



International  
**Paralympic**  
Committee

## **World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations**

**Revisions July-August 2017 – effective 1 January 2018**

October 2017

**International Paralympic Committee**

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# 1 Introduction

World Para Athletics (WPA) would like to thank the membership for providing input to the process of revision of the WPA Classification Rules and Regulations – March 2017 (WPA Classification Rules and Regulations).

Together with the membership input, WPA considered input from the WPA Classification Advisory Group and the IPC Management Team, as well as recommendations from the IPC Classification Research and Development Centres of Brisbane (Physical Impairment) and Leuven (Intellectual Impairment).

Some of the recommendations provided relate to the operations of WPA as opposed to the content of the WPA Classification Rules and Regulations. In such cases, where appropriate, the recommendations have been, or are proposed to be, implemented in the operational management and/or classifier training and certification manuals.

The new WPA Classification Rules are currently in the final stages of review by the IPC Medical & Scientific Department and IPC Legal Department. Once these reviews have been completed, the final version of the new WPA Classification Rules and Regulations will be published on the WPA website prior to coming into effect on 01 January 2018.

This document provides a summary of the amendments to the WPA Classification Rules and Regulations.

Importantly, as a result of the below amendments to the WPA Classification Rules and Regulations, and to preserve the integrity of WPA competitions:

- **All athletes with Sport Class T/F31-34 will be put in Review on 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**
- **All athletes with Sport Class T/F35-38 will be put in Review by 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**
- **All athletes with an Intellectual Impairment (T/F20) will be put back in Review on 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**

WPA will notify such athletes via the respective National Paralympic Committees.



## 2 Part One: General Provisions

WPA adopts the Model Rules that have been derived from the 2015 Athlete Classification Code. Any proposed amendments to Part One of the WPA Classification Rules and Regulations are therefore referred to the IPC Classification Committee for its recommendation.

No major amendments have been made.

## 3 Appendices – General

Throughout the Appendices the verbs '*should*' and '*shall*' have been replaced by '*may*' and '*must*' to provide greater clarity.

## 4 Appendix One – Sport Classes for Athletes with Physical Impairment

### 4.1 Introduction to Appendix One

The introduction has been updated to reflect the amendments throughout the Appendix and to provide an overview of the three (3) components of Athlete Evaluation for athletes with a physical impairment, namely: physical assessment; technical assessment; and observation in competition.

### 4.2 Appendix One, Section 2 – Minimum Impairment Criteria (MIC) and Methods of Assessment

Reference has been added to the methodology of the International Society for Advancement in Kinanthropometry (ISAK) to guide all measurements based on anatomical landmarks (Note: this does not mean that WPA Classifiers must be ISAK certified, but that the ISAK methodology will be applied throughout).

The Minimum Impairment Criteria for Limb Deficiency – Lower Limb has been amended to clarify that there must be complete bilateral amputation of the metatarsals of either foot.

### 4.3 Appendix One, new Section 3: Methods of Assessment in support of Sport Class Allocation Decisions

This new section sets out the new mandatory supplementary assessments required for athletes with the following Impairments:



- Hypertonia, Ataxia and Athetosis;
- Lower Limb Deficiency.

The new Section three (3) is subdivided as follows:

#### **4.3.1 Activity Limitation Tests for Athletes with Hypertonia, Ataxia and Athetosis competing seated**

This section outlines the additional tests (hand, arm and trunk function tests) that must be completed by a Classification Panel prior to allocating Sport Classes T/F31-34. Such tests will assist to improve the standardisation of decision-making by Classification Panels.

The tests are derived from clinical practices. As a result of the introduction of these tests, **all athletes with Sport Class T/F31-34 will be put in Review on 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**

#### **4.3.2 Activity Limitation Tests for Athletes with Hypertonia, Ataxia and Athetosis competing standing**

This section outlines the additional tests that must be completed by a Classification Panel prior to allocating Sport Classes T/F35-38. These tests will be performed on every athlete with a coordination Impairment (Hypertonia, Ataxia, Athetosis) to improve the reliability to differentiate between the allocation of Sport Class T/F38 versus T/F35 and T/F36 versus T/F37 respectively.

The tests are derived from research initiated at the IPC Classification Research & Development Centre – Athletes with Physical Impairment at Queensland University (Brisbane, Australia) in partnership with the University Miguel Hernandez (Elche, Spain; research partner of the International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football). References to the scientific articles have been added to Section 5 of Appendix One as well at the end of this summary.

Further research will be conducted by both of the above centres to enable quantitative measures (e.g. distance, height, time) to be considered by Classification Panels in the future.

