

# OFFICIAL PLAYER CLASSIFICATION MANUAL



# IWBF

International Wheelchair  
Basketball Federation

**PREPARED BY THE  
IWBF PLAYER CLASSIFICATION COMMISSION**

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**INTERNATIONAL WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL FEDERATION (IWBF) (Founded 1973)**

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*\*Disclaimer: For the purpose of this manual and to simplify the text all references to gender shall be male. It is understood that athletes maybe male or female.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Wheelchair basketball classification is the grouping of players into 8 classes, based on the player's physical capacity to execute fundamental basketball movements: pushing the wheelchair, braking and pivoting, dribbling, shooting, passing, catching, rebounding, tilting and reacting to contact.

To be eligible to play wheelchair basketball under IWBF jurisdiction a player must have a permanent health condition which in the opinion of the IWBF results in an impairment of the lower limbs to a degree where they cannot run, pivot or jump at the speed and with the control, safety, stability and endurance required to play running basketball as an able bodied player.

IWBF players are assigned a classification between 1.0 and 4.5 in half point increments. This classification value is the player's "playing points" on the court. At any given time in a game the total points assigned to a team of five players on court must not exceed 14 – they may be below 14.

By having a system of player classification and a corresponding rule of team balance, the IWBF equalizes each team's overall physical capacity and ensures that the outcome of any game is directly related to the athletic ability and skill of players, not the degrees of impairment.

The purpose of player classification in wheelchair basketball is therefore twofold:

- 1) to determine an athletes' eligibility to compete under IWBF jurisdiction
- 2) to ensure that the impact of an individual player's impairment on each team is minimised

This manual describes methods for dividing eligible athletes into sport classes. The aim is that each class should consist of athletes who have impairments that cause approximately the same amount of activity limitation in the key basketball movements as described above.

The IWBF Player Classification System was developed and proposed by Horst Strohkendl of Germany. It was formally adopted by the basketball playing nations in 1982, and used for the first time in a major International tournament at the 1984 Paralympics in England. The strength of the system is the level of understanding amongst players and coaches, and the open communication and interaction between teams and classifiers.

This handbook is a compilation of the work and thoughts of many people from all aspects of our game over the past decades. Players, coaches, administrators and supporters have all had input. However, no introduction to the classification of wheelchair basketball players is complete without giving thanks to the four people who over the last four decades have led the way: Horst Strohkendl (GER), the pioneer, developer and author of the functional classification of wheelchair basketball, Sir Philip Craven (GBR), former IWBF President and Chairman of Classification 1984-1988, Bernard Courbariaux (FRA), President of IWBF Classification Commission 1988-1998 and Don Perriman (AUS), President of the IWBF Classification Commission 1998-2018.



This manual is to be read in conjunction with the Official Player Classification Rules, and forms an integral part of the rules of wheelchair basketball. For those who wish to learn player classification, you should work closely with experienced classifiers who can help clarify the details of the system and assist you to become more competent in your deliberations.

## **THE PROCESS OF CLASSIFICATION:**

A new player who is eligible to compete under IWBF jurisdiction may receive his international wheelchair basketball classification at any IWBF sanctioned tournament where a Player Classification Panel is in attendance. A new player must be able to present documentary evidence supporting his proposed classification upon request of the panel. It is the responsibility of the player's NOWB to ensure that the player is eligible under IWBF regulations prior to the player's attendance at a tournament.

A new player must have their eligibility confirmed at least one month prior to the start of the first tournament in which the player intends to be registered. Players who do not have an International classification must complete the Player Registration Form and submit it to the IWBF who shall rule on a player's eligibility.

One month in advance of a tournament, National Organizations for Wheelchair Basketball (NOWBs) submit a Team Registration List which contains all of their player's names, jersey numbers, date and place of birth, existing and proposed classifications and Sport Class Status.

Prior to the tournament commencing and before team classification, a verification meeting is scheduled. During this meeting, a team representative confirms the accuracy of the team's submitted information with a member of the Classification Panel

New players are then observed during the team's observation practice prior to the commencement of competition. During this practice the Panel may choose to meet with the new player to discuss with them their proposed class and identify factors which may influence their decision. At the end of the observation practice the classification panel either confirms the proposed classifications or assigns appropriate classifications for the player to start the tournament.

The player is next observed in competition, at which time his classification is either confirmed or changed. A new player's class may change at the end of any preliminary round game, or at the end of the tournament.

Only a new player who has not been previously internationally classified need undergo this process. Players holding an IWBF classification card do not require re-classification at each tournament they attend.

If the panel has seen very little of a player during the tournament, and there remains uncertainty, a card will not be issued for the player. On the final tournament report the player will be listed as: "limited observation; no card issued".

A player's NOWB may request a review of a player's classification. Details of this process are in the **Official Player Classification Rules**. Observation of the player under review will follow the same procedure as observation of a new player.

### ***THE FUNCTIONS DETERMINING CLASSIFICATION:***

The main mobility limitations which determine a player's class are:

- 1) Trunk function
- 2) Lower limb function
- 3) Upper limb function

To arrive at a classification the range, strength and coordination of all these functions are taken into consideration, first as individual components, and then as they impact actual basketball situations.

Each class has distinct characteristics unique to that class, which the classifier looks for when making decisions. These characteristics are evident in the basketball skills observed as part of the classification process, and will be detailed in this manual.

In particular, trunk movement and stability form the basis for player classification. Therefore the most commonly used terminology when discussing classification is the player's "volume of action" which is clearly defined for each class.

