



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

Sport Section of the IWAS
www.powerchairhockey.org
office@powerchairhockey.org



ACTIVITY REPORT 2021

from January 2021 upto April 2021.

Sport Executive Committee:

International Meetings

During February 2021 two important meetings were held on-line between Chairman, Fabio Rodo and two main partner organizations FIPFA and IFF.

FIPFA: Present Ricky Stevenson and Donal Byrne. Both the sports share the same values, same vision and partially overlap on potential athletes. The meeting was in line with the one already held in Paris in 2017. Future collaboration is a high priority that can lead to growth for both the sports. The idea is to develop and undersign a Memorandum of Understanding to define the terms of future partnership.

IFF: Present Merita Brun. The International Floorball Federation has always been a good partner of IPCH sharing with it most of the game rules and sport equipment. There will probably be the chance to meet face to face in Italy during 2021. The idea is to collaborate with them to promote the World Cup also in Switzerland 2022.

Sport Congress Organization

The organization of the Sport Congress has been carried out by the Technical and Classification Officer with the support of the Secretary Office. SEC decided to use the platform Eventbrite that allows to collect registration in a digital format.

All participants will have to register through Eventbrite platform. Registrations are open from 20th January until Sunday 9th May 2021. Because the meeting will be held online, there will be no participation fee.

Because of the online setting SEC has decided to invite also IPCH Officials as well as all potentially interested people to participate as observers in order to have the chance to stimulate the participation internationally. IPCH invited IWAS Members and PCH Organizations to share the invitation with the people who can be interested in the topics on the agenda on a national level (including coaches, athletes, national officials etc).

On the platform 3 different kind of tickets will be available:

Delegate - WITH Voting Right: This ticket is reserved to 1 Delegate per Nation. This person will have to attend the whole meeting and will be the only one with the task to express the vote and allowed to talk on behalf of the National Organization.

IPCH needs to confirm all the registration as Delegate WITH voting rights with the National Organization/IWAS Member to make sure the registered person is legitimately appointed as Official Delegate and have an official mandate to represent their Nation in the meeting.

National Delegate: This ticket is reserved for max. 1 Delegate per Nation in addition to the one with voting rights. This person is strongly advised to attend the whole meeting. This



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person will NOT have voting rights, but IS allowed to speak on behalf of the National Organization. IPCH need to confirm all the registration as National Delegate with the National Organization / IWAS Member to make sure the registered person is legitimately registering as Official Delegate and have an official mandate to represent their Nation in the meeting.

Observers: observers will have NO voting rights and are not allowed to speak during the Sport Congress. As the congress will happen online, there will be a chat available where Observers can also express their views and opinions participating in the discussion. IPCH Staff will monitor the chat throughout the meeting and relevant comments will be highlighted or taken into consideration.

Powerchair Hockey Nations that are not represented officially by an IWAS Member and therefore do not have the possibility to have an Official Delegate (with or without voting rights) can register as Observers.

The organization of the Sport Congress will proceed by following the agreed roadmap and schedule:

Roadmap to XXIV IPCH Sport Congress

| DATE | ACTION | WHO |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 20th January 2021 | Distribution Invitation 15th Sport Congress + FIRST Package Opening of registration | IPCH |
| 28th February | Deadline Agenda Item suggestion | Nations / Members |
| 11th April 2021 | Distribution SECOND package of documents | IPCH |
| 9th May 2021 | Deadline for registration | Nations / Members |
| 10/23th May 2021 | Evaluation and control of the mandate and voting rights | IPCH |
| 23rd May 2021 | Deadline for Nation to second/comment Motions | Nations / Members |
| 30th May 2021 | Distribution THIRD package of documents | IPCH |
| 5th June 2021 | 14th IPCH Sport Congress | |

New SEC collaborators

Anna Rossi, IPCH Technical and Classification Officer and also temporarily Competition Officer, worked quite some time together with Aina Budde (Denmark) as Technical Delegate and assistant Technical Delegate on the cancelled EC2020 and on the WC2022. Due to the heavy workload of Anna Rossi, Anna expressed the need of having a permanent assistant. Aina Budde accepted the invitation to be the assistant of Anna Rossi.



