Oscar Pistorius faces race to qualify for London 2012 Olympics

Oscar Pistorius has yet to qualify for the 2012 London Olympics despite the double amputee 400m runner competing at this year's world championships, the chief executive of South Africa's Olympic Committee has said.

Pistorius ran a personal best of 45.07sec in July, to dip under the 45.25sec qualifying mark for London. The time also allowed the so-called Blade Runner to qualify for the world championships in Daegu, South Korea.

It was assumed that would suffice for a place in South Africa's Olympic team but a tightening of selection criteria means Pistorius will have to run another qualifying time.

"Oscar would have to satisfy the 'A' qualifying criteria as is [the case for] for able-bodied athletes within the stipulated time period, which I think is within three months of the Games," the SA Olympic Committee chief executive, Tubby Reddy, explained.

The president, Gideon Sam, said the tightening of the regulations was to ensure that only genuine contenders form part of South Africa's Olympic team. "The criteria work like this: to avoid a situation of a flash in the pan, you make the time but you have to show evidence that again you can make that time," he said.

In Daegu Pistorius participated in the 400m sprint and 4x400m relay: he was eliminated in the semi-final of the 400 (finishing last with a time of 46.19) but was part of South Africa's silver medal-winning relay team, making him the first amputee to win an able-bodied world track medal, although he was not selected for the final.

Sam is targeting 12 medals for South Africa in London and believes that is attainable. "The dream has certainly not changed at all. We remain very confident in both ourselves and the fact that our athletes will step up to the plate and deliver when they need to," he said.

"It's paramount that we believe in them for them to believe that the whole country is behind them."

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