## THE CONCEPT OF VOLUME OF ACTION

The key element of classification is the observation and assessment of each player's volume of action. The **Volume of Action** of a player is described as:

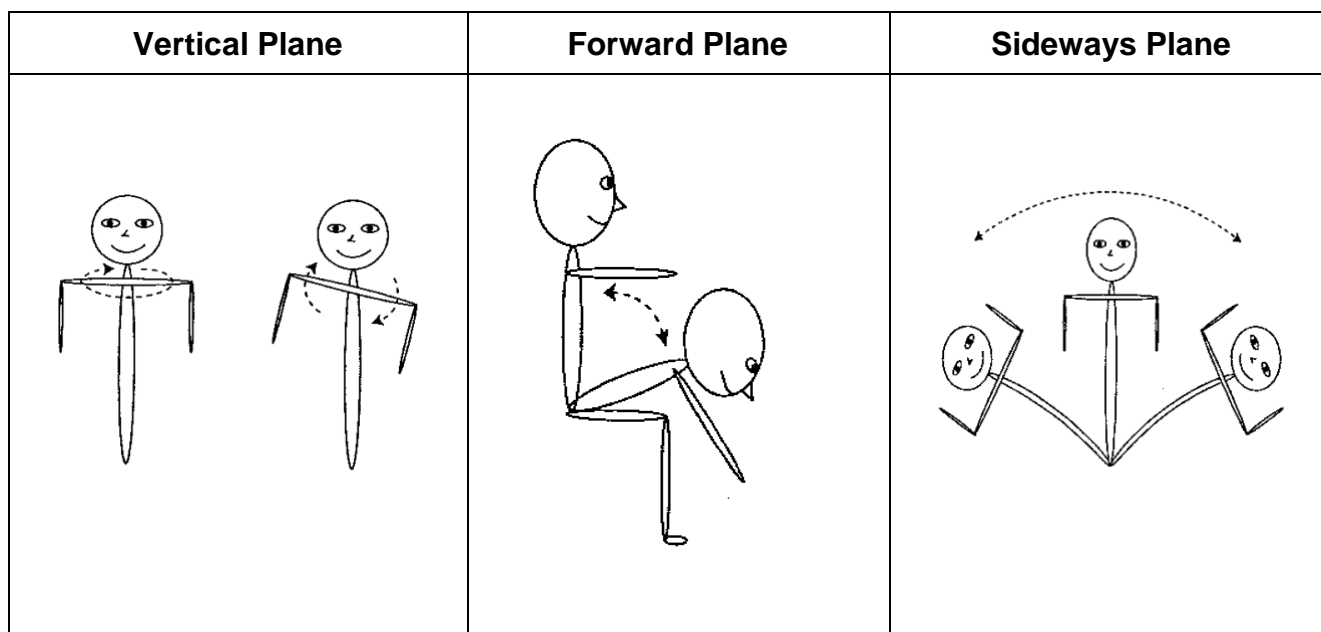
The limit to which a player can move voluntarily in any direction, and with control return to the upright seated position, without holding the wheelchair for support or using the upper extremities to aid the movement. The volume of action includes all directions, and describes the position of the ball as if the player were holding it with both hands.

In the seated position, there are several planes of movement available. While these planes have biomechanical names, in order to simplify the definition, they will be referred to as follows:

The **vertical plane**: Rotating the trunk to face left or right while maintaining an upright position. (Diagram 1)

The **forward plane**: Bending the trunk forward, reaching the hands towards the feet and returning to the upright position. (Diagram 2)

The **sideways plane**: Leaning the trunk to the left or right without movement in the forward plane and returning to the upright position. (Diagram 3)





**Diagram 1  
Rotation****Diagram 2  
Forward Movement****Diagram 3  
Sideways Movement**

Players in each class have different volumes of action. In brief, the typical volume of action for each primary class is as follows:

***The Class 1.0 Player:***

- Has no active trunk movement in the vertical plane (rotation).
- Has little or no controlled trunk movement in the forward plane.
- Has no controlled trunk movement in the sideways plane.
- When unbalanced, has to rely on his arms to return to the upright position.

***The Class 2.0 Player:***

- Has active upper trunk rotation but no lower trunk rotation.
- Has partially controlled trunk movement in the forward plane.
- Has no controlled trunk movements in the sideways plane.

***The Class 3.0 Player:***

- Has complete trunk movement in the vertical plane.
- Has complete trunk movement in the forward plane.
- Has no controlled trunk movements in the sideways plane.

***The Class 4.0 Player:***

- Has complete trunk movement in the vertical plane.
- Has complete trunk movement in the forward plane.
- Has complete trunk movement to one side, but usually due to limited function in one lower limb has difficulty with controlled trunk movement to the other side.

***The Class 4.5 Player:***

- Has complete trunk movement in the vertical plane.
- Has complete trunk movement in the forward plane.
- Has complete trunk movements to both sides.

There are situations where a player does not seem to fit exactly into one class, exhibiting characteristics of two or more classes. In this instance the classifier may assign the player a half point classification: 1.5, 2.5, or 3.5.



## THE CONCEPT OF PELVIC STABILITY

Players adjust their sitting position in the wheelchair to maximize their base of support. A stable base allows for maximum controlled movement of the trunk above, thus optimising the use of the players' volume of action.

