



INTERNATIONAL VA'A FEDERATION

Adaptive Paddler Rules & Classification System

Section I: IVF Adaptive Paddler Rules for World Sprints

1. Age requirement- competitors must have reached the age of 16 by or during the calendar year in which the competition takes place.
2. Eligibility determination -to determine eligibility to compete as an Adaptive Paddler, all candidates must submit the following documents and participate to the best of their ability in a Classification testing procedure:
 - a. IVF Consent for Adaptive Paddling Classification Form
 - b. IVF Classification Application Form
 - c. IVF Declaration of Medical Conditions that may require Emergency Measures Form
 - d. IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis completed by a medical doctor
 - e. paddlers with a visual impairment must include an IVF Vision Test Form completed by an ophthalmologist to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate classification requirements
3. Adaptive Paddler Classification score
 - a. the IVF Classification Panel will confirm/determine a Classification points score for individual Adaptive Paddlers following the Classification procedure
 - b. the IVF Classification Panel may observe paddlers anytime during training and/or competition and change the classification point value of any paddler whose performance in a canoe exhibits functional ability that markedly exceeds that which was demonstrated during the Functional Movement Test on the ergometer.
4. Competition Points allocation
 - a. V1 races in the following three divisions:
 - 1) men and women classified as 5 or 6 point paddlers
 - 2) men and women classified as 4 point paddlers
 - 3) men and women classified as 2 or 3 point paddlers
 - a. V6 mixed team competition:
 - 1) teams shall include three male and three female paddlers with disabilities
 - 2) the total number of points may not exceed 26
 - 3) a team may compete with a lower number of points.
 - b. V12 mixed team competition:
 - 1) teams shall include six male and six female paddlers with disabilities
 - 2) the total number of points may not exceed 52
 - 3) a team may compete with a lower number of points.

5. Adaptive Equipment

- a. Adaptive Paddlers must supply their own adaptive equipment with the exception of blind paddlers who will be required to wear blinders supplied by the Adaptive Paddling Committee in all of their races
- b. Adaptive Paddlers who use personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, seating support, etc. during the Classification testing procedure must use the same equipment when racing.
- c. When racing, Adaptive Paddlers may not use additional personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, support, etc. not used during the Classification testing procedure. For example, a paddler with limb amputation may not use a prosthetic device when racing, if it was not used during the Classification testing procedure

6. Overturns

- a. In V1 races, in the case of overturns, the contestant is eliminated from the race if it is not possible for them to resume their place in the va'a within three minutes, without any outside help.
- b. In V6 races, overturns will be cause for automatic disqualification, so immediate assistance can be given; paddlers will not be permitted to continue in the race

Section II: IVF Classification System for World Sprints

Utilization of a classification system allows athletes from the following five different disability groups in the Paralympic movement: (all definitions taken from the International Paralympic Committee report "Promoting the Health and Human Rights of Individuals with a Disability through the Paralympic Movement" written by Cheri Blauwet, January, 2005)

- amputation and other limb impairments - athletes in this group have at least one major joint or part of a limb missing (i.e. elbow, wrist, knee, ankle) or functional impairment equivalent to amputation
- cerebral palsy - athletes in this group have impaired coordination and muscle tone. This group includes those with cerebral palsy, in addition to stroke, head injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, Fredrich's Ataxia and several others
- visual impairment - this group includes athletes with any condition that impairs their vision
- spinal cord injuries - athletes with acquired spinal cord injury, spina bifida
- (les autres) a group which includes all those that do not fit into the aforementioned groups

to compete in the sport of outrigger canoeing against other teams or individual athletes with a comparable number of points as determined by evaluation of functional ability specific to the sport. By developing and using a Classification system, the IVF Adaptive Paddling Committee intends to assist the organizers of IVF World Sprints in providing international competition for adaptive paddlers, patterned after Paralympic Games which provide elite competition opportunity to athletes with a functional physical disability which precludes their involvement in open competition of the regular Olympics.

