Sport: Curling
Context: Competition-Development

Module 9: Coaching Wheelchair Athletes
Coaching Wheelchair Athletes

Outcomes of This Module

At the Completion of this module coaches should be able to:

1. Understand the key principles of working with athletes with a disability
2. Understand the Wheelchair Curling LTAD model and the application of all the stages from Learn to Play to Train to Win.
3. Explain the key performance factors for the wheelchair curling delivery and timing skills.
4. Describe the key differences in competition planning for athletes with a disability.
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This Module is intended to train coaches who are working with athletes with a physical disability that requires them to use a wheelchair for mobility.

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Introduction:  Why This Manual?

People with a disability who get involved in sport are first and foremost athletes, and they have the same basic needs, drive, and dreams as any other athlete. And, for them as well, coaching is a crucial factor to the quality of their sport experience.

Many coaches who have never worked with athletes with a disability feel that, to be effective, they need highly specialized skills, knowledge, or training. This is a misperception. In fact, most coaches who work with athletes with a disability soon discover that coaching these participants is fundamentally no different than coaching any other athlete. The challenge is to truly understand the person, to focus on their abilities, and to see what they can achieve.

Generally speaking, most coaches already possess the necessary technical skills and knowledge required to coach athletes with a disability. Typically, the only piece missing in their coaching “toolkit” is a basic understanding of a few key aspects that are unique to people with a disability. The purpose of this manual is to provide grassroots coaches who have never worked with athletes with a disability with basic information, guidelines, and tips that will assist in creating conditions for effective participation and inclusion. While some specialized information on disabilities is provided, this document is first and foremost a generic resource. As such, it focuses primarily on aspects that are likely to be encountered by all coaches, regardless of the sport or the disability. Where necessary, more technically oriented information can be obtained through National Sport Organizations or by contacting organizations that offer specific programs for athletes with a disability.

The themes covered in this publication have been carefully chosen by a group of experts who have extensive experience in sport for people with a disability. This group includes coaches, athletes, scientists, program leaders, and sport administrators. The information has been organized in a way that should be user-friendly for the reader, addressing frankly and openly some situations that are unique to coaching athletes with a disability. Testimonials based on “real life experiences” are also provided throughout, which should help in illustrating and reinforcing key messages.

Many coaches have expressed how working with athletes with a disability has enhanced their coaching abilities as they were compelled to see things differently and be creative. We hope that this resource will give coaches, parents, and teachers alike some practical guidelines on how to welcome athletes with a disability into sport programs, and make their sport experience an enjoyable and rewarding one.

John Bales                                      Patrick Jarvis                                 Mary Bluechardt  
President,                                        President,                                    Director, Coach  
Development                                      Coaching Association of Canada                Canadian Paralympic Committee  
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Part 1: Stages Coaches May Go Through When Working for the First Time with an Athlete with a Physical Disability

General remarks

As with any athlete, the best way for persons with a disability to develop sport skills is under the direction of a qualified coach. Coaching athletes or participants with a disability is fundamentally no different from coaching able-bodied people.

“The core element in coaching is to determine where people are, assess where they need to get to, and find a path down that road,” says Colin Higgs. “The basic issues are much the same with persons with a disability.”

Initially, however, it is not unusual for coaches who have never worked with persons with a disability to worry about whether they can provide the right type of support, be it at the grassroots or at more advanced competitive levels. There may be situations where coaches may not yet be totally confident with their own knowledge or abilities; there may also be questions about safety and about how to communicate properly with a person with a disability.

This section briefly outlines some stages that coaches may go through when working with athletes with a disability for the first time. Coaches should know that it is normal to experience some unease initially, but that they can go fairly quickly beyond these first reactions to do what they do best: coach.

Stage 1 – First Reactions

When the occasion presents itself to coach a wheelchair athlete for the first time, a coach’s first reaction could be fear, or worry about speaking to the person with a disability in terms that might be inappropriate. Some coaches may be asking themselves what they can do, and have doubts about their own ability to provide adequate coaching support. Others may have a tendency to focus too much on the disability at first, to question how much a person with a disability can accomplish in the playing field, or to have concerns about safety.