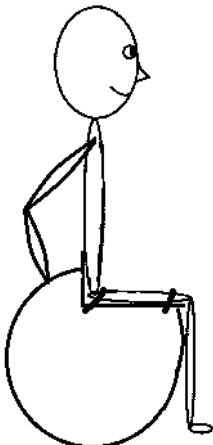
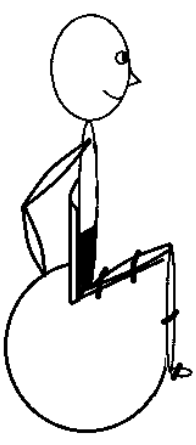
Players can be divided into two groups when considering pelvic stability: Those who can actively stabilize their pelvis and those who rely on their wheelchair installation to provide passive stability. It is the ability to stabilize the pelvis which allows a player to have an increased volume of action. It is for this reason that one of the first observation a classifier will make when observing a player is the player's wheelchair installation.

### Active Pelvic Stability

Active pelvic stability is when a player has sufficient muscle control in the lower trunk and hips to maintain his pelvis in a normal seated position when he moves his trunk actively through one or more planes of movement. Usually a player with active pelvic stability will be sitting on a relatively flat wheelchair seat, and will require minimal support from the wheelchair installation to maintain an upright sitting position. Players with active pelvic stability typically will be assigned a classification of 3.0 or higher. (Diagram 4)

### Passive Pelvic Stability

Passive pelvic stability is when a player does not have sufficient muscle control in the lower trunk and hips to maintain his pelvis in a normal seated position when he moves his trunk through one or more planes of movement. Usually a player with passive pelvic stability will be sitting on a seat significantly angled from front to rear, and relies on the external support of his wheelchair's installation to maintain an upright sitting position. Players with passive pelvic stability typically will be assigned a classification of 2.5 or lower. (Diagram5)

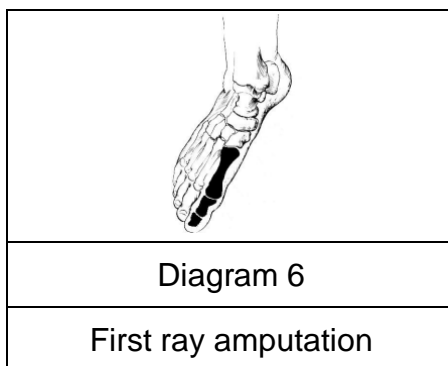
Typical Wheelchair Installation	
Active Pelvic Stability	Passive Pelvic Stability
	
Diagram 4	Diagram 5

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

In order to be eligible to play wheelchair basketball in competitions held under the jurisdiction of IWBF a player who does not have a lower extremity impairment which can be clearly established by observation alone will need to apply for consideration of their eligibility to the IWBF. Details of this process are in the IWBF Official Player Classification Rules.

Minimal Impairment Criteria will be determined using the following:

- a) A wheelchair basketball player must have a permanent health condition which, in the opinion of the IWBF, results in an impairment of the lower limbs to a degree where they cannot run, pivot or jump at the speed and with the control, safety, stability and endurance required to play running basketball as an able bodied player.
- b) The impairment must be such that it can be objectively verified by acknowledged medical and/or paramedical investigations such as measurement, X-ray, CT, MRI, etc.
- c) Persons who have had hip or knee joint replacements and have provided confirmation of the relevant surgery from their attending physician or surgeon and supporting X-rays/scans are deemed to have met the eligibility criteria.
- d) In the instance of amputation, the minimal requirement for eligibility is total removal of the first ray of one foot:



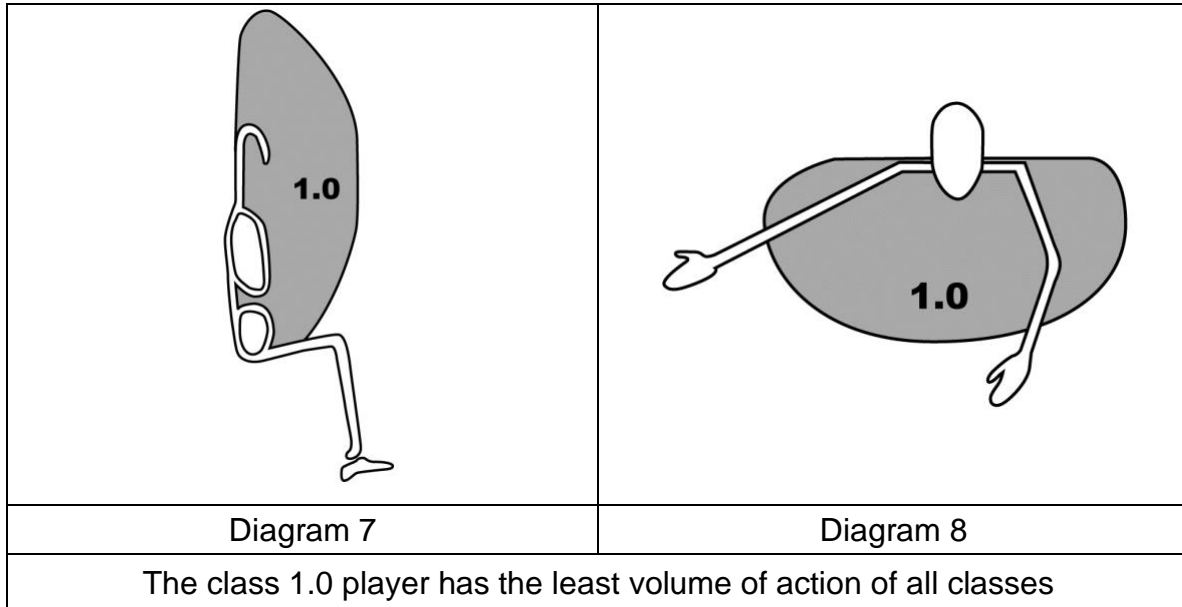
- e) In the instance of a leg length discrepancy the minimal requirement for eligibility is a 6cm difference in leg length as measured from the greater trochanter to the ground in a standing x-ray.