Note that the classification system does not include athletes with intellectual disability at this time. This is in accordance with an 11/01/2007 Memorandum from the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) "Position Statement Regarding the Participation of Athletes with an Intellectual Disability at IPC Sanctioned Competition" stating that the International Sports Federation for Persons with an Intellectual Disability (INAS-FID) was suspended from the Paralympic movement by the IPC general Assembly in 2001. Full reinstatement, including the participation of athletes with an intellectual disability at IPC sanctioned competitions, is dependent on the following as agreed upon by both the IPC and INAS-FID:

- Confirmation of impact of intellectual disability on sport performance
- Determination of minimum eligibility criteria and sport specific criteria
- Development and implementation of protest procedures

Introduction to the Functional Classification of Outrigger Canoe Paddlers

Purpose of a Classification System

- (a) Enable fair and equitable competition at all levels, for mildly, moderately and severely disabled outrigger canoe paddlers
- (b) Encourage crews of mixed disability, from mild to severe, to compete and compliment each other
- (c) Only measure the functional limitations caused by physical disability
- (d) Not be affected by the canoeing skills, training or talent of the paddler

IVF Classifiers

There are two types of IVF Classifiers:

1. Medical Classifier: a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, or physiotherapist (physical therapist)
2. Technical Classifier: a person with extensive practical knowledge of outrigger canoeing, such as a canoeing coach, sport scientist, physical educator or similarly qualified person.

The IVF Classification Panel consists of 1 Medical Classifier, and 4 Technical Classifiers. The IVF medical person may serve at his pleasure in a direct or in an advisory capacity.

PROCESS FOR CLASSIFYING OUTRIGGER CANOE PADDLERS WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY

Application Process for Paddlers Seeking IVF Classification

Before commencing the classification process, all paddlers are required to submit the following documents:

- IVF Consent for Adaptive Paddling Classification Form,
- Classification Application Form
- Declaration of Medical Conditions that may require Emergency Measures Form

- IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis completed by a medical doctor stating the paddler's disability, the date of the disability, whether or not the disability is progressive and other requested information. Note: Paddlers previously classified in IVF World Sprints do NOT need to submit a Certificate of Medical Diagnosis if their physical condition/diagnosis has not changed.
- Athletes with a visual impairment must include, with their application, IVF Vision Test Form completed by an ophthalmologist to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate classification requirements

Classification Procedure

Adaptive paddlers are responsible for bringing all completed required forms to IVF World Sprints and delivering them to the IVF Classification Panel at the classification evaluation meeting.

Adaptive paddlers must report to a classification evaluation meeting as determined by the IVF Classification Panel and declare all personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, seating support, etc. that they intend to use when racing. Paddlers having benchmark disabilities will present themselves for confirmation of the benchmark disability noted on the IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis. All other paddlers will be asked to perform a Functional Movement Test by paddling indoors on a Concept 2 Indoor Rower (Model D or Model E) with a Vermont Waterways Paddling Adapter in the presence of the Classification Panel whose members will evaluate the functional ability of those paddlers and assign them a class with a corresponding point value.

After a point value has been determined, a member of the Classification Panel will affix a small distinctive label onto the paddler's IVF World Sprints identification badge and write the point value on this sticker with a permanent marker. A permanent record of each paddler's points assigned in IVF World Sprints will be kept so it may be used as reference in future studies and competitions.

Method of Assessment

An IVF Classification Panel conducts the standard IVF classification process.

This process involves five parts:

1. Review of IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis
2. Review of an IVF Vision Test Form using IBSA (International Blind Sports Association) standards completed by an ophthalmologist for paddlers who are blind or visually impaired
3. Functional Movement Test on a Concept 2 Indoor Rower with Vermont Waterways Paddling Adapter - directed by an IVF Classifier (Technical) with an IVF Classifier (Medical) and IVF Classification Panel in attendance.
4. On Water Observation – the IVF Classification Panel may observe paddlers anytime during training and/or competition and change the classification point value of any paddler whose performance in a canoe exhibits functional ability that markedly exceeds that which was demonstrated during the Functional Movement Test on the ergometer.

