT TRAIL TRIALS	KZN, April 2027
FINAL TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT	30 MAY 2027

MOUNTAIN RUNNING QUALIFICATION PERIOD & EVENTS	
QUALIFICATION PERIOD STARTS	OCTOBER 2026
QUALIFICATION PERIOD ENDS	30 APRIL 2027
NATIONAL CLASSIC MT TRIALS	March 2027 (Boland)
NATIONAL UPHILL MT TRIALS	March 2027 (Boland)
FINAL TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT	30 MAY 2027

Appeals Window: 7 days after team announcement

9. APPEALS AND REVIEW

- 9.1** The ASA Mountain and Trail Running Committee acts as the primary oversight authority, while a dedicated selection panel holds responsibility for finalizing team decisions.
- 9.2** Athletes retain the right to contest selection verdicts by submitting a formal appeal within 7 days of the team announcement.
- 9.3** All lodged appeals must include verifiable, objective evidence, including authenticated qualifying results, official medical documentation, or documented proof of procedural errors.

10. ATHLETE WELFARE AND OBLIGATIONS

- 10.1** Medical Clearance Requirement: Athletes must be certified medically fit and formally cleared for competition by the designated ASA Team Medical Staff.
- 10.2** Anti-Doping Compliance: Trail Running athletes must strictly comply with all anti-doping testing protocols and whereabouts requirements as mandated by SAIDS (South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport) and World Athletics.
- 10.3** Team Commitments: Selected athletes are required to attend all official team briefings, training camps, and media obligations as directed by ASA.

ASA MOUNTAIN AND TRAIL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

- 10.4** Team Kit Policy: Selected athletes must wear official ASA team apparel (currently PUMA) during all official activities, competitions, and ceremonies. The display or use of individual sponsor kit is strictly prohibited during these times.
- 10.5** Safeguarding: All Athletes must complete the online safeguarding online course at <https://worldathletics.org/athletics-better-world/safeguarding>

11. AMENDMENTS

- 11.1** The ASA Mountain and Trail Running Committee reserves the right to amend this Selection Criteria at its discretion. Any such amendments will be communicated timeously.
 - 11.2** Circumstances may arise where criteria cannot be modified or applied as written due to logistical constraints, critical time limitations, or other unforeseen and exceptional events. In such instances, any decision—including final selection decisions—will be made by the designated ASA authorities in strict accordance with the objectives outlined in this document. Should an extraordinary decision of this nature be required, ASA will notify all affected athletes and officials immediately.
-