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Also IPCH Marketing and Communication Officer Rasmus Dissing Nielsen expressed the wish of having a permanent assistant. Seppe Hemerijckx (Belgium) was found interested in doing this job.

Both assistants have signed a Code of Conduct and a Non-disclosure agreement. They will participate in SEC meetings and all other relevant meetings without voting rights.

Working like that permits the SEC members to do their voluntary work within the SEC as the SEC seeks for more volunteers to do the work.

Questionnaires

To have new detailed statistical information the SEC decides to send the questionnaires to all the connected nations. This information will show the state of affairs in every country. The data will be presented to the nations at the online Sport Congress.

Technical and Classification Committee:

Referee committee

Referee committee has been working a lot on several topics. Matthias Vanhove (BEL) joined the committee in 2021.

The members of the Referee committee now are:

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Head of Committee | Davor Matijasevic | SLO |
| Secretary of committee | Inge de Zwart (Ref. Observers) | NED |
| Members | Lauri Oksanen (Ref. Observers) | FIN |
| | Andrea Vacchetti | ITA |
| | John Blackburn | CAN |
| | Matthias Vanhove | BEL |

Kimmo Virtanen and Ilkka Siiki in their roles of IPCH Referee Instructors can be eventually consulted by the Referee Committee.

Rulebook revision and re-edition

A thorough revision of the current IPCH Game Rules have been realized by the Referee Committee. The current IPCH Game Rules is the result of many additions made during the years to the same documents. There was a huge need to review the book and made it



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easier to be read and to be understood. Also it was necessary to check and eliminate few not updated references etc. A complete reorganization of contents was completed and in the process few proposals for changes have been made as well and will be discussed in the Sport Congress. The new rulebook will be presented to all Nations in the sport congress and will become official right after it with the implementation of the motions and rules changes voted in the meetings.

Referee Town Hall meetings

The Referee Committee decided to organize a virtual meeting of all IPCH licenced referees twice each year. It will be a semi-formal, with some presentations and explanation of new or existing rules, directions on how to manage games, analysis of videos, etc, but also some moments of open discussion, questions or clarification. Participants can send questions in advance, but they can also ask questions directly live and hopefully a discussion will start. First Town Hall meeting will be on 11.04.2021, another meeting will follow after the Sport Congress.

Those meetings are really important to keep IPCH Referees in the loop, monitor their interest and willingness to participate also in between events and keep the education/preparation level updated. SEC and RC believes this tool can also be beneficial for the Nations to have a concrete and continuous reference to IPCH Referee Committee, it hopefully will push Nations into having at least 1 international certified referee that can teach or follow up with national referees following a line of continuity with the IPCH rules and standards.

IPCH Portal for Officials

Referee committee is willing to create a portal where each IPCH referee would have an account, including observers (and potentially other IPCH Officials in the future). The goal is to have all events in there so that referees can mark themselves as available/not available as soon as the dates are published (or at any point later), so that SEC and RC can have an easier job when building the lists for appointing Officials.

As a next step, it would be possible to store all the observation feedback in the system, in order to have always updated data for each referee on hand and don't have to go through Excel sheets or papers.

Becoming Referees - package for new/developing nations

The IPCH education for Referees has so far only focused on international level referees. Therefore, it was dedicated to people who got previous experience in refereeing in PCH and wanted to become a certified international referee. Because of the development the sport is having worldwide we saw an increasing request to attend the C-licence courses also from developing countries where the knowledge on the sport is very basic. The C-licence course is meant for Referees who are able to manage international games and therefore it is not a basic onboarding course, as it requires some previous experience and preparation. The SEC and Referee committee have started to consider new ways of



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education in order to support also those countries who need to develop knowledge in whistling the sport from the very basics. Referee committee will work on a project (for some extents shared and in collaboration with the Development Committee) aimed to create an onboarding package of information about how to become a referee, with references to basic rules and regulations and very basic tips for game management. This package can be made available online and meetings or tutorships can be evaluated and eventually provided by Referee instructors and/or members of the RC.

Referee course in Germany

PCH Organization in Germany suggested the chance to organize and host a Referee Course during one of the National Team Training camps in summer 2021.

This possibility is currently under evaluation as a lot depends on the development of the pandemic situation and the possibility to travel.

