REPORT CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

**WC2014, Munich, Germany, 6 – 10 August**

### Classification Course:

**Participants:**
- Hannu Kapanen (Finland, physiotherapist)
- Kees Van Breukelen (the Netherlands, classifier IWBF, IWRF, handcycling)
- Katharina Reitz (Germany, EWH player, sportstechnician)

**Program:**
- Sunday, 03.08.14: Introduction IPC position statement on background and scientific rationale; best practices
- Monday, 04.08.14: IPC Classification Code
  - Classification in ICEWH: actual situation
  - ICF impairments based classification in EWH

Course was given by Denis Jaeken, Head of Classification ICEWH

### Classification Process:

**Classifiers (2 panels):**

**Panel 1:**
- Denis Jaeken (Belgium, medical doctor, chief classifier)
- Jindriska Cypricova (Czech Republic, physiotherapist)
- Alvaro Daza (Spain, sportstechnician)

**Panel 2:**
- Wim De Wilde (Belgium, physiotherapist)
- Gerda Nelles (Belgium, physiotherapist)
- Thea Smit (the Netherlands, physiotherapist/sportstechnician)

and the 3 aspirant-classifiers who followed the course (mentioned above)

( Please note that first Daan Eenkhoorn (the Netherlands, medical doctor) was appointed assistant chief classifier and classifier in panel 2. Due to familiar reasons he unfortunately had to leave Munich just before the start of the classification assessment process. Gerda Nelles was asked to replace him as classifier and arrived at the end of the first morning; Wim De Wilde was appointed assistant chief classifier)

**Program:**

- Monday, 04.08.14: Preparation meeting of the WC 2014 Classification
- Tuesday, 05.08.14: Classification of countries: Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Netherlands, Finland, Germany
  - Meeting: evaluation first day of classification
- Wednesday, 06.08.14: Classification of countries: Australia, Switzerland
  - Meeting: discussion/decision classification assessment results
  - 17 h: Protest classification: 3 players (Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland) concerning eligibility; 2 not accepted, 1 accepted (Switzerland); 3 players concerning functional classes (Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland): 2 not accepted, 1 accepted (Finland)
  - Meeting: discussion/decision protest classification results
- Thursday, 07.08.14: In-competition observation: Belgium and the Netherlands were observed in 2 games; the other countries in 1 game
Meeting: discussion / decision in competition observation – final results classification process WC EWH 2014
Evaluation classification process; preparation
Classification report
Closing of the Classification Process; certification of the 3 course classifiers

Results:

76 athletes (8 countries) entered the classification process: 40 for eligibility classification (19 for the first time); 36 had already a C(ONFIRMED) Sport Class Status; all athletes were assessed for functional classification; depending of time also athletes with sport class status C were asked to co-operate voluntarily to a draft classification based on ICF impairments.

1 player (Denmark) asked to postpone the classification assessment with 1 one day due to medical reasons (failure to attend). It was accepted by the Chief Classifier. The athlete was given a new date and time and the athlete was able to be classified at that date and time. No further problems.

The classification process in Electric Wheelchair Hockey consists of 3 main steps:

1. Written medical information: check of the medical forms
   All athletes had used the ICEWH medical form; 2 forms were not correctly filled in (not written in English: 1 Germany, 1 the Netherlands).
   All athletes undersigned the Consent Form correctly.

2. Eligibility Classification: according to ICEWH rules on Players Eligibility
   3 athletes (Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland) were classified “not eligible” after the first classification round (2 presenting with severe kyphoscoliosis with poor sitting balance and spina bifida, 1 with neuromuscular disease); protest was accepted in 1 case (Switzerland, severe kyphoscoliosis and poor sitting balance);
   3 athletes (the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland) have protested the functional classification; 1 was accepted (Finland, not 4 but 3 points)

   21 players received a C(ONFIRMED) Sport Class Status, 14 players received a N(ew) Sport Class Status and 5 a R(eview) Sport Class Status.

