



International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
(IWAS)

IWAS POWERCHAIR HOCKEY

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



ACTIVITY REPORT 2022

from January 2022 upto October 2022.

Sport Executive Committee:

International Meetings

A new meeting with IFF took place in June 2022.

The meeting was attended by Fabio Rodo, Danni Mogesen and Anna Rossi.

The International Floorball Federation has always been a good partner of IPCH sharing with it most of the game rules and sport equipment.

They could support and collaborate on promotion and advertisement, events and so on. IFF is willing to promote events/activities from IPCH.

IFF also offers to help out with statistical programs for events and referee/observer education and recruitment.

It would be possible to include some representatives from IPCH in various IFF committees (referee, observer, development, competition)

Sport Congress Organization

The Sport Executive Committee discussed the opportunity to move the IPCH Sports Congress that normally happens right after the big competitions to a more neutral moment. This topic was also raised a few times in the meetings with the LOC and with some National representatives.

Organizing the Sport Congress right after a huge competition had a long list of pros among which we can list the chance to discuss proposals and motions face to face before voting on them and to get the chance to invite some new or developing nations to visit the competition and the sports congress to get to know more about the sport and the movement. But hosting the Sports congress the day after such a huge competition also had a lot of challenges related to logistics, the tiredness of the participants that mostly come from a very complicated, stressful week, and also represents a cost for both IPCH, the LOC and the participants.

After long discussions and considering the fact that at the moment the SEC consists of 4 people of which 2 are recruited as supporting members without voting rights, adding that we cannot count anymore on the precious support of an IPCH Secretary, the SEC has decided to postpone the Sport Congress to autumn/winter 2022 (October/November) and host it once again online in order to be able to properly focus on its organization and to grant the chance for as many people as possible to join from all over the world.

As happened in 2021 it was decided to use the platform Eventbrite that allows to collect registration in a digital format.



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This year the Sport Congress will also host the Elections of the Sport Executive Committee for the 2022 – 2026 period.

Powerchair Hockey has been developing quite a lot in the last 10 years, many great changes and improvements have been made under several points of views as for example: technical, classification, safety, level of playing, etc.

All this has been possible thanks to the availability and support of volunteers that had to deal with huge workloads as well as, quite often, big responsibilities.

The last 3 years have been a huge challenge for everyone as well as for our sport. Due to the pandemic we could not play anymore and a lot of the development activities (and others) suffered from a sudden stop.

The IPCH as a committee needs more people willing to put some time in the international projects. Otherwise it will become impossible to achieve all the goals, and keep up with the dream of becoming a Paralympic sport.

The Sport Executive Committee decided to dedicate the 15th Sport Congress to do a proper recap of what has been done in the past few years and what should/could be done in the future in order to draw – together with the Nations participating in PCH – a common path and a common goal for the future.

The Sport Congress is open to all people interested in hearing and getting to know more about the sport and the international movement. As IPCH we do invite people to join and attend this meeting as much as possible as it is very important to create a shared culture and information and to stimulate participation internationally.

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.

Technical and Classification Committee:

Referee committee

The members of the Referee committee now are:



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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.

Referee Town Hall meetings

The Referee Committee decided to organize a virtual meeting of all IPCH licensed referees twice each year. It will be semi-formal, with some presentations and explanations 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.

Unfortunately participation was not as expected, a lack of interest also in relation to the topics to put up for discussion was registered. This brought to a loss of motivation from the committee members managing the project. For these reasons the Referee Town Hall meeting project is currently on hold and will be re-evaluated in the future.

IPCH Referee Development group

In 2021 it has become very clear that the IPCH movement suffers from a lack of referees. The current educational system, while adequate for the time when it was designed, has proven to be insufficient to bring enough quality referees on board. The main issue seems to be obtaining the C-license, which requires a course to be organized in the scope of an international tournament. While the Referee Commission agrees that in-person observation of referees on a high level tournament is essential for assessment of referee's readiness for the international level, the course part of the process seems to be a bottleneck. Courses bring additional costs to the candidates and the organizers and can sometimes be "too much" for otherwise talented referees to absorb in such a short amount of time. With that in mind. This is the background from which came the proposal to establish a Referee Development Group (RDG).



