

# Classification an Overview

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The classification of wheelchair basketball players has evolved significantly over the past 10 years. No longer is it necessary to individually examine each player in a medical room, debating about the relative grades of single muscles, and making subjective assessments of the balance attributes of a player before assigning them to a given class.

Players are now classified in their playing environment, on the basketball court, and in they're playing wheelchair. This enables the classifier to assess each player, as they will be when taking part in the actual competition.

## **Classification Philosophy:**

Wheelchair basketball classification is based on the players' functional capacity to complete the skills necessary to play - pushing, pivoting, shooting, rebounding, dribbling, passing and catching. It is not an assessment of a player's level of skill, merely their functional capacity to complete the task.

In particular, the trunk movement and stability observed during these actual basketball situations, forms the basis for the assignment of a player to a particular class.

## **Classes:**

Players are assigned points as their classification - 1, 2, 3, and 4 are the recognized classes, with 0.5 classes between for the exceptional cases which do not fit exactly into one class, and the 4.5 category for the player with least or minimal disability.

## **Volume of Action:**

Classes are defined according to players' "volume of action". Each class has a clearly defined maximal volume of action, which the player may exhibit. The volume of action refers to the extremes to which a player's trunk stability will allow them to reach, without holding on to the wheelchair, before overbalancing.

## **Class Characteristics:**

Each class has characteristics unique to that class, which are used by the classifier. These characteristics are evident in each of the basketball skills observed as part of the classification process.

## **How to Classify:**

Players are observed in their competition wheelchairs, complete with all strapping they will use, but in a training situation before the tournament commences. From this initial observation a player is assigned a class with which they will begin the tournament. The player is then observed in an actual competition game, at which time their classification will be confirmed or modified if the classification panel feels it is necessary. Only a new player who has not been previously Internationally classified need undergo this process. Players holding an International card do not require re-classification at each tournament they attend.

## **Team Balance:**

The total number of points allowed on court at any time is 14.0. That is, the total points of all five players actually playing. If a coach allows the team to have over 14.0 points, they will incur a technical foul on the bench.

