



**INTERNATIONAL WHEELCHAIR  
RUGBY FEDERATION**

**IWRF CLASSIFICATION MANUAL**

**3rd EDITION  
Revised 2015**

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## Acknowledgments

Anne-Marie Glenn, MD (1954-1997) was a dedicated leader in the sport of Wheelchair Rugby. Anne-Marie became involved in Wheelchair Rugby in 1990, assisting in the development and establishment of the sport-focused classification system. She gave unselfishly of her time, energy and heart to Wheelchair Rugby. This manual and the development of classification in this sport would not have been possible without the original contribution of Anne-Marie Glenn, MD and Diane Bulger-Tsapos, OT.

## Contributions

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# 1 Introduction to Wheelchair Rugby

Wheelchair Rugby began as a sport for *Athletes with Tetraplegia (Quadriplegia)* and has grown into an intense, physical team sport for both male and female athletes with a variety of impairment involving all four limbs. Wheelchair Rugby combines elements of rugby sevens, basketball, football and ice hockey and is played on a basketball court. The sport originated in 1977 in Canada and is rapidly developing throughout the world. The first competitors in Wheelchair Rugby were athletes with *Spinal Cord Injury*; however, now athletes with a wide variety of *impairments* are currently competing in this exciting sport.

Teams are formed by four athletes on the court and up to eight substitutes on the bench. The athletes are allocated one of seven *Sport Classes* ranging from 0.5 to 3.5; the higher number is intended for those athletes who have higher function on court and the lower numbers for those athletes with less function on court. The point total of the four athletes on the court cannot exceed 8.0.

*Explanatory Note:* At its 2008 Sports Assembly, the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF) adopted a new rule allowing additional point totals on court for female athletes. Refer to the most current IWRF Sport Rules for the most recent changes.

The Wheelchair Rugby ball is a soft-cover volleyball. The ball may be carried, dribbled, or passed in any way except by kicking; and it must be bounced at least once every 10 seconds. Athletes score a goal worth one point by carrying the ball over the opponent's goal line. The game is played in four eight-minute quarters (IWRF, 2006).

## 2 Classification

*Classification* has existed since the origin of sport. Perhaps the most familiar classification in sport is by gender - the development of separate events for men and women. Other types of classification in sport evolved in the interest of fairness, for example, grouping by weight in sports such as boxing.

Classification in sport for persons with disabilities has existed since the mid-1940s. Early classification was based on medical diagnoses, such as spinal cord injury, amputation or other neurologic or orthopedic conditions. Athletes received a single sport class, based on diagnosis or disorder, for all sports. However, recent transitions from more *General or Medical Classification* to *Functional Classification* to *Sport-Specific Classification* has determined *Sport Class* based not only on health condition, such as disorder or diagnosis, but also on the relevance of an athlete's impairment to carrying out activities fundamental to sport performance. This evolution strives to ensure that a classification system promotes participation in sport by persons with disabilities by minimizing the impact of impairment on the outcome of competition so that athletes who succeed are those with the best body dimensions, physiology, and psychology. By enhancing these elements through training and quality coaching, the strategies and skills of competing teams and athletes should be the factors determining success in competition. (Tweedy, 2010; Tweedy, 2009; DePauw & Gavron, 2005).

In the beginning, Wheelchair Rugby *Classification Rules* were medically based. There were three sport classes, largely determined by medical diagnosis and neurological level of spinal cord injury. In 1991, a sport-focused classification system for Wheelchair Rugby was started. Although the spinal cord injury examination was used as a guideline in developing the physical assessment component, the classification rules were expanded to include fundamental activities in Wheelchair Rugby in the allocation of sport class.

This change was made for many reasons, including accommodating the growing number of athletes with impairments from health conditions other than complete spinal cord injury such as individuals with incomplete spinal cord injury, poliomyelitis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, multiple amputations and other conditions with impairment in muscle strength similar to tetraplegia.

## 2.1 Purpose of Classification

In general, classification provides a structure for competition. Classification is carried out to ensure that an athlete's impairment is relevant to sport performance (IPC, 2007). Specifically, the purpose of classification is to promote participation in sport by people with disabilities by minimizing the impact of impairment on the outcome of competition (Tweedy, 2002).

Classification is an on-going process whereby all athletes are under regular observation by classifiers to ensure consistency and fairness for all athletes.

Classification has two important goals:

1. To determine *Eligibility* to compete, and
2. To group athletes for competition.

Each sport must determine what impairment types are eligible for their respective sport and describe how that impairment resulting from a permanent and verifiable medical condition or disorder causes activity limitation in the fundamental activities of the sport (IPC, 2007).

## 2.2 Purpose of Classification in Wheelchair Rugby

Each athlete undergoes evaluation to:

- Determine eligibility to compete in Wheelchair Rugby  
AND
- To group athletes into one of seven sport classes for competition.

## 2.3 Principles of Classification in Wheelchair Rugby

Classifiers utilise a sport-specific classification system developed for Wheelchair Rugby that includes physical, technical and observation components.

Classification in Wheelchair Rugby is composed of three distinct parts:

1. Physical assessment or Bench test,
2. Technical assessment including a range of sport specific tests and novel non-sport tests, and

3. Observation assessment consisting of observation of sport-specific activities on court.

Allocation of sport class is based on types of impairment associated with neuromuscular and musculoskeletal conditions, such as muscle strength and limb length, and severity of impairments affecting fundamental activities related to the sport, independent of skill level or athletic training. Specific activities in Wheelchair Rugby sport performance consist of wheelchair and ball activities.

*Explanatory Note:* As of 2010, the Wheelchair Rugby classification system was revised to include measurement of impairments in limb length and muscle strength in the trunk and specific lower extremity muscles that stabilize the pelvis.

## ***PART I – CLASSIFICATION OF IMPAIRMENTS***

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This section of the IWRF Classification Manual details the classification process and components of the evaluation of the Wheelchair Rugby athlete, including:

- Eligibility
- Physical Assessment – Bench Test
- Physical Assessment – Trunk Tests
- Technical Assessment – Sport specific tests and novel non-sports tests
- Observation Assessment – Observation On-Court
- Characteristics of Sport Classes

## 3 Athlete Evaluation

*Athlete Evaluation* is the process by which an athlete is assessed according to the classification rules of Wheelchair Rugby. IWRF classification rules require athlete evaluation by a panel of three IWRF certified international classifiers.

### 3.1 Eligibility for Wheelchair Rugby

To be eligible to compete in Wheelchair Rugby, an athlete must have an impairment caused by a verifiable and permanent health condition leading to activity limitation that impacts sport performance in Wheelchair Rugby (ICIDH-2, 2000; IPC Classification Code, 2007).

Wheelchair Rugby is a sport originally developed for athletes with tetraplegia due to spinal cord injury and neuromuscular conditions such as poliomyelitis. Now, there are athletes participating in Wheelchair Rugby with conditions other than spinal cord injury and poliomyelitis, such as muscular dystrophy and various types of central and peripheral nervous system conditions.

Also, athletes with conditions, such as multiple amputations, congenital limb defects and other similar musculoskeletal conditions are playing Wheelchair Rugby. Athletes with conditions other than neurological may be eligible if impairment type and severity results in activity limitation that impacts sport performance in a similar way to that of an athlete with tetraplegia.

To participate in Wheelchair Rugby, an athlete must be deemed eligible according to the IWRF classification rules.

1. The athlete must meet the criteria in the Eligibility Test to proceed to athlete evaluation, and
2. The athlete must be allocated one of the seven sport classes that range from 0.5 to 3.5.

An athlete allocated a 4.0 sport class is not eligible to participate in Wheelchair Rugby.

If an athlete fails to meet the eligibility criteria and is deemed not eligible for competition in Wheelchair Rugby; this finding does not question the presence of a genuine impairment. This is only a ruling on the eligibility of the athlete to compete under the sport rules of the IWRF (IPC Classification Code, 2007).

### 3.1.1 Eligibility Test (revised from the 4.0 Athlete Test in 2010)

The Eligibility Test sets apart those athletes who are appropriate for classification and those athletes whose severity of impairment and sport specific activity limitation does not meet the minimum eligibility requirement that has been determined for wheelchair rugby. The eligibility test measures impairments in muscle strength in upper extremities, trunk and lower extremities and also limb length.

This test will determine if an athlete is eligible to proceed to athlete evaluation or if the athlete is not eligible and will not move forward to the athlete evaluation. This test should be conducted after the interview process prior to the entire bench test, or physical assessment.

If an athlete moves forward to the physical assessment, technical assessment and on-court observation, not eligible still remains as a possible outcome.

Currently there are no specific tests for coordination impairments such as hypertonia, ataxia, and athetosis in the classification system. Athletes with these impairments may still be eligible to participate. However, since there are limited objective and reliable tests for measuring these impairments, sport class is primarily based on technical and observation assessment.

Refer to **Appendix A** Eligibility Test for both a graphic representation of the Classification Process for eligibility testing for classification in Wheelchair Rugby and for a graphic representation of the classification process for athletes, who pass the eligibility test.

Refer to **Appendix B** Trunk Test Flow Chart for the graphic representation of trunk testing, **Appendix C** Description of Trunk Tests for explanations of the individual trunk tests and **Appendix D** Trunk Value Definition and Observations for scoring the trunk.

## 3.2 Classification Components

All athletes who meet the requirements set out in the Eligibility Test proceed to the physical assessment, or bench test. The three parts of athlete evaluation are:

1. Physical assessment – Bench Test,
2. Technical assessment – novel and sport-specific tests, and
3. Observation assessment – observation of sport specific activities on-court during training and/or competition.

Refer to **Appendix E** Sport Class Allocation Pathway to see the steps in the complete athlete evaluation.

## 3.3 Components of Athlete Evaluation

Specific components of the athlete evaluation performed by the classifiers detailed in this section include the assessment of muscle strength, definitions of arm point values, trunk values, hand testing, and examples of the mathematics used as part of assigning a sport class.

### 3.3.1 Muscle Strength Testing Scale

Muscle testing is an important component of the physical assessment. Muscles are graded on a five-point ordinal scale used in manual muscle testing with evidence to support well-established validity and reliability of this testing (Hislop & Montgomery, 2007). The five-point scale is defined as:

- 0 Complete lack of voluntary muscle contraction. The examiner is unable to feel or see any muscle contraction.
- 1 Faint or “flicker” muscle contraction without any movement of the limb. The examiner can see or palpate some contractile activity of the muscle/s or may be able to see or feel the tendon “pop up” or tense as the athlete tries to perform the movement.
- 2 Very weak muscle contraction with movement through complete range of motion in a position that eliminates or minimizes the force of gravity. This position is often described as the horizontal plane of motion.
- 3 Muscle can complete a full range of motion against only the resistance of gravity.
- 4 Able to complete the full range of motion against gravity and can tolerate strong resistance without breaking the test position. The Grade 4 muscle clearly breaks with maximal resistance.
- 5 Able to complete full range of motion and maintain end point range position against maximal resistance. The examiner cannot break the athlete’s hold position.

*Explanatory note:* Plus (+) and minus (-) grades may be utilised where the muscle strength falls between the defined numerical grades. Criteria are defined according to Hislop HJ, Montgomery J. Daniels and Worthingham’s *Muscle Testing: Techniques of Manual Examination. 8th ed.* Philadelphia, Penn: WB Saunders, 2007.

Grades 0 and 1 represent absence or minimal muscle contractile activity, so plus (+) and minus (-) grades should not be used.

Other grades are defined as follows:

- Grade 2-: gravity eliminated movement that is less than full range of motion
- Grade 2+: in gravity minimized position, completes full available range and takes maximal resistance; or against gravity, up to half of full range of motion
- Grade 3-: against gravity, more than half but less than full range of motion
- Grade 3+: completes full range of motion against gravity, and holds end position against mild resistance

### 3.3.2 Triceps Test

Because of the importance of sustaining triceps strength in activities in Wheelchair Rugby such as wheelchair tasks, a modification was made to the testing for the triceps muscle to add a component of muscle endurance. The assignment of muscle grade for the triceps muscle is based on the following test:

3-	=	5-10 repetitions
3	=	10 repetitions
3+	=	10 repetitions then minimal resistance
4-	=	10 repetitions then moderate resistance
4	=	After 10 repetitions moderate resistance throughout active ROM

### 3.4 Physical Assessment – Bench Test

The *Bench Test* includes an interview and a physical assessment. The physical assessment includes manual muscle tests, trunk tests and hand tests (if appropriate).

Athletes will be requested to remove uniform tops if necessary to observe and evaluate muscle function and movements during the evaluation. Female athletes should wear appropriate underclothing to permit removal of their uniform shirt.

The athlete may also be asked to transfer to other surfaces for testing, such as a treatment table, floor mat or chair.

#### 3.4.1 Interview

An athlete is asked about diagnosis, medical history, sensation, spasticity, contractures, and previous operations to determine how these factors may affect performance of sport-specific tasks.

Classifiers look at the rugby chair and other equipment set-up, such as seating, gloves and binding/strapping. This information assists the classifiers in assessing how these elements may affect performance of sport-specific tasks.

#### 3.4.2 Manual Muscle Tests (MMTs)

Resistive tests are performed on select muscles in the arms, hands, trunk and legs. These manual muscle tests are performed in and out of the athlete's rugby chair.

*Explanatory Note:* For some athletes, manual muscle testing in the bench test provides little useful information, as strength is not impaired. For example, muscle strength is not always impaired in athletes with cerebral palsy. However, impairments such as athetosis or ataxia lead to activity limitation impacting sport performance. The technical and observation assessments are more useful in the final determination of sport class.

#### 3.4.3 Upper Extremity Proximal Weakness and Preservation of Distal Strength

Upper extremity point value for athletes with neuromuscular conditions that result in proximal weakness with preservation of distal strength, for example, poliomyelitis, and muscular dystrophy, is determined in a special manner:

- Draw a line on the classification form to divide the muscle test scores on the bench test below the triceps.
- Give point value for the upper arm and the lower arm separately.  
Add the scores and divide by two. This score gives you the point value for that arm.

**Manual Muscle Test Scores and Upper Extremity Point Values**

<b>0.5 Point</b> Deltoid Latissimus Clavicular Pectoralis Sternal Pectoralis Biceps Triceps Wrist extensors Wrist flexors Remaining hand muscles	0-5 0-1 0-5 0-1 0-5 0-1 0-5 0-1 0-1 0	<b>1.0 Point</b> Latissimus Clavicular Pectoralis Sternal Pectoralis Biceps Triceps Wrist extensors Wrist flexors Remaining hand muscles	0-3 5 0-3 5 0-3 0-5 0-3 0-1
<p><i>Characteristics of 0.5</i> are triceps 0-1 and shoulder girdle weakness, sternal pectoralis and latissimus weakness; possible weak shoulder rotation, with limited range; and possible clavicular pectoralis weakness.</p>		<p><i>Characteristics of 1.0</i> are normal strength of deltoid muscles and clavicular pectoralis fibres with overall stronger proximal muscles than 0.5. Still has proximal weakness throughout shoulder girdle. Both sternal pectoralis AND latissimus should be 3 or less. May have 0 triceps with stronger proximal muscles.</p>	
<b>1.5 Point</b> Latissimus Sternal Pectoralis Triceps Wrist extensors Wrist flexors	0-3 0-3 3+– 4- 4-5 0-3	<p><i>Characteristics of 1.5</i> are remaining weakness of proximal muscles such as ,latissimus or sternal pectoralis in combination with stronger triceps and wrist muscles compared to 1.0. Either sternal pectoralis OR latissimus should be 3 or less. If there is no proximal weakness but triceps are 3+ or 4-, beware of non-neurologic weakness.</p>	
<b>2.0 Point</b> Shoulder girdle muscles Biceps Triceps Wrist extensors Wrist flexors Finger flexors and extensors Intrinsic Thumb movements	5 5 4–5 4–5 4–5 0-2 0 0-2	<b>2.5 Point</b> Shoulder girdle muscles Biceps Triceps Wrist extensors and flexors Finger flexors and extensors Finger adductors and abductors Thumb extensor and flexor Thumb opponens, adductor and abductor Finger flexion in the MCP joints	5 5 5 4-5 3-4 0-2 3-5 0-2 0-2
<p><i>Characteristics of 2.0</i> are normal strength in the shoulders and chest, good to normal triceps, and strong, balanced wrist extension and flexion strength.</p>		<p><i>Characteristics of 2.5</i> are limited hand function with a curling and uncurling of the hand and not functional grasp and release. The curling and uncurling motion results from action of the finger flexor muscles without the stabilizing effect of the intrinsic muscles.</p>	
<b>3.0 Point</b> Shoulder girdle muscles Biceps Triceps Wrist extensors and flexors Finger flexors and extensors Finger adductors and abductors Thumb flexor, extensor Thumb abductor, adductor, opponens Finger flexion in the MCP joints	5 5 5 4-5 3-5 0-4 3-5 0-4 0-4	<p><i>Characteristics of 3.0</i> are functional grasp and release (opening and closing) but grip strength is impaired because of less than normal strength in intrinsic and/or thumb abduction and opposition. Atrophy is present in the hands at the thenar and hypothenar eminences. Also, interossei and lumbrical muscle weakness causes decreased maintenance of the hand arches and indicates significant hand weakness and muscle strength of less than 4–5. A value of 3 or more for interossei and/or thumb opposition and/or abduction usually excludes a hand from 2.5 and indicates a 3.0.</p>	

**3.5 Point**

Muscle tests of bilateral hands and arms with uniform strength of 4-5 in ALL muscle groups may indicate ineligibility (see eligibility test, **Appendix A**). A classifier should not determine arm value on muscle tests alone, but consider activity limitation of the entire extremity. Skill level, equipment, athletic ability or training effects should NOT be considered in the allocation of sport class.

### 3.5 Physical Assessment – Trunk Tests

The trunk tests assess abdominal, back, pelvic and leg muscles in all planes and in a variety of situations.

Testing, observation and palpation of trunk muscles may occur in or out of the wheelchair, and with or without binding/straps.

The ability to move or to stabilise the trunk assists an athlete in many of the sport specific activities in Wheelchair Rugby. The athlete with trunk muscle strength has an advantage on court over the athlete who has no trunk muscle strength. Trunk muscle strength will enable an athlete to perform many of the fundamental activities in Wheelchair Rugby at a higher level than the athlete without use of the trunk muscles.

Three areas that affect performance in wheelchair propulsion and throwing fundamental activities in Wheelchair Rugby are assessed:

1. Trunk muscle strength,
2. Impairment in leg length and
3. Leg and hip muscle strength.

If an athlete has impairment in limb length when there is no impairment in trunk muscle strength, leg length is key for use of the trunk in sport specific activities. For example, the greater the impairment in leg length, the more activity limitation affecting sport performance.

Muscle strength in the legs, particularly the hip abductors and hip flexors and extensors muscles that stabilize the pelvis and improve the contact to the wheelchair and control of the wheelchair, enhances the use of trunk in sport specific activities.

There are eight tests for assessment of the trunk, leg length and key leg and hip muscles to verify severity of impairment and related activity limitation in wheelchair and ball activities. There are four values for trunk (0, 0.5, 1.0 and 1.5) in the math formula, a component of allocating entry sport class.

(Refer to **Appendix B** Trunk Test Flow Chart, **Appendix C** Description of Trunk Tests and for the graphic representation of trunk testing for explanations of the individual trunk tests and **Appendix D** Trunk Value Definition and Observations for scoring the trunk.)

### 3.6 Technical Assessment – Sport specific tests and novel nosport tests

The extent of activity limitation and impact on sport performance is confirmed by the technical assessment of novel non-sport and sport specific tests that simulate

wheelchair and ball activities. In the technical assessment, the classifier evaluates these activities in a non-competitive environment, both with and without equipment.