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

A player who is deemed eligible to play under the above IWBF criteria shall receive a letter confirming his eligibility. At the first official competition where a classification panel is present the player will present a proposed classification and will be observed during training and game situations. At the end of the competition he will receive his classification card with his official classification.

## THE CLASS 1.0 PLAYER

### Volume of Action:



The class 1.0 player has no volume of action in either the vertical, forward or sideways planes.

The class 1.0 player:

- Cannot hold the ball with both hands outstretched in front of the face without inclining the head and/or trunk backwards as a counterbalance;
- Relies on his wheelchair and/or his arms for support in all planes of movement.

### Wheelchair Installation:

The class 1.0 player has no active pelvic stability therefore the seat of his wheelchair is usually significantly angled to the rear to maximize passive pelvic stability (Diagram 5)

Typical installation may include:

- Knees higher than hips;
- Backrest to height of ribs, upholstery loosened to allow the player's trunk to be positioned between the side supports of the backrest for stability;
- Abdominal belt to secure trunk to wheelchair;
- Pelvis, legs and feet secured to the wheelchair.

## Characteristics of Basketball Movements:

The class 1.0 player is primarily identified by passive mobility of the trunk in all activities, requiring frequent use of the upper extremities to maintain and adjust trunk position.

### Pushing:

- When pushing the class 1.0 player relies on his backrest for stability.
- He generally pushes in an upright position.
- The head and shoulders often move in a forward and back motion to compensate for the lack of trunk movement and to assist with maintaining stability.
- The player may rest his chest on his knees and remain in this position to push. He will need both arms to return to the upright position.

### Braking / Pivoting:

- When braking quickly or turning hard the class 1.0 player shows difficulty maintaining his trunk upright.
- When braking he may try to counterbalance by leaning his head and shoulders far back.
- When pivoting he may try to counterbalance the pull of his trunk towards the opposite direction of the pivot by pressing hard back into the backrest.
- In both actions he may hold the wheelchair for support.

### Dribbling:

- The class 1.0 player usually dribbles the ball close to the side of the wheelchair and near his trunk, requiring effort to maintain stability while dribbling and pushing simultaneously.

### Passing / Catching:

- The class 1.0 player usually relies on his wheelchair for support when passing the ball.
- A forceful two handed pass forward is accompanied by a backward movement of the head and shoulders to maintain an upright position.
- A forceful one handed pass will frequently require the use of the opposite hand on the wheelchair or leg to gain leverage and maintain upright position. Lack of rotation of the trunk limits the ability to generate power in the pass.
- A class 1.0 player can only passively rotate to catch a pass from behind when stabilized with one hand.

### Shooting / Rebounding:

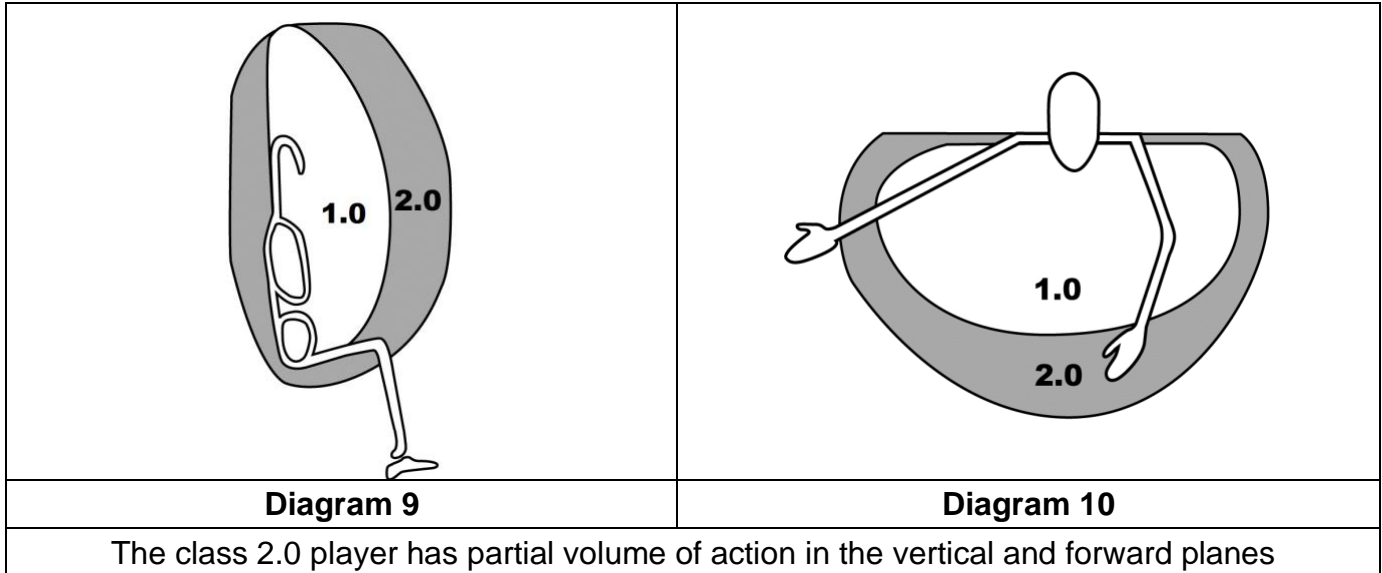
- The class 1.0 player typically leans back into the backrest to counterbalance when shooting.
- Often overbalances during follow through requiring arm support to remain upright.
- Almost always rebounds overhead with one hand; the other is used to hold onto the wheelchair for stability.
- Will reach for a rebound with two hands only if the ball is directly overhead.

