

National Wheelchair Softball Association (NWSA) Classification Policies and Procedures

Section 1: Player Eligibility

Section 1.1 Player Eligibility

- 1) The NWSA invites qualified men, women, and juniors to compete in the adult division of wheelchair softball. All competitors, regardless of gender or age, must receive a functional classification point assignment and classification certification to compete in the adult division.
 - a) NWSA has a Junior Division for boys and girls age nineteen (19) years and younger and not still in high school. See NWSA's Junior Division rulebook for eligibility.
 - b) There is no women's only division in NWSA at this time due to player availability.
- 2) To be eligible for play in the NWSA, a player shall have:
 - a) A permanent physical disability which consistently reduces the function of the lower limbs to a degree where they cannot run, pivot or jump at speed and with the control safety, stability, and endurance required to play running softball or basketball as an able-bodied player;
 - b) A disability that must be of a nature that it can be objectively verified by acknowledged medical and/or paramedical investigations such as measurement, X-ray, CT, MRI, etc.;
 - c) Including, but not limited to hip or knee joint replacements, and have provided confirmation of the relevant surgery from their attending physician or surgeon, and supporting X-rays/scans;
 - d) In the instance of amputation, at minimum total removal of the first ray of one foot;
 - e) In the instance of a leg length discrepancy, a minimum of a 6 cm difference in leg length is measured from the greater trochanter to the ground, as is verified by standing X-ray or confirmed by a measurement taken by an NWSA Classifier, except that the 6 cm minimum shall not apply to players for participation in the Junior Division.
- 3) Findings such as soft tissue contracture, edema or disuse atrophy, or symptoms such as pain or numbness without other objective findings shall not be considered a permanent lower extremity disability. Degrees of pain and/or numbness are not considered measurable and permanent disabilities within the meaning of Article 1, Section 1 of the NWSA Policies & Procedures.
- 4) An otherwise able-bodied player with a temporary disability is not considered eligible.
- 5) To be eligible to participate in any NWSA competitions, a player who does not have a lower extremity impairment, which can be established by observation alone, will need to apply for consideration of their eligibility to the NWSA under section 1.2 of these

policies and procedures. Completed applications should be forwarded to Head Classifier for Review by the Classification Committee for determination.

- 6) A player deemed eligible to play by a Team Reviewer, Classification Panel, the Classification Committee, or Head Classifier shall be eligible to participate in NWSA wheelchair softball games unless a review decision deems the player ineligible.

Section 1.2 Non-Obvious Disability Player Eligibility Determination

1.2.1: Purpose: If a player does not have an obvious disability by sight that presents with clear evidence of permanent loss of function, then the athlete must apply for consideration to the Classification Committee.

1.2.2 Process:

- 1) To apply for consideration under the Minimal Disability criteria, an athlete must submit a Consideration for Eligibility Form with supporting medical documentation to the Head Classifier.
 - a) The athlete shall have the responsibility to determine what supporting documentation to submit.
- 2) The Head Classifier shall forward copies of the information submitted by the athlete to members of the Classification Committee within five (5) business days of receipt;
- 3) Classification Committee will review the information received, ask any questions of the applicant and request additional information if needed, and decide eligibility.
- 4) The Head Classifier shall communicate the determination to the applicant.
- 5) If an athlete meets the Minimal Disability Standard, the athlete may be classified under the New Athlete Process as outlined in NWSA's Classification Policies and Procedures.

Section 2: Responsibilities of Players in the Classification Process

- 1) To be eligible for participation in the NWSA wheelchair softball games, a player shall receive classification as outlined in Section 3 of these Policies and Procedures. A player must be deemed eligible to play by a Certified Team Reviewer, Head Classifier, Classification Panel, the Classification Committee, or Head Classifier.
- 2) Athletes must report their last NWBA or USQRA functional classification number, certification level, and the year of the classification (if any) to their Certified Team Reviewer, Head Classifier, Classification Panel, and Classification Committee when requested.
 - a) Misrepresentations or lack of disclosure will result in possible player ineligibility or disciplinary actions.
 - b) **Penalty:** Any attempt to falsify information on player classification and certification information required requested in the classification process by the athlete, Certified Team Reviewer, or NWSA Team Representative shall lead to a penalty of up to a one-year suspension for the player submitting the information, and/or the team representative submitting the form on behalf of the player.
- 3) A "C" certified classification is good for two (2) years.