The classifiers must be confident that the athlete has performed the specific activities to the best of his/her ability during the technical assessment, and may request greater effort to ensure optimal observation opportunities.

The classifiers may apply certain conditions to the athlete to observe how the athlete performs the tasks or activities under simulated sport conditions.

The classifier may request that the athlete demonstrate many different ball handling and wheelchair activities under a variety of conditions (for example, in or out of the rugby chair; and/or with and without equipment such as gloves/straps/tape).

Fundamental activities for Wheelchair Rugby sport performance are described for wheelchair and ball activities. These tasks include but are not limited to:

- Pushing forward and backward,
- Turning (for example, pushing and turning in a “figure of 8” pattern),
- Stopping and starting,
- Changing direction,
- Holding rugby chair against resistance (for example, picks and/or blocks),
- Wheelies,
- Transfers (for example, to and from the playing chair or to and from a standard type chair),
- Passing (for example, two-hand chest pass, one-hand flip pass, overhead or “pop-up” pass),
- Dribbling,
- Retrieving the ball from the floor,
- Catching, and
- Ball security (such as holding the ball in both hands in front of the chair or while the chair is disturbed, or quickly moved and holding the ball against resistance).

These and other activities may also be observed during training and competition, when the athlete is in a more challenged situation.

The athlete may be requested to perform any additional non-sport and sport specific activities and tests as needed to determine sport class.

### 3.7 Observation Assessment – On Court Observation

The extent of activity limitation and impact on sport performance is confirmed by on court observation of wheelchair and ball handling activities, fundamental for Wheelchair Rugby sport performance.

Observation assessments consist of observing activities such as ball handling and wheelchair tasks during warm-up, training and/or practice, and/or during competition.

Assigning a sport class depends in part on examining the severity of impairment and extent of sport specific activity limitation based on the athlete's neuromuscular functioning and not on equipment, training, athletic ability or skill.

- The classifier evaluates *how* the athlete performs the task, not *how well* the athlete performs the task.

Observation assessment during warm-up, training and/or practice and during competition on-court helps the classifier understand the significant advantages and/or disadvantages the athlete may have within a particular sport class.

- The classification panel may use video footage and/or photography, if video footage and viewing equipment is available at the competition.

*Explanatory Note:* Observations of non-sport and sport-specific activities during testing and observations on court during training and/or competition take a skilled and trained eye. Classifiers use their skills in observation of neuromuscular substitution patterns and compensatory movements to differentiate between severity of impairment and associated activity limitation and athletic skill. Observation of movement, compensation and substitution is part of classifiers' professional education and training. Application of these professional observation skills to Wheelchair Rugby is part of the training and certification of IWRF classifiers.

### 3.8 On-Court Observation Tasks

Following the physical assessment (bench tests) and technical assessment (functional activities tests), the classifiers observe an athlete's mechanics on-court in performing certain sport specific tasks to confirm the appropriate sport class. These tasks are observed in a variety of situations, including non-challenge and challenge conditions during warm-up, training, practice and game competition.

Specific areas observed include but are not limited to:

- In the open court,
- In the key,
- During time-outs while the athlete is working with equipment such as tape, gloves, water bottles, tools, straps and binders, and
- Transferring to and from the rugby wheelchair, before and after play.

Ball handling and wheelchair activities observed include but are not limited to:

- Ball control/stability & ball protection/security
  - Catching
  - Passing
- Holding and palming the ball
  - Observe shape of hand when palming ball
  - Look for use of intrinsic muscles when holding/palming ball
- Passing – types and performance
  - Bounce pass

- Overhead pass—two-hands, one-hand (using both dominant and non-dominant hands)
- Chest pass
- Pop-up pass
- Performance- in both challenge and non-challenge situations
- Speed
- Force
- Distance
- Control, accuracy
- Dribbling the ball
  - Dribbling out to the sides and in front of the chair and/or dribbling with body away from the back of the chair
  - Dribbling around cone of wheelchair
- Catching
  - Forearm catch
  - Side catch
  - Overhead catch with one or both arms
- Grasp and release of the push rim
  - During turns
  - While starting and stopping, including quick starts and stops
  - Observe what the athlete does in defence and how the athlete performs defensive manoeuvres in the key.
  - Position of the hand on the rim, especially, use of the thumb
  - Pushing against resistance

*Explanatory Note:* This list of ball handling and wheelchair tasks is not a complete listing of all tasks that classifiers may observe.

### 3.9 Sport Class Math

Following the bench test, a numerical value is calculated that is useful in allocating a sport class for entering competition for most athletes. Adding up the value for both arms, dividing by two, and adding the trunk value is an estimate of the athlete's entry sport class.

If the athlete is eligible for classification, the final determination of sport class is based on these parts of the athlete evaluation: (1) physical assessment including the bench test (manual muscle tests), trunk tests and hand tests (if appropriate), (2) technical assessment including functional movement tasks such as chair and ball handling, and (3) observation assessment consisting of observation on-court during training and/or competition.

An athlete eligible for classification may still not meet minimum eligibility criteria and as a result be found not eligible for Wheelchair Rugby after any of the above-mentioned components of the classification process.

Refer to **Appendix A** for a graphic representation of the classification process for athletes who pass the initial eligibility test.

Refer to **Appendix G** for description of major and minor criteria in observation on court.

### 3.10 Sport Class and Sport Class Status

Following athlete evaluation, a *Sport Class* and *Sport Class Status* is allocated to each athlete.

#### 3.10.1 *Sport Class*

Sport class is a numerical category in which an athlete is grouped by reference to impairment and related activity limitation specific to Wheelchair Rugby. The sport classes are:

- 0.5
- 1.0
- 1.5
- 2.0
- 2.5
- 3.0
- 3.5
- 4.0 or more (This athlete is not eligible for Wheelchair Rugby.)

#### 3.10.2 *Sport Class Status*

Sport class status is allocated to each athlete to indicate further evaluation requirements and protest opportunities. The sport class statuses are:

- New (N)
- Review (R)
- Permanent (P)

The IWRF Classifiers use the IWRF Wheelchair Rugby classification form to record results of each athlete evaluation including sport class and sport class status (Appendix I IWRF Classification Form).

### 3.11 Documentation

The IWRF Classifiers use the IWRF Wheelchair Rugby classification form to record results of each athlete evaluation including sport class and sport class status (Appendix I IWRF Classification Form).

## 4 Hand Function

This section describes the range of bench testing results as well as examples of the activity limitations associated with impairments of muscle strength in the hands.

Single muscle test values are not the most important factor in hand function. The combination of muscle values is important in the final determination of hand function.

### 4.1 The 2.0 Hand

#### MUSCLE STRENGTH

Wrist flexors	4-5
Wrist extensors	4-5
Finger flexors and extensors	0-2
Intrinsics	0
Thumb movements	0-2

#### OBSERVATION

The characteristic 2.0 hand has balanced strength of wrist extension and flexion, extreme intrinsic muscle wasting, including thenar and hypothenar eminences, and no maintenance of the hand arches. If there is any visible or palpable finger muscle contraction, strength is poor and any grasp and release action is obtained with tenodesis at the wrist.

#### FUNCTION

- Because of lack of isolated finger flexion, there is limited ball security for passing against challenge by the defence.
- Can hold the ball firmly with wrists, but does not have useful finger activity.
- Typically, weak one-hand overhead pass with limited control and distance. Rarely see one-hand overhead passing on court during competition, unless for in-bounding, but may be able to perform a one-hand pass as part of functional tests during classification.

### 4.2 The 2.5 Hand

#### MUSCLE STRENGTH

Wrist extensors and flexors	4-5
Finger flexors and extensors	3-5
Finger adductors and abductors	0-2
Thumb extensor and flexor	3-5
Thumb opponens, adductor and abductor	0-2
Finger flexion in the MCP joints	0-2

*Explanatory Note:* In the athlete with 2.5 hand function, finger flexion is predominately due to the action of Flexor Digitorum Superficialis (FDS), at the proximal interphalangeal (PIP) joints of the fingers and Flexor Digitorum Profundus (FDP) at the distal interphalangeal (DIP) joints of the fingers without the stabilising influence of functional intrinsic muscles. This lack of intrinsic muscle stabilisation results in ‘curling’ and ‘uncurling’ of the fingers, rather than true functional grasp and release seen in the athlete with 3.0 hand function.

## **OBSERVATION**

The 2.5 hand displays marked intrinsic wasting, including thenar and hypothenar eminences, and little or no maintenance of the hand arches.

## **FUNCTION**

- Reasonably balanced finger flexion and extension (‘curling’ and ‘uncurling’) without true grasp and release because of the absence of stabilisation from the intrinsic muscles of the hand and no contribution to MCP flexion by the intrinsic muscles.
- Utilises extended wrist position (tenodesis) to strengthen grip and uses flexed wrist position to release grip, but may be able to perform some grip and release manoeuvres (curling and uncurling) independent of wrist position.
- Hook grip that is used to advantage on the push rim when challenged, often more ulnar grip.
- Dribbles the ball safely, but will supinate forearm to scoop the ball onto the lap.
- Capable of performing one-hand overhead pass, but with limited accuracy and distance and uses both hands and increased time to set up. May use the one-hand pass on-court in situations other than in bounding.
- Safe two-handed catching of passes, usually followed by scooping ball to lap. May catch passes with one hand and scoop to lap or to chest.
- Improved ball security compared to athlete with 2.0 hand function due to improved ability to isolate wrist/finger function.
- May have overhead game due to limited finger function

## **4.3 The 3.0 Hand**

### **MUSCLE STRENGTH**

Wrist extensors and flexors	4-5
Finger flexors and extensors	3-5
Finger adductors and abductors	0-4
Thumb flexor, extensor	3-5
Thumb abductor, adductor, opponens	0-4
Finger flexion in the MCP joints	0-4

### **OBSERVATION**

The 3.0 hand has a strong, balanced wrist; that means equal or near equal strength in both flexion and extension, with visible atrophy in interossei and intrinsic muscles in the thenar and/or hypothenar eminences of the hand. This atrophy is often visible as a “flattening” of the thenar and/or hypothenar eminences rather than the more

extreme wasting seen in the athlete with 2.0 or 2.5 hand functions. There is little or no maintenance of hand arches.

***The hand should have either weakness in the interossei and/or lumbricals or weakness in thumb opposition, adduction and abduction.*** In general, finger flexion and extension is usually stronger than in 2.5 hands. A value of 3/5 or more for interossei and/or thumb opposition, adduction and/or abduction usually excludes a hand from 2.5 and indicates a 3.0 hand.

*Explanatory Note:* It is important to remember single muscle tests values are not the most important factor in hand values. The combination of muscle values is important in the final determination of hand function. For example, a hand with 5/5 for finger flexion and extension, 4/5 for finger abduction and adduction and 4/5 for all thumb movements is more likely to be a 3.5 hand.

## FUNCTION

- Some wasting/atrophy in intrinsics and/or thenar/hypothenar eminences.
- Hand arches show limited maintenance.
- Has functional grasp and release of hand independent of wrist position.
- Because of improved activity in finger muscles, can control ball in varying planes of movement for passing, dribbling, catching and protecting ball during these activities.
- Can dribble and pass ball well with one hand.
- Multiple dribble one hand with control.
- Can stabilise with one arm to allow greater reach with the opposite arm, even if the athlete has no trunk function.

## 4.4 Comparison of the 3.0 and 3.5 Hand

The athlete with 3.0 hand function still displays impaired muscle strength in those muscles that originate and insert in the hand (refer to Article 3.11 Hand Function Testing).

The athlete with 3.5 hand function has normal strength, without any neurological weakness in the hands, and the ability to perform tasks in a way that is consistent with few to no activity limitations in the tasks specific to Wheelchair Rugby. strength

### 4.4.1 Observation

#### 3.0 point

- Balance between wrist flexor and extensor muscles, at least grade 3/5.
- Some visible wasting/atrophy of the intrinsic muscles and/or muscles in thenar/hypothenar eminences.
- Hand arches are partly, but not fully maintained.
- Muscle tone and/or sensory changes usually present.
- Functional grasp and release independent of wrist position.

#### 3.5 point

- Balance between flexor and extensor muscles in wrist and hand is greater than or equal to 4/5 strength, including balance in the MCP joints.

- Balanced and coordinated movements of the hand.
- Thumb opposition, thumb adduction, finger abduction and adduction are pure movements without substitution.

#### 4.4.2 Ball and Wheelchair Activities

*Explanatory Note:* These characteristics are described to assist a classifier in training to understand eligibility related to hand impairment and activity limitation and are not inclusive of all possible characteristics.

##### **Palming the ball**

- 3.0 Unable to perform in a challenged situation.
- 3.5 Can palm and control the ball above the head; and maintains stability of the ball in a challenged situation.

*Explanatory Note:* Classifiers should take caution and be very observant for body anthropometrics, equipment and skill. The ability to palm the ball may depend on the size of the athlete's hand and/or the use of equipment to stick to the ball. An athlete with sufficient hand muscle strength or compensation movements but small hand size may not always be able to palm the ball, especially without the use of equipment. However, an athlete without muscle strength but with large hands and/or the right equipment can stick to the ball with one hand. It is important to evaluate this task with and without gloves and equipment.

##### **Dribbling retrieval**

- 3.0 Uses strong wrist and finger flexion and extension to compensate for lack of intrinsic muscles and a weak thumb. Supinates the ball into the lap because of poor grip.
- 3.5 Controls the ball in all planes with no substitution patterns.

##### **Overhead, one-handed wrist flip pass**

- 3.0 Poor stability in palm. Decreased accuracy and distance with one-hand pass.
- 3.5 Good accuracy and distance.

##### **Catching passes**

- 3.0 One or two-handed catch; immediately bring the ball to the lap or stabilise with another body part.
- 3.5 May catch one-handed without need to stabilise on lap or may hold the ball away from the body with one hand.

*Explanatory Note:* Classifiers should take caution and be very observant. There are some athletes in the 3.0 sport class who are capable of catching with one hand, and also holding the ball away from the body with one hand. Some athletes with large hands, and/or assistive equipment and/or who have developed excellent ball skills from training and/or participating in other sports, can catch with one hand and/or hold the ball away from the body with one hand. It is important to get a complete training history, check equipment and not penalize athletes for body size, equipment, training and/or athletic skill. It is important to evaluate these tasks with and without gloves and equipment.

## 5 Characteristics of Sport Classes

Athletes in these seven sport classes are eligible for Wheelchair Rugby: 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0 and 3.5. Athletes in each sport class have unique abilities and specific roles on the court.

Athletes are sometimes referred to as “high-point” or “low point” athletes. Low point Sport Classes are the 0.5, 1.0 and 1.5 sport class. Mid-point sport classes are the 2.0 and 2.5 sport class. The high-point sport classes are the 3.0 and 3.5 sport class.

The 1.5, 2.5 and 3.5 sport classes were originally developed to categorise athletes with asymmetrical or varied upper extremity function and/or trunk function. 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 function.

Athletes in each sport class represent a wide range of impairment. Some activity limitation may at times overlap, due to variety of the impairment within one class. For example, an athlete with asymmetrical function can show some activities of a higher class on one hand. However, overall the athlete’s activities do not match with the higher class. Other overlap may be caused by skills development, training and 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.

The following examples are useful as a guide to observations of tasks specific to Wheelchair Rugby. These are not complete sport class profiles and are not inclusive of all possible characteristics. The descriptions included in this section are designed to assist a classifier in training in understanding some of the characteristics unique to the sport classes in Wheelchair Rugby.

See Appendix F Characteristics for Sport Classes for a more general description of characteristics of each of the seven wheelchair rugby sport classes, including typical roles on court and ball and wheelchair tasks. Still, the examples in Appendix F are not complete sport class profiles and are not inclusive of all possible characteristics.

### 5.1 Sport Class 0.5

The tasks an athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- Demonstrates consistent proximal shoulder instability,
- Posture in sitting includes sacral sitting posture, kyphosis and/or sits low in wheelchair,
- Typical on court role -- defence / blocker,

- Unopposed biceps push with abduction of the arm and internal rotation of shoulder,
- Forward head with bob when pushing,
- Often uses forearms to turn and stop,
- Flexes trunk forward and use forearms to press down on wheel to decelerate/stop,
- Uses back ¼ of wheel to stop, start and turn,
- Relatively slow transition/ recovery from one function to the next,
- Covers short distance/volume on court,
- Volleyball and/or scoop pass; no chest pass, and
- Traps direct passes on lap or bats into lap from limited range.

## 5.2 Sport Class 1.0

The tasks an athlete performs include but are not limited to:

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

## 5.3 Sport Class 1.5

The tasks an athlete with symmetrical arm function performs include but are not limited to:

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

The tasks an athlete with asymmetrical arm function performs include but are not limited to:

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

## 5.4 Sport Class 2.0

The tasks an athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- Good shoulder strength and stability, allows for very effective pushing,
- Balanced/functional wrist flexion and extension, limited to no finger function
- Increasing role on court as a ball handler,
- Quick stops, starts, turns,
- Rims the ball using wrist flexion with wrist in neutral or flexed position,
- Functional wrist flexion results in increased passing distance compared to athlete without wrist flexion,
- Inconsistent one-hand pass, takes time to set up with use of other hand, one-hand pass only effective when unchallenged,
- Limitations in ball security due to lack of finger function but can hold ball firmly with palms of hands using wrist flexion,
- Effective chest pass with control and consistency; typically flat if maximum distance.
- Dribble open-handed, with a flat hand and scoop bilaterally due to active wrist function,
- Scoops ball into legs when catching, and
- Control and distance in overhead pass is limited due to lack of finger function.

## 5.5 Sport Class 2.5

The tasks an athlete with symmetrical arm function performs include but are not limited to:

- Typical on court role: ball-handler and fairly fast playmaker,
- Because of excellent shoulder strength and stability will see good pushing speed on court,
- May have some trunk control giving better stability in the chair,
- Dribbles the ball safely, but supinates forearm to scoop the ball onto the legs,
- Finger flexion (DIP and PIP) used to hook around wheel for manoeuvring chair in picks and braking,
- 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,
- Safe two-handed catching of passes, usually scooping ball to legs. May catch passes one-handed and scoop to lap or chest, and
- Improved ball security compared to athlete with 2.0 hand because of improved ability to isolate wrist/finger function.
- Usually some useful overhead game.

The tasks an athlete with asymmetrical arm function performs include but are not limited to:

- Asymmetrical arm or hand function, noticeable with chair and ball handling activities,
- Asymmetrical push, may compensate with drag on strong side,
- Turns toward weak side with more skill, strength and speed than towards strong side,
- May use strong side more effectively when picking, and
- One-handed ball handling activities.

## 5.6 Sport Class 3.0

The tasks an athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- Normal shoulder, elbow and wrist strength; finger flexion and extension with weakness in flexion in the MCP joints and/or ,thumb opposition and abduction.
- On court role as very good ball handler and fast play maker,
- Ability to grip wheel rim can increase pushing control and speed; especially in stops, starts and turns,
- 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,
- Uses wrist/finger flexion in one-hand flip pass and rimming the ball,
- Uses finger and/or thumb function to stabilise with the opposite arm to allow greater reach if athlete has no trunk,
- Multiple dribble one handed with control,
- Functional finger flexion and extension and partial thumb function allowing for control of the ball in varying planes,
- Functional finger flexion and extension provides the ability to grasp and release wheel rim regardless of wrist position, and
- Strong ball security in all positions, including overhead, both with one or two hands.

