



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



ACTIVITY REPORT 2020

from January 2020 upto December 2020.

Sport Executive Committee:

Composition of SEC

The Sport Executive Committee consisted of 5 people. After the resignation of the Competition Officer and Development Officer in 2019, the other SEC members were looking for people to help to get the work done. Danni Hillbrandt-Mogensen from Denmark offered to become Development Officer. After the official introduction, SEC decided to co-opt Danni Hillbrandt-Mogensen.

Sport Executive Committee meetings are held every 3 weeks. In addition to this specific working meeting regarding specific aspects of Committees with Heads, volunteers or among SEC people are organized when needed.

Representing the SEC and the movement the Chair participated in all online monthly Executive Board meetings from August 2020.

Sport Congress Organisation:

Preparation of the sport congress 2020 continued, SEC seek chances to have a moment to meet and update the Nations on all the several aspects. After the postponement of the EC2020 a new time window for proposals was opened. In the meantime the SEC decided, in agreement with IWAS, to organize the Sport Congress online in 2021.

Technical and Classification Committee:

Classification Research on Trunk Functionality

After the World Championship 2018 Classification Committee, also on the basis of the inputs arrived by some players and coaches from different Nations, addressed the need to investigate more on the Trunk function in order to evaluate our current assessment system and investigate if there was any possibility to improve it.

In September 2019 the report of the practical study about the influence of limited trunk mobility on the arm-reach in Powerchair Hockey was made available. The report was written by Sjoerd Vennema, for his third year internship of the program Health and Technology at The Hague University of Applied Science. In accordance with the findings of the study the Classification Committee started an evaluation about how to improve the trunk assessment in Powerchair Hockey. Further investigations were conducted by IPCH Classification Committee and Classifiers during the IPCH Euro Stars 2020 in Lignano Sabbiadoro. Talks and discussions with coaches and players were also very useful for Classifiers.

The objective was to finalise a review of the trunk assessment methods and eventually of the Classification Manual for the Sport Congress 2020.

A final recommendation regarding the refinement of the assessment of the trunk function and a consequent revision of the IPCH Classification Manual has been finalised and approved by SEC right after the Eurostar Tournament in February 2020.

SEC's wish was to explain this refinement during the Sport Congress scheduled for the 8th June in Pajulahti and have it in place for the WC2022. Because of the postponement of the EC to 2021 IPCH SEC and Classification Committee have conducted an analysis of the situation. By analysing the IPCH Masterlist and the classification forms from previous competition it became clear that the application of the Trunk refined criteria affects 11 already classified players worldwide (of which 9 from Europe). Because of the postponement of the EC there will be only 1 year in between 2 major official competition (IPCH World Championships are due to happen in 2022)



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



In order to put this change into practice effective immediately and in order to give a reasonable time to all Nations to adapt and plan/select their teams according to those new refined rules IPCH organized a webinar session/video conference to which all nations have been invited to participate with at least 1 representative to get to hear a presentation/introduction of this refinement. In order to make sure those changes are well understood and eventually put into practice also nationally (for those Nations who already follow the IPCH Classification System also in their national leagues) IPCH recommended the presence of the National Classifiers or Head of National Classification. The webinar took place on the 25th June.

After the webinar a survey was conducted to get feedback on the initiative which appears to have been well appreciated by all the Nations. A recorded version of the webinar was also made available for those who could not attend.

Courses at EuroStars Tournament Feb2020

IPCH REFEREE COURSE:

Course was led by Davor Matijašević and Kimmo Virtanen, who took part of the course as the Referee Instructor Trainee. Since there were more applicants than available places (8), an interview process was performed and candidates that were deemed most likely to pass selected.

The goal of the course was to train the candidates during the course days and observe them during competition days. The teaching part of the course started on 19.2.2020 in the evening and lasted until the first match of the tournament on 21.2.

Candidates took part in the theoretical exam on the 21st of February in the afternoon and were observed by referee instructors during all three days of matches as part of the practical exam. The course was focused on two main areas: movement & positioning and game management.

Each of the areas was divided in sections that were designed to teach the candidates how to best lead the games, provide a positive atmosphere and give players and coaches as much freedom to express themselves on the field while promoting the brand of Powerchair hockey. Instructors prepared presentations with multiple videos that were targeted to teach candidates specific techniques and approaches leading the game, as well as movement and positioning, which is the foundation for successful game management.

Part of the course took place on the main playing field in the hall where special exercises were performed in order to teach the candidates the best way to move and position themselves on the field. In addition, a specially prepared table-top playing field with wooden wheelchair and referee figures was used to demonstrate positioning in various tactical situations on the field.