Classification

The review of the 2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code was approved by the IPC Governing Board in January 2021. The IPC regularly reviews its policies to remain a robust fit-for-purpose organisation and made a commitment in its Strategic Plan 2019-22 to “address the long-term challenges of classification.” While classification is a complex and ever-evolving area, improving the IPC Athlete Classification Code is seen as essential for the continued development of the Paralympic Movement.

The last review of the IPC Athlete Classification Code was in 2013 and was adopted by the IPC Governing Board leading to the implementation of today’s Code in June 2015. At that time IPCH implemented the new, current, Classification System in 2016 (and underwent the IPC compliance survey with success). Few revisions on some evaluation criteria (for both Arm and Trunk) were applied between 2018 and 2020, those additions did not change the structure of the system but improved the criteria for athletes evaluations.

The IPC Code provides policies and procedures for Paralympic classification that should be common to all sports and to the Paralympic Games.

As the final review documents will not be approved until the IPC General Assembly in December 2023, the current 2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code and accompanying International Standards remain in place and fully effective until the new Code's implementation date. At this stage, it is envisaged that implementation will be January 2025 for summer sports and July 2026 for winter sports. Therefore, IPCH Classification System will stay in place and as soon as feedbacks on the IPC review process will be made available, the IPCH Classification Committee will evaluate the possible changes that will have to be implemented in PCH System.

Webinars on Anti-doping

IWAS Antidoping is working on organizing some educational antidoping online webinars for our athletes on different antidoping topics, for example:

-Athletes' rights and responsibilities



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-Doping Control procedure
-TUEs
Schedule of those meetings is still under evaluation.

Competition Committee:

World Championships 2022 - Switzerland

After the allocation of the competition to Switzerland became official, the organizing process started. Technical Delegate of the competition will be Anna Rossi, assisted by Aina Budde who will in this way complete the training as Technical Delegate and can be then appointed for future competitions in the role.

The Local Organizing Committee has been formed and started to work on several aspects of the organization, periodical meetings are scheduled to happen every 6 weeks among representatives of the LOC and the TD's.

The invitation to the competition has been shared and the qualification criteria explained. As announced, IPCH and the LOC have discussed the possibility of creating a "special" edition of the World Championship increasing the number of allocated teams to 10. The allocations of Nations have been decided on the basis of the Qualification System approved by the Sport Congress in 2010, with some adjustments related to the current situation and to the fact that there was no EC2020 and according to the IPCH WRL list updated on 01.01.2021.

To make this process as clear and transparent as possible all Nations received a complete explanation of the process that led to the adaptations needed to reach the number of 10 allocated Nations for the 5th IWAS Powerchair Hockey World Championship.



| | Criteria | N. of teams | Applicable for WC2022 |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Top Ranked PCH Nation of the last IPCH World Championship qualifies | 1 | Yes |
| 2 | Top 2 ranked PCH Nations from the last IPCH <u>European</u> Regional Championship qualifies | 2 | No - would not be fair to use the EC 2016 rank as this was used already for WC18 and would be outdated. Top 2 Nations from WRL will be allocated instead. |
| 3 | Top ranked PCH Nations from the last IPCH <u>Oceania</u> Regional Championship qualifies | 1 | Yes |
| 4 | Top ranked PCH Nations from the last IPCH <u>American</u> Regional Championship qualifies | 1 | Yes |
| 5 | Top ranked PCH Nations from the last IPCH <u>Asian</u> Regional Championship qualifies | 1 | Yes - no Nation has qualified from Asia, therefore the slot will be allocated to WRL |
| 6 | Top ranked PCH Nations from the last IPCH <u>African</u> Regional Championship qualifies | 1 | Yes - no Nation has qualified from Africa, therefore the slot will be allocated to WRL |
| 7 | The Host country directly qualify - subject of having a rank in the WRL | 1 | Yes |
| | Total <i>(the system foresees the possibility from SEC to appoint the unused slots by WRL order or by giving a wild card)</i> | 8 | |

According to the analysis above the allocated Nations who have the right to participate in WC2022 are:

1. Italy Winner of WC2018 (n.3 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021)
2. Germany n.1 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021
3. Denmark n.2 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021
4. Australia Top ranked nation from Oceania region
5. Canada Top ranked nation from American region
6. The Netherlands n. 5 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021
7. Switzerland Hosting country (n.4 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021)
8. Belgium n, 6 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021
9. Finland n.7 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021
10. Spain n.8 IPCH WRL on 01.01.2021

The competition logo has been created and approved both by IWAS and IPCH SEC and the date and ways to proceed with the launch are currently under discussion.