## 5.7 Sport Class 3.5

The tasks an athlete performs include but are not limited to:

- Primary ball-handler and playmaker.
- If asymmetrical arm or hand function, noticeable with chair and ball handling activities.

*Explanatory Note:* These characteristics listed above focus on arm function of athletes. With the exception of the athlete in the 0.5 sport class, characteristics will vary widely among athletes who have partial to no trunk impairment, those with various combinations of arm impairment, and athletes with impairments in limb length.

## ***PART II – CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURES***

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This section of the IWRF Classification Manual details classification procedures related to:

- Athlete Evaluation
- Sport Class and Sport Class Status
- Protests and Appeals
- Classification Personnel
- Classifier Certification
- Classification Administration
- Classification Documentation

The classification rules are part of the rules of the sport. All individuals in the sport accept these classification rules as a condition of participation.

It is the responsibility of all parties involved in classification, including classifiers, athletes, coaches, team managers or team representatives, and other athlete support personnel to become educated regarding proper classification procedure and be an integral part of the classification process.

## 6 Classification Procedures

This section describes the procedures used in classification, specifically sport class and sport class status, athlete evaluation, evaluation timelines, observation in training, athlete notification and protest and appeal pathways.

### 6.1 Athlete Evaluation Pathway

The classification schedule for athlete evaluation will be available prior to tournament play and it is the responsibility of the coach and athletes of each team to arrive in a timely manner according to the schedule.

Refer to Appendix A for the Pathway for Allocation of Sport Class and Sport Class Status.

#### 6.1.1 Athlete Presentation for Evaluation

Athletes must dress appropriately and bring all documentation, equipment and devices as required including but not limited to:

- Passport photograph,
  - Athletes must bring a passport photo to the classification evaluation session and give the photograph to the tournament Chief Classifier or designee for making the athlete's IWRF classification card.
- Competition wheelchair,
- Competition gloves, straps, tape or any other devices the athlete intends to use during the competition,
  - Bring all equipment but do not wear gloves or tape before start of manual muscle testing.
- Assistive devices, prostheses or orthotics used during the competition, and
- Documentation.

Athletes will be requested to remove uniform tops if necessary to observe and evaluate muscle function and movements during the evaluation. Female athletes should wear appropriate underclothing to permit removal of their uniform shirt.

Athletes may also be asked to transfer to other surfaces for testing, such as a treatment table, floor mat or chair.

An interpreter must accompany the athlete, if the athlete does not understand and/or speak English well enough to participate in the classification process. The interpreter must be available for the physical and technical assessment.

The athlete may request an additional support person, such as the coach, team manager or official team representative.

The athlete may request a *Player Representative*, or *Player Classification Board Member (PCB)* is present during classification. (Refer to Article 9.7 Player Classification Representative.)

The athlete will be evaluated without other athletes present.

The Chief Classifier or designated representative will meet the athlete and accompanying support staff in a reception area to:

- Check the athlete has met all of the requirements for dress and equipment, and
- Collect any documentation brought by the athlete.

If an athlete has a health condition causing pain that limits or prohibits full effort during the evaluation, the athlete may not be appropriate for evaluation at that time. The Chief Classifier may, time permitting; re-schedule the athlete for evaluation at another time. However, if the athlete does not have a sport class and a sport class status at the end of the *Classification Evaluation Period*, the athlete will not be eligible to compete at that competition.

### *6.1.2 Completion of Consent Forms*

Athletes must consent to evaluation by signing a classification consent form to indicate their willingness to be classified and confirm their agreement to provide full effort and cooperation throughout the classification process. (Refer to Appendix O Consent for Classification Form.)

The classification consent form shall remind athletes that failing to cooperate with classifiers, failure to complete the classification process or intentionally misrepresenting skills and/or abilities are subject to sanctions (Articles 6.6 Athlete Failure to Attend Evaluation, 6.7 Non-Cooperation during Evaluation, and 6.8 Intentional Misrepresentation of Skills and/or Abilities).

Signing the consent for classification form includes but is not limited to:

- Willingness to undergo a complete athlete evaluation, including all components required and to take part cooperating fully with the classifiers, and
- Acknowledge that classifiers are not held liable for any pain or suffering experienced in the course of the athlete evaluation.

### *6.1.3 Classification Process Briefing*

Prior to the athlete evaluation, a classification panel member will brief the athlete and accompanying support staff about the procedures involved in the classification process.

It is the responsibility of all athletes and coaches to respect the classification process and to remember this process is in place for the benefit of all athletes and for the sport of Wheelchair Rugby.

In this regard, is the responsibility of all athletes and coaches to be an integral part of the classification process and, at all times, to respect the classifiers and their efforts.

### *6.1.4 Athlete Evaluation*

The physical assessment and technical assessment take place during the classification evaluation period. The observation assessment takes place during training/practice and/or competition.

Athletes must give full effort and complete cooperation throughout the classification process. An athlete, who in the opinion of the classification panel is unable or unwilling to participate in athlete evaluation, shall be considered non-cooperative during evaluation (refer to Article 6.7 for consequences).

An athlete, who in the opinion of the classification panel is intentionally misrepresenting his/her skills and/or abilities, shall be considered in violation of the IWRP classification rules (refer to Article 6.8 for consequences).

### *6.1.5 Allocation of Entry Sports Class and Sports Class Status*

The athlete is allocated an entry sport class and sport class status after the physical and technical assessment.

- The classifiers may convene regarding the athlete's classification without the athlete present.
- The PCB may be present.
- If this is the athlete's first evaluation or if results are inconclusive following these tests, a new (N) or review (R) sport class status will be assigned.

Once the classification panel has made a decision on the athlete's entry sport class, at least one member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete of the panel's decision. This should take place as soon as possible after the decision is taken. The athlete is encouraged to discuss the classification result and ask any questions which may arise.

For any athlete that is in review for a decision between sport classes, the assigned class will be that of the higher sport class. If the classification panel members need to vote, a majority decision is necessary.

Both the athlete and coach or team representative may be involved in the explanation of the results and encouraged to discuss the rationale for the decision in a respectful and professional manner.

The athlete under review with an N or R sport class status will be observed on the court during training and/or competition to confirm the sport class and sport class status. A final decision on sport class will be made as soon as possible, dependent on tournament regulations.

Once the classification panel has confirmed the athlete's sport class after observation, at least one member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete of the panel's decision. This should take place as soon as possible after the decision is taken.

## 6.2 Sport Class Allocation

Every athlete wanting to compete in Wheelchair Rugby must be allocated a sport class and sport class status.

### 6.2.1 Sport Class

Sport class is a numerical category that is used to group athletes by reference to impairment and activity limitation specific to tasks in Wheelchair Rugby. There are seven sport classes, ranging from 0.5 to 3.5. A sport class of 4.0 indicates ineligibility for Wheelchair Rugby.

### 6.2.2 Sport Class Status

In addition to the assignment of a sport class, an athlete in wheelchair rugby is also allocated a class type, also known as sport class status. Sport class status is allocated to each athlete to indicate further evaluation requirements and protest opportunities.

Sport class status assists in identifying athletes who:

- Have not been previously classified,
- Require a review of their sport class, or
- Do not require athlete evaluation for a specific competition.

There are three designations of sport class status in international Wheelchair Rugby:

- New (N)
- Review (R)
- Permanent (P)

#### **The N Sport Class Status is used when:**

- An athlete is a new athlete who has not been previously evaluated by an international classification panel and has not had an entry sport class verified by the International Federation.
- Sport class status N includes athletes who have been allocated a sport class by their National Federation for entry purposes in an internationally sanctioned competition.
- Athletes with sport class status N must complete athlete evaluation prior to competing at international competitions

If an athlete leaves a tournament, attended by a Type A or B international panel and the R or N was removed, that evaluation counts as one of the three required for an award of a P permanent sport class status.

#### **The R Sport Class Status is used when:**

- Athletes require further observation during competition to confirm their sport class because the athlete had limited court time, or because the athlete is inexperienced.
- Athletes previously evaluated by an international panel continue to require review to confirm their sport class.

- If a Classification Panel decides that further Athlete Evaluation is required before an Athlete can be allocated a confirmed Sport Class Status, the Athlete will be assigned Sport Class Status Review (R) or Sport Class Review with a Fixed Date (RFD). This decision may be taken for a number of reasons, including but not limited to situations where the Athlete:
  - has only recently entered competition in Wheelchair Rugby;
  - has a fluctuating and/or progressive Impairment/Impairments that is/are permanent but not stable;
  - is of a young age;
  - has an Eligible Impairment that complies with Minimum Impairment Criteria but which has not stabilised

The athlete's sport class is valid for entry in a competition, but the athlete is subject to re-evaluation and the sport class may be changed before or during competition.

An R sport class status may be added to an athlete's sport class as part of a *Protest under Exceptional Circumstances* (Article 7.4 Exception Circumstances).

When the R sport class status is removed from a new athlete undergoing his/her first classification at an international tournament, this evaluation will be considered as the athlete's first international sport class.

*Explanatory Note:* These same classification rules apply for allocation of a zone sport class.

If an athlete leaves a tournament with the R sport class status, this evaluation does not count as one of the athlete's three classifications required for allocation of a permanent, or P, sport class status.

#### **The P Sport Class Status is used when:**

- An international panel has previously evaluated an athlete and the panel has confirmed that the sport class will not change.

Sport class status P is assigned to an athlete who has been allocated a sport class by a Type A and/or Type B international panel (the Type B panel can allocate the first sport class and sport class status) at three tournaments with no change in sport class at the conclusion of the competition. (Refer to Article 12.1 Classification Panel Requirements for definitions of the Type A and Type B Classification Panels.) These evaluations can occur no more than once in an 11-month period.

*Explanatory Note:* This 11-month rule is implemented to ensure that an athlete is allocated a permanent sport class status after a sufficient time period to demonstrate that the sport class is stable.

If an athlete leaves a tournament, attended by a Type A or B international panel and the R or N was removed, that competition counts as one of the three required evaluations for P permanent sport class status.

The athlete with a sport class status P will not have a change in sport class except in the case of a protest under exceptional circumstances (Article 7.4) described as:

- There is a change in the degree of impairment of an athlete.

- The athlete demonstrates significantly less or greater ability prior to competition that does not reflect the athlete's current sport class.
- An error made by a classification panel has led to the allocation of a sport class that is not in keeping with the athlete's ability.
- There is a change in the sport class allocation criteria (change in classification rules).

### **T = Temporary Sport Class Status**

There is also a temporary sport class status (T) that may be awarded at a local or national level, but this is not an international sport class status.

- This sports class status is not used with an international sport class and may only be awarded at a local or national level. This is a provisional sport class for use at local or national levels in those areas without a national classification programme. The athlete does not have an IWRF sport class until evaluated by a proper international classification panel according to the IWRF classification rules.
- An athlete may be allocated a T sport class status if a classification panel evaluates the athlete and was not a complete panel according to the classification rules of the National Federation.
- An athlete may be allocated a T sport class status, if evaluated by an incomplete classification panel for use in regions without a national classification programme.

*Explanatory Note:* At developmental international or zone tournaments or training clinics (for example, tournaments or training clinics conducted to teach athletes, coaches, referees and classifiers in new and developing nations) an athlete may be examined by an incomplete classification panel and receive the T sport class status. The athlete is provided with this provisional sport class to begin play in his/her own nation, but the athlete does not have a valid international sport class until examined by the proper classification panel according to the IWRF classification rules.

### **Z = Zone Sport Class Status**

It is recognized that many athletes will never compete outside of their zone. Thus, athletes may be given a permanent, or P, zone sport class status if seen by a Type B zone panel at three zone tournaments with no change in sport class at the conclusion of each competition. These evaluations can occur no more than once in an 11-month period. (Refer to Article 12.1 Classification Panel Requirements for Definitions of the Type A and Type B Classification Panels.)

There are currently three zones recognised by the IWRF for Wheelchair Rugby competition:

- E = European Zone
- A = America Zone
- O = Asia-Oceania Zone

Only athletes evaluated by an IWRF type A or type B panel can receive an IWRF international classification card. Athletes evaluated by a zonal or national panel will not receive an IWRF international classification card, but a zonal or national one.

### 6.3 Sport Class Allocation Timeline

Athletes with sport class status of N or R may have their sport class changed at any time and this change will take effect immediately, including decisions regarding eligibility.

If an athlete is attending an international tournament and receiving his/her first IWRF sport class, that individual's sport class may be changed at any time during the tournament.

If an athlete has a previous IWRF sport class and enters the tournament under review (sport class status R) from a previous competition, or is allocated a R sport class status after physical and technical assessment in the classification evaluation period; the athlete may have his/her sport class changed at any time and this change will take effect immediately in accordance with the competition rules of play.

- If the athlete is determined to be ineligible, this athlete's ineligibility occurs as soon as possible, in accordance with the tournament rules of play.

If athletes have a previous IWRF sport class (for example, it is their 2nd or 3rd evaluation) and they are not under review prior to the start of play (when the classification evaluation period ends and the competition evaluation period begins), any change of sport class occurs at the end of the tournament.

*Explanatory Note:* The rule applies to an athlete who enters a tournament and undergoes athlete evaluation for his/her 2nd or 3rd sport class. Following the bench test and technical assessment if there is no evidence that the sport class has changed, the R sport class may not be assigned. However, while observing play, if the panel determines the sport class of that athlete may not be correct, they may add a sport class status R to formally observe the athlete. This athlete may be required to undergo further evaluation after observation. Following this evaluation, if the panel determines the sport class should be changed; this sport class change will take effect at the end of the tournament.

If an athlete has a previous IWRF sport class (for example, the athlete is attending his/her 2nd or 3rd classification evaluation) and is not under review (does not have a sport class status R), and the athlete is determined to be not eligible, this athlete's sport class NE occurs at the end of the tournament.

If an athlete has been seen by an international classification panel and has received an international sport class that is different from the athlete's national sport class, the National Head Classifier may discuss differences between the athlete's international and national sport class with the respective *Zone Head Classifier* and the IWRF *Head of Classification*.

## 6.4 Notification of Third Parties

At the end of each session, or each day, during the classification evaluation period, the Chief Classifier shall convey the outcomes of assigned sport class and sport class status to the local organizing committee.

The Chief Classifier and/or the local organizing committee should inform all relevant parties of outcomes of athlete evaluation. Sport class and sport class status may be posted and/or distributed to all teams/nations at the end of each day, or as soon as is logistically possible.

When the initial sport class is determined, the athlete will be issued an official IWRF classification card.

The Chief Classifier is responsible for preparing the IWRF classification card and collecting the appropriate fees.

### *6.4.1 Changes in Sport Class Resulting from Observation Assessment*

If the classification panel determines any changes to an athlete's sport class during the observation assessment:

- At least one member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete and local organizing committee of the panel's decision as soon as is logistically possible.
- Changes will be posted and distributed to all teams/nations at the end of each day, or as soon as is logistically possible.
- The IWRF classification card is collected and a new card prepared with the revised sport class; no additional fee is required.

### *6.4.2 Classification Cards*

Official IWRF classification cards can be obtained at tournaments sanctioned by IWRF for classification and where a certified IWRF classification panel evaluates the athlete.

The IWRF classification cards must be used at international tournaments for identification of sport class.

The IWRF classification cards may be used for identification of sport class at zone, national or club tournaments, but the official IWRF classification cards cannot be obtained at national or club tournaments, unless sanctioned by IWRF for classification.

If a club tournament is sanctioned by IWRF and a properly certified classification panel is present, athlete evaluation may be available and proper IWRF classification cards issued.

The IWRF classification cards must be laminated.

Athletes must pay 10 USD (or local equivalent) for new and replacements classification cards. Lost or forgotten classification cards must be replaced in order for the athlete to participate at the competition.

If an athlete does not have an IWRF classification card at a tournament (for example, the classification card is lost or misplaced), the athlete must pay a fine of 10 USD (or local equivalent) and also pay 10 USD (or local equivalent) to replace the classification card in order to participate in the tournament.

- In the case of a lost, forgotten or misplaced classification card, the total fee for card replacement and fine is 20 USD (or local equivalent).

If, in the opinion of the Chief Classifier, an IWRF classification card is damaged or no longer usable, the athlete must replace the classification card and pay 10 USD (or local equivalent) for the replacement card.

- National associations or the individual athlete may pay for classification cards and replacement classification cards.

No sport class status (N, R or P) is marked on IWRF classification cards.

## 6.5 Athlete Responsibilities

Once the athlete receives an official IWRF classification card, it is the athlete's responsibility to bring the card to every tournament. Failure to bring the card to a tournament will result in a fine of 10 USD (or local equivalent). A new classification card must be issued for the athlete to play in the tournament and the replacement fee is 10 USD (or local equivalent). The total cost for replacing a lost or missing card is 20 USD (or local equivalent).

It is the responsibility of the athlete/coach/team representative to adhere the athlete's official uniform number on the outside of the laminated classification card.

An athlete may request a copy of his/her personal IWRF classification form by obtaining a release form from the IWRF Head of Classification or the competition Chief Classifier or designee, signing and returning the appropriate form for release of information. An administrative fee may be charged for each release of information requested to cover the costs of copying and mailing of forms. (Refer to Appendix M for the release of information form and charges.)

An athlete who fails to attend classification, is unable or unwilling to cooperate in athlete evaluation, or is intentionally misrepresenting skills and/or abilities will not be allocated a sport class or sport class status and will not be permitted to compete at that tournament, and/or may be considered in violation of the classification rules and undergo sanctions determined by the IWRF (Articles 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8).

## 6.6 Athlete Failure to Attend Evaluation

If an athlete fails to attend his/her scheduled evaluation session, the athlete will not be allocated a sport class or sport class status, and will not be eligible to compete in this tournament.

However, should the Chief Classifier be satisfied that a reasonable explanation exists for the failure to attend the evaluation; an athlete may be given a second and final chance to attend the evaluation.

Failure to attend evaluation includes:

- Not attending the evaluation at the specified time or place.
- Not attending the evaluation with the appropriate equipment/clothing and/or documentation, including the passport photograph required for making the classification card.
- Not attending the evaluation accompanied by the required athlete support personnel, including a translator if needed.

## 6.7 Non-Cooperation during Evaluation

An athlete, who in the opinion of the classification panel is unable or unwilling to participate in the classification process, should be considered non-cooperative during evaluation. However, should the Chief Classifier be satisfied that a reasonable explanation exists for the failure to cooperate during the evaluation; an athlete may be given a second and final opportunity to attend and cooperate.

If the athlete fails to cooperate, the consequences include:

- The athlete will not be allocated a sport class or sport class status, and will not be permitted to compete at the tournament.
- The athlete may have his/her sport class changed at any time.
- The athlete may not be awarded an international sport class or sport class status at the conclusion of the tournament.
- The athlete is subject to sanctions as determined by the IWRF.
  - Any athlete found to be non-cooperative during an evaluation is not permitted to undergo any further evaluation for Wheelchair Rugby for a minimum of three months, starting from the date on which the athlete failed to cooperate.

This situation may include an athlete who is inconsistent in presentation. For example, impairments and activity limitations are not consistent and vary during physical assessment, technical assessment and observation assessment. If the testing is not consistent, the classifiers will be unable to determine a sport class.

Any athlete entering the classification room under the influence of any performance altering substance shall be considered non-cooperative during evaluation. This athlete will be asked to leave, not allocated a sport class and sport class status and will not be permitted to compete at that tournament.

## 6.8 Intentional Misrepresentation of Skills and/or Abilities

An athlete, who in the opinion of the classification panel is intentionally misrepresenting skills and/or abilities, shall be considered in violation of the IWRF classification rules.

If the athlete intentionally misrepresents skills and/or abilities, the consequences include:

- The athlete will not be allocated a sport class or sport class status, and will not be permitted to compete at that tournament.
- The athlete is subject to other sanctions as determined by IWRF.