Among 8 participants only 2 referees successfully passed the course and obtained the IPCH C Referee Licence.

Course assessment

After having performed a review of the course, instructors agreed that some areas need more attention in the future. For example, the course didn't address rules too much, which might have caused issues with referees when setting the line. IPCH agreed that in future courses, Referee Instructors will combine sections talking about the line with references and videos related to the rules to describe in more detail to the candidates what is expected of them. Another section that will be introduced is the referee image, techniques of showing cards and additional focus on whistling. While these topics were covered as part of the course, IPCH believes that Referee Instructors should stress them more, as they might've been lost in the large amount of information that instructors tried to pass onto the candidates. Naturally, in order to be able to fit in all the above-mentioned topics into the course, additional time will be needed. A proposal how to obtain that time without extending the course can be found in Tournament assessment

As it was expected from a tournament featuring some of the world's best teams, matches were played on the highest level. It was very good to see that teams adapted more offensive roles for T-stick players, which IPCH attribute to the new 2-point rule for goals scored by them. There have been a couple of them in this tournament, just as in the Qualification Tournament in Prague. Since less experienced players (and teams) have sometimes been confused by the current penalty shot sign (raised fist with other arm pointing at the centre spot), it was decided to test usage of ice hockey/floorball sign for penalty shot.

This course also showed how important knowledge of English is on the international level. National Associations should be informed that any candidates with a not good enough level of English will encounter difficulties in obtaining their licence.



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



IPCH REFEREE OBSERVERS COURSE:

The course only counted on 2 participants, one of which was there to renew the licence.

Lauri Oksanen was appointed as Observers Instructor and Senior Observer conducted all the preparatory work.

During the theoretical part of the course several topics were addressed and discussed; personal background, possibilities to listen and learn to know the person behind the role; rules, regulations, code of conduct, information on how to use the observational forms.

Observers were involved in following up referee trainees' physical session in the arena; and in the session of game leadership.

Observers also worked together with Referees during controls and check-in at the arena.

During the matches observation of referees were performed and feedbacks have been given both to referees and observers.

Course assessment

Referee observer trainees should attend the referee candidates' sessions to get a common idea what is expected from trainees in the rink. Still a little modulation for the evaluation sheet is needed; general impression of referees described only with few sentences, not part of numeric grading.

Double work away from evaluating the process, more delegation needed from chief referee – trust is the key word. The way of thinking of how to handle people especially in coaching situations should be in line with our code of conduct agreement.

IPCH JURY MEMBERS COURSE:

The Jury team counted on only 2 people. The Jury IPCH Instructor Dorte Berenth and 1 new Jury trainee. The Trainee was educated in the days before matches about the following topics:

- How to behave as an official
- Jury Members Tasks
- Preparation for the control day and the match days
- Procedure for Control of documents
- How to support referees during equipment check
- What is a classification and how support the classifiers and the Teams.
- IPCH Class Calculator tool
- IPCH Match table procedures and app (still in development)

Jury Members also participated in the education of 5 volunteers appointed for the Match Table tasks (time keeping and score keeping) For Jury members it was hard on the match days – only two Jury members is not enough for all matches – no time for breaks or lunch/dinner – they were at duties from 09:00 to 22:00.

Course assessment

The trainee successfully completed the training and will be now listed in the IPCH Jury Members list.

The Jury also reported a very good collaboration with the students. After a thorough instruction in the duties as time- and scorekeeper, they were ready for the duties on the match table. They were engaged and focused on the duties as time- and scorekeeper.

IPCH CLASSIFIERS COURSE:

5 Classifiers have been instructed on the IPCH Classification Manual, 2 of them were refreshing their knowledge after a period of international inactivity.

The course was led by Kees van Breukelen.

The course contents was presented by a PowerPoint (215 slides) which was also given on paper to the course participants covered:

- Definition of classification and why classification is necessary
- Basics of Classification and IPC classification standards and guidelines
- Detailed explanation of PCH classification both theoretical and practical.

Trainees also participated in the classification of 16 players from 4 countries.



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



Course assessment

The course went really well, and all the candidates have successfully passed the evaluation. One critical point was the division of workload among the IPCH Instructor and the Senior IPCH Classifier who was not always working for the best. This will be a learning point for the future to better divide the tasks among instruction and supervision of practical aspects regarding classification.

Recruiting Officials

It became clear while offering the different kind of courses that Nations do usually prefer to have trained Referee and Classifiers, as those are the 2 categories of Officials needed also on a national level for the national leagues. It became clear that Nations find it difficult to invest money in education for Jury Members and Referees Observers as those are not as much needed as the other 2 categories. IPCH and the Head of the committees have analysed this situation and agreed to discuss this topic further with the Nation to seek for new chances or new way to recruit more Jury Members and Observers.