“There’s sometimes apprehension in the early stages,” says James Hood. “It’s really a matter of coming back to what you know as a coach, and experimenting with it.”

Finally, there may be concerns about the logistics of integrating wheelchair athletes into a league or onto able bodied teams, the reactions of other participants or even the impact on team or individual performances.
**Stage 2 – Making assumptions**

Beyond the first reactions, many coaches may make various assumptions about what persons with a disability can or cannot do.

Rather than speculating about the athlete’s capabilities, coaches should engage in a frank dialogue. Communication is a key component in any successful coach–athlete relationship, perhaps even more when athletes with a disability are involved. When persons with a disability decide to join organized sport, most have accepted their disability, and are at a stage where many of the initial issues have been addressed. In general, they are also open-minded about discussing personal issues and concerns, and this can help coaches better understand their abilities and motivations.

“I just ask athletes what they feel they can and can’t do,” says Jean Laroche. “At first, there is certainly a worry about talking to them openly about personal situations and their disability. You can’t be scared to ask them what they think and what they feel can make them better in their sport. Remember, they have just taken a big step by joining organized sport. It’s important at first to work with their abilities. You only learn about limitations later on.”

Some people may also assume that coaching athletes with a disability increases their liability. There is no need to be any more concerned about liability issues when working with athletes with a disability than when working with any other athletes.

**Stage 3 – Accommodating the situation**

Once the coach overcomes those initial assumptions and learns more about the person with a disability, the general conclusion is that there is not much difference in the same basic skills used for able-bodied athletes. “What the coaches tell me is that the necessary modifications or adjustments were not extensive” says Mary Bluechardt. “It is the fear of the unknown at first — wanting to do the right thing but not feeling comfortable about what to do or how to do it.”

Swimming coach James Hood has been floored on several occasions by how swimmers with a disability have surmounted their disability and surprised even themselves. “You need to be aware of their capabilities, but I try not to put limitations when they shouldn’t be there,” he says. “I generally follow that philosophy. For example, if a swimmer comes in and says ‘I can’t kick in the water,’ my challenge is to find a way to prove the contrary if I know it’s possible. You must emphasize their qualities to help them reach and sometimes even exceed their goals.”
Stage 4 – Getting into the technical aspects

After going through the previous stages, most coaches become curious about the technical aspects of coaching athletes with a disability and reach a degree of comfort in the process.

When this occurs, coaches seek and usually find answers to questions such as how the performance of the specific athlete can be improved? They say that reaching this stage is a major victory. The disability is no longer a factor, and the focus is on coaching and on helping the person improve his or her athletic abilities.

Comments from expert coaches

Jean Laroche has coached some of Canada’s greatest wheelchair athletes in track and field, including André Viger and Diane Roy. He has also coached able-bodied athletes in several sports, including hockey and soccer. “My first experience with athletes with a disability was a surprise; I didn’t really know what to do,” Laroche says. “I really had to sit down and learn about their situation.” Laroche says that coaches must have the right attitude when coaching a person with a disability for the first time. “You have to be open-minded,” he says. “For my part, I didn’t have any preconceived ideas. I tried to work with the abilities they did have and I treated them right off the bat as athletes. In able-bodied sports, a kayaker doesn’t train the same way as a high jumper. So for me, that’s how I viewed the situation.”

Peter Eriksson, an award-winning national team and international wheelchair racing coach whose stable of athletes includes quintuple Canadian Paralympic champion Chantal Petitclerc and world record holder Jeff Adams, says that coaches should simply remember at first that they are coaches. Eriksson has coached athletes to more than 100 medals at the Paralympic Games over the last 20 years. “You’re not there to be a nurse or a helper,” says Eriksson, the first Canadian wheelchair coach to be certified at the highest level of the National Coaching Certification Program in track and field. “It’s important to do what you would with any other athlete at first, such as determining their fitness levels, identifying what skills need to be improved, and educating them about good training. You should look at coaching the person with a disability as an opportunity to help her or him develop in the sport.”
Part 2: First Contact

This section offers coaches practical suggestions for establishing a positive first contact with athletes with a disability and for effectively initiating the more technically oriented work.