- Any athlete found to be intentionally misrepresenting skills and/or abilities is not permitted to undergo any further evaluation for Wheelchair Rugby for a minimum of two years from the date on which the athlete intentionally misrepresented skills and/or abilities.
- The athlete will have any previous sport class or sport class status removed from the IWRF classification master list.
- The athlete should be designated as IM (intentional misrepresentation) in the IWRF classification master list.
- Any athlete who, on a second separate occasion, intentionally misrepresents skills and/or abilities will receive a lifetime ban from the Paralympic Games and is subject to other sanctions deemed appropriate by the IWRF.

## 7 Protests

A protest is the procedure by which a formal objection to an athlete's sport class is made and subsequently resolved. This section describes protest procedures including timelines for submission and resolution of protests.

### 7.1 General Principles

Protests are an integral right of athletes and classifiers; however, protests should not be used in a manner that would unfairly affect the outcome of the competition. "Tactical Protests" are a breach of the principles of fair play.

It is important for everyone involved in the protest process to respect the athletes, coaches and classifiers; and to remember that classification is for the benefit of all athletes and the sport of Wheelchair Rugby.

It is equally important to respect other athletes and submit a protest only when there is genuine doubt about the sport class of a competitor (International Paralympic Committee, 2000).

### 7.2 Submission of Protests

Protests may be submitted to the IWRF Head of Classification prior to a competition or to the Chief Classifier of an IWRF sanctioned international tournament prior to or at an IWRF sanctioned international tournament.

### 7.3 Protest Opportunities

The sport class status that is allocated to an athlete indicates protest opportunities that are available. The sport class statuses in Wheelchair Rugby are:

- New (N) – This status indicates an athlete who has not undergone evaluation in order to obtain a sport class for international competition.
  - Athletes with sport class status N may be protested following allocation of a sport class by the athlete, another team or by the Chief Classifier.
- Review (R) – This status indicates an athlete who has undergone evaluation and has obtained a sport class for international competition, but requires further evaluation.
  - Athletes with sport class status R may be protested following allocation of a sport class by the athlete, another team or by the Chief Classifier.
- Permanent (P) – This status indicates an athlete who has undergone evaluation and the sport class has been confirmed for international competition, and does not require further evaluation.
  - Athletes with sport class status Permanent (P) may only be protested by the IWRF Head of Classification and/or the Chief Classifier under exceptional circumstances (refer to Article 7.4).

The athlete whose sport class is being protested with an R sport class status is still under review by a classification panel at the tournament to confirm the athlete's sport class. In this case, the protest of an athlete's sport class under review may be accepted and recorded but will only proceed to the *Protest Panel* when the classification panel has completed its evaluation, removed the R sport class status and confirmed the athlete's sport class for that tournament.

- The protest panel evaluating the athlete will be informed of the protest. If the protest panel begins the athlete evaluation and is unable to gather enough evidence to reach a decision by the conclusion of the tournament, the protest may be carried forward to the next equivalent tournament.

The regulations for protest for athletes with a 4.0 sport class, or not eligible, are described in **Appendix I** – Protest Procedure for Not Eligible Athletes.

## 7.4 Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will arise if the IWRF Head of Classification and/or Chief Classifier believe that an athlete's sport class no longer reflects that athlete's ability to compete equitably within the sport class.

Exceptional circumstances may result from:

- A change in the degree of impairment of an athlete.
- An athlete demonstrating significantly less or greater ability prior to or during competition that does not reflect the athlete's current sport class.
- An error made by a classification panel that has led to the athlete being allocated a sport class that is not in keeping with the athlete's ability.
- Sport class allocation criteria having changed since the athlete's most recent evaluation.

A protest made under exceptional circumstances shall follow the same process detailed in Articles 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9.

## 7.5 Protest Submission Procedures

The maximum number of protests per athlete is three times during the playing career of the athlete.

*Explanatory note: If an Athlete has a change in Sport Class, the number of protests does not reset to zero. The limit on protests on an Athlete in wheelchair rugby is three.*

The IWRF Head of Classification and/or Chief Classifier may protest any athlete's sport class under Exceptional Circumstances at any time even if the maximum number of protests had been reached. This type of protest does not count as one of the three allowed protests.

### 7.5.1 Protest Submission Prior to Competition

Protests must be submitted on the IWRF protest form. Official protest forms may be obtained from the IWRF Head of Classification, Zone Head Classifier, tournament Chief Classifier or may be found in the Classification Section on the IWRF website ([www.iwrf.com](http://www.iwrf.com)).

The protest form, accompanied by the protest fee should be submitted to the IWRF Head of Classification or his/her designee, for example, the tournament Chief Classifier.

The submitted protest form must be written in English and describe briefly and clearly the details of the decision being protested and the reason for the protest.

Upon receipt of the official protest form, the Head of Classification or his/her designee shall conduct a review to determine whether all relevant classification rules concerning submission of the protest have been followed.

If the relevant classification rules have not been followed, the Head of Classification or his/her designee will dismiss the protest and return the protest form and fee.

If the relevant classification rules have been followed, the Head of Classification or his/her designee shall notify all relevant parties of the date for the next event where the protest evaluation will take place.

For protests filed ahead of the competition, the IWRF Head of Classification and/or the tournament Chief Classifier will appoint the classification protest panel to conduct the protest at the next appropriate internationally sanctioned tournament.

The IWRF Head of Classification and/or tournament Chief Classifier will make every effort to ensure that the source of the protest is kept confidential.

### *7.5.2 Protest Submission during Competition*

Protests may be submitted by:

- A team representative authorized to submit protests, for example, the team manager.
  - If an athlete wishes to protest his/her own sport class, the athlete must have the support of his/her coach, and who must also sign the classification protest form.
- Chief Classifier under Exception Circumstances

The Chief Classifier or his/her designee for that tournament is the person authorised to receive protests at that event.

Protests must be submitted on the IWRF protest form. Official forms may be obtained from the IWRF Head of Classification, Zone Head Classifier, local organizing committee or tournament director, and tournament Chief Classifier or may be found on the IWRF website in the IWRF Classification Manual.

The submitted protest form must be written in English and describe briefly and clearly the details of the decision being protested and the reason for the protest.

The completed form, accompanied by the protest fee should be given to the tournament Chief Classifier or his/her designee.

The protest fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld; if the protest is not upheld the money remains with the IWRF Classification Commission (ICC).

Upon receipt of the protest form, the tournament Chief Classifier will conduct a review to determine whether all necessary information is included. If it appears to the Chief Classifier that the protest form has been submitted without all necessary information, the Chief Classifier shall dismiss the protest and notify all relevant parties.

The Chief Classifier will investigate the validity of the submitted protest by checking the IWRF Database, looking at previous charts and/or contacting the respective Zone Head Classifier to clarify information, if necessary.

If the protest is accepted, the Chief Classifier shall notify all relevant parties of the time and date for any subsequent protest evaluation, according to the classification rules for protests.

The IWRF Head of Classification and/or tournament Chief Classifier will make every effort to ensure that the source of the protest is kept confidential.

## 7.6 Protest Panel during Competition

For resolution of protests filed prior to a tournament:

- The Head of Classification and/or tournament Chief Classifier appoints the protest panel.

For resolution of protests filed at a tournament:

- The Chief Classifier appoints the protest panel.

A protest panel will consist of:

- Three classifiers from three different countries and two zones plus tournament Chief Classifier in advisory capacity (if the athlete has an IWRF international class).
- Player Classification Board Member (PCB) – if available. The PCB is a player or former player selected to represent the interests of the athlete under protest; serves in an advisory capacity only and is a non-voting member.
- IWRF Executive Board Member (EBM), and/or tournament director will be informed of a protest. The EBM may be present, if available, to observe and advise that the protest process and procedures are followed appropriately. The EBM is a non-voting member of the panel.

To serve the best interest of the athlete, if at all possible, the protest panel shall be composed of classifiers with equal or greater expertise (of the same or higher IWRF

international classification certification level) than those members who were involved in the athlete's previous classification.

The classification panel that was involved in the allocation of the sport class being protested should not resolve the protest.

A protest of an athlete (nation's own or another nation) may be made up to the designated cut-off time at the tournament:

- Each team has played once in a 'round robin' or
- At the end of pool play.

Notification of timelines for submission of protests at specific tournaments will be provided to teams in the written tournament procedures prior to select tournaments (for example, Zone Championships, World Championships) or teams may be advised of timelines by the Chief Classifier or his/her representative at the tournament during team/coaches technical meeting or in written tournament procedures provided at the tournament.

## 7.7 Resolution of the Protest

Once the Chief Classifier accepts the protest, the Chief Classifier gives the documentation submitted with the protest, and any additional written evidence offered in support of the protest, to the protest panel to review the detailed reason for the protest. The protest panel uses this information as the basis for their review and responds to questions and points in the protest form in their written decision.

The protest panel starts the athlete evaluation with no previous information, other than what is provided on the written protest form and supporting documents (if provided), so the protest evaluation is conducted as if the athlete is having his/her first classification evaluation.

The protest panel should conduct the evaluation without reference to previous documents, such as classification forms or prior protest forms, and without reference to members of the classification panel that were involved in the allocation of the sport class that is being protested.

The protest panel may seek medical, sport or scientific expertise in reviewing the athlete's sport class.

In general, on-court observations are necessary in the protest procedure. An initial observation session may take place without notifying the athlete under protest.

- In the case of a self-protest, the athlete knows that he/she is under protest. The athlete and/or team coach or team representative will be informed of the time and date of the athlete evaluation which may be scheduled before the initial observation.
- If another party submits the protest, the athlete and/or team coach or team representative will be informed of the protest as soon as possible after the initial observation has occurred. The athlete and coach or team representative will be informed of the time and date of the athlete evaluation.

The classification protest panel will evaluate the athlete under protest in another physical and technical assessment.

- The athlete may have his coach OR a team representative and a translator present, if necessary, for the physical and technical assessments. The PCB and EBM may be present, if available.

Further observation may be necessary after the physical and technical assessment.

The protest panel will make a ruling on the protest as soon as possible following the collection of all information needed to render a decision. (Article 7.9 Protest Decision Timeline for when protest decisions take effect).

If the protest panel is unable to reach consensus and there is a need to vote, a majority decision is necessary.

- This decision is made by an open vote and not by a secret ballot.
- The individual votes are not recorded.

If the protest panel is unable to gather enough evidence to make a decision by the end of the tournament, the protest shall carry over to the next equivalent IWRF tournament. Inability to make a decision may result from:

- Insufficient playing time on court, for whatever reason, for the necessary observations to take place;
- If there are insufficient numbers of classifiers to assemble a proper protest panel at the tournament; and/or
- Multiple protests filed at a tournament whereby the panels are unable to complete all protests at that tournament.
  - Protests are handled in the order in which they are submitted with the tournament Chief Classifier or his/her designee.
  - To ensure that protests are handled in the order in which they are submitted, time of deposit is recorded on the protest forms when submitted to the tournament Chief Classifier or his/her designee.

## 7.8 Protest Decision Notification

All relevant parties shall be notified of the protest decision in accordance with athlete evaluation articles 6.2.5, 6.3 and 6.3.1 on informing decisions of an athlete's sport class and notification of third parties.

### *7.8.1 Informing athletes of decisions on sport class as a result of a self-protest*

- When the classification panel has made a decision on the protest, at least one member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete of the panel's decision. This should take place as soon as possible after the decision is taken in accordance with Articles 6.2.5 and 6.3.1.

The nation and/or athlete submitting the self-protest is provided with a copy of the protest form including the written decision by the protest panel. If the athlete wants a copy of this classification evaluation form, the athlete must submit a release of records form obtainable from the Classification Section on the IWRF website ([www.iwrf.com](http://www.iwrf.com)).

### 7.8.2 Informing of decisions on sport class as a result of a protest by another nation

- When the classification panel has made a decision, at least one member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete under protest of the panel's decision. This should take place as soon as possible after the decision is taken in accordance with Articles 6.2.5 and 6.3.1.
- The panel does not inform the athlete of what nation made the protest, only of the decision taken.
- The panel informs the nation submitting the protest with a written explanation of the decision taken in the appropriate section on the protest form; and may verbally inform the nation submitting the protest as soon as is logistically possible. If time or circumstances do not permit a meeting, the decision is given in written form only on the IWRF protest form.

*Explanatory Note:* A protest may be lodged by another nation, not completed at that tournament, and carried over to the next equivalent IWRF sanctioned tournament. If the nation lodging the protest is not present at the next equivalent event where the protest is completed and cannot be verbally informed in a meeting, written notification of the decision taken is provided to the nation that lodged the protest as soon as is logistically possible after the conclusion of the tournament.

## 7.9 Protest Decision Timeline

The implementation of any change of sport class occurring as a result of a protest will take effect as soon as possible prior to the start of the tournament semi-finals; however, if the decision is made after the start of semi-finals, the change will be implemented at the end of the tournament.

The exception to this rule is for athletes under protest who have a previous Type A international class (refer to Article 6.3 Sport Class Allocation Timeline).

- If a protest is filed at the tournament on an athlete with a previous Type A international class, any change of class as a result of the protest is implemented at the end of the tournament.
- If a protest is filed on an athlete with a previous Type A international class at least four weeks prior to the start of classification evaluation period at a tournament, a change of class as a result of the protest can be implemented as soon as possible prior to the start of the tournament semi-finals. However, if the decision is made after the start of semi-finals, the change will be implemented at the end of the tournament.

## 8 Appeals

### 8.1 Appeal

Appeal is used to describe the procedure by which a formal objection to the manner in which classification procedures have been conducted is submitted and subsequently resolved.

### 8.2 General Principles

Each International Federation shall have *Classification Appeal* procedures in its classification rules. These procedures include clear timelines for the submission and resolution of an appeal. Each International Federation should identify an appeal body in its classification rules.

*Explanatory Note:* As of 2010, the International Federation (IF) for wheelchair rugby is the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF). The IWRF has procedures that include timelines for submission and resolution of appeals. To obtain the procedures for an appeal contact:

IWRF, Suite 349 – 5158 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Delta BC, V4K 5B6, Canada

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Board of Appeals of Classification (BAC) acts as the appeal body during Paralympic Games.

## 9 Classification Personnel

Classifiers are individuals with formal medical and/or health-related education and training in neuromuscular evaluation and testing (for example, physicians, physical therapists or physiotherapists and occupational therapists).

Individuals in other disciplines such as sport science, adapted physical education, human kinetics or kinesiology may have this expertise.

### 9.1 Eligibility to Become a Classifier

To be eligible to become a classifier in Wheelchair Rugby an individual must have the following pre-requisites:

- Experience in the evaluation of individuals with impairment and activity limitation, especially those most common in Wheelchair Rugby (such as spinal cord injury and other neuromuscular and orthopaedic conditions).
- Knowledge of Wheelchair Rugby or other wheelchair sports and/or a willingness to increase knowledge through watching the sport.
- Demonstrate competence in manual muscle testing of the upper and lower extremities and trunk.

To make a final determination of eligibility to become a classifier in Wheelchair Rugby, the interested individual must submit the IWRF Classifier Application (**Appendix J**) and any other requested documents needed to confirm credentials and qualifications.

### 9.2 Classifier

A classifier is a person authorized as an official by IWRF to evaluate athletes, while serving as a member of a classification panel.

Classifiers do not allocate international sport class and sport class status individually. Classifiers work as members of a classification panel.

During a competition, members of the classification panel should not have any other duties or official responsibilities that are not in connection with classification.

The duties of a classifier include but are not limited to:

- Work as a member of a classification panel to allocate athlete sport class and sport class status,
- Work as a member of a protest panel as required to conduct athlete evaluation and resolve an objection to an athlete's sport class,
- Attend classification meetings and seminars at competitions, and
- Assist in classifier training and certification as requested by the IWRF Head of Classification, *Training and Development Officer* or his/her designee (for example, organizing and teaching workshops; mentoring classifiers and trainees working with a classification panel and those teaching workshops).

### 9.3 Head of Classification

The Head of Classification, also referred to as the Classification Commissioner, is appointed by the IWRF Board and is responsible for all direction, administration, coordination, and implementation of international classification matters for Wheelchair Rugby for a period of four years.

The duties of the Head of Classification include but are not limited to:

- Administer and coordinate classification matters related to Wheelchair Rugby, including serving as a member of the IWRF Executive Board.
- Communicate on behalf of the IWRF with zone and national classification on matters relating to international classification.
- Provide advice and assistance to the local organising committees at IWRF sanctioned events to ensure that the necessary arrangements are made for travel, accommodations and working logistics for classifiers before, during and after the event.
- Appoint classifiers for appropriate composition of classification panels and protest panels for IWRF World Championships and Paralympic Games in consultation with Zone Head Classifiers.
- Act as Chief Classifier at IWRF World Championships and Paralympic Games or appoint a Chief Classifier if unable to attend.
- Examine the current state of classification in the sport on a regular basis.
- Evaluate current classification rules and the IWRF Classification Manual and provide recommendations for improvements and/or revisions on a regular basis.
- Inform classifiers of any changes in the classification rules and consult for feedback on issues that affect the sport rules.
- Oversee the publication of the IWRF Classification Manual in accordance with the policies and procedures of the IWRF.
- Prepare, submit and monitor a classification budget for IWRF annually, or as requested.
- Organize and conduct classifier training and certification, and/or appoint a Training and Development Officer to organize and conduct classifier training and certification.
- Maintain and regularly update a secure classification database to ensure classification records are accurate or appoint an individual as the *Database Administrator* to maintain and update the database.
- Maintain and regularly update a classifier database to track classifier activity and certifications or appoint an individual as the Database Administrator to maintain and update the database.
- Maintain and regularly update the classification master list or appoint an individual as the Database Administrator to maintain and update the classification master list.

### 9.4 Zone Head Classifier

The *Zone Head Classifier* is elected by each zone for a period of two to four years to communicate with zone and national classifiers on matters relating to classification and international and zone classification opportunities in the respective zone.

A Zone Head Classifier must be an IWRF Certified Level 3 or 4 classifier, active internationally, in the zone, and preferably also active at the national level.

The duties of the Zone Head Classifier include but are not limited to:

- Liaise with Zone Executive Committee, and communicate with other National Head Classifiers within the respective zone.
- Act as Chief Classifier at relevant IWRF Zone Championships or IWRF sanctioned tournaments in that zone, or assist the Head of Classification in appointing a Chief Classifier if unable to attend.
- Appoint classification panels and protest panels for relevant IWRF Zone Championships or IWRF sanctioned tournaments in the zone in consultation with and with final approval of the IWRF Head of Classification.
- Communicate with the Head of Classification and/or Training & Certification Officer to further zone classifier development.
- Assist the Head of Classification in any matters relating to classification.
- May recommend certification for IWRF Level 2, 3 and 4 classifiers (if Zone Head Classifier is a Level 4 classifier) and may recommend certification for IWRF Level 2 and 3 classifiers (if Zone Head Classifier is a Level 3 classifier) at type A and type B tournaments. Certification is dependent on approval of the IWRF Head of Classification.
- Checks log books of classifiers in respective zone.
- Has the authority to gain verification of logbooks within zone.
- Ensures that zone alpha player list is prepared and updated twice a year and sent to IWRF Database Administrator as requested.
- Submits an annual report to Zone Executive Committee prior to the respective Zone Sport Assembly and to the Head of Classification prior to an IWRF Sport Assembly.

## 9.5 Chief Classifier

The Chief Classifier is appointed by IWRF for a specific competition. The IWRF Head of Classification may fill this position, such as at Paralympic Games and World Championships.