- a) A player's "C" Certified classification will be changed to an "RC" Review Certified classification to begin the third year, requiring a review by the Classification Panel to receive a new "C" Certified classification. A player can play in the World Series using an "RC" Review Certified classification.

Section 3: Functional Player Classification System

3.1 Athlete Classification

- 1) Three classification status designations are used for wheelchair softball for players:
 - a. "P" – a "proposed" classification status provided by a Certified Team Reviewer for a new player.
 - b. "A" – an "approved" classification status provided when the proposed "P" classification is confirmed by two other team reviewers.
 - c. "C" - A certified classification status provided when an NWSA classification panel makes a final classification determination.
- 2) Two established functional classification systems will be used to determine a player's point value to be used in competition by wheelchair softball players :
 - a. An eight-class functional classification system. (Note: utilized by the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA))
 - i. Based on the athletes performance functionality the point values in this system are 1,0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, and 4.5.
 - ii. See Appendix "A" for a description of the eight classes.
 - b. A seven-class functional classification system for players wishing to qualify to compete in NWSA's quadriplegic classification. (Note: Utilized by the United States Quadraplegic Rugby Association (USQRA))
 - i. Based on the athletes performance functionality the point values in this system are .5, 1,0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, and 3.5.
 - a USQRA classifications of 3.5 and 3.0 will play at .5 points in NWSA's player point assignment system.
 - b USQRA classifications of 2.0, 1.5, 1.0, and .5 will be called a "free" player and play at no (0) points in NWSA's player point assignment system.
 - c USQRA qualified female players will be called a "free" player and play at no (0) points in NWSA's player point assignment system.
 - d Male and female players with a USQRA classification AND an NWBA classification will qualify to play in the quad roster position but must use the NWBA classification points less than 1.5 points.
 - e **See Appendix "A" for a description of the eight classes.**
- 3) Female and junior players will be given a one-point reduction from their NWBA functional classification point value.
 - a. Neither woman nor junior players will play below a .5 after reductions.
- 4) Players with current NWBA and USQRA functional classifications as of July 1st of any calendar year shall be required to play at that functional classification in NWSA for that year.

- 5) NWSA will accept and use current NWBA and USQRA functional classifications as the basis for NWSA's player classification, but NWBA and USQRA will not accept a player's NWSA classification.
- 6) To be eligible for the Wheelchair Softball World Series (WSWS), a player must have an Approved "A", Certified "C", or Review Certified "RC" classification status.
 - a. A player with a Proposed "P" status must be seen by the Classification Panel before playing in the WSWS and receive at least an Approved "A" classification rating before playing in WSWS games.
 - b. A player with an Approved "A" status will be seen by the Classification Panel during the WSWS for classification and Certification "C" rating that will be given after the WSWS and good for two years.

3.2 Player Classification Process

3.2.1 Players with current NWBA or USQRA classifications

- 1) Players with existing current Approved "A" or Certified "C" classifications with the NWBA shall not be subject to the process outlined in subsection 3.2 of the NWSA's Classification Policies and Procedures and will retain that classification for NWSA classification purposes. Players with an existing current certification of:
 - a. Certified "C" classifications with the NWBA will not need to be reviewed by NWSA's Classification Panel.
 - b. Approved "A" classifications with the NWBA will need to be reviewed by NWSA's Classification Panel before a Certified "C" status is issued.
- 2) Players with an existing current USQRA Sports Class Status of:
 - a. Confirmed "C" or Review with a Fixed Review Date "FRD" shall not be subject to the process outlined in subsection 3.2 of the NWSA's Classification Policies, and Procedures, and will be a "C" confirmed status for NWSA classification purposes.
 - b. New "N," Review "R," or Temporary "T" Sports Class Status with the USQRA shall be given a "P" classification status in wheelchair softball, and need to follow the classification process detailed in section 3.2.2 New Players to receive "A" Approved and "C" Certified classification statuses.
- 3) Players with current NWBA and USQRA functional classifications as of July 1st of any calendar year shall be required to play at that functional classification in NWSA for that and the following two years unless a new certified classification is given.
 - i. Male and female players with a USQRA classification AND an NWBA classification will qualify to play in the quad roster position but must use the NWBA classification points less than 1.5 points.
- 4) NWSA will verify NWBA and USQRA classification determinations and verify the player a Certified "C" rating for NWSA competitions as appropriate.