Three main themes are developed:

- welcoming the person with a disability to the program
- finding out more about the disability
- assessing fitness, coordination, and skill level

Welcoming the person with a disability to the program

First impressions must be positive. First impressions can influence anyone who joins a sport program: new participants may ask themselves whether they’ll fit in or have enough basic skills to meet the expectations of the coach and the group. Those questions also run through the minds of many persons with a disability. However, persons with a disability who join a sport program are generally moving into a new phase of their lives — ready to explore new challenges and eager to develop new skills.

Making a new person feel welcomed into a sport program is not much different from making anyone feel welcomed into your house. Each person with a disability must be accepted as an individual, and their form of mobility – wheelchair, prosthesis, guide dog, etc. - should not be seen as a barrier, it is merely an extension of the person.

“It must be athlete and sport first,” says Patrick Jarvis. “For example, the mindset should be that this person is a sprinter who happens to be an amputee. This basketball player happens to play in a chair. The key is getting past the disability. The passion for sport should be the common ground. Sport is the communication mechanism.”

Finding out more about the disability

There are many different types of disabilities that are grouped into the broad category of “mobility impairment” or “wheelchair user”.

Disabilities are either congenital (i.e., present at birth.) or acquired (i.e., not present at birth, but acquired through a traumatic injury or an illness).

Providing extensive information about each type of disability is beyond the scope of this document. However, coaches should aim to develop a reasonably good
understanding of the disability or disabilities of the athletes that they coach. Some basic information, including specific safety considerations and recommendations to coaches, are presented in Appendix 1. Interested readers can also find out more about specific disabilities by contacting some of the organizations listed in Appendix 6.

Get information that concerns the person’s ability to perform in sport

Generally, children with a physical disability are more likely to have a congenital condition, while people who became disabled as adults are more likely to have been involved in accidents or were afflicted with a major illness. For the coach, it can be important to know whether a disability was acquired or congenital. A person who acquired a disability in an accident may possess skills from previous sport experience and may know about training but now need to relearn some skills. Someone born with a disability has typically adjusted to how his or her body operates; however, sport opportunities may have been limited, and as a result some motor or sport-specific skills may be delayed.

Persons with a disability have usually gone through rehabilitation or therapy during which they have provided their life story on numerous occasions to nurses, doctors, and others. Sharing personal information about their disability is generally not an issue. "I don’t think you need to go into details about how someone got injured" says Colin Higgs. "But a good question would be how the disability affects the ability to balance or whether the athlete needs more side support — that kind of stuff … information that concerns their ability to perform in sport."

Some athletes with a disability may also need medication. Generally, the medication issues for people with a disability are the same as with able-bodied people. For example, medication may be required for diabetes, asthma, a heart condition, seizures, or some other health-related problem.

Be with them, observe, and ask what they feel they can and cannot do

Just being with the athletes and watching how they conduct themselves and react to situations on and off the playing field is a good way to know the individuals, says Jean Laroche. "It’s important to be with the person often, especially at the beginning. That can help you pick up tips to adjust your training methods for this athlete at both the technical and psychological levels."

Initially, the person with a disability (or, in the case of young children, a parent) is the best judge of what the individual can or cannot do on the playing field. The best way to get these answers is to ask. "They know best what skills they can and can’t perform," says Colin Higgs.

Coach Peter Eriksson keeps the focus on sport as much as possible. "I don’t even know how some of my athletes became disabled," he says. "It has no bearing for me."
The only things I really ask are injury level and classification to ensure fair competition. The rest is about what their goals and dreams are."

**Establish goals and objectives that are realistic but not limiting**

Persons with a disability will have goals and expectations when they enter a sport program for the first time. It is important for the coach to discuss with the person how those goals will be established and realized. Goals have to be realistic and achievable, but not limiting for the individual. The slogan “See the potential, not the limitations” should apply. Everybody has the right to take risks and to fail, and this applies to persons with a disability as much as to any other athletes.

For teenagers and adults with a disability, coaches need to know the person’s objectives and get a feel for why she or he is getting involved in sport. Jean Laroche says that he has had persons with a disability come to his office saying that they want to be world champions in five years. “There’s a lot of hard work for an adult or teenager starting out, and they should know that they can take their time; there is no rush,” says Laroche. “They need to get through the steps to get better, and that can be slow at some levels. Everybody’s different.”