The duties of the Chief Classifier include but are not limited to:

- Responsible for all direction, administration, coordination, and implementation of classification matters for a specified competition.
- Liaise with organising committees and teams before a competition to identify and notify athletes who require evaluation for allocation of sport class and sport class status.
- Liaise with organising committees before a competition to ensure travel, accommodation and working logistics are provided for classifiers (for example, working space, equipment, office supplies, transportation, lodging and meals).
- Consult with classifiers to ensure that classification rules are applied appropriately during a specific competition.
- Supervise classifiers and trainee classifiers in their duties as members of classification panels, and observe their classification competencies and proficiencies.

Refer to Article 11 for specific duties managing classification at a tournament including pre-Competition, competition and post-competition.

## 9.6 Trainee

A *Trainee* is an individual who is in the process of formal classification training. The formal training may be at the basic or introductory level or may be more advanced training to progress in certification level.

A trainee who is not yet certified by IWRF as a classifier may not be appointed as a member of a classification panel at an international competition. This individual is unable to allocate an international sport class.

A trainee may be certified by IWRF as a Level 2 zone or international classifier and be attending an event for advanced training though not an appointed member of a classification panel at an international event.

It should be ensured that trainee classifiers have no responsibilities as a member of a National Delegation or Team at the event where classification training takes place. Having no such official duties allows the trainee classifiers to participate fully in their classification training and to be eligible for certification or to advance in certification.

The duties of the trainee include but are not limited to:

- Active participation and observation to learn classification rules and to develop competencies and proficiencies in athlete evaluation for Certification.
- Attend classification meetings, seminars, and training workshops.

*Explanatory Note:* In rare cases where a classification panel member becomes ill or there is an emergency of some nature, a trainee with national classification experience or a previously certified zone classifier attending as a trainee may be advanced in certification and appointed to work with an international classification panel, if the individual meets the required competencies.

## 9.7 Player Classification Representative (PCB)

The *Player Classification Representative (PCB)*, or *Player Classification Board Member*, is a Wheelchair Rugby athlete, or former athlete, who understands and can explain the classification rules from the perspective of the athlete. The Player Classification Representative must appreciate and be able to explain the classification process and the unique characteristics and differences of the specific sport classes to other athletes.

At the start of most tournaments, the Chief Classifier in consultation with the classification panel will select appropriate PCBs and invite these individuals to participate in athlete evaluation, when requested.

Duties of the Player Classification Representative include but are not limited to:

- Explain the classification rules in terms understandable to the athletes.
- Be diplomatic and tactful in communication with athletes, coaches, athlete support personnel and members of the classification panel.

- Be trusted and respected by the athletes in Wheelchair Rugby.
- Observe the IWRF Code of Conduct and keep information related to athletes confidential.
- Be available to observe during athlete evaluation, and provide expertise in situations such as technical assessment, on-court observation, protests, and the development and implementation of new classification rules.
- Serve in an advisory capacity; the PCB will not have a vote in the actual determination of an athlete's sport class.
- Attend classification meetings if available; the PCB may participate in classification meetings, but does not have a vote.

## 10 Classifier Certification

Classifier certification establishes that an individual has met the competencies for classification and is proficient to practice as a classifier in Wheelchair Rugby. Classifiers shall be trained and certified by the IWRF.

### 10.1 Levels of Certification

There are four levels of certification provided by the IWRF:

#### Level 1 – National Classifier

- This level of certification is offered only to individuals who want to classify in a nation without an active national classification certification and training program.
- This level of certification indicates the individual may participate in the allocation of sport class in his/her nation.
- This individual is unable to allocate a zone or international sport class.

#### Level 2 – Zone or International Classifier

- An individual who has successfully completed formal basic training and has been certified by IWRF as a member of a classification panel.
- If the classifier has trained with a zone panel, then the classifier may be certified as Level 2 zone (Level 2 Z). Refer to Article 10.3.
  - A classifier trainee with a Level 1 national certification may train with an international panel and be awarded a zone classification; if that classifier is certified to work in his/her zone with other experienced classifiers and is not yet competent to work independently at an international event.
- If the classifier has trained with an international panel, then the classifier may be certified as Level 2 international (Level 2 I).
- This individual may participate in the assignment of sport class with supervision of more experienced classifiers.

#### Level 3 – International Classifier

- This individual has successfully completed the formal advanced training and been certified as a member of a classification panel at an international competition.
- This individual participates in the assignment of sport class with no supervision from more experienced classifiers and may require minimal supervision from more experienced classifiers in decisions of eligibility, protests, and appeals.

#### Level 4 – International Classifier

- This individual has successfully completed the formal advanced training and been certified as a member of a classification panel at an international competition.
- This individual has demonstrated the highest level of experience as a classifier, including administration, certification and training.

## 10.2 Assessing Competencies

Methods of obtaining certification include theoretical education delivered through basic training workshops and advanced workshops or seminars, and application of knowledge and practical education through hands-on training with a classification panel and mentorship.

## 10.3 Certification Criteria

There are specific competencies for certification at each level. Minimal criteria for certification and advancement include, but are not limited to:

### **Level 1 National Classifier**

1. Complete basic formal workshop supervised by a IWRF international classifier Level 3 or 4.
2. Read IWRF Code of Conduct.
3. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the game of rugby.
4. Begin logbook documenting rugby experience and activities.

### **Level 2 Zone or International Classifier**

1. Demonstrate minimum of one year classifying with national or zone Wheelchair Rugby.
2. Perform complete bench test, functional tests, and on-court observation.
3. Demonstrate ability to evaluate athlete independently and provide explanations of findings to the classification panel, athletes and appropriate athlete support personnel.
4. Communicate with Chief Classifier regarding classification issues at specific competition.
5. Seek guidance and assistance when needed.
6. If training with a zone panel, the classifier may be certified as Level 2 zone (Level 2 Z).
7. If training with an international panel, the classifier may be certified as Level 2 international (Level 2 I).

*Explanatory Note:* If certified to work in his/her zone with other experienced classifiers but not yet competent to work independently at an international event, a trainee working with an international panel may receive a zone certification.

### **Level 3 International Classifier**

1. Complete advanced workshop, supervised by IWRF international classifier Level 3 or 4.
2. Demonstrate minimum of two years of experience as a Level 2 classifier.
3. Appointed as a member of a Type A or B panel in at least one international tournament.
4. Instruct all or part of a basic workshop supervised by another IWRF international classifier Level 3 or 4.
5. Experience as Chief Classifier at a tournament with a minimum of four teams participating.

6. Explain the protest procedure and eligibility requirements to classification panel, athlete and appropriate athlete support personnel.

#### **Level 4 International Classifier**

1. Demonstrate leadership skills and activities in matters related to classification, such as administration and management of classification.
2. Continuing participation in training and certification of classifiers, such as teaching at advanced workshops and supervising/mentoring instructors at basic and advanced workshops.
3. Active participation in IWRF Classification Commission (ICC) meetings.
4. Continuing participation as member of classification panel at international, zone and/or national level (specifically, serve as a member on a minimum of two Type A or B classification panels within a four-year period to maintain certification as Level 4).

### 10.4 Evaluation of Competency

Classifiers may submit their logbooks for review of proficiency in specific competencies to respective Zone Head Classifier on an annual basis, the specific date or time period as determined by the Zone Head Classifier.

Classifiers are evaluated in specific areas as identified on the classifier certification form (refer to **Appendix L Classifier Certification Form**).

Classifiers must demonstrate improvement of weak areas as identified in the classifier certification development plan in order to advance in certification level (**Appendix L Classifier Certification Form**).

### 10.5 Approval of Certification

Certification at each level as a zone classifier can only be obtained with the approval of the respective Zone Head Classifier and the IWRF Head of Classification.

Certification at each level as an international classifier can only be obtained with the approval of the respective Zone Head Classifier and the IWRF Head of Classification.

### 10.6 Notification of Certification

At each tournament where the classifier is assessed, the classifier will receive written and verbal feedback using the classifier certification form (**Appendix L Classifier Certification Form**).

- This form, including an action plan for addressing identified competencies requiring improvement, is to be completed by the classifier trainer or by the member of the classification panel designated by the classifier trainer or Chief Classifier as the evaluator to conduct classifier certification and training.
- At each tournament where the classifier is being assessed, the classifier should provide a copy of his/her previous certification form in order to be

assessed by the classifier trainer or evaluator appointed to conduct certification and training.

- If a classifier is being advanced in certification level and there are any competencies listed in the development/action plan still requiring improvement but not critical to advancement in certification level, these competencies must be carried through on the certification form to the next assessment.
- At a tournament where the classifier is being evaluated but is not being assessed to advance in certification level, the classifier trainer or designated evaluator may provide a pathway to further develop competencies. The designated evaluator will discuss achievements regarding the classifier's development/action plan. If the evaluator believes specific competencies requiring further proficiency have been met, the action plan can be signed and dated for each competency and documented for future assessment and potential advancement in certification level.

Not all classifiers attending training or working as classifiers at an event who are eligible for advancement in certification are guaranteed to receive that certification level. Even though the classifier may meet the recommended criteria to move forward, there may be identified areas of weakness that require further development in order to demonstrate proficiency in the competencies necessary to obtain certification at the higher level. The classifier will be notified of the pathway to further develop these competencies and the requirements to maintain and/or advance certification.

- It is the responsibility of this classifier to formulate an action plan as to how to improve these areas requiring further development. Classifiers may receive assistance in developing this plan from their respective Zone Head Classifier and/or the IWRF Training and Development Officer.

## 10.7 Retraining and Recertification

Classifiers submit logbooks for review of proficiency in specific competencies to respective Zone Head Classifier on an annual basis, the specific date or time period as determined by the Zone Head Classifier.

If inactive internationally for a four-year period, the classifier will decrease one level in certification and must develop an action plan with his/her respective Zone Head Classifier for re-certification to the previous level. This plan of action is subject to the approval of the IWRF Head of Classification.

## 10.8 Classifier Code of Conduct

### 10.8.1 *General Principles*

The role of the classifier is to act as an impartial evaluator in determining an athlete's sport class and sport class status. The integrity of classification in Wheelchair Rugby rests on the professional and ethical conduct and behaviour of each individual classifier.

### 10.8.2 *Classifier Compliance*

All classification personnel must sign and adhere to the IWRF Code of Conduct, indicating an agreement to act in a professional manner according to a set of guidelines for professional conduct and behaviour.

Classifiers should:

- Value and respect the athletes and athlete support personnel; and work together with athletes and athlete support personnel with understanding, patience, and dignity.
- Be courteous, objective, honest and impartial in performing classification duties for all athletes, regardless of team affiliation or national origin.
- Accept responsibility for all actions and decisions taken and be open to discussion and interaction with athletes and athlete support personnel in accordance with the classification rules for athlete evaluation, protests and appeals, and rules for the tournament or competition.
- Perform classification duties and related responsibilities while not being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Maintain confidentiality of athlete information whenever possible, according to the classification rules for athlete evaluation and protests and appeals.
- Classifiers should respect the classification rules.
  - Understand the theory and practice of the classification rules and assist athletes and athlete support personnel in learning and understanding the classification rules.
- Accurately and honestly represent their qualifications and abilities when applying for training and certification and when accepting classification appointments at competitions.
- Perform duties without yielding to any economic, political, sporting or human pressure.
- Recognize that anything that may lead to a *Conflict of Interest*, either real or apparent, must be avoided.
  - Disclose any relationship with a team, athlete, or athlete support personnel that would otherwise constitute a conflict of interest.
- Seek self-development through study of the sport, classification rules, and mentoring less-experienced classifiers and classifier trainees.
- Classifiers should respect their colleagues and:
  - Treat all classification discussions with colleagues related to athletes as confidential information.
  - Explain and justify decisions without showing anger or resentment.
  - Treat colleagues with professional dignity and courtesy, recognizing that it is inappropriate to criticize other classifiers or officials in public.
  - Publicly and privately respect the decisions and decision-making process of other classifiers and officials, whether or not in agreement.
- Share theoretical, technical and practical knowledge, skills and expertise with less experienced classifiers and classifier trainees.

### 10.8.3 *Consequences of Non-Compliance*

Classifiers must acknowledge and accept that disciplinary action against them may include a variety of sanctions from verbal or written reprimand to revoking their certification as a classifier in Wheelchair Rugby.

## 11 Administration and Development

The *International Classification Committee* (ICC) is the group responsible for the administrative and development duties related to international classification.

The duties of the ICC include evaluation and revision of classification rules, and policy and procedures related to athlete evaluation and protests, classifier certification and training and other related administration of classification.

The ICC shall be composed of the IWRF Head of Classification (Classification Commissioner) who serves as Chairperson, the Head Classifier from each zone, the Database Administrator, and the Training and Certification Officer (**Appendix N** IWRF Classification Committee Structure and Members).

In addition to the above members, the ICC may select an athlete to serve as a player classification representative (PCB) in an advisory capacity. This individual may be utilised for his/her perspective as an athlete, or former athlete, in the sport with experience in situations such as athlete evaluation, protests, evaluation of classification rules and development of new classification rules, and/or policies and procedures related to classification.

### 11.1 Head of Classification Duties

- Serves as member of the IWRF Executive Board.
- Refer to Article 9.3 for duties of the Head of Classification.

### 11.2 Zone Head Classifier Duties

- Refer to Article 9.4 for duties of the Zone Head Classifier.

### 11.3 Player Classification Representative (PCB) Duties

- The Player Classification Representative, or the Player Classification Board Member (PCB), serves on the ICC in an advisory capacity for all areas relating to the status of classification in the sport; including classification rules development, direction, implementation and evaluation.
- Liaise with athletes and provide explanations, when required, regarding classification matters and issues.
- Further develop knowledge of classification rules through attendance at classification workshops and through involvement in local, national and international classification.
- Act as Player Classification Representative (PCB) at IWRF World Championships and Paralympic Games, if in attendance. If this individual is not attending, then another athlete or former athlete will be appointed to fulfil the duties of PCB at the event.

## 11.4 Database Administrator Duties

- Maintain a database of all internationally classified athletes and classifiers, including a current list of internationally accredited classifiers and certification levels.
- Distribute the database in a secure format to the Head of Classification and all Zone Head Classifiers as requested.
- In consultation with Zone Head Classifiers, prepare a comprehensive master list annually and submit to the Head of Classification and/or the International Federation as requested.
- Make amendments and improvements to the database as required.
- Provide appropriate reports from the database on request.
- Provide the Webmaster of the IWRF website with all relevant information in a timely manner, in consultation with the appropriate International Classification Committee members.
- Prepare the agenda and act as recorder, or appoint a recorder, for all meetings of the International Classification Committee, in consultation with the Head of Classification.
- Collate and publish an annual calendar, in consultation with the Head of Classification, Zone Head Classifiers and the Training & Certification Officer.
- Collect minutes from all classification meetings within one month of the meeting date.

## 11.5 Training & Certification Officer Duties

- On-going development and evaluation of comprehensive training and certification programme for classifiers.
- On-going development and evaluation of training curriculum and tools, including introductory and advanced workshops, 'Layperson's Guide to Wheelchair Rugby Classification' and relevant web-based resources for basic and advanced training workshops and seminars.
- Assist in recruitment, retention and development of international classifiers.
- Appoint classifier trainers or evaluators for all international certification clinics.
- Allocate classification certification levels to classifiers in accordance with criteria for certification of classifiers and with the support of Zone Head Classifiers and approval of the Head of Classification.
- Generate a classifier certification and training tournament report within 10 days following the conclusion of the tournament where training takes place and submit the report to the Head of Classification.
  - The training and certification officer or designee, for example the tournament Chief Classifier, generates a written report.
  - This report will consist of an inclusive list of all classifiers certified and reviewed, including comments and outcomes.
  - Lists the types of training that occurred such as basic or advanced workshops including topics, workshop leaders and attendees.
- Send classifier certification forms to the IWRF Head of Classification at the conclusion of the tournament and/or training.

- Provide copies of the certification forms to each classifier for his/her personal records before the conclusion of the tournament, or within two weeks of the conclusion of the tournament.

## 12 Tournament Classification Administration

To award a sport class and sport class status to an athlete at a competition, the classification panel must include four to seven classifiers, with the composition of the classification panel depending on the type of tournament.

### 12.1 Classification Panel Requirements

To award an international sport class and sport class status to an athlete, the criteria for a Type A or B international classification panel must be met.

#### 12.1.1 *Type A International Panel*

- Class Awarded
  - International sport class and sport class status.
- Panel Requirements
  - Seven classifiers from at least five countries and two zones, with at least three Level 4 classifiers and two Level 3 classifiers; and a maximum of two Level 2 international classifiers. Each team of three classifiers must have one member from out of the zone where the tournament is taking place.
- Tournaments
  - For example, Paralympics, World Championships, and Zone Championships (if held one year prior to Paralympics).

#### 12.1.2 *Type B International Panel*

- Class Awarded
  - International sport class and sport class status.
  - Only new athletes, those athletes without a previous international classification, should undergo evaluation at a competition with a Type B panel.
- Panel Requirements
  - Four classifiers from at least three countries and two zones, with one Level 4 classifier and one Level 3 classifier.
  - This panel should be used only for athletes without a previous international sport class.
  - This type of classification panel should be used at developmental tournaments where the priority is to provide international classes for new athletes.

- There may a limit to the number of athletes that can be evaluated because of the smaller panel.
- Tournaments
  - NO PROTESTS SHOULD BE DEALT WITH WHERE THERE IS A TYPE B CLASSIFICATION PANEL - as athletes do not have the right to protest, this type classification panel should only be used at tournaments to assist with development.
  - For example, Zone Championships, sanctioned international tournaments.

### 12.1.3 *Type B Zone Panel*

- Class Awarded
  - Zone sport class and sport class status.
- Panel Requirements
  - Four classifiers from a minimum of two to three countries and one zone, with one Level 4 classifier and one Level 3 classifier.
  - NO PROTESTS OF SPORT CLASS ALLOCATED BY THIS TYPE B PANEL SHOULD OCCUR AT THIS TOURNAMENT. However, a protest may be handled at or carried forward to a zone tournament with a Type B classification panel consisting of different classifiers than those who awarded the sport class being protested.
  - This panel cannot allocate an IWRP international sport class; a zone sport class does not count toward achieving a permanent (P) IWRP international sport class status.
  - A Type B zone panel cannot change an IWRP international sport class.

### 12.1.4 *Type C Tournament Panel*

- Class Awarded
  - National sport class and sport class status.
- Panel Requirements
  - At least three classifiers, at least one will be Level 3 or Level 4. All levels of classifier may participate.
  - A Type C panel cannot change an international or zone class.
- Tournaments
  - National or club tournaments.

If a national or club tournament organizing committee would like to provide international classification opportunities to athletes, the competition must be

sanctioned by IWRF for classification and meet the criteria for a Type A or B international classification panel.

## 12.2 Pre-Competition Tasks

- Appointment of a Chief Classifier.
- The IWRF Head of Classification appoints the Chief Classifier for the competition and provides the local organizing committee with the Chief Classifier contact details at least three months prior to the event.