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The idea behind RDG is to identify talented referees with international potential in national championships and work with them throughout the season using videos and remote meetings like Zoom or Google Meet (and of course in person, where possible).

Referees could be identified by other international referees, members of IPCH (observers, jury members, even classifiers) or even national powerchair hockey organization.

The leadership of RDG will assess them and assign them a coach who would work with them. Once candidates are deemed ready, they would be invited to the next available international tournament (with National Teams or maybe even high level club tournaments upon agreement with RC and SEC), where they would be observed by IPCH instructors and, if they satisfy the criteria, awarded a C-level license. Of course, they would have to pass the theoretical exam and also possess an adequate level of English.

We believe that this approach would yield more referees than the current system, since they would have a benefit of (relatively) continuous work with a coach before they are put under the spotlight on the international level. It would, of course, require some changes in regulations, where members of IPCH RDG would be allowed to referee official friendly matches, if appointed by IPCH SEC/RC. Naturally, they would not be appointed to other official events until they actually get the license.

Some potential candidates for this project have already been contacted and the project will be soon kicked off officially.

Classification

IPCH was invited to fill in a new IPC Classification Survey between April and June 2022 as a monitoring exercise on Compliance with the 2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code (the Code). Classification is an ever-evolving area, thus Classification will always represent a unique developmental opportunity for all Para sports. Through this survey, IPC hopes to encourage healthy dialogue surrounding Code Compliance in order to identify areas where members may need support. The responses received will provide greater oversight of the Code Compliance landscape and help shape a new Classification compliance strategy. The survey's main aim was to promote a greater consideration and conversation around Classification which is an important step in fostering a positive Code Compliance culture. It is important to ensure that on top of having a set of compliant rules, the Classification Systems and processes across Para sports are being implemented in a Code compliant manner. The current Code review process does not alter the requirement to maintain compliance with the current Code. The survey also aimed to gather up-to-date information which will aid the ongoing Code review discussions.

IPCH has highlighted as areas in which further research is needed the following:

- **Short stature impairment** - about this the Classification Committee developed already an updated best practice which was shared with all Nations after the Bever Cup and



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before the World Championship - because of this some players with Short Stature Impairment have been moved to R status meaning they will need to undergo classification again with more refined assessments.

- **Coordination Impairment** - improving the assessment of athletes presenting coordination impairment is a common challenge for many para-sports. Because this is a common challenge to other sports IPCH will on one side monitor the development of other sports and follow IPC guidelines, and on the other keep working to develop sport-specific guidelines and best practices for Powerchair Hockey.

Most of the players with coordination impairment, have been moved to R status and will be reclassified in the upcoming sessions to support research and allow the classifiers to test new methods and procedures to fine-tune the assessment for those players.

- **Amputation (limb deficiency)** is not a very common impairment in Powerchair Hockey, seen the limited number of cases of athletes with amputation further investigations and research to improve the assessment methods is needed. In this case, no consequence or changes have been made to the master list for the time being.

IPCH also sent a note to all organization strongly encouraging to contact and share cases of athletes, active on a national level, with the above-mentioned impairments to enlarge the number of cases to support research and development work in those areas.

Competition Committee:

Bever Cup - Eindhoven - May 2022

Event report coming soon

World Championships 2022 - Switzerland

Event report coming soon

Call for Bids for QT2023

Prior to the European Championship 2024 (EC 2024), there should, according to the rules, be a qualification tournament (QT) to determine which of the European nation that is not automatically qualified for EC 2024 will get the 8th slot.

At this stage, no nation has put a bid to host this qualification tournament, which ideally should take place between September and November 2023.

For the development of the sport, SEC believe that this QT should be organized in order to make sure that all Nations can have a fair and equal chance to qualify for EC 2024. Therefore IPCH is considering providing a venue and organizing the tournament.



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Depending on the number of nations participating, this QT could take place in a period of 3-4 days, preferably during a weekend (Thursday to Sunday).

IPCH has some good connections with some of the venues that hosted events in the past and that could be a good opportunity for hosting the QT eventually.

As always, the travel and participation fees (that normally include accommodation and meals) will be at each nation's own expense.