3.2.2 New Players

- 1) A Certified Team Reviewer, as defined in Section 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 of these Policies and Procedures, shall classify new players before the team's first game. These will represent Proposed "P" classifications;
 - a. Players added to a team's roster during the season comply with the same process.
- 2) Players shall play as the Proposed "P" classifications for the first game(s) of the season until such time that three Certified Team Reviewers shall either:
 - a. Concur and Approve "A" the Proposed "P" classification; or
 - b. Determine a different classification for the player(s) for which they disagree (See 3.2.2 #3)
- 3) In the event of a disagreement between the Certified Team Reviewer of the player's team and the opposing team's Certified Team Reviewers, the player's proposed "P" classification will remain, until:
 - a. Two Certified Team Reviewers from opposing team(s) agree to the Proposed "P" classification of the player;
 - b. A player's Approved "A" classification shall be determined by the agreement of three Certified Team Reviewers regardless of whether or not the player's Team Reviewer agrees;
 - c. The player's Approved "A" classification shall remain in effect for the athlete until reviewed by the Classification Panel.
- 4) Once a player has received a classification confirmation by two Certified Team Reviewers Reviewer for a player's Approved "A" classification, it shall be valid until reviewed by the Classification Panel.
- 5) The Certified Team Reviewer or Team Representative of the player's team shall submit the approved player's classification with the team's roster to the Head Classifier within seven days of approval.
 - 1 Teams that do not submit approved player classifications or team classification rosters timely or when requested may be fined up to a \$200 team fee, and/or the player or team may be deemed ineligible for postseason play.
- 6) A player's Proposed "P" classification can only be Approved "A" during competition games between two NWSA teams (i.e., not practice or exhibition games).
- 7) Following the observation of the player by a Classification Panel, the Head Classifier shall submit the information to NWSA's Classification Committee which will record and keep the record along with the year of certification.

3.2.3 Team Reviewer for using NWBA's eight-class classification system

- 1) Each NWSA team will select a "Team Reviewer" for the functional eight-class classification system. The Team Reviewer shall be a coach, player, or team representative that attends games, practices for the team, or another credible team volunteer.
- 2) An NWSA team may certify more than one Team Reviewer.
- 3) The Team Reviewer shall be responsible for becoming trained in NWBA's functional eight-class classification system using the NWBA's online training and certification system.

- 4) Once the Team Reviewer passes the NWBA training and online test, he/she will be considered a Certified Team Reviewer. The new Certified Team Reviewer must notify and evident the certification to the Head Classifier.
 - 1 The Team Reviewer must complete the NWBA certification exam before providing any official player classifications as a Certified Team Reviewer.
- 5) A Certified Team Reviewer shall evaluate opposing team players' Proposed "P" classification and rosters for an Approve "A" classification when possible.
- ~~6) A Certified Team Reviewer may only serve as such for one (1) NWSA team (or program).~~
- 7) Certified Team Reviewers shall be recertified every two (2) years.
- 8) Teams that play a game against a team without a Certified Team Reviewer may NOT have the opposing team sign off at a later date for a player's classification, even if the opposing team certifies their team Reviewer after the game/tournament has been completed.