### 12.2.1 Chief Classifier Tasks 2-3 Months Prior to Competition

- Work with IWRF and local organizing committee to provide facilities and support infrastructure for classification.
- Identify and confirm classification panel members.
- Notify tournament director and/or local organizing committee of classifiers selected, provide contact information, and ensure the tournament director and/or designee makes arrangements for travel to and from the competition in accordance with date and time for beginning of the classification evaluation period.
- Liaison with IWRF, tournament director and/or organizing committee for collecting all Team and athlete entries well in advance of competition dates.
- Contact IWRF Database Administrator for identification of athletes for evaluation and any necessary documentation and data for classification.
- Crosscheck athlete entry event information with classification master list and database to verify sport class and sport class status.
- Allocate sport class status of N for athletes who have not been previously listed in the database or the master list and add them to the classification list for the competition.
- Identify athletes requiring athlete evaluation during the classification evaluation period.
  - Athletes with N and R sport class.
  - Athletes requiring 2nd or 3rd evaluation for sport class.
  - Athletes under protest.
- Establish date and time for classification evaluation period and provide tournament director with the following:
  - Athlete evaluation schedule for distribution to competing nations/teams.
  - Provide written IWRF classification rules and any specific competition rules related to classification for the local organizing committee and participating nations/teams.
- Notify tournament director and/or local organizing committee liaison of facilities and support for classifiers and to conduct classification including:
  - Facilities and venue for athlete evaluation, such as classification room or rooms reserved for entire tournament, appropriate signage and directions to the classification area.
  - Facilities and venue for administration of classification.
  - Facilities and venue for classifier training, if scheduled.
  - Equipment Needs and Technology Support:
    - Bench or table/plinths,
    - Floor mats,

- Wheelchair Rugby balls, and
  - Office equipment, such as access to copier, paper, pens, marking pens.
- Presentation equipment for training sessions, such as projector/beamer, writing pads, marking pens.
- Accommodation and meals for classifiers.
  - Classifiers may be placed in double accommodation.
  - Chief Classifier should have single room accommodation.
- Event transportation including:
  - Transportation to and from airport/train station to hotel and
  - Local transportation to and from competition venue.
- Collect classification documentation.
- Notify the Database Administrator of the teams attending the tournament, and request most recent classification information for all players on all teams.
- If athletes do not have a previous international class, the Database Administrator and/or Chief Classifier may contact the Zone or National Head Classifier for zone or national classification forms.
- Advise teams and athletes of any supportive classification documentation that athletes should bring. This documentation may include:
  - Zone or national classification documents and/or
  - Medical documentation, written clearly in English, of the athlete's impairment, particularly if the athlete's impairment is a result of an uncommon or rare condition.
- Organise IWRF classification cards and materials to make classification cards.

### 12.2.2 *Chief Classifier Tasks 6-8 Weeks Prior to Competition*

- Chief Classifier should send classification rules and related classification information to the local organizing committee for distribution to all team managers including athlete responsibilities, protest procedures, protest forms and any other changes in classification rules relevant for the specific tournament such as time limits for protests, when changes in class will occur, and when pool play or round robin play will end.
- Request final tournament roster from tournament director, confirm names and uniform number of athletes requiring evaluation, as well as those under review by cross referencing rosters, the database and/or master list.
- Prepare written classification schedule and establish specific times for teams and individual athletes. Be sure scheduled times for athlete evaluation correspond realistically with team travel arrangements, training and match play schedule.
- The Chief Classifier has the right to determine the number of athletes that can reasonably be accommodated at a tournament and to prioritize athletes for classification.
- Provide copy of classification schedule and any other relevant information for classification to tournament director to disseminate to all competing teams/nations.
- Finalise athlete sport class and sport class status for athletes attending competition.

- Contact all classifiers to confirm attendance and inform travel arrangements, accommodation, transportation, and classification schedules.

### 12.2.3 Chief Classifier Tasks 1 Week Prior to Competition

- Make copies of forms, gather classification cards and prepare other office materials needed for classification.
- Make final communications with classification panel members and local organizing committee as necessary prior to departure for the competition.

## 12.3 Chief Classifier Duties during Competition

- Review classification cards for all athletes at the tournament to ensure sport class and sport class status are correct and that classification cards are legible and in good condition.
  - This review ideally takes place during the classification evaluation period.
  - The coach or designated Team Representative may be requested to bring all classification cards for review and updating during a team's scheduled classification evaluation period.
  - If review is not possible during the classification evaluation period, the Chief Classifier may request the cards be produced as soon as possible.
  - Classification cards may be examined at the scorer's table during competition.
- Missing, incorrect or damaged classification cards must be replaced, with appropriate fee assessed.
- Classification cards must be changed or a new card issued if there is a change in sport class. If there is a change in sport class requiring a new classification card, there is no charge for a new classification card.
- Sport class status is not written on the classification card.
  - Sport class status is recorded on the written classification report and maintained in the athlete database.
- After completion of the bench test and functional test portion of athlete evaluation and initial allocation of sport class and sport class status, the Chief Classifier or a member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete of initial sport class (entry sport class allocation).
- At the end of each classification evaluation session, daily or as soon as is logistically possible, the Chief Classifier posts written results in a central location and/or provides the local organizing committee with a written list of sport class and sport class status of all athletes for distribution to each team.
- Following observation assessment and confirmation of the athlete's sport class, the Chief Classifier or a member of the classification panel shall inform the athlete and/or team representative and the local organizing committee of the decision as soon as is logistically possible.
- Make any necessary changes to the athlete's classification card and notify the Head referee of any relevant changes in sport class.

- Provide a written list of sport class and sport class status of all athletes to the local organizing committee for distribution to all teams as the competition evaluation sessions for on-court observation are concluded each day.
- Post final results and give final written list of sport class and sport class status to each team and the local organizing committee at the conclusion of the tournament.

## 12.4 Post Competition Tasks

### 12.4.1 *Post-Competition Report*

- The Chief Classifier shall complete and forward a Post-competition report to the IWRF Head of Classification within 10 days of the end of the tournament.
  - The report should consist of an inclusive list of sport class and sport class status of all athletes classified, reviewed and protested, comments and recommendations regarding event management to share with the local organizing committee and the IWRF, minutes from classifier meetings; classifier training and certification report.

### 12.4.2 *Update Database and Master List*

- The Chief Classifier must communicate with the Database Administrator and/or Head of Classification to ensure that the classification forms are sent to the Database Administrator and the database and master list are updated.
- The Head of Classification, Chief Classifier and/or Database Administrator will communicate all changes of the international class of athletes with the respective national head classifier, if there is an identified Head of Classification in a country. Copies of the classification forms may be provided to the national head classifier on request.

## 13 Classification Documentation

### 13.1 Classification Forms

The IWRF classification form is used for recording athlete evaluation results and allocation of sport class and sport class status. There are additional forms used by classifiers including:

- IWRF Classification Form (**Appendix H and IWRF website**)
- Protest Form (**IWRF website**)
- Tournament Classification Report (**Appendix O**)
- Release of Information Form (**IWRF website**)
- Classification Consent Form (**IWRF website**)

### 13.2 Classifier Training and Certification Documentation

There are a number of forms used by classifiers for documenting classifier training and certification including:

- Classifier Certification Form and Development Plan (**Appendix L**)
- IWRF Classifier Application Form (**Appendix J**)
- IWRF Classifier Code of Conduct (**IWRF website**)
- Classification Logbook (**Appendix M**)

## 14 Glossary\*

Ability	A quality or state of being able to perform.
Activity Limitation	Difficulties an individual may have in executing activities, such as walking, transferring or pushing a wheelchair. In classification, sport specific activities are evaluated. Activities relevant to Wheelchair Rugby, such as ball and chair activities are observed in athlete evaluation and factor in the allocation of sport class.
Athlete	Any person who participates in sport.
Athlete Evaluation	The process by which an athlete is assessed in accordance with the IWRF classification rules. Athlete evaluation in Wheelchair Rugby includes physical assessment (bench tests), technical assessment (functional movement tests), and observation assessment (on-court observation); resulting in allocation of sport class and sport class status.
Athlete Support Personnel	Any coach, trainer, manager, interpreter, agent, team staff, official, medical or para-medical personnel working with or treating athletes participating in or preparing for training and/or competition.
Bench Test	Part of athlete evaluation conducted by internationally certified classifiers as part of the process of determining the sport class for Wheelchair Rugby that includes medical history and surgeries, diagnosis, sensation, spasticity, range of motion, and manual muscle tests. Also, referred to as physical assessment or impairment assessment.
Chief Classifier	The internationally certified classifier responsible for all direction, administration, coordination, and implementation of classification matters for a specified competition.
Classification	A structure for competition to ensure that an athlete's impairment is relevant to sport performance and to minimize the impact of impairment on the outcome of competition.
Classification Appeal	The process to resolve procedural disputes concerning classification.
Classification Evaluation Period	The period of time when athlete evaluation takes place prior to the start of tournament play, including physical assessment and technical assessment. May also include observation of training/practice.

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\* Many of these terms are defined according to the IPC Classification Code guidelines.

Classification Panel	A group of classifiers, appointed by the International Federation, to determine the sport class and sport class status in accordance with the IWRF classification rules. The classification panel must include four to seven classifiers, depending on the tournament and type of panel necessary to allocate sport class and sport class status. There are two types of classification panels that can award international class: Type A and Type B.
Classification Protest	The procedure by which a formal objection to an athlete's sport class and/or sport class status is lodged and subsequently resolved.
Classification Rules	The policies, procedures, protocols and descriptions that are in connection with athlete evaluation and the grouping of athletes for competition in wheelchair rugby.
Classifier	A person authorized as an official by the IWRF to evaluate athletes as a member of a classification panel.
Competition Evaluation Period	The period of time when observation of the athlete on court during competition takes place to confirm the athlete's sport class.
Conflict of Interest	A conflict of interest will arise when a pre-existing personal or professional relationship suggests the possibility of that relationship affecting the classifier's ability to make an objective decision or assessment.
Diagnosis	A process of identifying a medical condition or disease by its signs, symptoms, and various diagnostic procedures.
Eligibility	Eligible impairments include muscle strength and/or limb length. The severity of impairment must relate to activity limitation in sport specific activities in wheelchair propulsion and ball handling. Also referred to as Minimal Eligibility, Minimal Handicap or Minimum Disability.
Exceptional Circumstances	Exceptional Circumstances arise if the IWRF Head of Classification and/or Chief Classifier believe that an athlete's sport class no longer reflects that athlete's ability to compete equitably within the sport class.
General Classification	Classification rules where athletes are evaluated and assessed based only on medical diagnosis or condition and degree of impairment. The original classification rules for wheelchair rugby included only medical testing. In 1991, the classification rules were expanded to include assessment of activities specific to wheelchair rugby. The classification as

performed until 1991 is also referred to as Medical Classification.

Head of Classification	A classifier responsible for all direction, administration, coordination and implementation of classification matters for the IWRF. Also known as the Classification Commissioner.
Impairment	Problems in body function or structure such as significant loss or deviation, for example, weakness or loss of limb length. Eligible impairments in Wheelchair Rugby consist of impairment in muscle strength in a combination of the trunk, upper and lower extremities, and impairment in limb length.
International Classification Committee (ICC)	Responsible for administrative and development duties related to classification in wheelchair rugby. Specifically, these tasks include classification rules, classification policy and procedures, classifier recruitment and development, classifier training and accreditation and overall administration of international classification. The Committee is directly associated with the IWRF Executive Committee and consists of the IWRF Head of Classification, Head Classifiers from each zone and other officers.
National Classifier	An individual who has been certified as a national classifier in his/her own nation, but has not yet undergone the training to become accredited as an international classifier. For those nations where there is no national classification training programme, classifiers may participate in an IWRF basic workshop; and on completion of the training may be certified as a Level 1 national classifier to further develop their skills at the national level.
Paraplegia	Weakness (paraparesis) or paralysis (paraplegia) affecting the legs, and in many cases, the trunk, but not the arms; most commonly due to injury to the thoracic or lumbar spine. Athletes with paraplegia or who have impairments similar to paraplegia are not eligible for wheelchair rugby.
Permanent Condition	A health condition, impairment or related activity limitation that is unlikely to be resolved, meaning the principle effects will not resolve in the foreseeable future regardless of physical training, rehabilitation or other therapeutic interventions.
Quadriplegia	Weakness (quadriparesis) or paralysis (quadriplegia) affecting all four limbs, and often the trunk to some degree, most commonly due to spinal cord injury involving the cervical spine. Also referred to as tetraplegia. Athletes in wheelchair rugby must have combinations of trunk, upper and lower extremity impairment consistent with quadriplegia

to be eligible to participate.

Sport Class	Athletes in wheelchair rugby are categorized by reference to an activity limitation resulting from impairment consistent with tetraplegia. There are seven sport classes ranging from 0.5-3.5; the higher numbers intended for those athletes that have higher ability and the lower numbers for those athletes with lower ability in the sport specific tasks.
Sport Class Status	A category allocated to indicate evaluation requirements and protest opportunities. In wheelchair rugby, there are three sport class status designations: N = new, R = review and P = permanent.
Sport Specific Activity Tests	The portion of athlete evaluation where novel tasks and tasks specific to wheelchair rugby are observed, including various ball and chair activities. These tasks are observed under a variety of conditions and may also be observed during training and competition in a challenged situation. Also, referred to functional movement tests or technical assessment.
Sport-Specific Classification	A classification system where athletes are examined and assessed including the specific tasks required for the sport, for example, wheelchair propulsion and ball tasks. Also referred to as Functional Classification.
Tetraplegia	Refers to impairment in muscle strength affecting all four limbs, most commonly due to spinal cord injury involving the neck. Includes a range of impairments from degrees of weakness to full paralysis. Also referred to as quadriplegia. Athletes in wheelchair rugby must have combinations of trunk, upper and lower extremity impairment similar to tetraplegia to be eligible to participate.
Type A Panel	Seven classifiers from at least five countries and two zones, with at least three Level 4 classifiers and two Level 3 classifiers; and a maximum of two Level 2 international classifiers.
Type B Panel	Four classifiers from a minimum of two to three countries and one zone, with one Level 4 classifier and one Level 3 classifier. Used for development; no protests can be handled by this small panel.
Zone Head Classifier	An internationally certified classifier who is elected by the respective zones to represent classification matters in the zone and nations of that zone. There are three zones in wheelchair rugby—Asia-Oceania, Europe and Americas.

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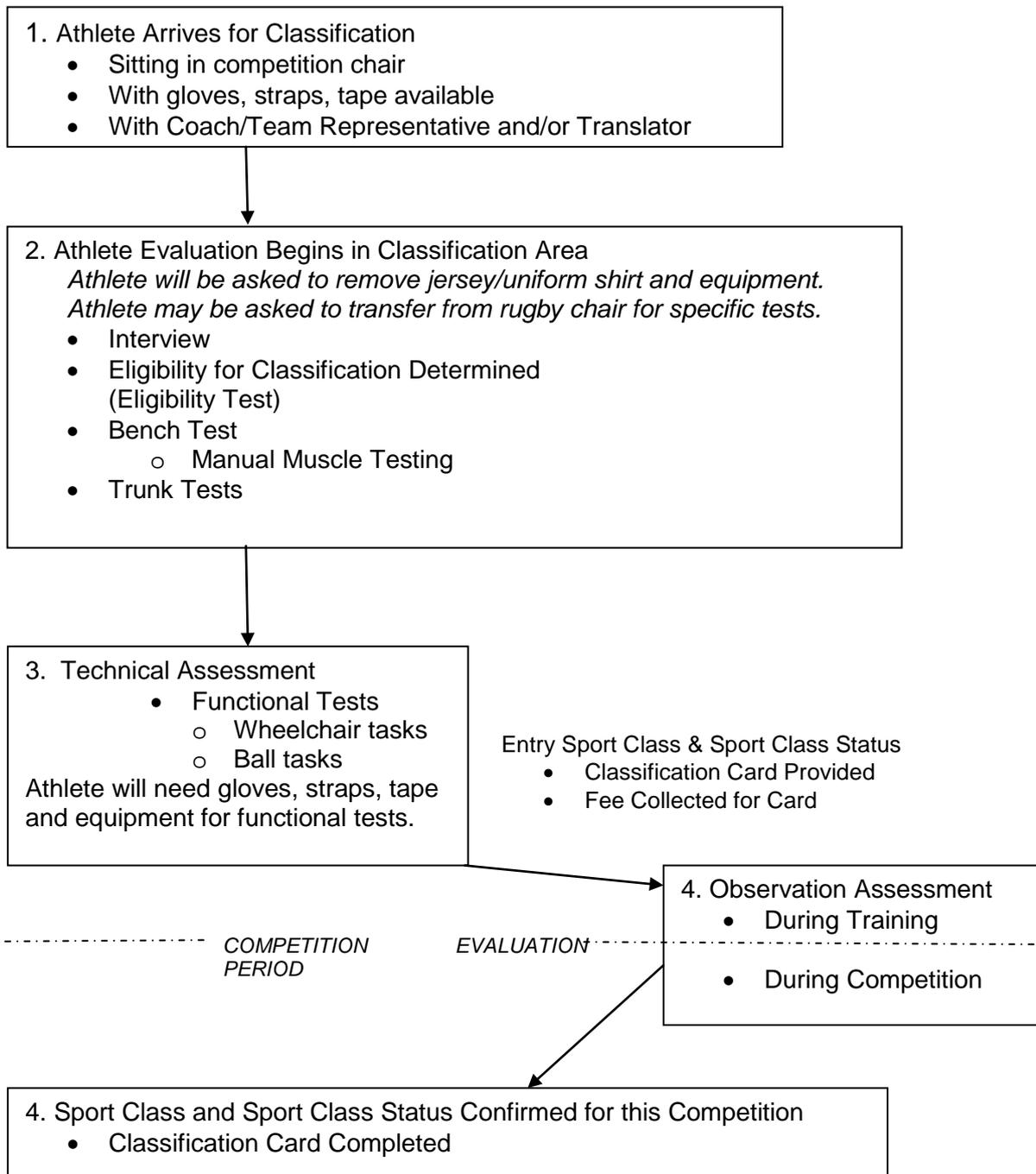
## **16 APPENDICES**

The following appendices contain administrative forms, documentation and information related to classification and the classification process; the structure of the IWRF Classification Committee; and recruitment, training and certification of classifiers.