### Contact:

- The class 1.0 player cannot preserve the upright position when contact is made.
- Requires the use of upper extremities to return to upright position.

## THE CLASS 2.0 PLAYER

### Volume of Action:



The class 2.0 player has partial volume of action in the vertical and forward planes but no volume of action in the sideways plane.

The class 2.0 player:

- Can rotate his upper trunk in both directions when the lower trunk is supported by the backrest;
- Is able to hold the ball with both hands outstretched in front of the face without using the head and/or trunk as a counterbalance;
- Is able to lean the trunk forward through approximately 45 degrees and return to the upright position without upper extremity assistance;
- Cannot raise the trunk from resting fully forward on the thighs without using at least one arm unless sitting with the knees significantly higher than the hips;
- Needs to use his arms to return to the upright position when off balance to the side.

*Note: It is important to know that with good wheelchair installation, the class 2.0 player may give the appearance of having significant lower trunk function.*

### Wheelchair Installation:

Similar to the class 1.0 player, the class 2.0 player has no active pelvic stability therefore the seat of his wheelchair is usually significantly angled to the rear to maximize passive stability (Diagram 5)

Typical installation may include:

- Knees higher than hips;
- Backrest to height of waist, upholstery loosened to allow the player's trunk to be positioned between the side supports of the backrest for stability;
- Pelvis, legs and feet secured to the wheelchair.

## Characteristics of Basketball Movements:

### Pushing:

- The class 2.0 player is able to lean partially forward to gain momentum and increase pushing power.
- There is loss of stability at the waist level and the lower trunk is not actively used in the pushing action.
- The head and shoulders are often held in a static position to compensate for the lack of lower trunk movement.
- After overbalancing during a pushing action the class 2.0 player will often use one arm pushing off the front of the wheelchair or knees to return to the upright position.

### Braking / Turning:

- When stopping quickly or turning hard the class 2.0 player is able to brace the trunk to maintain stability.
- The class 2.0 player can lean the upper trunk actively in the direction of the pivot.
- The class 2.0 player may remain in a forward leaning position in hard braking situations, but does not release the hands until the trunk is upright.

### Dribbling:

- The class 2.0 player usually dribbles the ball at the level of the front castors, near the wheelchair.
- Ability to dribble in front of the wheelchair is possible if supported by high position of the knees.
- When attempting maximum speed take-off, the class 2.0 player will often have loss of stability at the waist at the start of the dribble.

### Passing / Catching:

- The class 2.0 player usually relies on his wheelchair for support when making strong passes.
- A forceful two handed pass forward is performed with minimal loss of stability. The lower trunk is not used to gain power.
- A forceful one handed pass is usually performed with the opposite hand on the wheelchair to gain leverage and maintain upright position.
- He is able to rotate the upper trunk to catch a pass from the side when stabilized by the backrest.

### Shooting / Rebounding:

- The class 2.0 player is able to lean the upper trunk forward for shooting, but more often remains on the backrest, particularly for longer range shots.
- He can rotate the upper trunk towards the basket if the lower trunk is supported by the backrest.
- He is more stable rebounding with one hand, using the free hand for support on the wheelchair.
- If reaching overhead with both hands, the player will have moderate loss of stability.

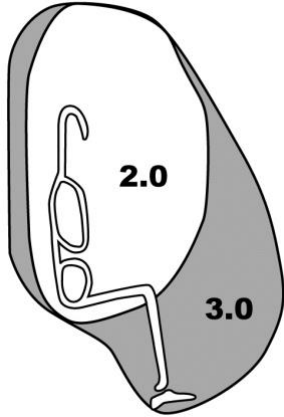
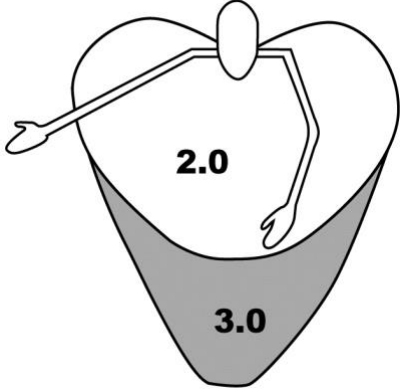
### Contact:

- The class 2.0 player cannot preserve balance when forceful wheelchair contact is made, especially when in the act of shooting or rebounding.
- The class 2.0 player is able to return to an upright position quickly with the use of only one arm.



## THE CLASS 3.0 PLAYER

### Volume of Action:

	
<b>Diagram 11</b>	<b>Diagram 12</b>
The class 3.0 player has complete volume of action in the vertical and forward planes, but no volume of action in the sideways plane	

The class 3.0 player has full volume of action in the vertical and forward planes and no volume of action in the sideways plane usually due to lack of hip and thigh stabilization.

The class 3.0 player:

- Has complete volume of action in the vertical plane with active rotation of the trunk as a unit;
- Is able to hold the ball with both hands overhead without loss of trunk stability;
- Is able to actively move his trunk through the complete forward plane (90 degrees), and return to an upright position without using his arms to assist the movement;
- Requires at least one arm to return to an upright position after leaning to either side.

