

GBWR CLASSIFICATION

DOMESTIC CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

What to expect during classification

The classification process for wheelchair rugby is completed in three stages.

You will find more detailed information on these stages below, however in summary they are, an athlete evaluation, ball and wheelchair skills observation and on-court observations. Once all three of these stages have been completed, a confirmed domestic classification will be given.

When an athlete attends their classification appointment, they are permitted to bring a player classification representative to help support them during the process. Athletes should ideally attend the appointment in their rugby chair and bring with them any gloves, binders, and straps - where possible athletes should wait until they are asked by a classifier to put their gloves on.

During the athlete evaluation stage, classifiers will ask athletes to remove their uniform shirt and as such athletes are encouraged to ensure they are wearing appropriate underclothing.

If an athlete is ever unsure about anything that has been said, or they do not understand the reasoning behind a decision, they are welcome to ask for clarification from the classifiers.

Athlete Evaluation

During the athlete evaluation stage, classifiers will test an athlete's muscles to ascertain a baseline classification. Classifiers will ask the athlete to perform a movement and then hold that position whilst they apply resistance.

Most of the muscle testing is completed whilst the athlete is sat in their rugby chair, however in some situations if a classifier needs to clarify which muscle is assisting the movement, they may need to change the athlete's position so that the athlete is lying on their back or front. This could involve helping the athlete onto a table or tipping the wheelchair flat onto the floor - dependant on location facilities.

The classifiers will be required to place their hands on the athletes' individual muscles to feel how they are working and as such athletes should ensure they are prepared for this intimate process.

If an athlete is feeling uncomfortable at any time, then they should inform the classifiers who will do their best to reassure them and talk them through the process.

Ball and Wheelchair Skills

The ball and wheelchair skills stage of the classification process is a chance for classifiers to observe the athletes' technical skills, both with and without the use of gloves. Classifiers will look to perform these observations in a private area, however due to availability of space during competitions, the observations are often performed in warm up areas, the space between courts, or even during limited time on court between games.

During the skill observations the athlete will be challenged through fast and unpredictable movements in an effort to reproduce game style play.

On-court Observations

The final stage of the classification process is the on-court observations. Classifiers will position themselves at the side of the pitch in order to view the athletes whilst they are playing a game of wheelchair rugby. Athletes should be mindful that classifiers may be observing multiple players during the same game and it may take more than one game to complete the observation.

If classifiers do not feel they have seen enough of an individual athlete during a game, they may ask their coach to increase their court time to complete the observation. Similarly, if classifiers do not feel the athlete has been sufficiently challenged during the game to match their abilities, they may decide to wait until they have watched another game before making their final decision.

Finally, if an athlete demonstrates movements or skills that are inconsistent with the athlete evaluation stage, the classifiers may look to perform further testing to help consolidate their understanding of the athlete's abilities.