3.2.4 Team Reviewer Quadriplegics for using USQRA's seven-class classification system

- 1) Each NWSA team will select a Team Reviewer to qualify athletes as a "quadriplegic" player in wheelchair softball using the USQRA's seven-class classification system. The Team Reviewer shall be at a minimum a Level 3 USQRA Certified classifier.
- 2) The Q Team Reviewer shall verify an athlete's current or Propose "P" a USQRA Sport Class and Sports Class Status for players who want to qualify and play as a quadriplegic in wheelchair softball.
- 3) A Q Team Reviewer shall also evaluate and Approve "A" opposing team players Proposed "P" quadriplegic player USQRA Sport Class and Sports Class Status when possible.
- ~~4) A Q Team Reviewer may serve as such for only one (1) NWSA team (or program).~~
- 5) A Q Team Reviewer's certification with USQRA should be current unless excused explicitly by NWSA's Head Classifier.

3.2.5 Violations Involving Team Reviewer and Classification

- 1) If a Certified Team Reviewer is not acting in good faith when proposing or verifying the opposing team's classifications, a grievance can be filed with by the Head Classifier.
- 2) The Classification Committee shall recommend appropriate sanctions to the Commissioner for action for intentional acts of bad faith regarding player classifications by Certified Team Reviewers or Team Representatives;
- 3) Penalty: Sanctions may include barring the individual from being a Team Reviewer / Certified Quad Team Reviewer, forfeiture of games played by the misclassified players, and suspension from NWSA activities and games (if a player or coach).

3.2.5: Appeals of classification and player eligibility decisions

- 1) Appeals of classification and eligibility decisions may only be made by the affected athlete.
 - a) There are no appeals of Proposed "P" classification ratings given by a Certified Team Reviewer.
- 2) A player may protest his/her Approved "A" classification by:
 - a) Completing an NWSA Player Classification & Eligibility Protest Form with a \$100 protest fee and submitting it to the Head Classifier.
 - i. Two different Certified Team Reviewers, that did not participate in the current classification determination, will review the player and communicate findings to the Head Classifier.
 - b) The Head Classifier will review and make a final determination on the "A" level classification
 - a) The \$100 protest fee will be refunded if the Head Classifier makes a different final determination. The Head Classifier's decision shall be considered final.
- 3) A player may protest his/her Certified "C" classification by:
 - b) Completing an NWSA Player Classification & Eligibility Protest Form with a \$100 protest fee and submitting it to the Head Classifier.
 - c) The protest will be reviewed by three other Classification panel members on the Classification Committee who will make a final determination on the Certified "C" level classification.
 - d) The \$100 protest fee will be refunded if a different final classification determination is made. The review decision shall be considered final.

Section 4 NWSA's Classification Organization

4.1 NWSA Classification Committee

- 1) The Classification Committee shall consist of five to nine members including the Head Classifier, who shall serve as the chair of the committee. Committee members shall be individuals in the medical profession, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and/or NWBA/USQRA classification backgrounds. These members are to be approved by the NWSA's Board of Directors. Members shall be identified and proposed for the committee by NWSA's Commissioner, Head Classifier, and President. It shall take at least five votes to pass any policy change, motion or make any recommendation on behalf of the committee.
- 2) Classification Committee members may be removed by the Board of Directors.
- 3) The Classification Committee shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a. Identify and recruit members for the Classification Panel.
 - b. Update, edit, maintain, and distribute the NWSA's classification Policy and Procedures;
 - c. Provide classification interpretations and develop a casebook of examples to provide clarification to team reviewers and team administrators as available;

- d. Evaluate and approve proposed player classification and eligibility requests, appeals, or changes;
- e.—Submit and make recommendations for changes in the Classification Policies and Procedures.
- f.—Committee members may serve as certified team reviewers or classification panel members.

4.2 Head Classifier

- a. Shall be an individual that has at least a level XXX classifiers certification in the National Wheelchair Basketball Association.
- b. Shall be approved by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Commissioner.
- c. Shall serve as the chair for the Classification Committee.
- d. Recruit and track certification of team reviewers.
- e. Oversee the classification panel at tournaments and the WSWs.
- f. Perform classification and oversight duties as assigned in these policies and procedures.