A possible solution that will be tried is to include in the appointment for the IPCH Official Competitions 1 trainee in those 2 categories, offering the slot to the hosting nation first and/or to those Nations who are not represented among the Officials.

Speed system

The German speed control system was tested during the Eurostar Tournament in February 2020.

The experience with this new system was overall good, and it presents a lot of good points: it is easier to handle as it is more portable than the one we currently use, it gives the measurements of both wheels as well as the average speed score by combining the 2 results. This is beneficial for players as well, as this helps to understand also potential "issues" with batteries or engines. The screen with the result is cabled, so there is no need for remote measurement that can be more affected by how the remote is positioned or handled by the official performing the control. We have also seen that the system still need some improvements as during the 3 days of matches it got damaged.

In any case IPCH has agreed to allow the German System to be used as an official speed control system in further competition as well as the results were in line with the IPCH Official one, in use since 2010.

The Finnish LOC started to work on a possible other system of which we got very good feedback and whose results were tested also during the Finnish league and would have been used in Pajulahti during EC2020.

Appointing Officials EC2020

The Technical and Classification Officer as stated by the rules after having consulted all the Heads of the different committees proceeded to send the appointing letters to the Officials invited to EC2020. All the Officials invited got the information about the postponement and about the cancellation of the EC as well as the Nation.

Rulebook Review Project

Referee committee started working on a project to review the Rules of the Game document. The review aims to improve the readability of the document by re-organizing the topics in a more logical order, trying to avoid misunderstandings and too many references to other articles which could create confusion especially when changes and modifications are done after each sport congress.

A first draft of the Rule Book will be presented in the online Sport Congress.

IPCH System for Online eXams (SOX).

Referee committee set up an online system where to provide Online Exams. The platform can be used for Referee Exams but potentially also from other categories to periodically check the knowledge or to keep the Officials involved.



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



Competition committee:

IPCH EuroStars 2020 Italy

The IPCH Euro Stars 2020 Tournament was held in Lignano Sabbiadoro (UD), Italy, from 19th to 23rd February 2020. The event was organized under the aegis of the IWAS and the IPCH by the local organizing committee (LOC) appointed by the Federazione Italiana Wheelchair Hockey (FIWH).

The organization of the event stems from the will of the Italian National team to have a Test Match before the European Championship and to be able to complete the classifications of the athletes started during the 2019 National Play-offs. This event was sanctioned by IPCH as IPCH Official Competition and was therefore valid for the World Ranking list. The possibility to organize IPCH Officials Educational Courses for Classifiers, Referees, Referee Observers and Jury Members was a key factor for IPCH to approve the tournament as official.

More than one hundred people were involved in the event, considering Team delegations members, IPCH Officials (instructors and course participants included), suppliers and sponsors, volunteers. All participants were hosted in the same facility.

As stated by the rules a transportation service was organized for all national teams and officials.

In the IPCH Euro Stars 2020 Tournament, about 15 volunteers have been involved, during the whole event they had different functions as drivers, hospitality/hosting services for teams and officials.

Live Streaming has been taken care of with particular attention. The streaming sessions were organized by the Italian Federation Service with the support of an external video operator, Stefano Bin, and under the supervision of IPCH Communication Officer that was also present during the event. Matches were streamed and are available on the IPCH Powerchair Hockey YouTube channel.

Because the tournament was an officially sanctioned IPCH event, the invitations were sent directly to all IWAS Member organizations and to all PCH National Organization IPCH is in contact with worldwide in September 2019. 4 Nations confirmed their participation: Italy, Germany, Finland, Switzerland.

Postponement of EC2020

In May 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IPCH and the Local Organizing Committee decided to postpone the event one year, so we can make sure it will be safe to organize the event.

The Local Organizing Committee looked into possibilities. A possible new solution has been found as it looked possible to postpone the competition of 1 year and organize it between 31/5 and 07/6 2021.

SEC decided that the event would continue to go under the name IPCH European Championship 2020, despite the change of year.

Cancellation of EC2020

The complicated and unpredictable situation created by the COVID-19 Pandemic brought the IPCH Sport Executive Committee, in agreement with the Local Organizing Committee, to postpone the European Championship in Finland to 31st May – 7th June 2021.

Because of the still ongoing uncertainty IPCH, together with the LOC, has been closely monitoring the situation with at heart the situation and condition of all the athletes, officials, volunteers and supporters involved.