**Assessing fitness, coordination, and skill level**

**General remarks**

An assessment of the physical aspects of wheelchair athletes is essential in order to provide them with adequate support and sound programming.

Athletes who require the use of a wheelchair, may have difficulty with certain movements and might also have a low fitness level. Social aspects of athletes with specific physical disabilities are similar to those of able-bodied athletes, such as resistance to change, difficulty with transition and routines, difficulty following standard behaviours, frustration, and fear of failure. Use a process similar to that used with able-bodied athletes, but be creative.

One of the first challenges a coach can face with an athlete with a disability is determining the person’s fitness level, coordination skills, and natural sport instincts. As with other matters, the process is similar to that with able-bodied athletes. “When I’m evaluating persons with a disability, I’m looking at their abilities” says Bob Schrader. However, the coach must sometimes be creative while implementing or devising tests to ensure they are compatible for the various groups and levels of disabilities.
Disability or not, athletes should be assessed based on the demands of their sport. Dean Kozak recalls that, in goalball, a sport for the visually impaired, there was a lot of training similar to other sports with different conditioning components. “The coaches would assess our power like that of a football player or bobsledder, but the conditioning would be assessed more like that of a volleyball player,” Kozak says. “Some Paralympic sports have unique demands, so a different approach may be needed to assess athletes.”

“It’s all about adaptation,” says Kozak. “For someone in a wheelchair, assessing the athlete is going to be sport specific. For someone with a visual impairment, mobility is not necessarily an issue, but that depends sometimes on the level of vision. If I had to run between lines, then I would throw a towel on those lines so I could decipher them. Sometimes you just need to make small tweaks to the drills.”

An athlete’s perspective

Four-time Paralympian Elisabeth Walker joined her first swimming club at age 11. Walker was born with two shortened arms, a condition known as dysmelia. She praises her first coaches, who made her feel very comfortable training alongside the able-bodied swimmers. It wasn’t long before she was swimming faster than many of them.

“When I first joined I just wanted to be treated the same as everybody else,” she says, “and I wanted some pointers on how I could improve. Physically at first it was difficult for me, but the coaches were great. It was so encouraging when we just did kicking exercises and I was faster than my teammates. It showed that I had talent; it was a type of measuring stick and gave me confidence.”

“Now I can pull without my legs, using only my arms almost as fast as I kick. It surprised me and gave me so much self-esteem. That was something I wouldn’t have thought would have been possible.” Walker says that coaches should get to know the personalities of their athletes with a disability. Many are straight shooters, but some are shy. She also notes that some can use their disability as an excuse for not working hard in practice. “Everyone needs to be challenged,” she says. “And coaches shouldn’t shy away from using techniques that they know best to help all their athletes improve. For an athlete with a disability, a small improvement in the playing field can potentially make a big difference in overall life skills.”
Coaching tips

- Bring the athlete on a tour of the surroundings where practice and competitions will take place and explain the functions of the equipment that the athlete may use.

- If there is another practice going on, let the athlete eavesdrop into that session so that she or he gets a sensory, auditory, or visual feeling.

- Encourage the athletes to educate you about what they can and cannot do, and work slowly to extend the intensity, duration, and complexity of their athletic activities.

- Like able-bodied people, persons with a disability may learn faster or may be motivated by watching videos of others or themselves.
Part 3: Communication and Interaction

Get to know the person first

Head-to-head dialogue is encouraged from the start as both the coach and the athlete with a disability get to know each other better. The coach can communicate a feeling of enthusiasm that this athlete has chosen to try a new sport and how much the individual will benefit from the program. It helps if the coach can display knowledge of the athlete’s talents, for instance past sport or academic success. Of course, the usual questions about why a person chose a certain sport, what the short- and long-term goals are, and what the commitment is to the program are all important.

Ultimately, the key is not ignoring the disability but getting past it and seeing the person for who she or he is. “The coach should create a welcoming environment, and that includes displaying some knowledge of sport for people with disability,” says Carla Qualtrough. “The coach should refer to the person as an athlete first, who just happens not to see or walk or whatever the disability is. The coach should emphasize right away that the athlete is part of the group just like any other athlete.”