### ***Wheelchair Installation:***

As the class 3.0 player has some active pelvic stability, the seat of the wheelchair is usually only slightly angled downwards to the rear to maximize stability and wheelchair performance. (Diagram 4)

Typical installation may include:

- Knees slightly higher than hips;
- Backrest to height of top of pelvis;
- Pelvis, legs and feet secured to the wheelchair.

## Characteristics of Basketball Movements:

### Pushing:

- A class 3.0 player is able to actively use the trunk in the forward plane to gain maximum momentum and increase pushing power. There is no loss of stability in the motion.
- The head, shoulders and trunk move forward and back as a unit throughout the pushing action.

### Braking / Turning:

- When stopping quickly or turning hard the class 3.0 player is able to actively use the trunk to avoid losing balance. He is able to lean the upper and lower trunk into the pivot.
- He can maintain stability easily in hard braking situations and quickly return to an upright position.

### Dribbling:

- The class 3.0 player dribbles the ball in front or at the side of the wheelchair.
- He is able to dribble from one side to the other without losing balance or control of the chair
- He can dribble and reach maximum speed without loss of stability.
- He is only able to dribble far to the side of the wheelchair when stabilized with the opposite hand.

### Passing / Catching:

- The class 3.0 player is able to pass the ball without support from the wheelchair.
- A forceful two handed pass forward is performed with no loss of stability using forward motion of the trunk to gain maximum power and momentum.
- A forceful one handed pass is performed using active trunk movement to gain leverage.
- The class 3.0 player is able to rotate his trunk to receive a pass from behind without requiring support from the backrest.
- The class 3.0 player can only receive a pass wide to the side of the body with one hand by using his free hand to maintain trunk stability.

### Shooting / Rebounding:

- The class 3.0 player is able to lean forward strongly for shooting.
- He can rotate his full trunk towards the direction of the shot unsupported by the backrest.
- He is able to rebound overhead with both hands without loss of stability.
- He loses stability when attempting to rebound to the side with both hands.

### Contact:

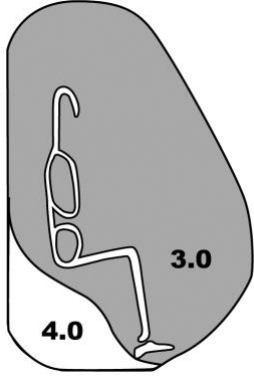
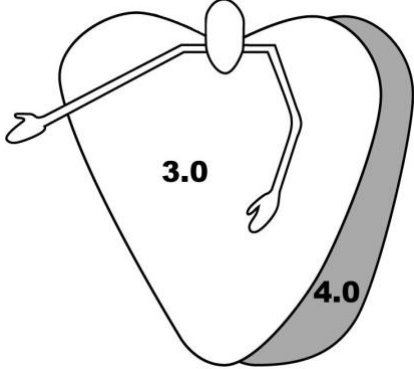
- The class 3.0 player can maintain stability when moderate wheelchair contact is made in the forward plane. He may lose stability if this contact is forceful.
- He is unable to maintain stability if contact is from the side.
- He is able to return to an upright position quickly without the use of his arms, unless there is loss of stability in the sideways plane.

### Tilting:

- The class 3.0 player may actively use the trunk and lower limbs to tilt the chair to either side.
- In order to maintain stability he will need to either lean their trunk towards the wheel that has left the floor or hold the wheel that has left the floor.

## THE CLASS 4.0 PLAYER

### Volume of Action:

	
<b>Diagram 13</b>	<b>Diagram 14</b>
The class 4.0 player has complete volume of action in the vertical and forward planes and complete volume of action to only one side	

A class 4.0 player has complete volume of action in the vertical and forward planes. In the sideways plane he has full volume of action to one side. He may have partial volume to the other side but it is not complete.

The class 4.0 player:

- Is able to hold the ball overhead with both hands without loss of stability with contact in the front and one side; he may have loss of stability with contact on the weak side;
- Is able to fully move his trunk actively to one side and return to upright position without the use of his arms; he may lean partially to his weak side but will require his arms to return to an upright position.

### ***Wheelchair Installation:***

As the class 4.0 player has active pelvic stability, the seat of the wheelchair is usually flat or may be angled slightly forward to allow maximum manoeuvrability and speed. (Diagram 4)

Typical installation may include:

- Knees same level or lower than hips;
- Backrest is low and not required for stability;
- Pelvis and legs secured to the wheelchair.

## **Characteristics of Basketball Movements:**

### **Pushing / Turning / Braking:**

- Like the class 3.0 player, the class 4.0 player is able to actively use the trunk to optimize the pushing, turning and braking actions.
- He does not lose stability during any of these actions, even in contact situations.
- He shows stable trunk movements with all wheelchair handling activity.

### **Dribbling:**

- Like a class 3.0 player, the class 4.0 player is able to dribble the ball to the side or front of the wheelchair with ease.
- He is able to dribble wide to only one side without the use of the opposite arm to maintain stability.

### **Passing / Catching:**

- Like the class 3.0 player, the class 4.0 player is able to pass the ball with one or two hands in the forward plane without requiring support from the wheelchair.
- He is able to actively move his trunk to only one side to pass the ball with one or two hands and return to an upright position without loss of stability.
- Like the class 3.0 player, the class 4.0 player is able to rotate to catch a pass from behind without support from the backrest.
- He can receive a pass wide to his strong side with two hands but requires the use of the opposite hand to maintain trunk stability when catching a ball on his weak side.

### **Shooting / Rebounding:**

- Like the class 3.0 player the class 4.0 player is able to actively use his trunk for shooting and rebounding in the vertical and forward plane.
- He/ is able to actively move his trunk into the sideways plane on his strong side to rebound with both hands without loss of stability. He may be able to move partially to his weak side with loss of stability.