As a result of the introduction of these tests, **all athletes with Sport Class T/F35-38 will be put in Review by 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**



### 4.3.3 Determining Maximum Allowable Standing Height (MASH) for athletes with bilateral lower limb deficiency competing with prostheses

The MASH measures, effective 01 January 2018, have been transferred to this new section. In the former WPA Classification Rules and Regulations these measures were captured in Section 3.1.4.3.

## 4.4 Appendix One – Section 4: Sport Class Profiles

This section outlines a new group of Sport Classes to split the current Sport Classes T42-44. The new Sport Classes T61-64 are for athletes who compete in running/jumping events with the assistance of equipment, while the existing Sport Classes T42-44 will now be exclusively for athletes with lower limb impairment who are able to run/jump using two anatomical limbs.

The motivation for this amendment is twofold:

1. The current Sport Classes T42-44 include both athletes who compete with a prosthesis and athletes who do not. Recent findings indicate that the use of prosthesis may provide a performance advantage. For example, the introduction of energy-return blades in 1988 has resulted in significant performance increases (Hassani et al, 2014, 2015; Hobara, 2015). As such, it is no longer possible for athletes who compete with a prosthesis to compete against those who do not on equal terms under the concept of fair classification (as defined in the 2015 Athlete Classification Code: *“grouping Athletes into Sport Classes according to how much their Impairment affects fundamental activities in each specific sport or discipline”*).
2. The current Sport Classes T/F42 includes both athletes with single below knee amputation (SBK, using one prosthesis) and bilateral double above knee amputation (DAK, using two prostheses). This is a result from an historical error where a DAK athlete (of which at that time there was only a limited number) was considered disadvantaged over those athletes with double below knee amputation (DBK, Sport Class T43) and thus ‘classed down’ into Sport Class T42. This now needs correction and requires the introduction of a separate Sport Class for DAK athletes as they cannot be merged with Sport Class T43.

Based on the above rationale, the following new structure, will be effective 01 January 2018 onwards:

1. **Sport Classes T42-44:** Athletes with lower limb impairment with two anatomical limbs remain in these Sport Classes.
2. **New Sport Classes T61-64** are introduced as follows:



T61	Athletes with bilateral above knee limb deficiency (amputation/dysmelia) running with prostheses (previously T42)
T62	Athletes with bilateral below knee limb deficiency (amputation/dysmelia), running with prostheses (previously T43)
T63	Athletes with single above knee limb deficiency (amputation/dysmelia), running with prosthesis (previously T42)
T64	Athletes with single below knee limb deficiency (amputation/dysmelia) and leg length difference, running with prosthesis (previously T44)

It is important to clarify that the new Sport Classes T61-64 are exclusively for athletes with lower limb deficiency (e.g. amputation, dysmelia) and leg length difference, provided these athletes meet the respective Minimum Impairment Criteria and compete with a prosthesis.

The transfer of athletes from their current Sport Classes to the new Sport Classes T61-64 will **not** require the majority of athletes to be put in Review.

To ensure consistency, the above athletes who also compete in field events, will also be transferred to F61-64. The hierarchy matrix of the WPA Technical Rules and Regulations will be amended to enable the above combination of Sport Classes to compete in one event.

Consequential amendments to section 4 have been made.

In addition, WPA would like to inform its membership that it has requested further research on the introduction of a knee joint for prosthetic running/jumping for athletes with double above knee amputation. Any outcome of this project will only be considered post Tokyo 2020.

#### **4.5 Appendix One – Chapter 5: References**

References of publications in support of the above amendments have been included.

## **5 Appendix Two – Sport Classes for Athletes with Vision Impairment**

No changes



## 6 Appendix Three – Sport Classes for Athletes with intellectual impairment

### 6.1 Articles 4.4 and 4.5

Upon recommendation of the IPC Classification Research and Development Centre – Intellectual Impairment, the different tests for ‘processing speed & attention-concentration skills’ have been replaced by a ‘Flanker Test’ and the scoring amended accordingly. The rationale for this amendment is that the Flanker Test discriminates better between athletes with Intellectual Impairment and the reference group of able-bodied athletes.

In addition, a few minor amendments have been made to the technical assessment instructions.

### 6.2 Observation in-Competition Assessment

The former Article 5 ‘Observation in-Competition Assessment’ has been removed. The IPC Classification Research and Development Centre – Intellectual Impairment will focus in next period on the development of technical observation in competition assessment protocols that will be introduced in the WPA Classification Rules at a later stage.

Consequential amendments to the former Article 6 have been made to remove references to the ‘Observation Assessment’ outcomes as part of the final decision-making.

**As a result of the amendments, all athletes with an Intellectual Impairment (T/F20) will be put back in Review on 01 January 2018, and will be required to present for re-assessment at the next available opportunity.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hilary Beeton'.

Hilary Beeton  
WPA Head of Classification

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Van de Vliet'.

Peter Van de Vliet  
IPC Medical & Scientific Director



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