“In the end, the most important thing, I believe, is to get to know the person first,” says Dean Kozak. “Then get into specifics.”

Establish trust early in the process

Open communication is vital, and coaches can ask a question that may be assumed to be offensive. The best question for coaches to ask themselves is what they would ask of able-bodied athletes. “Honesty is key to successful communication with a person with a disability,” says Cathy Cadieux.

“The coach should be up front about past experience in coaching or working with persons with a disability and express an eagerness to learn. You want to establish trust right off the bat. And if the coach needs an answer to a very personal question, go to the athlete first, not someone else,” adds Cadieux.

Communication Between Athlete and Coach

Open communication is the key to a successful athlete/coach relationship – regardless if an athlete has a disability or not - and this style of communication is even more essential when the athlete has a disability.
The wheelchair athlete and their coaching staff - need to develop a “safe” and confidential relationship that allows the athlete to communicate some of their personal needs and demands that relate to their disability. Often some of these needs can be quite personal and embarrassing to talk about at first – and the coaching staff will need to be aware of this.

It would be very helpful if coaching staff has some prior knowledge about the different disabilities that their athletes have and how the disability affects the athlete and their performance – perhaps researching them on their own time.

At this level of competition – most wheelchair athletes should have a very good sense of who they are and how their disability is best managed both on and off the ice - and should be able to be very direct with their needs.

Everyone involved should do so with an open mind. Don’t be afraid to ask the athlete ANY question and don’t be surprised by what an athlete has to share with you!
Parental involvement

General remarks

When people dream of becoming parents, they never think that their child could have a disability. The parents of healthy children are challenged every day, but when the disability factor comes into play, both the child and the parents must face emotionally charged issues such as access and acceptance.

When children with a disability join organized sport for the first time, some have not been as active as their able-bodied counterparts, and their motor skills can be delayed. Understandably, many parents are cautious about sport, since sometimes the basic stages of early life that able-bodied people take for granted have been more challenging for them and their children up to that point.

Dealing with overprotective parents

Several coaches agree that, initially, many parents tend to be nervous about registering a child with a disability in sports. Concerns include social integration, safety, access, and needs. The viewpoint from coaches is that these parents are generally overprotective.

Coaches who encounter overprotective parents may communicate that their child has the same rights as anybody else to participate in sport and enjoy its challenges and risks. Once the child is on the playing field, the goal is for the parents to discover the values of sport in social development — the increased discipline, teamwork, self-esteem, social interaction, and social responsibility of the child.

Bob Schrader understands parents’ concerns, but says they can let their children with a disability be independent for the period of the day in a sport program. “I’ve had people in their 20s struggle to be self-sufficient because they have been so guarded by their parents,” he says. “I’ve had parents steer the chair for their child when they try to go around the track. That’s not helping them. The children have to learn to do it themselves. The coach is there to provide the proper help and instructions to make that happen, so it won’t be frustrating for the child.”

Disability or not, the overall picture with parents is similar

The overall picture with parents of children with a disability is much the same as with the parents of able-bodied children. Some parents drop their children off at practice and return later to pick them up. Others are keen to get involved in various facets of volunteering.

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A parent’s involvement is not necessary in most cases, but is a great benefit to the program when offered. The involvement should be to a level that is comfortable for the child. “Parents are our volunteer base,” says Cathy Cadieux. “We can’t forget that.”

Parents should be encouraged to help

In sports for persons with a disability, parents should be aware that if they can spare the time, their services could be extremely valuable to a coach. A visually impaired swimmer, for example, may need a tapper. Visually impaired cyclists and runners may need guides. In team sports, the coach may need an assistant to keep playing time equitable. Parents can also assist in training drills and transportation issues. “Organized sport is not a glorified day care,” says Greg Lagacé. “It’s nice to have one or both parents involved, even if they are just on the sidelines cheering on their child and the other participants. We encourage all parents to participate in the lives of athletes, able or disabled.”

“Having able-bodied support is always welcomed,” says Cathy Cadieux. “It’s needed to move teams around and to provide help for teams in environments that are not ideal for persons with a disability. It’s important to make sure that able-bodied help doesn’t come only from the coach, and that mentality should start at the grassroots level.”