Before starting the planning of such an event, IPCH would like to get an impression of how many of the Nations that should/could take part to this tournament would be interested in participating. If less than 2 nations are interested, the QT will not take place and the 8th EC 2024 slot will go to the nation that is placed highest on the current World Ranking List, updated with the results of the WC, which currently is Belgium.

Call for Bids for EC2024

Denmark has presented a bidding package for the EC2024.

Parasport Denmark successfully presented a Letter of Intent followed by a bidding package and checklist. IPCH has been invited to visit the venues suggested for hosting the event from 9th to 11th October 2022.

Development Committee

The list of active and development nations within PCH.

Argentina	Americas & NW Europe	Developing
Belgium	Americas & NW Europe	Active
Brazil	Americas & NW Europe	Developing
Canada	Americas & NW Europe	Active
Italy	Americas & NW Europe	Active
Netherlands	Americas & NW Europe	Active
UK	Americas & NW Europe	Developing
US	Americas & NW Europe	Active
Austria	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Developing
Czech	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Denmark	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Germany	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Morocco	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Developing
Slovakia	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Slovenia	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Spain	Central/Southern Europe & Africa	Active
Australia	Northern Europe, APAC	Active
Estonia	Northern Europe, APAC	Active
Finland	Northern Europe, APAC	Active
Japan	Northern Europe, APAC	Developing



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Russia	Northern Europe, APAC	Developing
Sweden	Northern Europe, APAC	Developing
Switzerland	Northern Europe, APAC	Active

The launch of Global Development Network (GDN).

2022 has been the year when we officially launched our new initiative Global Development Network (GDN). From the very beginning, we have considered GDN to have a huge potential in terms of support the development and collaboration in our movement, and therefore the GDN Committee (Meghan Hines and Danni Mogensen) put a lot of effort in ensuring that everything was running smoothly from the beginning.

Besides creating a Facebook communication platform for the GDN, both for the worldwide group and the working groups, the GDN Committee also lead the first meeting in each of the three working groups. This to ensure that the framework for this initiative was clear to everybody and to ensure that each working group appointed a group lead, who's main task is to make sure that the working group is functioning and also is a direct link to the GDN Committee, when support/contact is needed.

The three meetings with the different working groups took place in January and February and all three meetings went well. Since then, each of the three working groups have been led by their own appointed group lead with support from the GDN Committee when needed. Besides the three meetings with the working groups, that first worldwide meeting was held in June. The topic for this meeting was the current state of the powerchair hockey movement and was led by the SEC. The intention with that topic was to have a discussion on ways to continue progressing powerchair hockey worldwide and opportunities to get more involved with IPCH to support this progression.

All though we had some good discussions, the need of involvement in the international work is still crucial. So if you have an interest or you want to know more about IPCH and the work we do, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Despite the fact that the GDN is fully launched and in theory should be running smoothly, the GDN Committee will still have an active role in the future making sure that both the overall functioning of the GDN and the functioning of the three working groups are intact.

Powerchair hockey in South America.

In 2022 we have tried to support the start of powerchair hockey in South America i.e. Brazil and Argentina. Back in 2021 we had meetings with a representative from Brazil and early in 2022 we connected with a representative from Argentina.

Therefore, we have had meetings with the representatives individually as well as a joint meeting with both representatives to discuss the development of powerchair hockey in South America.

For that to happen, we will have to invest a lot of time and resources, and it is the clear intention of the Development Committee to prioritize the ongoing contact with the representatives from Brazil and Argentina as it has the potential to develop powerchair hockey in a whole new region of the world, where powerchair hockey isn't represented at



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this point, which we consider would be a major accomplishment and highly beneficial for our sport in general.

Communication and Marketing Committee:

During 2022 2 new members joined the IPCH Communication committee: Hedwige van Steen (BEL) and Bob Gotz (NED).

The team worked on the following objectives:

- Bring back social media to live after covid
- Shine a light and promote National leagues, national happenings and tournaments all around the world even when not IPCH sanctioned, to encourage a more open sharing culture with IPCH as well also of minor events that can offer good chances for training and education or growth.
- Ensure live follow-up, footage and scored from the main IPCH Competition (Bever Cup and World Championship) bringing the sport, the players as well as the supporters into the picture.
- Launch and teasing towards the World Championship
 - Interviews with the captains of the 10 teams