

## PRESS RELEASE

### Tyler McCandless Responds to Pan American Games Marathon Removal

BOULDER, CO (July 20, 2015) – In May 2015, Tyler McCandless was honored to be asked to join the Men's Marathon team representing the USA at the Pan American Games in Toronto on July 25, 2015. USATF, the national governing body for running, nominated McCandless to the US Olympic Committee (USOC) that oversees the National team and on July 6 McCandless was included in USOC's press release announcing the full team roster. After the official team announcement, Craig Leon stepped forward to state that he had a marathon performance which gave him preference over McCandless in the selection criteria and filed a grievance with the USOC against USATF. On July 10, USATF formally notified McCandless that they planned to resubmit their team nomination to USOC to remove McCandless from the team due to the oversight in their selection process. Having committed the late Spring and early Summer to training for the Games and rearranging his, and his family's, schedules McCandless filed for arbitration to stay on the team.

After hearing arguments from all sides, the arbitrator characterized the situation as a disaster. In his decision, the arbitrator recognized USATF as "the sole cause of the extraordinary issues that gave rise to this dispute," and instructed that USATF must pay for all of the arbitration costs. With the need for expedited action, the "interim operative decision" placed Leon on the team in place of McCandless, additional details will come with the documentation in the "fully reasoned award" which will be forthcoming.

McCandless elaborated on his feelings:

"It's hard to describe how excited I was to believe I was to have the opportunity to represent the USA in international competition and to wear the USA singlet. Those reading my social media posts could see the excitement and I enjoyed the support and encouragement I received back from individuals and race organizations."

"I never thought that accepting a nomination to the Pan Am Games would end in heartbreak. When selected to the Games, I deferred a full-time job offer by a month, pushed back my PhD dissertation defense by a month and dedicated nearly two months of intense training for the Pan Am Games Marathon - foregoing other racing opportunities as well. My mom even pushed back a necessary hip replacement surgery to see me compete in Toronto!"

"Beyond all that, I feel that my own NGB, USATF, misrepresented the truth in submissions to the arbitrator in what can only be characterized as a personal attack rather than an attempt for justice. Humiliated, heart-broken, and shattered are words to describe my feelings right now.

"Of course, I wish Craig Leon and all of Team USA the best at the Pan American Games and know that he and the team will wear the red, white and blue with pride. Although a career dream come true has now become a nightmare that I won't be able to wake up from for some time, I will continue to dedicate myself to the sport I love."