The need for volunteers may increase when athletes with a disability are involved. Tasks can include helping with transfers, loading and unloading equipment from a car, and help in a change room. Such tasks are not necessarily the coach’s responsibility, and by doing them, the coach might be sacrificing time that should be devoted to other athletes. These extra needs should be discussed by coach and athlete and a strategy or support to provide for these needs should be developed.

Dos and don’ts

Do not to be scared to ask questions

The dos and don’ts for communicating with persons with a disability vary from person to person and disability to disability. Ultimately, most coaches learn as they go along what is out of bounds with their athletes. (A glossary of proper and accepted terms is available in Appendix 5.)

“The athlete, even if a youngster, should be the first point of contact in most cases,” says Greg Lagacé. “That alone will break down a barrier, and the child will know that the coach is there for him or her. The key is not to be scared to ask the questions. It’s just like you would ask anyone else. Keep it simple. There should be no preconceived ideas.”
National team wheelchair racing coach Peter Eriksson says that coaches may sometimes need to ask what they feel are tough questions in order to determine the mobility of the person with a disability. “You need to know if the athlete can walk up the stairs, for example, or bench press,” he says. “There are many things they can do, and you should never assume that there is something they can’t do.”

**Ensure equal treatment**

When working with an athlete with a disability, the coach should aim to individualize his or her interventions as would be done with other athletes — no more, no less.

Carla Qualtrough says that coaches should remember not to totally avoid the disability issue. “The disability is part of who we are. I don’t want to be ashamed of it and try to fool people that I can see when I can’t, just because I want to fit in. We don’t want special treatment, but we may need different treatment at times.” A coach learns through experience how to handle these situations.

Qualtrough says that one of her best memories is of when she was suspended by a coach at age 18 for missing two practices. “I just thought it was so cool that I could be suspended too,” she says. “Treating people equally doesn’t mean treating them the same and it also doesn’t mean treating them so differently that they are the exceptions to the rule.”

Tim Frick limits the conversation to sports. “I’m there as a coach, and I want to talk about the sport but I also want to develop a rapport with the athletes,” Frick says. “What’s happening on the court is what is important to me. How they got into a wheelchair? I couldn’t care less. Able-bodied or disabled athletes — I coach the same way.”

**Sit down when talking to a person in a wheelchair**

One initial tip is to sit down when talking to a person in a wheelchair. It can give the impression of an air of superiority if you are standing while in conversation with a person in a wheelchair. “For people in wheelchairs, you should make sure you are not looking down at them. You should sit down so you’re both at the same level. You don’t want this superior–inferior kind of relationship,” says Colin Higgs. “These are athletes with a different piece of equipment, that’s all.”

**Remember to ask for permission before touching a wheelchair, crutches or walker and try to know in advance where accessible washrooms, routes and venues are located.**
Part 4: Inclusion and Integration

The value of participation for people with a disability

When asked for their opinion, both coaches and disability experts quickly point out that sport can open a new world of access for people with a disability: they become stronger, gain more endurance, and are generally healthier and more confident outside the playing field. But these benefits are not limited to the participants themselves. Ultimately, everyone gains from the inclusion of persons with a disability in sport programs.

Participating in sport for persons with a disability changed my life. When, as a teenager, my disability made it impossible for me to keep pace with my able-bodied counterparts in the sports I was involved in, I was encouraged to find out that I could swim against people with a similar disability, and that I could train with a coach who would teach me the sport more in depth and adapt it for my disability. I learned through sport that I could do whatever I wanted. And I did.

Carla Qualtrough, former member of Canada’s Paralympic swimming team

“The values of sport are well documented,” says Tim Frick. “The values are the same whether you are able or not, young or old, male or female. My advice to parents is to let the kids take a chance and get them the best possible equipment. That can be the difference between loving it and hating it.”

Dean Kozak says that sport can enrich the lives of persons with a disability and also says that role models must be presented to the beginners. “A lot of persons with a disability don’t tend to get out a lot,” he says. “Sport will give them a better sense of belonging in the community.” Kozak adds that sport skills can be valuable to a person with a disability in everyday life. He recommends that coaches point this out to apprehensive parents.