3. Functional Classification: according to ICEWH Functional Classification System (4-point-system)
   Three functional tests were performed (according to IPC proposal of best practices: 1 novel activity (reaching top of cones/basis of cones) and 2 practiced activities (hitting and slalom).

Results:
Class 1: 28 players (8 countries) (1 point)
Class 2: 16 players (8 countries) (2 points): 1 player is classified functionally as 2 points but received the strong advise of the Classification Panel to not enter the competition as a 2 point player but only as a 1 point player (T stick) due to safety reasons.
Class 3: 8 players (4 countries) (3 points)
Class 4: 21 players (7 countries) (4 points)

4. In – competition observation
   64 players were observed during the first competition day; 2 teams (Belgium; the Netherlands) have been observed during 2 games; the other countries only during 1 game.
   10 players (5 countries) were not active; 5 already had a confirmed classification for eligibility from earlier classifications but fail the classification for functional points (as it was the first official occasion for functional classification); 5 players (4 countries) have not completed the classification for eligibility.
The classifiers and the 3 aspirant-classifiers filled in an in-competition observation form; the forms were compared and discussed during the classification meeting after the first competition day, resulting in a final decision.

**Results:**

**Concerning eligibility:**

C to R : 2 players (2 countries): players have to be re-classified on a next occasion and have to handle over more medical evidence about (the severity of) their diseases.

**Concerning functional points**

2 to 1 : 3 players (3 countries)

3 to 2 : 1 player

4 to 3 : 4 players (3 countries): This means that the actual functional assessment has a great match with the results of an expert-based in-competition observation. Nevertheless clear instructions of the functional assessment are needed as well as to instruct the athlete how he/she has to perform the tests as to the classifiers how to describe more detailed the functional abilities of the athletes during testing.

There still remains a lot of discussion about the relation between a 1 point player (T-stick) and other classes. 1 player was tested as 2 point player but performed also with T stick (as a 1 point player)

1 player, assessed as 4 point player (during in-competition observation reduced to 3 points) played in 2 games as a T stick player; in 1 case she even played in the same game as a T-stick player as well as a hand-held stick player. On that occasion she changed points from 4 to 1; if not, the team was playing with too much points on the field.

In both occasions it were players from 1 country (the Netherlands).

**General Remarks:**

First of all the classifiers would like to congratulate and thank the members of the Organizing Committee and all the volunteers for all the work they have done. Whatever the question was they started with trying to find a solution, showing interest and comprehension and acting quickly, firmly and always with a smile.

For the future we will strongly advise ICEWH to insist about the importance of classification in relation to a fair and equitable competition and to provide organizers of detailed information on how to organize a classification session in relation to a given competition as is specified in the proposed Classification Manual: needed space for the testing, specific banks for eligibility classification, privacy (as athletes sometimes have to undress), technical matters (cones with the right height (55 cm),…), administrative support (the names of the participants were only available up to arrival, making computerized preparation impossible), needed time per assessment is 30 minutes, keep the assessment space operational until after protest classification,…

As classification is an essential part of the competition; it has to be scheduled more effectively: try to avoid time pressure or pressure by persons or other (necessary) organizational issues, be aware of the importance of the daily meetings and the administrative work (check/recheck), Special attention to the relation classification assessment - protest classification - in-competition assessment; reconsider the rules.

Concerning the classification process itself we will try to make better test instructions for athletes and for classifiers in the functional assessment, further refine the definitions of the functional classes (abilities / limitations of 1 point player, hitting limitations of 3 point player compared to 4 point player,…) and the assessment based on ICF impairments.

I also would like to stress again that it is the responsibility of the athlete and the team to become a proper classification before entering the competition.

Evidence-based research remains important to further develop this classification system. We hope to convince universities (medical, paramedical or sport departments) and students.
Munich, 8 August 2014

Denis Jaeken
Chief Classifier