### **Contact:**

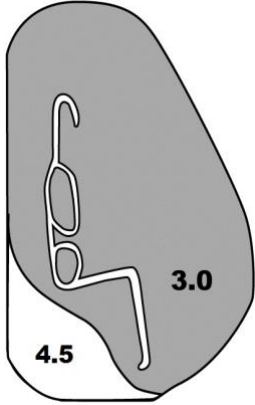
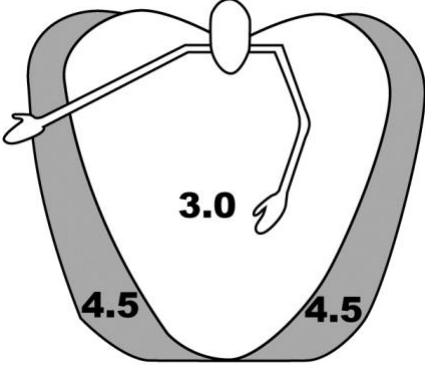
- The class 4.0 player maintains stability when forceful wheelchair contact is made from the front when in the act of shooting and/or rebounding.
- He is able to maintain stability with forceful contact on his strong side but may lose stability with contact on his weak side.
- He is able to return to an upright position quickly without the use of his arms on his strong side but may require assistance when loss of stability occurs on his weak side.

### **Tilting:**

- The class 4.0 player will actively use the trunk and lower limbs to tilt the chair to his strong side without the use of his arms.
- When tilting to his weaker side he will need to counterbalance by leaning towards the wheel that has left the floor or by using one hand on the wheel that has left the floor.

## THE CLASS 4.5 PLAYER

### Volume of Action:

	
<b>Diagram 15</b>	<b>Diagram 16</b>
The 4.5 player has complete volume of action in all planes	

The class 4.5 player has complete volume of action in all planes, with no weakness in any direction.

### Characteristics of Basketball Movements:

The class 4.5 player has all the attributes of the class 4.0 player, but is able to control movement to both sides of the body. Has no obvious weak or strong side.

## THE PLAYER WITH LOWER LIMB DEFICIENCIES

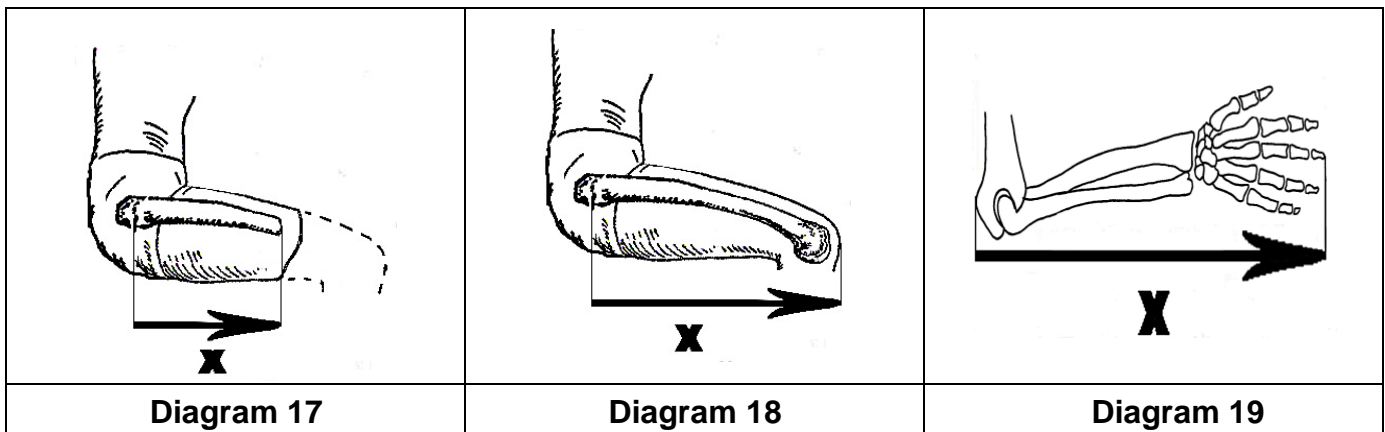
Players with lower limb deficiencies are generally classified by definition. The definitions are based on how decreased length of a residual limb may result in decreased volume of action. It is important to note that these definitions should be used as a guide only. Other factors may need to be considered in the classification of a player with lower limb deficiencies such as:

- Decreased residual limb function;
- Joint restrictions;
- And, in the case of players with single leg deficiencies, any limitations in the other leg.

Players should be classified based upon definition and then observed for function on the court. A classification is ultimately based on function and may be higher or lower than the defined guidelines.

Only above knee amputations need to be measured. Residual limb length is established in the following manner:

1. The athlete's above knee residual limb is measured from the greater trochanter to the bony end of the residual limb. (Diagram 17)
2. This length is next compared to "X":
  - If the athlete is a single above knee amputee, "X" is obtained by measuring the length of the athlete's unaffected thigh from the greater trochanter to the furthest point of the knee when bent at 90 degrees. (Diagram 18)
  - If the athlete is a bilateral above knee amputee "X" is obtained by measuring the length of the athlete's forearm from the back of the elbow to the tip of the longest finger when bent at 90 degrees at athletes' side. (Diagram 19)



- If the above knee residual limb is longer than 2/3 of "X" it offers sufficient leverage to lean to the side and return to an upright position without the use of the arms. In isolation such an amputation does not lead to a reduction in volume of action.
- If the above knee residual limb is 2/3 or less than "X" it does not provide the athlete with sufficient leverage to lean to the side and return to an upright position without using his arms and, in this situation, a loss of volume of action is identified.
- Varying other types of amputations lead to decreased volume of action.





