4.3 Classification Panel

- a. Panel members shall be certified NWBA or USQRA classifiers.
 - a. For NWBA, classifiers certification shall be XXX or greater.
 - b. For USQRA, classifiers shall be at a minimum a Level 3 USQRA Certified classifier.
- b. Panel members are to be approved and serve at the pleasure of the Head Classifier.
- c. Three-panel members that have not been a part of a player's Approved "A" classification, can determine the Certified "C" classification of a player.
 - a. The panel members must work together, and not at different times, to determine the final Certification "C" classification of a player.
- d. Panel members will provide classification at the WSWs and at in-season tournaments as assigned by the Head Classifier.

NWBA Functional Classification system.

The NWBA, beginning with the 2014-15 season, began using the Functional Classification system. NWSA is officially adopting this system in 2020. The Functional Classification system uses classifications from 1.0 - 4.5. Each athlete will be classified by a team reviewer in one of eight classes (1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5).

Class 1.0 - No active movement of the trunk in the vertical, forward or sideways plane

Class 1.5 - Has characteristics of a class 1.0, but able to move partially out into forward plane, able to rotate upper trunk, able to transition from catching to passing or shooter faster than class 1.0, more stable upon contact than class 1.0, and more at ease with ball within cylinder of movement.

Class 2.0 - Has active use of upper trunk in the vertical and forward planes, able to rotate the upper trunk while upright in both directions, able to hold the ball forward with both arms extended, able to lean the trunk into the forward plane about 45 degrees with control and return to the upright sitting position, able to actively bring upper trunk off the backrest of the chair, and uses hands to return to upright of trunk if no thighs-unless knees are significantly higher than the hips.

Class 2.5 - Has characteristics of class 1.0, but able to lean forward 90 degrees and return to upright sitting position without proper upper extremity assist with knees higher than hips, able to lean forward and rotate the upper trunk simultaneously, Able to lean forward and rotate the upper trunk simultaneously, active movement of both the Upper and Lower Trunk but not coordinated or as one unit, lower Trunk is not against the backrest at all times, may have a lordosis (Curve in low back) to assist in returning to upright, and more stable than a Class 2.0 player but still has loss of stability in trunk.

Class 3.0 - Displays active use of the upper and lower trunk in the forward and vertical planes: Can lean forward 90 degrees, placing chest on thighs and return to upright with ease without knees significantly higher than hips, can hold the ball with both hands outstretched in front of face without loss of stability, can rotate upper and lower trunk as a unit not supported by wheelchair backrest, rotation of the trunk occurs at the level of the pelvis not the waist, unable to maintain stability leaning sideways, and works within a 'Cylinder'

Class 3.5 - Has characteristics of a class 3.0, but able to move partially out into the sideways plane and return to upright sitting, able to remain upright in hard contact situations forward, able to sit with hips higher than knees, often raises and lowers trunk with each push, able to generate some power in legs with pushing, able to retrieve a ball with two hands on the floor slightly to the side and return to upright position, can lean to the side but remains within his base of support, plays within a WIDER cylinder than a Class 3.0 player, does not have full volume of action to either side.

Class 4.0 - Displays the ability to move the trunk maximally in all planes of movement with weakness to one side, has one strong side and one weaker side, able to lean strongly to one side, usually able to lean to weak side slightly, can hold the ball with outstretched hands in front or overhead without loss of stability even in contact situations, no need to counterbalance even in contact situations unless contact is forceful and directed into the weaker side.

Class 4.5 - Displays the ability to move the trunk maximally in all planes of movement with no significant weakness in any direction, full volume of action in all planes, displays ability to lean to either side during shooting, passing, contesting a shot or trying to intercept a pass.

USQRA Functional Classification system.

There are seven Sport Classes in Wheelchair Rugby: 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0 and 3.5. Athletes in each Sport Class have unique Sport-specific abilities and specific roles on the court.