By the rules, the European Championship is the qualification tournament for the European Region for the World Championship planned to happen in 2022, so, of course, the hope of the SEC and of the organizers, as well as the one of the teams, was to do our best to try to keep planning a successful event with all the protocols and measures to minimize the risk.

The complexity of the overall situation, thought, affects also and mainly the National teams and their organization and logistics. Therefore, IPCH SEC decided to plan a series of one to one online meetings with the representatives of each country involved in the EC to better understand what the situation looks like nationally and what are the plans for the different National Teams.

All the meetings took place between 19th and 29th October, and were led by Anna Rossi, as appointed IPCH Technical Delegate of the competition with the support of Aina Budde (IPCH Assistant Technical Delegate) and Kenny Verbraekel representing IPCH SEC in his role of IPCH Secretary.



Main outlined topics common to all the meetings have been:

- The situation of the pandemic in each Nation
- Possibility to plan training sessions and/or national leagues/competition both on club and National team level
- Thoughts and feelings about having the EC 2020 in May/June
- Timelines and roadmap for travel arrangements
- If it would be a possibility to move EC till Autumn 2021
- If EC is not possible, how to qualify for WC
- If 10 Nations for WC could be a possibility

These are strange times and the situation is constantly in flux, which makes it impossible for any of us to foresee how the situation will develop.

Training is only possible in a few Nations and the level of the competition at EC would suffer under the lack of training. Furthermore, the general thought is that there is almost no chance of the situation changing and a vaccine being ready already in May/June.

If EC is moved to Autumn 2021, if it is possible with the Venue, it could cause a problem economically and result in few nations not able to take part in both EC and WC the year after.

Having Nations withdrawing from the EC might as well result in huge difficulties for the Organizers under the budget point of view.

Therefore, as Technical Delegates, we report to the SEC that the most dominant feeling is that it will not be possible to have EC as planned.

If the EC will be cancelled, then the most popular solution to how to solve the issue of how to qualify is to expand WC to include 10 Nations. The Nations will be willing to adapt to the situation and accept that some rooms might not be fully equipped for wheelchair users.

The final advice from our side as Technical Delegates of the event is therefore to consider the cancellation of the European Championships and the possibility of creating a special/new competition concept for the WC2022.

Site Inspection in Nottwil

Program:

Wednesday, 30 September 2020 Site Visit Infrastructure Nottwil	Arrivals in Nottwil Visit of the Schweizer Paraplegiker-Zentrum Visit of Hotel Sempachersee Visit of the Auditorium (meal court) Visit of Sports hall SPZ (trainings halls) Visit hotel for supporters and extras in Sursee
Thursday, 1 October 2020 Site Visit Infrastructure Sursee	Stadthalle Sursee Inspection Competition Hall Meeting with LOC Final Q&A

Nottwil and the Schweizer Paraplegiker-Zentrum is quick and easy to find, it can be reached by car, as well as by public transport. The centre is a ten-minute walk from the railway station in Nottwil, where there are trains every half hour to and from Lucerne, and (via Sursee) to and from Basel, Bern, Geneva and Zurich. Both the Nottwil train station and the path to the SPZ are wheelchair accessible. The SPZ also benefit from their own bus stop on the regional bus network route.

Sursee is a small town 4 km away from Nottwil and connected to it by train and public transportation in a very easy way. Sursee according to the Bid presented will host the Competition field and eventually the accommodation of few delegates not closely involved in the Team Delegation. Few Hotels in Sursee have already been contacted in order to ensure availability and if possible fair fares for supporters and family members.



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



After the Site Inspection, and the decision of cancelling the EC2020, IPCH got in touch with the Swiss LOC in order to discuss the outcomes of the meeting IPCH had with all the Nations involved in the EC2020, which will be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the possible effects this can have on the WC2022.

LOC of WC2022 has accepted the proposal to increase the number of participating teams from 8 to 10 providing the following two conditions are met:

1. The entry fee of each team member will have to be adjusted to the new needs.
2. In order to run the group matches in an adequate and fair way, the length of the WC22 will be extended by one day compared to the regular length of World Championships. Thus, the official opening ceremony is scheduled for Tuesday in the late afternoon. A first draft of the adapted game schedule has already been shared with IPCH.

The budget has been optimized for this new scenario but additional requests with financial impacts will not have space in the budget in the future.

On the ground of the site inspection held on 30 October - 1 November 2020, IPCH Inspectors and Sport Executive committee will advise IWAS to appoint Switzerland to host WC2022 and SC2022.