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During the Sport Congress on 5th June a special session of the meeting will be dedicated to a presentation of the IPCH World Championship with the aim of giving Nations and teams as much information as possible regarding the upcoming deadlines as well on the logistics etc.

Call for Bids for QT2023 and EC2024

The SEC has decided to open the bidding procedures for the next two big competitions:

- IPCH Qualification Tournament for the European Championship due to happen in 2023
- IPCH European Championship due to happen in 2024

The open call for bidding to host those competitions is scheduled to be released between the end of March and beginning of April, both via email to IWAS Member Organizations and PCH Organizations and via website/social media.

The deadline for sending the Letter of Intent and start the evaluation process for the appointment of the hosting nation will follow specific deadlines

- 30 September 2021 for Qualification Tournament 2023
- 31 January 2022 for European Championship 2024

Friendly match Germany vs Switzerland

The PCH Organization in Germany suggested the chance to organize and host an official IPCH friendly match during one of the National Team training camps in summer 2021. Switzerland could be interested to participate in the official friendly match. In this occasion it would be also possible to plan an official classification session for the players.

This possibility is currently under evaluation as a lot depends on the development of the pandemic situation and the possibility to travel.

Development Committee

In the first quarter of 2021 the focus has been on both keeping in touch with the existing development countries and to follow up on new potential Powerchair Hockey countries. Thus there have been various meetings between the Development Committee and key persons from different countries around the world. Having ongoing meetings and contact in general between the Development Committee and the development countries will be something that will be prioritized in the future work of the Development Committee, as it is essential to secure a positive, sustainable and ongoing development of Powerchair Hockey around the world.

The work done by the Development Committee in the period from October 2022 until this point has given a much clearer insight in the current state of development in many countries, and it has also contributed to making new profitable relationships between key persons from different development countries and both the Development Committee and



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the IPCH Sports Executive Committee in general.

It is on that foundation of which the Development Committee has the following plans for the further work in 2021:

- **Start the development of Powerchair Hockey in at least two new countries, i.e. The United Kingdom and Brazil**

Since the end of 2020 there has been an ongoing and positive dialogue between the Development Committee and both The United Kingdom and Brazil. Both countries have shown a great interest in developing Powerchair Hockey in their country.

Therefore, there have been meetings between the Development Committee and key persons from these respective countries with the purpose of both getting an understanding of how each country organizes sports for disabled people and also to discuss how to move on towards developing Powerchair Hockey. These kinds of meetings are expected to continue throughout 2021.

At the moment we are at a very early stage of development and therefore obstacles probably will come along the way that could make it difficult to achieve this goal inside the year 2021, but nevertheless a good and positive connection between the two nations and the Development Committee has been established, and therefore we feel confident that the potential is definitely existing, and we will do anything possible to pursue this.

- **Securing a continuing development of Powerchair Hockey in Australia, Canada and the U.S.A.**

Besides focusing on developing Powerchair Hockey in new countries the Development Committee will also focus on supporting the Powerchair Hockey movement in Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. The three countries represent crucial continents for our sport in order to reach our long-term goal which is to become a Paralympic Sport.

Powerchair Hockey is mainly played in Europe and the SEC needs to keep on working towards development outside of Europe, and therefore it is of the utmost importance to support Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. in any way possible.

There have already been meetings between the Development Committee and Australia, Canada and the U.S.A., and it is the intention by the Development Committee to maintain an ongoing dialogue with Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. in order to secure both the existence and the future development of Powerchair Hockey in these countries/continents.



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- Enabling representatives from development nations in the international work of Powerchair Hockey

In order to secure a sustainable and diverse organization of Powerchair Hockey internationally it is the opinion of the Development Committee that it is essential to involve representatives from development nations to a much greater extent, than it is the case at this point. This will be beneficial for both the IPCH Sports Executive Committee and for the countries.