Athletes are sometimes referred to as "high point", "mid point" or "low point" athletes. Low point Sport Classes are the 0.5, 1.0 and 1.5 Sport Classes. Mid point Sport Classes are the 2.0 and 2.5 Sport Classes. The high point Sport Classes are the 3.0 and 3.5 Sport Classes.

The 1.5, 2.5 and 3.5 Sport Classes were originally developed to categorize athletes with asymmetrical or varied upper extremity Impairment and/or trunk Impairment. However, there are currently physical assessment features and characteristics of ball and chair tasks identified for athletes in these three Sport Classes who have both asymmetrical and symmetrical arm Impairment.

Athletes in each Sport Class represent a wide range of Impairment. Some Activity Limitation may at times overlap due to the range of Impairment within one class. For example, an Athlete with asymmetrical Impairment can show some activities consistent with a higher Sport Class. However, the athlete's overall activities do not match with what is expected in the higher class.

Other overlap may be due to skills development, training and/or talent. For example, the capabilities of a world-class Athlete in the 0.5 Sport Class may exceed those of many good quality athletes in the 1.0 Sport Class and, in a few cases, new or inexperienced athletes in the 1.5 Sport Class.

Comment Article 6: The descriptions included in this section are designed to assist the Classifier in training to understand characteristics unique to the Sport Classes in Wheelchair Rugby. Examples in this article are not complete Sport Class profiles and are not inclusive of all possible characteristics. These characteristics describe arm/hand Impairment and their impact on sport-specific activities. With the exception of the athlete in the 0.5 Sport Class, characteristics will vary widely among athletes with partial to no trunk Impairment, those with various combinations of arm Impairment, and those with Impairment in limb length.

6.1 Sport Class 0.5

The activities an Athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- a. Consistent proximal shoulder instability,
- b. Posture in sitting includes sacral sitting posture, kyphosis and/or sits low in wheelchair,
- c. Typical on court role -- defense / blocker,
- d. Unopposed biceps push with abduction of the arm,
- e. Forward head with bob when pushing,
- f. Often uses forearms to turn and stop,
- g. Trunk flexes forward and uses forearms to press down on wheel to decelerate/stop,
- h. Uses back ¼ of wheel to stop, start and turn,
- i. Relatively slow transition/ recovery from one activity to the next,
- j. Covers short distance/volume on court,

- k. Volleyball and/or scoop pass; no chest pass, and
- l. Traps direct passes on lap or bats into lap from limited range.

6.2 Sport Class 1.0

The activities an Athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- a. More balanced shoulder strength so arms are less abducted during pushing than the 0.5 Athlete,
- b. Typical on court role -- defense / blocker,
- c. May inbound ball but not a major ball handler,
- d. May have triceps push (especially see elbow extension at the end of the push stroke) and/ or unopposed biceps push with longer wheel contact,
- e. May have slight head bob throughout pushing, especially visible in starts,
- f. Longer contact actively propelling on wheel, may have some ability to reverse pushing on back of wheel,
- g. Multidirectional start, stop and turn—including wheeling backwards,
- h. May use wrist extensors to hook under portion of rim,
- i. Forearm or fist/ wrist catch, and
- j. Weak chest or forearm pass.

6.3 Sport Class 1.5

The tasks an Athlete with symmetrical arm Impairment performs include but are not limited to:

- a. Typical on court role: Excellent blocker and may also be an occasional ball handler,
- b. Slight head bob at start, not typically throughout push,
- c. Increased shoulder strength/ stability allows for more effective pushing with limited explosive start due to triceps weakness,
- d. Typically, the chest pass is not entirely flat, but with some arch,
- e. Increased shoulder strength and stability allows for some distance and consistency to chest pass,
- f. More effective chest pass than the typical 1.0 Athlete, due to stronger triceps and shoulder muscles, and
- g. Typically has wrist imbalance that causes limited ball security.

