

## 2023 ULTIMATE HALL OF FAME

### PEER POOL PROCESS + HALL SELECTION + VOTING CRITERIA

Peer input is the foundational first step of the multi-step Ultimate Hall of Fame (HoF) Selection Process. The creation and ongoing updates to the membership of the respective Peer Pools is critical to supporting the worthiest and best-informed HoF candidate selections.

The composition of the Player Peer Pools is key to identifying the top vote getting HoF candidates from their respective playing era and aims to include fair representation across the regions.

The eligibility for and composition of the Open, Mixed, and Women's division Peer Pools must align with the current **Peak Playing Years**. For **2023**, peer pool members and Hall candidates must have competed at the highest level of competition in their Primary Division of Play between **2004 – 2012**. This is an expansion by one year from previous peak playing year time frames and applies to the 3 player divisions.

For 2023, the age eligibility guidelines have been reduced from 42 to **41 for Open** division competitors and remains at **39 for Women's division** competitors. For the **Mixed division, female-matching and male-matching** eligibility guidelines will align with the other two divisions at **39/41**.

While some peer pool members and Hall candidates may have extended their playing careers into the Masters division, and longevity is one of seven Hall of Fame Criteria for Consideration detailed in the "**What Makes A Hall of Famer**" document, when identifying and voting upon Hall candidates and consideration of Hall-worthiness, the focus must be on **what they did at their best against the best in their primary division of play during the current Peak Playing Years focus window. For Mixed, an added requirement is to have competed in the division at the USAU/WFDF level for a minimum of 3 years.**

#### **Peer Pools:**

Currently, there are 3 Peer Pools; Open, the Women's division, and Mixed division each composed of players who competed primarily in that USAU/WFDF division during the peak playing years and **Consultants**; coaches, organizers, administrators, reporters/media, or others who have first-hand knowledge about the top tier competitors in that division during the peak playing years.

To ensure that the Peer Pools are in alignment with the current focus window of time – a.k.a. Peak Playing Years, new peer pool members are added and those whose competitive playing careers ended before 2004 are rotated off of the Peer Pool, unless there are compelling reasons to remain on the respective Peer Pool. This includes Consultant members of the respective peer pools, as described above. Beginning in 2022 and continuing in 2023, these non-player Peer Pool members are invited to

participate in the respective player pools via a Consultant Peer Pool invitation sent by the Vetting Committee chair, in collaboration with the respective Peer Pool coordinators.

For 2023, **Contributor selection** will be managed by the Contributor sub committee led by current Contributor members of the Hall. In 2024, changes will be made to the Contributor selection process; updates will be posted, as available.

### **Peer Pool and Hall of Fame Candidate Eligibility Guidelines:**

When the HoF was first established in 2004, there was defined age criteria\* to designate when a former player first became eligible for HoF candidacy. However, no formal rules were established that defined when such a candidate's eligibility expired until the Peak Playing Years were established in 2016. After the HoF selection process worked through a backlog of older players in the 2016 to 2018 catch-up period, the selection process was deemed to have been “caught up” and could consider candidates for induction into the Hall in their first year of eligibility. By establishing defined time frames for when candidate eligibility begins and ends provides greater clarity about the selection process for candidates and other stakeholders in the ultimate community at large.

Peer Pool members are invited to participate in the respective Peer Pool based on their Nationals and Worlds-caliber competitive history, team affiliations, and regional representation; everyone must complete a Information/Short form that details their competitive history. Consultants (coaches, organizers, media/reporters, and others engaged in the sport) for the “current” Peak Playing Years are also invited to participate in the Peer Pool by the respective peer pool leadership.

While there are general eligibility rules applied to the Open, Mixed, and Women’s division peer pool members and Hall candidates, there remain some differences in who and how Hall of Fame candidates are identified. The Vetting Committee is working to align these processes across the player divisions.

Each year, the members of each peer pool are published on the Ultimate Hall of Fame website on the [Selection Process page](#).

**All eligible player candidates in the Open, Mixed, and Women’s division** who meet the age and Peak Playing Years criteria must be nominated by one or more of their peers using the **Nomination/Reference form** for the respective Player division. Once nominated, the eligible candidate must complete their division’s **Short Form** and have 2 **References** submitted to be eligible to be placed on the respective Peer Pool ballot. Candidates are eligible for up to 5 years or until their Peak Playing Years no longer align with the current year.

All eligible **Contributor candidates** whose contributions fit with the current Peak Playing Year timeframe can be nominated using the **Contributor Nomination/Nominee Information Form**.

**Women's Division:**

The Women's division peer pool coordinators adjusted their goals in 2022, and continue in 2023 to include 8 to 10 Peer Pool members per region to represent diverse team affiliation based on USAU's updated regional mapping. Additionally, the coordinators will focus on growing the Consultant pool in a highly selective and balanced manner taking into consideration knowledge and regional affiliation of the invited applicants.

**Mixed Division:**

With the launch of the **Mixed division** Starting Class in 2022, the Mixed division peer pool was initially composed of Players, Contributors, and Consultants involved with the beginnings of the division in 1998 through 2010. In 2023, peer pool members who fit the current peak playing years timeframe include female-matching players and male-matching players who competed for at least 3 years at USAU/UPA Nationals in the Mixed division with balanced representation across the regions.

With the 2023 selection process, Contributors from the Mixed division who were instrumental in establishing and supporting the division as a contributor are nominated through the Contributor category.

