

IPC Swimming Summit Submission by Canadian Paralympic Committee and Swimming/Natation Canada

Theme: Classification

Topic: Development of a classification working group that falls under an IPC Swimming Committee to discuss and make recommendations on all issues related to classification.

Background/History

- The original classification system was developed in 1985 for the sport of swimming to create competitive classes that included a multitude of disabilities
- A universal standard classification manual was established with routine review and revision and this continued until September 2008
- A process was developed and set in place to train new classifiers and provide updates to current classifiers
- With the establishment of the new classification system, an international database was developed. Classifications completed by IPC classifiers were added to the database.
- Draft revisions to the classification manual were submitted to each country that had IPC classifiers for review and feedback.
- All revisions to the classification manual were completed and finalized two years prior to the Paralympic Games so that athletes were provide a fair and level playing field and provided an opportunity for high performance athletes to focus on competition.
- Swimming congresses were held every other year which gave all swimming coaches and countries the opportunity to provide input and engage in discussions about relevant swimming topics. Due to the restructuring in 2006, there has been no standardized forum to seek input from the swimming community.

Considerations

- The classification manual needs to be updated using a standardized and transparent process which includes set timelines.
- The classification Handbook and classification manual need to be revised so that they are clear, organized and sequential.
- The online course needs to be updated to reflect the current classification manual and processes.
- A standardized process should be developed for the delivery of classification courses.
- When updates are made to the IPC Swimming rule book and the classification manual, there needs to be an established process for distribution and notification.
- A clear distinction needs to be made between technical rules and classification rules. For example, we currently use the same protest form for both rule infractions and classification protests.
- We need standardized processes, procedures, and opportunities for classification protests.
- There should be clear timelines and opportunities for classification reviews.
- IPC Classification Code review and clarification
 - N, R, and C statuses
 - First appearance (all 4 strokes must be seen in order to determine final classification)
- There is no head of classification currently in place therefore there is not an official avenue for classification protests.
- There needs to be a clear process and easy access to VI classification. Also, a review and examination of a VI functional classification and minimal disability need to be conducted
- S14 inclusion and classification system should be relevant to swimming
- Ongoing research and development in classification needs to take place to ensure that it continues to be equitable. This includes updates on the FCS classes 1-4, minimal disability review; review of Functional Range of Motion for Swimming, examination of the points allocation for the ankle and knee etc.



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- Standards need to be established for classifiers including
 - Travel (accommodation, air travel, ground transportation, meals etc)
 - Liability insurance
 - Training/Education and procedure for certification

Recommendations

- An IPC Swimming Committee should be established in order to lead IPC Swimming into a vibrant self sustaining entity.
- The appointment of a Head of Classification.
- The establishment of a classification working group to discuss the above mentioned topics. The chairperson of this working group should be a member of the IPC Swimming Committee who represents classification. The composition of this working group should be comprised of a variety of experienced classifiers.