The activities an Athlete with asymmetrical arm Impairment performs include but are not limited to:

- h. Asymmetrical arm or hand Impairment, noticeable with chair and ball handling activities,
- i. Asymmetrical push, may compensate with drag on strong side,
- j. Turns toward weak side with more skill, strength and speed than towards strong side,
- k. May use strong side more effectively when picking, and
- l. One-sided ball handling skills – for example, one hand used more for stabilizing while other hand used to direct pass.

6.4 Sport Class 2.0

The activities an Athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- a. Good shoulder strength and stability, allows for very effective pushing,
 - b. Balanced/functional wrist flexion and extension, limited to no finger function
 - c. Increasing role on court as a ball handler,
 - d. Quick stops, starts, turns,
 - e. Rims the ball using wrist flexion with wrist in neutral or flexed position,

- f. Functional wrist flexion results in increased passing distance compared to athlete without wrist flexion,
- g. Inconsistent one-hand pass, takes time to set up with use of other hand, one-hand pass only effective when unchallenged,
- h. Limitations in ball security due to lack of finger function but can hold ball firmly with palms of hands using wrist flexion,
- i. Effective chest pass with control and consistency; typically flat if maximum distance,
- j. Dribble open-handed, with a flat hand and scoop bilaterally due to active wrist function,
- k. Scoops ball into lap when catching, and
- l. Control and distance in overhead pass is limited due to lack of finger function.

6.5 Sport Class 2.5

The activities with symmetrical arm Impairment include but are not limited to:

- a. Typical on court role: ball-handler and fairly fast playmaker,
- b. Because of excellent shoulder strength and stability will see good pushing speed on court,
- c. May have some trunk control giving better stability in the chair,
- d. Dribbles the ball safely, but supinates forearm to scoop the ball onto the lap,
- e. Finger flexion (DIP and PIP) used to hook around wheel for maneuvering chair in picks and braking,
- f. Due to finger flexion strength capable of performing one-handed overhead pass, takes some time to set up for pass, usually with assistance of other hand; limited accuracy and distance because of imbalance in finger strength,
- g. Safe two-handed catching of passes, usually scooping ball to lap. May catch passes onehanded and scoop to lap or chest, and
- h. Improved ball security compared to athlete with 2.0 hand because of improved ability to isolate wrist/finger function, and
- i. Usually has some useful overhead game The activities with asymmetrical arm Impairment include but are not limited to:
- j. Asymmetrical arm or hand Impairment, noticeable with chair and ball handling skills,
- k. Asymmetrical push, may compensate with drag on strong side,
- l. Turns toward weak side with more skill, strength and speed than towards strong side,
- m. May use strong side more effectively when picking, and
- n. One-handed ball handling skills.

6.6 Sport Class 3.0

The activities an Athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- a. Normal shoulder, elbow and wrist strength; finger flexion and extension with weakness in lumbricals (flexion at the MCP joints) and/or thumb opposition and thumb abduction.
- b. On court role as very good ball handler and fast playmaker,
- c. Ability to grip wheel rim can increase pushing control and speed; especially in stops, starts and turns,
- d. Use of wrist/finger flexion allows quick set-up for one-hand pass, usually uses one hand alone without use of other hand to set up, especially if using dominant hand for passing,
- e. Uses wrist/finger flexion in one-hand flip pass and rimming the ball,

- f. Uses finger and/or thumb to stabilize with the opposite arm to allow greater reach if Athlete has no trunk,
- g. Multiple dribble one handed with control,
- h. Functional finger flexion and extension and partial thumb function allowing for control of the ball in varying planes,
- i. Functional finger flexion and extension provides the ability to grasp and release wheel rim regardless of wrist position, and
- j. Strong ball security in all positions, including overhead, with one or two hands.