**Open Division:**

As with the other player divisions, Nationals and Worlds-caliber Open division players are invited to participate in the Peer Pool by completing a Short form; balancing regional representation is an objective when adding new peer pool members. Consultants are also invited to participate in the Peer Pool. Peer Pool members who reach age 41 and meet the Peak Playing Years criteria become eligible Hall candidates.

Beginning in 2023, Open division players can be nominated by one or more of their peers. Once nominated, the eligible candidate must have 2 references submitted and thereafter, may be added to the Peer Pool ballot for up to 5 years, subject to the minimum vote requirement being met, or until their Peak Playing Years no longer align with the current year.

**Peer Pool Voting, Vetting Committee, & Community Input:**

Under the direction of the respective Peer Pool leaders, eligible Peer Pool members participate in a voting process that identifies and rank orders (1 through 5) the top vote getters in each player division.

The results of the Peer Pool vote are provided to the Vetting Committee who confer to identify those candidates to include in the Final Slate, including any Contributor and/or Special Merit candidates. The goal of the Vetting Committee is to ensure fair representation on the Final Slate by balancing playing era, player division, and region.

The Final Slate is published for community input via the Call to Community and is voted upon by eligible HoF members.

The 2023 Vetting Committee is comprised of current HoF members including the respective division coordinators, Open/Jeff Cruickshank (HoF '17), Jim Parinella

(HoF'14), and Bart Watson (HoF '22), Women's/Dominique Fontenette (HoF '18), Katharine Forth (HoF '21), and Miranda Knowles Roth (HoF '22), Mixed/Pam Kraus (HoF'17, Scott Conway (HoF '22), and Emily "Smitty" Smith-Wilson (HoF'22), Contributors co-leads Jennifer (JD) Donnelly (HoF '22) and Joe Seidler (HoF '22), Contributor ex-officio, Nob Rauch (HoF '06)), the HoF Committee chairperson Suzanne Fields (HoF '04), as well as, Gwen Ambler (HoF '21). Dave Blau (HoF '17) participates on the Vetting Committee as the HoF Board President. In prior years, an elected USAU Board Representative has participated in the Hall's Vetting Committee – TBD for 2023. '

The final determination of who gets inducted into the Ultimate HoF is made through a formal voting process that includes eligible Hall of Fame voting members and the Vetting Committee. Effective with the 2020 voting process, players inducted under the Look Back category are not eligible voters. Special Merit inductees are also not eligible Hall voters.

HoF voting members and the Vetting Committee shall draw upon the peer review input, written Player Candidate Questionnaires, Nomination or Reference letters, the Annual Call to Community input, personal discussions, and any other means at their disposal in making decisions regarding potential inductees.

## APRIL 2023

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\*Beginning in 2004, the eligibility rules stated that player-candidates must be the minimum age, based on the age limit for the UPA Masters Division. To ensure that players from the early years of Ultimate got fair consideration, the age limit began at Masters age plus 15 years in 2005 (48 years old for males by December 31, 2005, and 45 for females) and decreased by one year, each year (47/44 in 2006, etc.) until it reached the age thresholds of Masters age plus 10 years (43/40) in 2010. An additional eligibility clause stating that "player-candidates need to be retired from their primary division of play for a minimum of 5 years" was eliminated in a 2018 rule modification. Another key change in eligibility requirements was instituted with the "catch up period" from 2016 to 2018 when "eligible" Hall candidates' careers would need to overlap with a focused window of time, known as Peak Playing Years. The Peak Playing Years focus on an 8 year time period that advanced by one year each year.

In **2021**, the **Women's division** peer pool coordinators analyzed and refined the composition of the peer pool membership with the goal to balance representation across the regions and added representatives from those teams who competed at Club Nationals during the Peak Playing Years with the objective to have 3 representatives per team in the Peer Pool. To accomplish these goals, the following steps were taken:

- Players with multiple team history were assigned to one primary team to equalize regional representation
- Members of the Peer Pool who were not active in the Women's division during the Peak Playing years or who did not have adequate knowledge of players in the Peak Playing years were retired from the Peer Pool
- Members who were inactive and non-communicative in the last year were removed
- Players were added to the Peer Pool from teams that were underrepresented in the 3 per team per year at Club Nationals metric goal

In **2021**, the **Open division** established a Working Group that developed the following clarifications on candidate eligibility.

- Potential candidates **first** become **eligible Hall candidates** (and appear as such on the Peer Pool ballot) in the year they reach age 43
- Candidates have a **maximum** eligibility of **10 years**, although eligibility **may be fewer years** based on playing history in the Open Club division
- Any individual who first becomes an eligible candidate in the year they reach age 43 will be an eligible Hall candidate for a **minimum of 3 years**, regardless of playing history.
- 2021 served as a final rule transition year; waivers were granted that allowed for a final year of eligibility to candidates who would have otherwise been ineligible under the new rules enacted in 2021.
- The burden of responsibility for validating HoF candidacy (and the ability to utilize the full 10 years of eligibility or minimum of 3 years) is on the former players and teammates, not the HoF Vetting Committee.

Effective in 2022, the Peak Playing Years were expanded by 1 year to include 2002 to 2010. For 2022, the age thresholds were lowered to 42 for Open and 39 for the Women's division, and 42/39 for male-matching and female-matching in the Mixed division. The 2022 Hall of Fame Process Improvements document details these and other historical process changes.

Effective in 2023, the age threshold was lowered for Open to age 41 and remains at 39 for the Women's division and 41/39 for male-matching and female-matching in the Mixed division.

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