Outrigger Canoe Functions

- 1) Pelvic stability - A stable base allows for maximum controlled movement of the trunk above, thus optimizing a player's volume of action, therefore, this is the first distinction made in classifying paddlers
- 2) Trunk function - *volume of action* in forwards, backwards, sideways and vertical planes
- 3) Upper limb function
- 4) Hand function - grip and release
- 5) Lower limb function

The outrigger canoe classification system will group paddlers into categories or classes based upon the paddlers' physical capability to execute fundamental outrigger canoe movements:

- 1) forward power stroke
- 2) draw stroke
- 3) back paddle or brake stroke
- 4) changing of paddling sides

Paddlers are assigned a classification from 1.0 (being the paddler with the least physical functional ability) to 6.0 (being the paddler with the most physical functional ability, including the paddler with the minimal disability). This classification is the paddler's points. A maximum number of points per team is set such that a team can not have too many paddlers with a mild disability.

In IVF World Sprints:

V6 mixed team competition:

- teams shall include three male and three female paddlers with disabilities
- the total number of points may not exceed 26
- a V6 team may compete with a lower number of points

V12 team competition:

- teams shall include six male and six female paddlers with disabilities
- the total number of points may not exceed 52
- the V12 team may compete with a lower number of points.

By having a system of player classification, and a rule of team balance, the IVF Adaptive Paddling Committee equalizes the functional potential of teams and ensures that the outcome of any race is directly related to the athletic ability and skill of the paddlers.

Classification Information Sheet for Vision Impaired

The guidelines for Classification for athletes with vision impairment (VI) are determined by the International Blind Sports Association (IBSA).

IBSA Classes:

B1: From no light perception in either eye to light perception, but inability to recognize the shape of a hand at any distance or in any direction

B2: From ability to recognize the shape of a hand to a visual acuity of 2/60 and/or monocular visual field of less than 5 degrees.

B3: From visual acuity above 2/60 to visual acuity of 6/60 and/or monocular visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees

Explanation of Testing of Functional Ability

1. Trunk function - as in wheelchair basketball, where an athlete performs skills from a seated position while holding onto an object (ball or paddle, in our case), pelvic stability and trunk movement (function) will form the basis of paddler classification, paddlers too may be assessed according to their Volume of Action. *Taken from the manual, "International Wheelchair Basketball Federation Functional Player Classification System"*:

The **Volume of Action** of a paddler is described as:

The limit to which a paddler can move voluntarily in any direction and with control, return to the upright seated position, without holding the canoe for support or to aid the movement. The volume of action includes all directions, and describes the position of the paddle when held with both hands (or with one hand for upper limb amputation, not using a prosthetic).

In the seated position, there are several "planes of movement" available:

- The forward plane: bending the trunk forwards, reaching the hands towards the feet and returning to the upright position.
- The backward plane: leaning the trunk backwards 30 degrees and returning to the upright position
- The vertical plane: rotating the trunk to face left or right while maintaining an upright position.
- The sideways plane: leaning the trunk to the left or right without movement in the forward plane and returning to the upright position.

The Concept2 with Vermont Waterways Paddling Adapter was chosen as the assessment tool because both pieces of equipment are available in many parts of the world. The access to standard testing equipment should be helpful when we train classifiers and do classification assessments throughout the world, including at future World Sprints.

Assessing Functional Ability on Concept 2 with Paddling Adapter

The Concept 2 with Paddling Adapter will be set up indoors on a floor with a non-skid surface so the ergo meter remains stationary during the testing period and the paddler's feet do not slip. Paddlers may place non-skid material under their feet or attach foot supports to the ergo meter if they intend to use them during racing; this may be necessary for some paddlers with cerebral palsy. Paddlers may not use the foot supports on the Concept 2.

The resistance will be set at 3 on the Concept 2.