6.7 Sport Class 3.5

The activities an Athlete performs include but are not limited to:

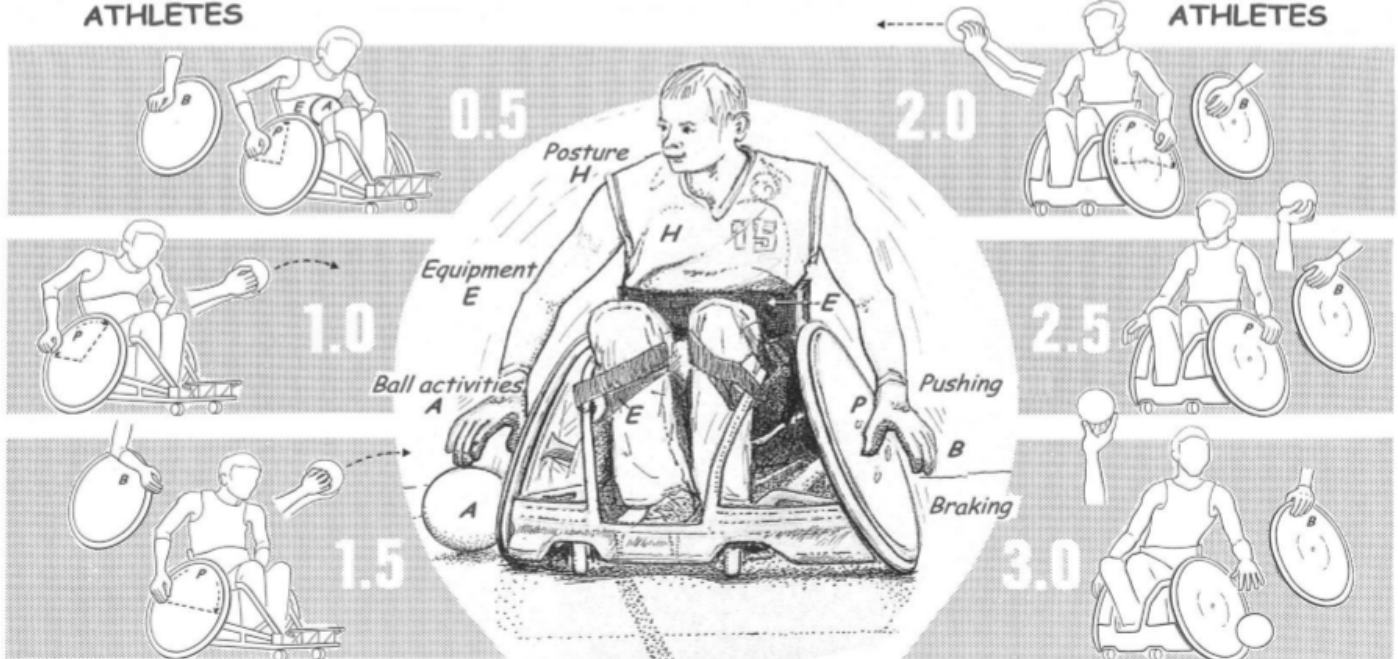
- a. Primary ball-handler and playmaker.
- b. If asymmetrical arm or hand Impairment, noticeable with chair and ball handling activities.
- c. If trunk present, very stable in wheelchair and able to use trunk for ball and chair activities.
- d. If the athlete has both hand and trunk muscle activity, usually has excellent ball control for controlled one hand passing for distance and excellent ball security during passing and catching.

Refer to Appendix A.7 Characteristics of Sport Classes and Illustration for a more general description of features of each of the seven Wheelchair Rugby Sport Classes, and an illustration including typical roles on court and ball and wheelchair activities.

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

DEFENSIVE
ATHLETES

OFFENSIVE
ATHLETES



Classification in wheelchair rugby.

Every team can have 4 athletes with a maximum point value on court of 8 points.
The highest eligible sport class for wheelchair rugby is 3.5.
The athlete sport class can be seen from: Role on court (offensive or defensive)
-Posture (H) -Pushing (P) -Braking (B) -Ball activities (A) -Equipment (E)

Besides a point value for their arms, athletes also get a point value for their trunk and legs. The minimum point value is 0 (no active trunk or leg function) and the maximum value is 1.5 (good to normal trunk and leg function). The value for trunk and legs is added to the average value for both arms for the entrance sport class. An athlete in the 3.5 class can have a combination of arm, trunk and leg function.



For more information visit:
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