

Dear Madame President, Dear Judy, my friend,

Greetings to you and to your Bermuda Olympic Committee colleagues as you prepare for the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

For your recollection, I serve as the Tokyo 2020 Technical Delegate for Swimming, as nominated by FINA and approved by the IOC. Therefore, I have had substantial participation in the qualification process for the Games, as well as preparation for my duties during the competition.

On previous occasions, you and I have discussed the utilization of Universality positions for Bermuda aquatic athletes. Additionally, as you know, I made a lengthy presentation to the BOC Board of Directors on this topic.

Thus, you know my long-standing position on this issue, which I feel obligated to repeat to you again, as the deadline for Olympic entry rapidly approaches.

My colleagues within the FINA Bureau and within UANA have articulately provided rationale for utilization of Universality places, and I am in complete agreement with their sentiments.

However, I would like to provide you with some additional information that provides specific context to the Tokyo circumstances.

I have just returned from the FINA Office in Lausanne, after spending ten days reviewing the swimming times achieved to date, as well as the various scenarios that are consistent with the IOC quota of 878 athletes.

Due to a variety of factors, including a five-year time window, a reduction in the quota from 900 athletes in 2016, and the addition of three new events to the program (two individual events and one relay), it appears likely that no "B" standard athletes will be invited to the Tokyo Olympic Games. Instead, the only invited athletes will be those who have achieved an "A" standard, those who will participate in a relay, and Universality athletes.

For reference, the "A" standard is established as the 14th place time achieved in Rio in 2016.

Thus, the practical situation is this: unless a Bermuda athlete achieves a time that is 14th best from the previous Olympic Games, he or she will not be able to participate in Tokyo.

With due respect to the achievements of Bermuda athletes over many years of Olympic participation, this is a very high bar to set for Bermuda swimmers. In truth, the decision not to utilize a Universality invitation is de-motivating to current athletes, who realize that, in all likelihood, no swimmer will be able to represent Bermuda in the Olympic Games – now, or in the foreseeable future.

FINA has a single goal that is shared by the IOC in creation of the qualification procedures: the best male and best female swimmer in every country will participate in Tokyo. If you apply this simple premise, then I think the decision becomes more clear and transparent: the two best Bermudan swimmers should compete in Tokyo.

Lastly, and importantly, your two best swimmers, as determined by the FINA Points Table and FIN A Rankings, will receive an invitation to participate from the IOC and from FINA. I say this respectfully, and without malintent, but it is inconceivable to me that a leading National Olympic Committee, as is Bermuda Olympic Committee, will turn down an invitation issued by the IOC and FINA.

Of course, the decision is yours, in consultation with the BOC Board of Directors. But I would be remiss in my duties not to implore you to re-consider your decision and provide the opportunity for two Bermuda athletes to achieve their Olympic dreams.

With respect and gratitude,

Dale Neuburger

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