- Appendix A Athlete Classification Pathway
- Appendix B Eligibility Test
- Appendix C Trunk Test Flow Chart
- Appendix D Description of Trunk Tests
- Appendix E Trunk Value Definition and Observations
- Appendix F Characteristics of Sport Classes
- Appendix G Description of Major and Minor Criteria
- Appendix H Classification Form
- Appendix I Protest Procedure for Not Eligible Athlete
- Appendix J IWRF Classifier Application Form
- Appendix K Classifier Certification Form
- Appendix L Classifier Logbook
- Appendix M IWRF Classification Committee
- Appendix N Tournament Classification Report

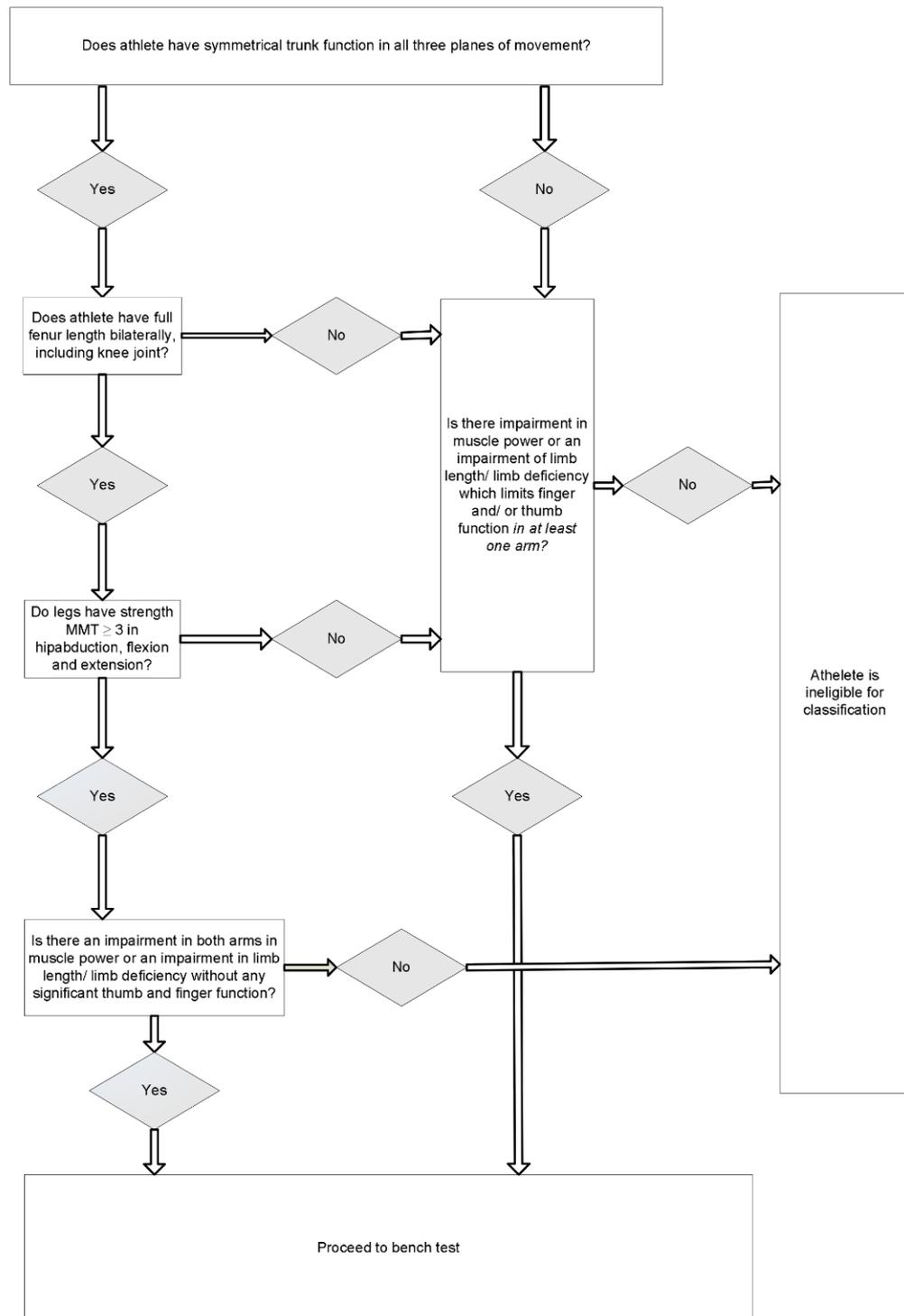
# Appendix A Athlete Classification Pathway

----- CLASSIFICATION EVALUATION PERIOD -----

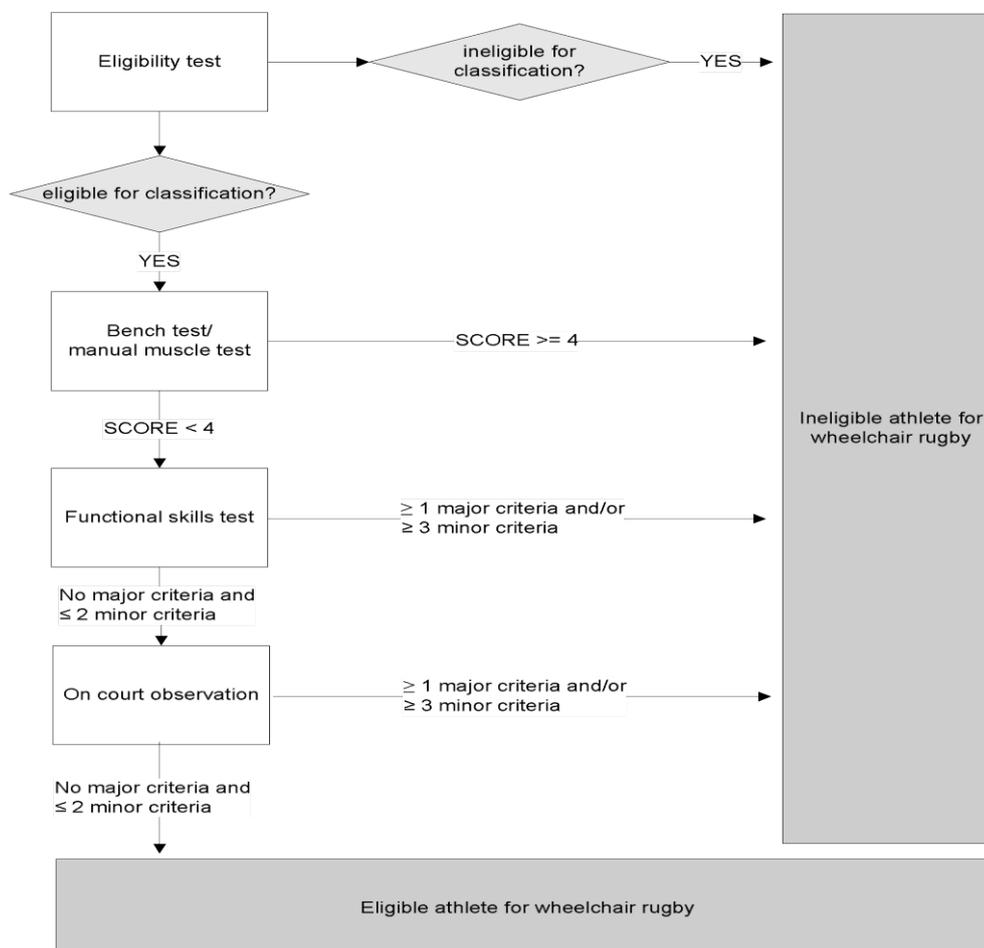


## Appendix B Eligibility Test

### Eligibility test for classification in wheelchair rugby

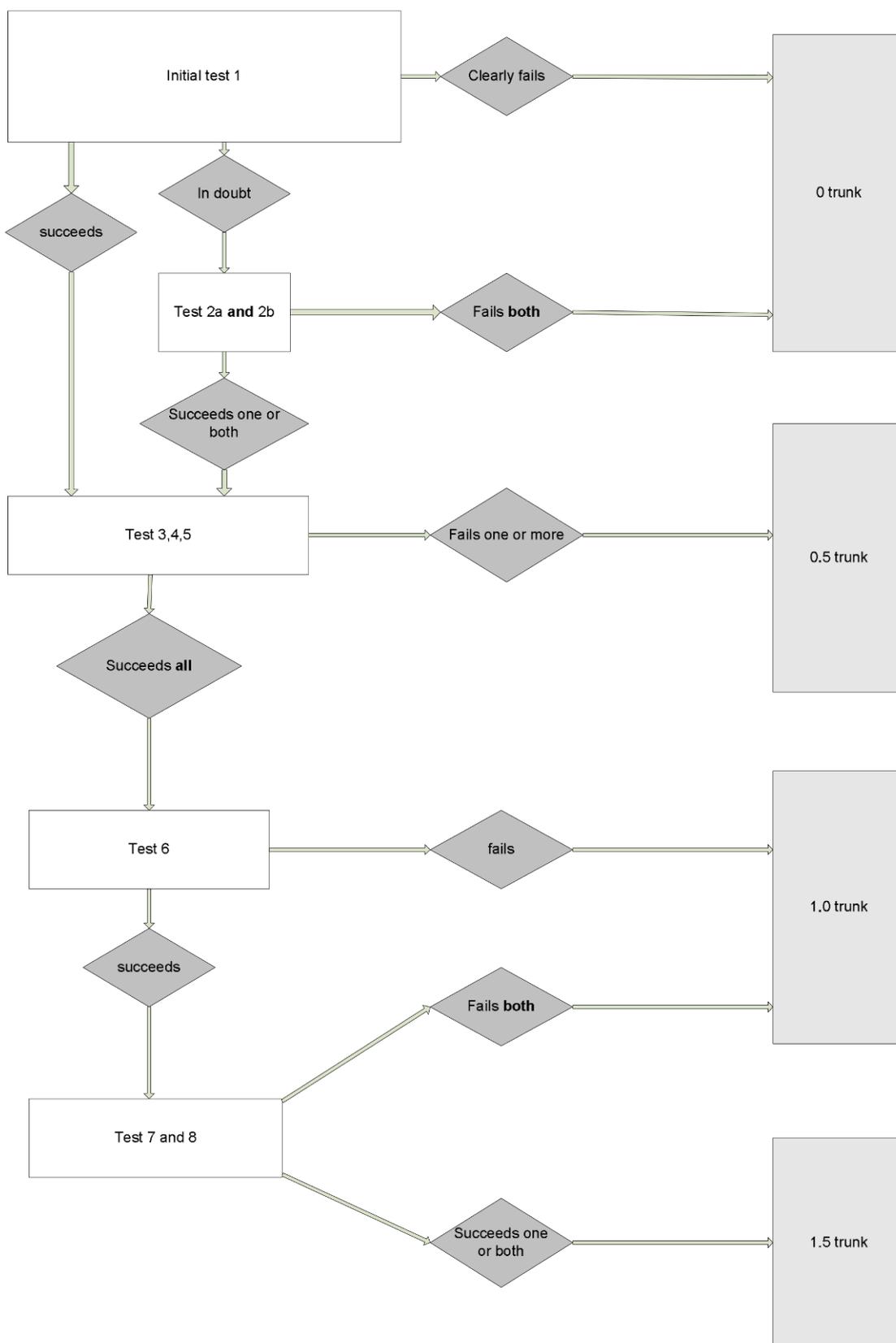


### Classification process for athletes who passed the eligibility test

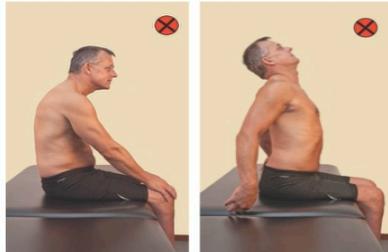
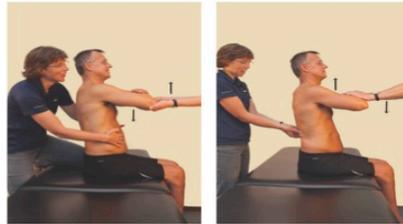


- Refer to Appendix G for description of major and minor criteria
- Score  $\geq 4$  – Total score for arms and trunk after bench test is 4 or more
- Score  $< 4$  – Total score for arms and trunk after bench test is less than 4.
- $\geq 1$  major criteria and/or  $\geq 3$  minor criteria – one or both major criteria and three or more minor criteria
- $\leq 2$  minor criteria – zero, one or two minor criteria

## Appendix C Trunk Test Flow Chart



## Appendix D Description of Trunk Tests

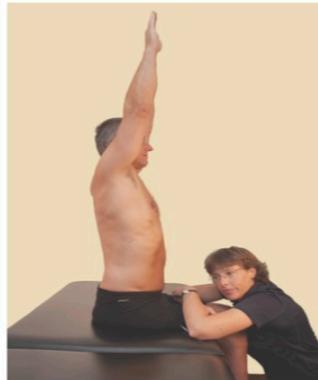
Testnr	Test Description	Evaluation	Score: succeeds	Score: fails
1	Athlete sitting unsupported. Athlete sitting in wheelchair not supported by backrest, or sitting on plinth with legs hanging over edge of plinth with the feet unsupported. The athlete crosses the arms in front of his chest, to prevent support for sitting balance from the arms. Bring athlete into upright position with hand on sternal bone and hand on back and slowly let go of support.	Observe sitting position after removing support from classifier's hands: straight/upright or kyphotic? Observe stomach: flat or "quad belly".	Sits straight/upright, without marked kyphosis and with flat belly.	Sits with marked kyphosis or with quad belly.
				
2a	Athlete lying on back, classifier flexes knees and hips to 90°, feet are unsupported. The classifier holds the lower legs and the classifier rotates the legs from one side to the other. Ask athlete to resist movement of the classifier.	Palpate abdominal and spinal extensor muscle contractions.	Muscle contractions palpable in abdominals and/or spinal extensor muscles.	No muscle contraction palpable in abdominals and/or spinal extensor muscles.
2b	Athlete sitting on plinth, legs unsupported. Shoulders at 90° of flexion with arms crossed in front of shoulders. Classifier applies resistance at the arms against trunk flexion and extension.	Palpate abdominals and spinal extensor muscle contractions.	Muscle contractions palpable in abdominals (resistance against extension) or spinal extensors (resistance against flexion).	No muscle contraction palpable in abdominals and spinal extensors.
				

**Testnr Test Description**

**3** Athlete sitting on plinth, legs hanging over the edge of the plinth with the feet unsupported. Bending forward with trunk towards lap and arms outstretched in maximum shoulder flexion. (If the athlete has triceps weakness, the classifier supports the forearms, to keep the elbows extended). Ask athlete to assume straight/upright position and maintain arm position in maximum shoulder flexion. The classifier fixates both legs to the plinth at the proximal 1/3 of the thighs, close to the hips. The feet should be unsupported. Athlete extends trunk past upright and flexes forward to assume upright position again.

**Evaluation**

Observe movement, standing lateral to the athlete.



**Score: succeeds**

Athlete performs trunk flexion to at least 45° line between pelvis and C7 and vertical and maintains position.



Athlete performs at least 30° trunk extension and maintains position. Resumes straight position without support of arms.



**Score: fails**

Athlete does not perform flexion to 45° and extension to 30° or compensates by kyphosis/ lordosis. or cannot resume straight position without support or compensations.



**4** Athlete sitting on plinth, legs hanging over the edge of the plinth with the feet unsupported. Arms crossed in front in 90° shoulder flexion. Ask for maximum rotation to both sides. The classifier fixates both legs to the plinth at the proximal 1/3 of the thighs, close to the hips. The feet should be unsupported.

Observe from the front, back and lateral from the athlete,



Athlete stays in upright position in sagittal plane. Rotates 45° or more to both sides, measured in straight line between both shoulders and line between ASIS on both sides.



Athlete does not rotate or rotates less than 45°, or athlete cannot maintain upright position in sagittal plane while rotating (e.g. assumes kyphotic posture). Or athlete can perform test to one side, but not to the other.

**Testnr Test Description**

**5** Athlete sitting on plinth, legs hanging over the edge of the plinth with the feet unsupported. Arms in horizontal (90°) abduction in the shoulders, maximum elbow flexion and hands on the back of the head. Ask for maximal lateral flexion to both sides and hold this maximum position for two seconds, before returning to the upright position. One classifier fixates both legs firmly to the plinth at the proximal 1/3 of the thighs, close to the hips to prevent the athlete from shifting weight to one leg. The feet should be unsupported. The athlete is not allowed to abduct the legs. The other classifier palpates the ASIS (anterior superior iliac spine).

**Evaluation**

Observe movement quality and range from front and back of athlete.

**Score: succeeds**

Athlete stays in upright position in sagittal plane and performs lateral flexion at least with suprasternal notch in vertical line above the ASIS to both sides. And can hold this position for two seconds before resuming the upright position.

**Score: fails**

Athlete cannot perform lateral flexion to the level where the suprasternal notch is in a vertical line above the ASIS. Or athlete cannot maintain straight position in sagittal plane while performing lateral flexion (e.g. kyphotic posture). Or performs lateral flexion without holding the position in the end range, but falls to the side. Or athlete can perform test to one side, but not to the other.



**6a**

Athlete sidelying on plinth. Test MMT hip abduction with athlete lying on side with the shoulder resting on the table. With the hip in full extension



MMT grade 3 or more in hip abduction, flexion and extension?  
If leg length deficiency: estimate leg length: is there a minimum of 2/3 upper leg length? (If both legs are amputated the estimated full femur length is the same as the length from the point of the elbow to the tip of the middle finger.)

Strength in MMT grade 3 or more in at least two of the three tested muscle groups in both legs.  
If leg length deficiency: MMT grade 3 or more and at least 2/3 upper leg length bilaterally.

Strength in MMT grade 2 or less in at least two of the tested muscle groups in one of the legs.  
If leg length deficiency: less than 2/3 upper leg length in at least one of the legs, despite MMT, which might be 3 or more.

If there is severe spasticity in the hip adductors, limiting the range of hip abduction, repeat the test for hip abduction with the knee in 60° flexion, the hip remaining in neutral extension

**Testnr Test Description**

**6b** Athlete lies supine on plinth. Test hip flexion with athlete the knee in 90° flexion. Support the lower legs if there is knee extensor weakness.

**Evaluation**

See text hip abduction

**Score: succeeds**

See text hip abduction

**Score: fails**

See text hip abduction



**6c** Athlete lies prone on plinth. Test hip extension with athlete lying prone, with the trunk on the plinth and the hip joints on the edge of the plinth in 90° flexion. The athlete is allowed to hold himself to the plinth using the arms. The feet are allowed to touch the floor. The athlete extends the leg that is tested to maximum extension in the hip. The classifier supports the lower leg in full knee extension if there is weakness around the knee.

See text hip abduction

See text hip abduction

See text hip abduction



**Testnr Test Description**

**7** Athlete lying on back, flexes knees and hips to 90°. The classifier holds the lower legs to get into and maintain the hip and knee position.  
The classifier continues to hold the lower legs and asks athlete to move legs from one side to the other. The arms of the athlete are positioned in 90° abduction. The athlete has to keep his shoulder flat on the plinth and is not allowed to use his hands to push down or hold on to the plinth.

**Evaluation**

Observe quality of movement and amount of resistance.



**Score: succeeds**

Athlete moves both legs to one side to a minimum of 45°, and resumes position. The athlete performs the test to both sides, one side at a time.



**Score: fails**

Athlete is unable to perform test to both sides or cannot resume position. Or can only perform by using compensations (e.g. lifting arms from plinth to gain momentum).

**8** Athlete sitting on plinth, unsupported. Ask to perform “bum shuffling”. The feet should be unsupported.

Observe quality of movement lateral from athlete.



Athlete sits with upright posture. Moves the body forward with alternating elevation and forward movement of the pelvis on one side. At the same time the pelvis elevates and rotates the ipsilateral leg moves up to clear the plinth.  
The athlete can perform this on both sides.

Athlete cannot elevate pelvis in upright sitting position or cannot move one side of pelvis forwards. Or shuffles forwards, moving the leg forwards without clearing the plinth.