A flat bench seat can be set up on the Concept 2 with Paddling Adapter for the testing session. Each paddler will bring all personal adaptive equipment with them to the evaluation session and position his equipment on the flat bench seat the same way he intends to use it in the canoe. A photo and full description of each paddler's adaptive seat should be placed in his file including notations of any pelvic and/or lateral supports as well as strapping (lap belt and or chest belt) used. Paddlers must use the same equipment in testing and racing.

Functional ability for the forward stroke and the changing of paddling sides can be evaluated by observing the paddler paddle for two minutes, switching paddling sides after every ten strokes; additional time may be requested, as necessary, by the Evaluation Panel. Evaluators will assess functional ability and look for coordination impairment and spasticity.

To test functional ability for the draw stroke the paddler and his seat must be repositioned on the flat bench seat on the ergometer such that the paddler is turned 90 degrees to the right on the I-beam to test the draw stroke on the left and turned 90 degrees to the left to test the draw stroke on the right. To test the draw stroke on the left side, the paddler will be asked to rotate his torso, lean out his left side, turn the paddle shaft such that the "extended blade" would be parallel to the keel line of the "canoe," place the shaft in a vertical position with respect to the floor position and execute a draw stroke while keeping the end of the shaft close to the floor. The paddler will then be asked to recover the paddle to the starting position by turning the shaft clockwise, so the paddle blade could "slice through the water". The Evaluation Panel will observe the paddler executing the draw stroke and ask the paddler to repeat the skill until they have determined an assessment. The test will be repeated on the right side.

To test functional ability for the back paddle stroke, the paddler and his seat will be repositioned such that the paddler is facing backwards on the ergometer. The test will be administered on both the right and left sides. To test for the backward stroke on the left side, an evaluator will pull the paddle shaft back, hold on to the cord to eliminate any resistance, turn the paddle shaft such that the grip is positioned for the forward stroke and hand it to the paddler on his left side. The paddler will be asked to change his grip by rotating the paddle counterclockwise in preparation for the backward stroke. When this is accomplished, the evaluator will release his grip on the cords (to add resistance to the paddle) and paddler will be asked to rotate his body to the left, lean backwards, place the bottom of the paddle shaft near the floor behind him, push forwards with the bottom hand and pull the top hand towards his body to execute the backwards stroke. This procedure may be repeated until the Evaluation Panel has determined an initial assessment. The same procedure will be followed on the paddler's right side to assess the paddler's ability to paddle backwards on the right side; the paddler will be asked to change his grip on the paddle by rotating the paddle clockwise and rotate this body to the right.

Typical Disabilities in Point Classes

6 Point Paddlers

Single Below Knee Amputation with prosthesis

Bilateral Below Knee Amputation with prosthesis

5 Point Paddlers

Single Below Knee Amputation without prosthesis

Single Above Knee Amputation with prosthesis

Bilateral Above Knee Amputation with prosthesis

Bilateral amputation, one Above Knee and one Below Knee with prostheses

Va'a - Below Elbow amputation with prosthesis

4 Point Paddlers

Hemipelvectomy

Hip Disarticulation

Paddlers with hand amputation with prostheses

Bilateral Below Knee Amputation without prostheses

Bilateral Above Knee Amputation without prostheses

Bilateral amputation, one Above Knee and One Below Knee without prostheses

Va'a - Above Elbow amputation with prosthesis

Paddlers with paraplegia who do not need trunk support

Post polio paralysis with one leg involvement

Cerebral Palsy Class 4 (CPISRA)

3 Point Paddlers

Post-polio paralysis with minimal or no control of lower limbs

Paddlers with paraparesis who need postural/trunk support

2 Point Paddlers

Paddler with two upper limbs but only one functioning upper limb

Paddlers with hemiplegia

Cerebral Palsy Class 7 (CPISRA)

Paddlers with cerebral palsy who have the use of only one arm

1 Point Paddlers

Paddlers with cerebral palsy with no use of lower limbs and no use of one arm

Some, but not all paddlers with quadriplegia

Paddlers with brain injury with no use of lower limbs and no use of one arm