## Stabilization of Residual Limbs

For classification of players with lower limb deficiencies it is important to ascertain the purpose of any strapping or stabilizing device. If the strap or device enables weight bearing and use of the lower limbs so that the athlete can actively stabilize it will impact his classification. If the strap or device is for positioning or safety it will not impact his classification. The impact of strapping is further discussed in wheelchair Installation.

The table on the following page lists the classes generally attributed to players with various levels of lower limb amputations.

In the table:

- "AK" refers to "Above Knee"
- "BK" refers to "Below Knee"

Class 4.5				
				
Single BK	Single AK > 2/3	Double BK with sockets	Double BK with stabilization	One BK stabilized One AK > 2/3
Class 4.0				
				
Single AK < 2/3 Including hip disarticulation	Double BK not stabilized	Double AK both > 2/3	One AK > 2/3 1 BK not stabilized	One AK < 2/3 1 BK stabilized
Class 3.5				
				
Hemipelvectomy	One AK < 2/3 One AK > 2/3	One AK < 2/3 1 BK not stabilized	1 hemipelvectomy One BK stabilized	
Class 3.0				
				
Double AK both < 2/3	1 BK not stabilized 1 hemipelvectomy	One AK > 2/3 1 hemipelvectomy		
May be less than class 3.0				
				
Double AK < 1/3	One AK < 2/3 1 hemipelvectomy	Double hip disarticulation		



## THE PLAYER WITH UPPER LIMB IMPAIRMENT

In recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of wheelchair basketball players who present with significant impairment of the upper limbs.

The classification of these players represents a challenge to the classifiers, and unfortunately there is no easy formula, as each player is different and must be assessed on their individual functional capacity.

Regardless of the upper limb impairment, the player must fulfill the IWBF eligibility criteria for all players, in that they must be able to be classified according to their lower limb impairment. Any player who only has impairment of the upper limbs is not eligible to be classified under IWBF regulations.

To classify the player with an upper limb impairment, it is necessary that the classifiers first place the player into a class according to lower limb and trunk function. That is, the player is initially classified disregarding their upper limb impairment. This provides a consistent starting point for all players.

The classifiers must then take into account the severity and significance of the upper limb impairment when the player is in a game situation. Important factors to consider are how the upper limb impairment affects volume of action and the main basketball movements: pushing, braking, pivoting, dribbling, passing and catching, shooting and rebounding, tilting and reacting to contact.

The classifiers must then decide the degree of functional disadvantage the upper limb impairment creates for the player when compared to other players in his trunk class. The classifiers must consider how the player with upper limb impairment would be able to compete in a 'one on one' situation, taking into account all offensive and defensive aspects of the game.

This enables the classifiers to assess the true impact of the upper limb impairment and to place the player in a class which best equates to their functional capacity on court.

It may be that a player's upper limb impairment will not change their classification, or it may be reduced by several points. The final decision must ensure that no player is advantaged or disadvantaged by the classification of the player with upper limb impairment and that all continue to compete on an even level.

## **INFLUENCE OF WHEELCHAIR INSTALLATION:**

Players should be encouraged to experiment with their wheelchair installation to optimize their playing capacity. This should include adjusting seat position and strapping to meet individual needs thus optimizing function and performance.

Players should not be assigned a higher classification as a result of adopting an optimal installation. Nor should a player be placed in a lower classification for adopting a poor installation.

When observing a player with a poor wheelchair installation, the classifier must attempt to foresee how the player would function in their optimal installation.

Classifiers must remember that a strap is passive and it cannot substitute for paralyzed muscles or absent limbs. Mostly, a strap will add safety and passive stability for the player. Adding a strap does not mean that a player's classification must change.

The exception to this is players with lower limb amputations, whether double below knee or a combination of one above and one below knee. These players cannot use a strap or other form of stabilization below the knees unless indicated on their playing card as this affects their classification. As a result the playing installation of all players with double lower limb amputations must be clearly identified on their playing card to show if they play with a strap or other form of stabilization below the knee.

## CONCLUSION

This manual has been written to outline the basics of IWBF Player Classification. It is not intended to replace attendance at courses or time spent working with experienced classifiers.

IWBF conducts courses where classification candidates can obtain their certification and improve their understanding of the system through the use of official resource material, practical experience using a wheelchair, directed observation and working with experienced classifiers and players.

Classification is an important part of the game of wheelchair basketball, but it does not rule the game. Classification, while being strict and adhering to the rules and regulations, must be discreet and always respectful of the player as an individual.

Any conversation with players is regarded as confidential, and classifiers should not discuss personal details of players with others who have no right to this information.

To improve, it is vital to watch as much wheelchair basketball as possible to build up your own mental database of players, so that you can compare new players to those you have already classified. In this way you will be more consistent in your definition of classes.

Remember, there are always people willing to help with your learning, most of all the players who make this game great.

Enjoy.

## APPENDIX 1

### Application Procedures

The following procedures are described in the IWBF Official Player Classification Rules:

- Procedure for requesting determination of eligibility
- Procedure for requesting a review of the eligibility decision
- Procedure for requesting a review of a player's classification

For further information on these procedures please refer to the current Internal Regulations handbook available on the IWBF web site at [www.iwbf.org](http://www.iwbf.org)