

BWB Classification Consultation 2022

Introduction

Classification is a key part of Paralympic sport, it determines which athletes are eligible to compete in each sport.

British Wheelchair Basketball's (BWB) Classification procedures align to the criteria used in IWBF's 2018 Classification Manual with the addition of the 5.0 for players without a disability or with a non-eligible impairment. For more information about BWB Classification visit <https://britishwheelchairbasketball.co.uk/rules-regulations/classification/guide-to-classification/>

There have been recent changes to wheelchair basketball Classification internationally which means that classification in BWB's leagues and competitions no longer align to the international criteria. Follow this link for information about international Classification procedures <https://iwbf.org/the-game/classification/>

The purpose of this consultation is to determine procedures for Classification in BWB leagues and competitions in the future. The consultation will take place via survey.

Terminology

BWB: British Wheelchair Basketball

Classification: The process for determining Eligibility and allocating a Sport Class.

Disability: a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities (Equality Act, 2010 <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>).

Eligibility: the process of determining whether a player has an Eligible Impairment for the sport.

Eligibility Criteria: The guidelines which describe the characteristics for an Eligible Impairment for wheelchair basketball.

Eligible Impairment: An impairment designated as being a prerequisite for competing in Para-sport.

IPC: International Paralympic Committee

IWBF: International Wheelchair Basketball Federation

Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC): Guidelines defined on the basis of scientific research which assesses the impacts of impairments on the sport's activities and outlines the minimum criteria for Eligibility for each eligible impairment.

Permanent disability: An impairment that is unlikely to be resolved meaning the principle effects are lifelong.

Scenario 1

This scenario represents Eligibility and Classification procedures based on the 2018 IWBF Classification Manual with the development of a domestic Minimum Impairment Criteria

2018 Eligibility Criteria

- a) A wheelchair basketball player must have a permanent physical disability which 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 basketball as non-disabled player.
- b) The disability must be such that it can be objectively verified by acknowledged medical and/or paramedical investigations such as measurement, x-ray, CT, MRI, etc.
- c) Persons who have had hip or knee joint replacements and have provided confirmation of the relevant surgery from their attending physician or surgeon and supporting x-rays/scans are deemed to have met the eligibility criteria.
- d) In the instance of amputation, the minimal requirement for eligibility is total removal of the first ray of one foot.
- e) In the instance of a leg length discrepancy the minimal requirement for eligibility is 6cm difference in leg length as measured from the greater trochanter to the ground in a standing x-ray.

For the purpose of Classification, degrees of pain are not considered measurable and permanent disabilities.

- In this scenario the rules would align with IWBF's 2018 Classification Manual.
- Non-disabled players and those with a non-eligible impairment type would be classified with 5.0 points.
- Other considerations:
 - The 2018 IWBF rules have subsequently been updated for the IWBF to demonstrate compliance with the IPC Classification Code.
 - A Minimum Impairment Criteria would need to be developed to clarify the definition of Eligible Impairments.

Scenario 2

This scenario presents to Classify all players in their chair, regardless of impairment type and severity. Include the option of assigning 5.0 sport class.

- This scenario is inclusive in terms of the type and level of impairment that a player can have.
- In this scenario there are no Minimum Impairment Criteria or Eligible Impairments, but players would need to prove a physical disability.
- Non-physically disabled players (including those with intellectual impairment) would be assigned sport class 5.0.
- Players with impairment types not eligible for the Paralympics would be eligible domestically.

- The rules would not align with the IPC Athlete Classification Code, but would with the UK version, by facilitating meaningful competition.
- Other considerations:
 - What evidence would be required to confirm a physical disability? Who would perform this assessment? How would it be performed?
 - Should players be required to prove a physical disability which affects the lower limbs, or could the upper limbs/body be considered without lower limbs?
 - Should players be required to prove a physical disability or any disability, for example could those with intellectual impairments be classified below 5.0?
 - Should an assessment of impairment type be included? Otherwise, how would you know if someone was on a Paralympic pathway or not based on their impairment type?
 - How to word rules and provide clarity to those who either are/are not on a Paralympic pathway based on the type/level of impairment?
 - Could including players with non-eligible impairment types (for Paralympics) reduce opportunities for those on a Paralympic pathway (in terms of classification)?
 - Players with non-eligible impairment type for Paralympic competition could be classified into any sport class, depending on the severity of their impairment.
 - Should disabled players be able to be assigned 5.0 sport class? For example, a player with 5cm leg length difference would not meet IWBF Minimum Impairment Criteria, so should they be a 4.5 or 5.0 in National competition?
 - Any regulation on number of 5.0 players?

Scenario 3

No 5.0 class, maximum sport class of 4.5.

- As with Scenario 2, there are no MIC and players with non-eligible impairment types for the Paralympics would be eligible domestically.
- The considerations given in Scenario 2 also apply in this scenario.
- Other considerations:
 - Non-disabled players would be in 4.5 sport class.
 - Could this lead to dilution of the 4.5 class?
 - What impact would this have on a “genuine” 4.5 (e.g. meets IWBF MIC so could play internationally) if their squad also contained less impaired players who would not meet the IWBF MIC, but domestically are also a 4.5?

Scenario 4

Adopt the IWBF rules, including eligible impairments, minimum impairment criteria and sport class allocation.

- In this scenario, only those eligible to compete in the Paralympics would be able to play domestically.
- The rules would align with the IPC Classification Code.

- Non-disabled players, those with a non-eligible impairment type, or who do not meet MIC would not be eligible to play in national competitions.
- Other considerations:
 - Are existing classifiers suitably skilled/trained to be able to perform the assessments this scenario requires?
 - When/how would the various stages of assessment be performed?