



Pathway to Becoming an IWRF Classifier



**International Wheelchair Rugby Federation
Classification Committee**

Becoming a Classifier

Like every Paralympic sport, Wheelchair Rugby uses a sport specific classification system to assign a class to all athletes, based on impairments that cause activity limitations in the sport. The goal of classification is to minimize the impact of these impairments on the outcome of the competition. With classification, the achievement of the athlete and the team will be based on talent, training, equipment and team tactics, just like in sports for able bodied athletes. And not simply on having the advantage of being the least impaired.



In wheelchair rugby, every player is assigned a point value from 0.5 to 3.5 that corresponds to his or her level of function. Only 8 points are allowed on the court at any one time (8.5 points are permitted when one or more of the athletes on the team is female). This ensures that athletes with varying levels of impairment can compete fairly together.

- **Who Can Become a Classifier?**

The IWRF is always looking for classifiers to help us evaluate and classify our athletes. Generally, classifiers must be a physical therapist, occupational therapist or physician, although anyone with formal training in neuromuscular evaluation can apply. No previous experience in wheelchair rugby? No problem. If you are a PT, OT or physician, we can train you in the specifics of wheelchair rugby.

- **Why Should I Become a Classifier?**

Getting involved in wheelchair rugby as a classifier is a rewarding job. In addition to becoming part of the close-knit wheelchair rugby community, classifiers often enjoy the opportunity to travel and experience tournaments held around the world. Many classifiers report that they enjoy their role because it allows them to put their training to use in a very different manner.

- **How Do I Become a Classifier?**

Your first step in becoming a classifier is to contact the Head Classifier within your Zone to express your interest. You will find an email link to this person under the “Your Zone” area on our website at www.iwrf.com. From there, you will be guided through the four levels of certification shown here.

Level 1: National Classifier

1. Attend a basic formal workshop supervised by an IWRF International Classifier.
2. Sign the IWRF Code of Ethics.
3. Have basic knowledge of the game of wheelchair rugby.
4. Begin a logbook of wheelchair rugby experience and activities.

Level 2: Zonal or International Classifier

1. Demonstrate a minimum of one year classifying at the national or Zonal level.
2. Perform complete bench test, functional tests and on-court observation.
3. Demonstrate ability to classify independently and provide explanations on the findings to the classification panel, athletes and coaches.
4. Communicate with the Head Classifier regarding classification issues.
5. Seek guidance when needed.
6. If the classifier has worked with a Zonal panel, then he or she may be certified as Level 2 Zonal (Level 2 Z).
7. If the classifier has worked with an international panel, then the classifier may be certified as Level 2 International (Level 2 I).

Level 3: International Classifier

1. Attend an Advanced Workshop supervised by an IWRF International Classifier.
2. Minimum 2 years of experience as a Level 2 classifier.
3. Have been a member of a Type A or B panel in at least one international tournament (with a Type A or B panel).
4. Have instructed a basic workshop supervised by another IWRF International Classifier Level 3 or 4.
5. Experience as head classifier at a tournament with a minimum of four teams participating.
6. Must be able to explain the Protest Procedure and Minimum Eligibility requirements.

Level 4: International Classifier

1. Ongoing involvement in training and certification of classifiers.
2. Active participation in IWRF Classification Commission (ICC) meetings at Type A or B Tournaments.
3. Demonstrate ongoing leadership skills and activities.
4. Teach at advanced workshops.
5. Must remain active in classification. Must be a classifier on a minimum of two Type A or B panels within a three-year period to remain active at Level 4. If a Level 4 classifier has been inactive for a period of two years, they will need to complete a test detailing changes in the last 2 years.

• How is an Athlete Classified?

All athletes eligible for wheelchair rugby have tetraplegia or an equivalent impairment, meaning that they have functional limitations in at least 3 limbs. To determine an athlete's class, classifiers follow three steps:

1. **The Bench Test:** Classifiers test an athlete's limbs for strength, flexibility, sensation and muscle tone. They also test an athlete's trunk (abdominal and back muscles).
2. **Functional Skills Test:** The classifiers then observe the athlete performing a number of common skills to wheelchair rugby prior to game play.
3. **On Court Observation:** The athlete is observed on court during actual play to make the final determination of an athlete's class.

Athletes are required to be classified 3 times by certified international classification panels at least 11 months apart before their class becomes permanent (P status).

When an athlete's class is under review, for example, during a tournament, they will be designated as such (R status).

A player with a new or recent injury, or with a changing physical condition may be awarded new player status (N status).

Occasionally, an athlete's classification will be subject to protest. In this case, a panel of classifiers will review the athlete's classification and adjust it if necessary.

- **How do I learn more about Classification in Wheelchair Rugby?**

Visit the "Classification" section of our website located at www.iwrf.com. From here you can read more detailed information about the IWRF's classification system and download the latest IWRF Classification Manual. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have additional questions.

How to Contact the IWRF:

International Wheelchair Rugby Federation
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Richmond, British Columbia V7B 0A2
Canada

Telephone: +1-604-285-0285

Fax: +1-604-285-0295

Email: info@iwrf.com

Website: www.iwrf.com



IWRF Classifier Application Form

This is an exciting time to become involved with Wheelchair Rugby and we welcome your interest in becoming an IWRF Classifier. Please fill out the form below and return it to us at your earliest opportunity. You can refer to www.iwrf.com for the email address of the Head Classifier in Your Zone, or send this to us at the information found on the previous page.

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Profession: (place an X in the appropriate box) PT - OT - MD - OTHER

Having experience in wheelchair rugby or other sport for persons with disabilities is not required. If you do have previous experiences please share them with us here:

Number of years in wheelchair rugby or other sports listed above: _____

Team Affiliation, if any: _____

Comments: _____

Wheelchair Rugby is an exciting, fast paced full-contact sport whose growth and popularity grows throughout the world every year. We hope you consider this a great opportunity and encourage you to get involved. We look forward to helping you get started and welcoming you into the wheelchair rugby family.

Thank you,

Greg Ungerer
IWRF Head of Classification

Please note that becoming an IWRF Classifier requires participation in classification workshops and making a commitment to assisting with classification in your area.