Allocation World Championship 2022 to Switzerland

In December 2020, the announcement of the allocation of Switzerland as Host Country for the World Championship 2022 was made. Team delegations will be accommodated at the Hotel Sempachersee and the venues of the Schweizer Paraplegiker-Zentrum will be used for training, controls and meetings.

The games will be played in the nearby town of Sursee at the Sursee Stadthalle.

The venue can host up to 3200 people and provides all the infrastructures needed to perfectly host the event both in terms of space, capabilities and collateral happenings.

After the cancellation of the European Championships 2020, due to happen in June 2021, IPCH, Wheelchair Sport Switzerland and Swiss Powerchair Hockey Organization have been actively investigating the possibility to make the World Championship 2022 a special edition of the competition with more than the usual 8 participating teams. This was possible also on the ground of the meetings IPCH had with all the Nations supposed to participate in the EC2020 in Pajulahti as all the Nations agreed and committed to supporting the organization of a possibly bigger competition with all the potential logistical challenges.

Development Committee

A new Development Officer was announced on the 30th of September 2020 and the initial work for the rest of 2020 was to follow up on several "cold contacts" and try to reconnect with countries in the development stage. The work consisted of two main focuses:

1. To reconnect specifically with Australia, Canada and The U.S.A. in order to get insight in the current state of Powerchair Hockey in each nation and with the intention to restrengthen the bond between IPCH and these nations/continents in order to secure a stronger and more sustainable future collaboration regarding development of Powerchair Hockey in each nation.
2. To get a clear view on which of the many old contacts to different countries were still active and relevant, and if they were, then try to reconnect with the purpose of discussing the state of Powerchair Hockey in the specific country.

Because there hadn't been too much contact with all these nations and contacts for quite a while, it took longer than expected to get a connection. But at the end of 2020 IPCH had both gained a much clearer view on the actual active key persons from the different countries, and also managed to re-establish a connection with most of these key persons.



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



Thus the foundation for a more focused development work for 2021 was in place.

Marketing and Communication committee:

2020 has definitely been a different and challenging year in many ways. This was also the case for the marketing and communication committee. They were challenged to create content about the sport that was more or less shot down most of the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

IPCH European Championship 2020 - launching, postponing and then cancelling

The Marketing and Communication Committee started the year by launching the website and social media channels for the European Championship, which was planned to be taking place in 2020.

Huge events like the World Championship and the European championship is usually the most important catalyst for creating engaging content for IPCH social media. This time most of the news about the upcoming event was not the kind of news SEC wanted to share. After the pandemic hit us and we realized that we were not able to pull off this event, we had to communicate the sad news about postponing the event one year.

In december, as the pandemic had gained a firm grip in the world, we had to realize that it was impossible to organize the European Championship. This meant we had to communicate yet another bad news.

IPCH Euro Stars tournament

Just before the whole world was affected by the pandemic, IPCH fortunately was able to have one official tournament. The IPCH Euro Stars tournament took place just a few kilometres away from most affected Italian cities that already were affected by Coronavirus. The IPCH Euro Stars tournament was meant to be a warm-up for the European Championship that was planned to take place a few months later. At the tournament the Marketing and Communications committee was represented by the committee officer, Rasmus Dissing Nielsen.

At the tournament the committee was able to create daily content, to be used across the social media channels. The tournament was also streamed live to the official IPCH YouTube channel. The livestream was produced by the local organizing committee.

Besides the daily content for social media, the committee used the opportunity to create videos for future use, alongside an aftermovie for the event. The videos created for future use was originally planned to be used up to the European Championship, but since the Powerchair Hockey activities have been shot down most of the year. Will instead be used at a later time.

#StayAtHomeChallenge PCH edition

As the world entered lockdown, the PCH movement started to take part of the #StayAtHomeChallenge and started sharing their love for PCH by sharing their skills and challenging each other across nations on video. In mid-April the Marketing and Communication Committee did a compilation video of the best shared #StayAtHomeChallenge-videos. The video was a success and showed the love and commitment to the sport as well as showed the bonds of friendship Powerchair Hockey makes across the world.

Start of the Social Media Team

In late September the Marketing and Communication Officer took the early steps to start up the new Social Media Team. The plan was to create a team that could start to create and share content from leagues around the world. This should both increase the amount of content as well as help the development of PCH by highlighting activities, as soon as the PCH world was able to start playing again. The plan was also that the team should help with the general management of IPCH social media channels and creating content.

Announcing the host of the IPCH World Cup

Luckily, the committee was able to end the year with some positive communication.

On one of the last days of the year, IPCH could announce the appointment of Switzerland to be the host of the IPCH World Championship 2022, to take place in Nottwil, Switzerland.