Therefore, the SEC will be much more proactive when it comes to encouraging representatives from the development countries to take part in the international work regardless if it is minor or major topics. In the end all of this of course relies on both a genuine interest in taking part of the work and on the amount of available resources from the persons.

- Global Development Network

As mentioned above SEC considers it important to involve representatives from development countries in the international work within the IPCH. A clear example of that is this initiative, which the Development Committee have decided to call the Global Development Network.

Together with two representatives from Canada, who have been highly involved in the whole process so far, the Development Committee have been working on the idea of creating a community for all the development countries along with a few representatives from more developed and established countries. The objective is to continue the growth and development of Powerchair Hockey around the world through collaboration and focus on improving the quality of experiences. More specific:

1. Create bonds and networking opportunities among development countries.
2. Provide opportunities to share best practices on topics including education and awareness, marketing and promotion, recruitment and much more.
3. Contribute to the Development Committee's overall agenda and priorities.

It is the intention that the Global Development Network first and foremost will be an initiative run by a few appointed representatives from developing countries, but the Development Officer will of course also be involved, as this network refers to the Development Committee and lastly to the IPCH Sports Executive Committee.

The Global Development Network is expected to be up and running during 2021, and the Development Committee hopes this initiative will be helpful to secure stronger



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bonds between development countries and thus support a continuing development of Powerchair Hockey across the world.

- **Manual for development countries**

In the work so far regarding development of Powerchair Hockey it has become very clear that it is key to have some kind of “Manual for development countries” in which you can find the most important and basic information you need to know, when starting Powerchair Hockey.

The objective with this manual is to make sure that people with the interest in taking part in Powerchair Hockey or maybe even start up a club, easily can get the necessary information such as basic game rules, specifics of the chairs, where to purchase boundaries, sticks and chairs etc. etc.

This kind of manual could also be beneficial in order to secure a more common ground when developing Powerchair Hockey around the world, so the SEC makes sure that there aren't too many differences in how Powerchair Hockey is played and how it is perceived between the countries.

Therefore, the Development Committee will be working alongside the Referee Committee to collaborate on creating this manual, and it is the intention that it should be useful for anyone with an interest in our beloved sport.

- **Focus on being visible and supportive towards all countries**

Lastly it is very important for the SEC to emphasize that the aim is to be as visible and supportive as possible. The SEC is aware that developing Powerchair Hockey is important not only for new countries but also for the more established countries. The pandemic has been tough on all of us, and therefore Powerchair Hockey needs all the support it can get in any country.

The SEC encourages you to contact us at any time whenever you feel like it is necessary. You can contact the Development Officer at danni.h.mogensen@powerchairhockey.org



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Marketing and Communication Committee:

A big challenge for the Marketing and Communication committee, has been finding the resources and time to run the IPCH social media channels. Creating engaging content has been a challenge, both due to the time it takes to continuously update and create content but also because of the lack of events and tournaments. This makes it harder to create relevant content as well as the content that can be created takes much longer to produce.

To address some of these challenges, the committee has taken some actions that hopefully will improve the presence on social media.

- **Start of a new IPCH Social Media Team**

As one of the actions the SEC has taken to improve the communication effort on social media. SEC has set up an IPCH Social Media Team. The idea for this team is to recruit members from each country, so the team is able to provide news and content from every league and nation. The team should both be creating local content with an international angle as well as general content.

Currently, the Social Media Team has participants from Belgium, Spain, Denmark and Canada.

The Marketing and Communication Officer is still looking for members from other countries. If you're interested in joining the team, feel free to reach out at rasmus.dissingnielsen@powerchairhockey.org.

- **New Marketing and Communication assistant**

Recently the committee has also been strengthened with appointment of Seppe Hemerijckx from Belgium, as new Marketing and Communication assistant. Seppe will be leading the social media efforts of the IPCH.

- **International Powerchair Hockey Day**

The first steps towards making the first International Powerchair Hockey Day has been taken. The committee has formed a working group who will develop and organize the International Powerchair Hockey day. Paul Desaulniers from Canada, who is also a new member of the Social Media team and the man behind the idea, is in charge of the work group.