## Appendix E Trunk Value Definition and Observations

Trunk Value	Definition	Trunk tests	Observation in sports specific technical assessment and in competition
0	No trunk control Collapse position within base of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fails test 1</li> <li>• Fails test 2a <i>and</i> 2b, if necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kyphotic posture if unsupported (kyphotic posture = thoracolumbar kyphosis together with posterior pelvic tilt)</li> <li>• Collapse of trunk when stopping</li> <li>• Instability when hit</li> <li>• Shoulders move backwards when pushing and throwing</li> <li>• Shoulders lag behind body/wheelchair in turn</li> <li>• Binders for trunk</li> </ul>
0.5	Able to maintain upright trunk posture within base of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passes tests 1</li> <li>• Passes test 2a <i>and/or</i> 2b, if necessary</li> <li>• Fails at least one of tests 3,4,5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upright position in chair</li> <li>• Partial or full collapse of trunk when stopping</li> <li>• Trunk does not stay in position in hit</li> <li>• Shoulders stay in position in push (do not move backwards/ upwards)</li> <li>• Shoulders stay in position in throw</li> <li>• Partial shoulder lag in turns</li> <li>• Binders for trunk</li> </ul>
1.0	Able to move trunk outside of base of support and return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passes test 1</li> <li>• Passes test 2a <i>and/or</i> 2b, if necessary</li> <li>• Passes tests 3,4,5</li> <li>• Fails test 6</li> <li>• Or passes test 6, but fails <i>both</i> test 7 and 8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upright position in chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ May use low back rest</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No collapse of trunk in stopping</li> <li>• Trunk stays in position in hit</li> <li>• Shoulders stay in position in push and throws</li> <li>• No shoulder lag in turns</li> <li>• Reach outside of base of support</li> <li>• If outside base of support, able to reassume position without use of hands</li> <li>• May use belly binder, or only hip strap</li> </ul>

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1.5	Able to shift base of support by using trunk, pelvis or legs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passes all of the above tests.</li> <li>• Passes test 6, and passes test 7 and/or test 8.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the features of 1.0 trunk <i>and</i></li> <li>• Able to firmly resist hit and maintain stable posture or moves towards direction of hit</li> <li>• Able to move wheelchair by using trunk, pelvis and legs             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hops chair</li> <li>○ Turns chair without use of arms/hands</li> <li>○ Starts turn with trunk (shoulders turn first!)</li> <li>○ Increases impact making hit with trunk and/or legs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ball protection overhead without use of hands on wheel</li> <li>• Usually low back rest</li> <li>• Usually no belly binder, just hip strap</li> </ul>
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## Appendix F Characteristics of Sport Classes

The following table includes examples of court roles, ball and chair handling tasks for each of the seven Wheelchair Rugby sport classes. These are not complete class profiles and do not include all possible characteristics. These are examples to help classifiers train in the observation assessment

### Examples of Functional Characteristics for Wheelchair Rugby Classes

Class	Typical On Court Role	Chair Activities/Function	Ball Activities/Function
0.5	Main role is as blocker, not a major ball handler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because of extensive proximal shoulder weakness and lack of triceps function forward head bob present when pushing</li> <li>• Because of lack of triceps, pulls on back part of the wheel for push stroke using biceps by bending elbows; elbows are also out to side when pushing (called an “unopposed biceps push”)</li> <li>• Because of wrist extensor weakness and lack of other wrist and hand function, may use forearm on wheel for starts, turns and stops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because of proximal shoulder weakness, arm and wrist weakness, traps direct passes on lap or bats it in from limited range</li> <li>▪ Bats ball using “underhand volleyball pass” for longer range pass or for shorter range pass uses “scoop pass” with the ball forward to the side uses a two-hand toss</li> </ul>
1.0	Blocker, may in-bound ball, not a major ball handler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because of proximal shoulder weakness and triceps weakness, may have slight head bob when pushing, but has a longer push on wheel (combination of push and pull on back part of wheel)</li> <li>▪ Because of increased strength in upper chest and shoulders, multidirectional start, stop and turn (Can turn in all directions without stopping; easier and faster turning than 0.5 athlete; but because of triceps and wrist weakness, 1.0 athlete may still use forearm)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Forearm or wrist catch</li> <li>▪ Weak chest pass or forearm pass</li> </ul>

<b>Class</b>	<b>Typical On Court Role</b>	<b>Chair Activities/Function</b>	<b>Ball Activities/Function</b>
<b>1.5</b>	Excellent blocker and also may be occasional ball handler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased shoulder strength and stability allows for more effective and efficient pushing (including starts and stops) and ball handling activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased shoulder strength and stability allows for increased pushing speed, ability to hold ball out in front of chair and increased distance and consistency to chest pass</li> <li>Typically has wrist imbalance that causes limited ball security when passing</li> <li>May have asymmetry present in arms. If so, predominantly uses the stronger arm for chair and ball activities</li> <li>Has ability to perform a one handed pass but with poor control, accuracy and distance—rarely see on court during challenge but may test during classification. If used, more often used for in-bounding</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	Increasing role on court as ball handler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically has very strong and stable shoulder that allows for excellent quick stops and starts and good pushing speed on court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective chest pass with control over moderate distance</li> <li>Because of lack of finger flexion, there is limited ball security against defence during passing</li> <li>Can hold the ball with wrists firmly, but does not have hand function.</li> <li>Weak one-hand overhead pass with limited control and distance (occasionally see on court during challenge, but may test during classification)</li> </ul>

<b>Class</b>	<b>Typical On Court Role</b>	<b>Chair Activities/Function</b>	<b>Ball Activities/Function</b>
<b>2.5</b>	Ball handler and fairly fast playmaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because of excellent shoulder strength and stability will see good pushing speed on court</li> <li>▪ Functional grip is used to advantage on the push rim when challenged</li> <li>▪ May have some trunk control giving better stability in the chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reasonably balanced finger flexion and extension without true grasp and release</li> <li>▪ Dribbles the ball safely, but supinates forearm to scoop the ball onto the lap.</li> <li>▪ Due to finger flexion strength capable of performing one-handed overhead pass, but limited accuracy and distance because of imbalance in finger strength</li> <li>▪ Safe two handed catching of passes, usually scooping ball to lap. May catch passes single handed and scoop to lap or chest</li> <li>▪ Improved ball security in challenge situations compared to 2.0 hands due to improved ability to isolate wrist/finger function.</li> <li>▪ May have asymmetrical arm or hand function, noticeable with chair and ball handling activities</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	Very good ball handler and fast playmaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because of balanced finger function, athlete can grip wheelchair rim and tire for manoeuvring chair</li> <li>▪ May have some trunk control giving better stability in the chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because of function in fingers, can control ball in varying planes of movement for passing, dribbling, catching and protecting ball during these activities.</li> <li>▪ Can dribble and pass ball well with one hand</li> <li>▪ Multiple dribble one handed with control</li> <li>▪ Stabilises with the opposite arm to allow greater reach (if the athlete has no trunk function)</li> </ul>
<b>3.5</b>	Major ball handler and very fast playmaker. Often primary ball handler and playmaker on team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the athlete has trunk function, very stable in wheelchair and able to use trunk for ball and chair activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the athlete has both hand and trunk function, usually has excellent ball control with controlled one hand passing for distance and excellent ball security during passing and receiving</li> </ul>

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## Appendix G Description Major & Minor Criteria

### Major criteria

- Athlete shows consistent control in all planes of movement single-handed in challenged situations on both sides (must be able to control ball in all planes of movement with one hand and do so with both hands – one at a time).
- Ball protection overhead with two hands and at the same time control chair with the trunk and the hips

### Minor criteria

#### Chair Activities:

- Use of trunk to enhance push and change direction and velocity in combination with the **use of fingers** on the rim or wheel on both sides.
- Without using hands, the athlete uses trunk to control chair, maintain balance and empower hits in all directions.
- Hopping the chair out of blocks.
  - Hopping is defined as getting out of blocks or traps in defensive position by using trunk and legs to elevate pelvis and chair to jump.
  - Moving or “rocking” the chair forwards and backwards or laterally lifting chair on one side with minimal or no lifting of the pelvis and chair off of the ground is *not* considered hopping.
- Without using hands on the chair, the athlete maintains an upright sitting balance when hit, while protecting the ball at the same time.

#### Ball Activities:

- Hold ball overhead using both hands for 5-10 seconds with partial control of trunk position (to maintain upright posture); athlete does not use one hand to stabilise chair.
- Protecting ball overhead with two hands with (partial) control of trunk position, but no chair control.
- Passing 15 meters with one or two hands, enhanced by active trunk flexion, extension or rotation.
- Able to control ball in all planes **using fingers** of one hand on at least one side while holding chair with hand on the other side.
- Pass securely and consistently in all directions with one hand on at least one side.
- Reach outside cone of wheelchair in catch, dribble and picking ball from the floor to all sides, without support of the arms to get into position or resume upright position.

# Appendix H Classification Form

<b>IWRF CLASSIFICATION FORM</b>		 <small>International Wheelchair Rugby Federation</small>	
<small>Revised January 2015</small>			
Name (last)	<input type="text"/>	Team/No	<input type="text"/>
Name (first)	<input type="text"/>	Country	<input type="text"/>
Diagnosis	<input type="text"/>	Level of injury	<input type="text"/>
Prior rugby class	<input type="text"/>	Experience since	<input type="text"/>
Class for other sports	<input type="text"/>	Active	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Manual Muscle Test (0 – 5)</b>		<b>General Information</b>	
Dominance (Right or Left)	<input type="text"/>	Examined in playing chair?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deltoid Lateral	<input type="text"/>	Strapping Belly Binder	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pectoralis Sternal	<input type="text"/>	Hip/pelvic belt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pectoralis Clavicular	<input type="text"/>	Knee strap	<input type="checkbox"/>
Latissimus Dorsi	<input type="text"/>	Foot strap	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serratus Anterior	<input type="text"/>	Spinal deformity	<input type="text"/>
Internal rotators	<input type="text"/>	Contractures	<input type="text"/>
External rotators	<input type="text"/>	Surgery	<input type="text"/>
Biceps	<input type="text"/>	Spasticity	<input type="text"/>
Triceps	<input type="text"/>	Ability to stand	<input type="text"/>
Wrist extensors	<input type="text"/>	Ability to ambulate	<input type="text"/>
Wrist flexors	<input type="text"/>	Sensory level	<input type="text"/>
Finger extensors	<input type="text"/>		
Finger flexors	<input type="text"/>		
Interossei	<input type="text"/>		
Lumbricals	<input type="text"/>		
Thumb abductor	<input type="text"/>		
Thumb adductor	<input type="text"/>		
Thumb extensor	<input type="text"/>		
Thumb flexor	<input type="text"/>		
Thumb opponens	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Upper Extremity Totals:</b>	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Trunk Test</b>		<b>Classification Details</b>	
Highest passed trunk function test	<input type="text"/>	Please use 24 hour time      Class/Status	
<b>Trunk Total</b>	<input type="text"/>	Sports entry class determined	<input type="text"/>
		Confirmed sports class determined	<input type="text"/>
		Athlete notified of decision	<input type="text"/>
		Tournament	<input type="text"/>
		Classifiers	<input type="text"/>
			<input type="text"/>
			<input type="text"/>
<b>Right UE</b> <input type="text"/> + <b>Left UE</b> <input type="text"/> = <b>Total UE</b> <input type="text"/> / 2 = <input type="text"/> + <b>Trunk</b> <input type="text"/> = <b>Total Class</b> <input type="text"/>			
Remarks <input style="width: 100%; height: 80px;" type="text"/>			

Example only. Please download original form directly from IWRF Website.

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## Appendix I Protest Procedure for Not Eligible Athlete

If an athlete is determined to be not eligible following evaluation by a classification panel at a competition, examination by a second classification panel (Protest Panel) is required for physical and technical assessment at the competition. Observation assessment of competition on-court will be completed by videotape/DVD.

- If equipment and video footage is available for the protest panel to view at that competition, the decision of the protest panel may be concluded before the end of that competition.
- If the necessary equipment and/or video footage are not available, the observation assessment will be completed following the conclusion of the competition within the time frame described below.
- If the athlete would like to submit documentation in addition to video footage from this competition to support his/her protest of not eligible sport class, the protest panel will not conclude their decision at that competition, but within the time frame described below.

The Chief Classifier at the competition (in consultation with the IWRF Head of Classification) shall appoint a protest panel consisting of at a minimum three classifiers of equal or greater level of certification as those involved in the not eligible decision. Also, this protest panel should not include members of the classification panel involved in the not eligible decision.

- The protest panel should conduct the protest evaluation without reference to the classification panel that awarded the not eligible sport class.
- Protest panel members may seek medical, sport or scientific expertise in reviewing the athlete's sport class.

A protest form must be submitted by the protesting team with the Chief Classifier of the competition within 48-hours following the allocation of the not eligible sport class; or if this time falls outside the end of the competition, a letter of intent to protest must be filed before the end of the competition. If the protest form or letter of intent is not filed within this time, the protest is dismissed. In this case, the decision of the classification panel is final and the athlete has no further protest opportunities.

- The protest form or letter of intent to protest must be submitted with a fee of 150 USD, or local equivalent at the competition. This amount will be returned if the protest is upheld.
- The protesting athlete has eight weeks from the receipt of the protest form to the Chief Classifier to gather and submit documentation relevant to the protest. This documentation is submitted to the IWRF Head of Classification. Four copies of all documentation are required.

Documentation submitted that would assist the protest panel in their deliberations must be relevant and specific to the athlete during play. This documentation must include:

- Video or DVD from the tournament where the not eligible decision was made, or an equivalent tournament held within one year prior to the not eligible ruling. This video recording should show the athlete giving maximum and full effort. This video recording will allow the protest panel to complete the observation assessment of on-court play and make a final decision on sport class.

Other documentation that would assist the protest panel may include:

- If the athlete has impairment as a result of an uncommon or rare condition, supporting specialist documentation, written in English, is recommended.
- Information from the respective Zone Head Classifier; coach; and/or PCB.
- Additional videotape, DVD or other similar evidence to support the protest.

All information submitted must be signed by the submitting person (Athlete), plus the coach or official team representative and must also be endorsed by the athlete's National Federation.

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The IWRP Head of Classification has the right to ask for any other documentation that may be thought necessary to assist the protest panel in their deliberations, including medical reports related to the athlete's impairment.

Upon receipt of the documents and other evidence, the IWRP Head of Classification shall conduct a review to determine whether all necessary information is included and is valid. If the information is not sufficient, appropriate or complete and/or relevant classification rules have not been complied with, the protest may be dismissed and the IWRP Head of Classification will notify all relevant parties. The protest fee is not returned.

If the submitted information is accepted, the IWRP Head of Classification shall proceed with the distribution of documentation and supporting evidence to the protest panel. The Head of Classification shall notify all relevant parties of the date of the final protest decision and if any further information or documentation is requested.

The time from receipt of documentation by the IWRP Head of Classification to a final decision made by the protest panel is three months.

Each member of the protest panel will have his/her own copy of video/DVD and written information to review individually. A conference call with the protest panel will be arranged to discuss the protest and arrive at a decision. A majority decision is necessary; with agreement between two out of three classifiers to arrive at a final decision. Information from the protest panel will be collected and compiled by the IWRP Head of Classification in writing. The written notification of the decision will be distributed to all relevant parties.

If the protest panel upholds the not eligible sport class, the athlete will not be permitted to compete in Wheelchair Rugby. No further protest can be made unless there is a change in the criteria for allocation of sport class in Wheelchair Rugby, or unless there has been a change in the degree of impairment of the athlete where the athlete is demonstrating significantly less ability that does not reflect the current sport class (refer to Article 7.4 Exception Circumstances in the *IWRP Classification Manual*, revised 3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

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## Appendix J IWRF Classifier Application Form

Please fill out this form if you are interested in becoming a Wheelchair Rugby classifier. Refer to IWRF website for the current Head of Classification and Zone Representatives and contact information.

Please send to:

AMERICA ZONE	EUROPEAN ZONE	OCEANIA ZONE
EMILIE NEWELL	SARAH LEIGHTON	JACQUES ERASMUS
111 Waterloo Street, Suite 201	37 Stannington Road	PO Box 13591
London, Ontario N6K 1A8	S6 5FH, United Kingdom	Mobray, Cape Town, 7705
Canada		
Tel: +1 519 433 6605 (Work) +1 519 473 5644 (Home)	Tel: +44 114 233 7643 (Home) +44 774 760 3376 (Mobile)	Tel: +27 21 442 1831 (Work) +27 82 563 4336 (Mobile)
Fax (Work) + 1 519 433 8555		
Email: emilienewell@sympatico.ca	Email: seileighton@hotmail.com	Email: jephysio@vodamail.co.za

If you are interested in becoming an international Wheelchair Rugby classifier, it will require participation in classification workshops to learn the classification rules and a time commitment for assisting with classification in your area.

This is an exciting time to get involved with Wheelchair Rugby classification and your help would be greatly appreciated.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Profession: (circle appropriate one) PT    OT    MD    OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Team Affiliation, if any:

\_\_\_\_\_

Experience in Wheelchair Rugby or other sports for persons with disabilities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in Wheelchair Rugby or other sports listed above: \_\_\_\_\_

We hope that you will consider this opportunity to become involved in Wheelchair Rugby, it is a thrilling sport and its growth increases every year.

Thank you,

Greg Ungerer  
IWRF Head of Classification

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# Appendix K Classifier Certification Form

## IWRF CLASSIFIER CERTIFICATION

NAME:

PRESENT LEVEL:

LEVEL ACHIEVED:

- 1 Professionalism
- 2 Neutrality
- 3 Time keeping
- 4 Working as a team
- 5 English (spoken & written)
- 6 Organisational qualities
- 7 Muscle charting
- 8 Observational skills
- 9 Explanations
- 10 Decision making
- 11 Log book
- 12 Knowledge of Classification Rules and Regulations
- 13 Teaching ability
- 14 Experience

Tournament:

Certifying Classifier/s:

Comments:

Date:

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**CERTIFICATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

DATE	ABILITIES REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT	ACTION PLAN	DATE ACHIEVED

## Appendix L Classification Logbook

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DETAILS	ROLE
		# of Athletes classified: 0-10___ 11-20___ 20+___	CC
		# of teams present: 4-8___ 8-10___ 10-12___	Classifier
		# of Athletes protested:	Team Physiotherapist
		Ineligible players: yes ___ no ___	Observer
	Were other classifiers present? Yes___ No___	Classification workshop: leader participant	Other
		Meetings attended: _____(i.e. AGM)	
		Comments	

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DETAILS	ROLE
		# of Athletes classified: 0-10___ 11-20___ 20+___	CC
		# of teams present: 4-8___ 8-10___ 10-12___	Classifier
		# of Athletes protested:	Team Physiotherapist
		Ineligible players: yes ___ no ___	Observer
	Were other classifiers present? Yes___ No___	Classification workshop: leader participant	Other
		Meetings attended: _____(i.e. AGM)	
		Comments	

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DETAILS	ROLE
		# of Athletes classified: 0-10___ 11-20___ 20+___	CC
		# of teams present: 4-8___ 8-10___ 10-12___	Classifier
		# of Athletes protested:	Team Physiotherapist
		Ineligible players: yes ___ no ___	Observer
	Were other classifiers present? Yes___ No___	Classification workshop: leader participant	Other
		Meetings attended: _____(i.e. AGM)	
		Comments	

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## Appendix M IWRF Classification Committee

Structure of International Wheelchair Rugby Federation Classification Committee\*



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\*This IWRF International Classification Committee (ICC) structure was adopted at the 2002 IWRF World Championships, Gothenburg, Sweden. Modifications in 2004 include the addition of the database administrator and training and accreditation officer.

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# Appendix N Tournament Classification Report

## IWRF Tournament Classification Report

TOURNAMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

CHIEF CLASSIFIER: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSIFIERS PRESENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

All athletes listed below must report to the classification room, as scheduled, in their playing chair. If there is a conflict with any of the scheduled times notify the classifiers immediately. Any athlete failing to attend classification on time may be rescheduled at the Chief Classifier's convenience, and will not be allowed to participate in tournament play until classified.

Any athlete perceived as not giving full effort, voluntarily, or through the effects of drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave without receiving classification, such athletes may be rescheduled in attempt to obtain full effort, at the discretion of the Chief Classifier.

Athletes have the right to request the presence of a Player Classification Representative (PCB) during testing. The athlete's coach or team manager, or official team representative may be present and an interpreter may be present.

CLASSIFICATION ROOM LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSIFICATION DATE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

	Athletes	Nation/ Team	Classification Time	Entry Sport Class and Status	Final Sport Class and Status	Comments
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						

---

	<b>Athletes</b>	<b>Country Team</b>	<b>Classification Time</b>	<b>Pre-Tournament</b>	<b>Post-Tournament</b>	<b>Comments</b>
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						
16.						
17.						
18.						
19.						
20.						
21.						
22.						
23.						
24.						
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34.						
35.						

# NOTES