The value of inclusion and participation for coaches

There is a general view that most coaches are not interested in coaching persons with a disability. The problem is awareness. Most people simply don’t know that these opportunities exist and generally need to be lured or have a person with a disability come into their sport program. “It’s all about awareness,” says Carla Qualtrough. “Coaching athletes with a disability is something most coaches don’t go looking for. It is brought to them.”

Jeff Snyder has re-energized his coaching career from his...
experiences with Canada’s national sledge hockey team. Snyder was previously head coach of the Kitchener Rangers of the Ontario Hockey League, one step below the NHL. “You’ll get the same satisfaction as you would get from working with an able-bodied person. You are helping a child or individual progress in a sport, whatever their goal and whatever level they want to be at,” he says.

Says Tim Frick: “When we get a new coach, we want that person to enjoy the experience and provide a situation that assures success. When a coach asks me what he or she needs to know, I say: You need to know basketball. The rest you can learn as you go along.”

The value of inclusion for sport administrators

Leagues, clubs, schools, and associations can integrate programs for persons with a disability or provide separate training groups. Both Tim Frick and Bob Schrader see the benefits. Persons with a disability are a large and distinct portion of the population, and they feel that it should be an easy sell.

“There’s no other opportunity for this kid to go five days a week and pursue his or her dreams,” says Frick. “This is the best chance. It’s not a big deal to incorporate an athlete in wheelchair in practices.”

“Providing sport programs or integrating programs for persons with a disability is something clubs need to do to serve their community,” adds Bob Schrader.

With 3.6 million Canadians living with a disability and more than 2 million more who provide direct support, Greg Lagacé says that the numbers are too big to ignore. “Don’t look at this as cumbersome” Lagacé says. “Look at it as an opportunity to grow your sport. And as sport administrators we have a collective responsibility to provide sporting opportunities to all Canadians.”

Cathy Cadieux is encouraged by the progress being shown by Canadian sport organizations to include sports for persons with a disability in their programs, but says it still needs to improve. “Programs with a disability are still an add-on and an additional unknown in most programs at most levels,” she says. “At the grassroots level right now there is no money within the able-bodied system to support programs for athletes with a disability. For us it’s our wheelchair sport association that delivers programs to wheelchair athletes.”

Sport opportunities for people with a disability

There is no shortage of sport opportunities for persons with a disability. Some sports, such as goalball for the visually impaired, wheelchair rugby for quadriplegics, and boccia (a popular sport with athletes with cerebral palsy), are unique to athletes with a
disability. Others, such as swimming and track and field, offer competitive opportunities at almost all levels and types of disabilities. In some instances, athletes with a disability may also compete with able-bodied athletes. For instance, Alpine Skiing offers options to athletes with disability to compete in certain age groups with able-bodied athletes, or with masters. Another example would be an individual wheelchair curler who curls in their community league on an able-bodied team or a team of four wheelchair curlers entering their team into a league or bonspiel.

But these are far from being the only disciplines in which persons with a disability train and compete. A more detailed list of sports, as well as the methods that are used to assure fair competition amongst athletes with a disability, are provided in Appendix 2.

**Integrated sport programs**

*General remarks*

Sport programs that integrate able-bodied athletes and athletes with a physical disability are more common today. Sports such as swimming, weightlifting, rowing, curling and triathlon now hold integrated national championships, and national team athletes — both able bodied and with a disability — train alongside each other.

Mary Bluechardt says that a discussion with the able-bodied athletes could be necessary to tell them about the needs and interests of an athlete with a disability joining their program. “You can’t deny participation”, she says. “Regardless of whether an athlete has a disability or not, individualized coaching strategies must be implemented. But it’s also important that the support and resources be available to provide assistance for coaching a person with a disability where necessary.”

For a person with a disability, it is recommended at first to set achievable goals while keeping the sessions challenging. This should ensure progressive skill development and encourage persons with a disability to meet the requirements of the sport to the best of the athlete’s ability. Skills should be taught one at a time, and all players should see the skill being demonstrated.
How to Integrate Wheelchair Curlers into Community Curling Leagues

People who need to play the sport of curling from a wheelchair - can very easily be integrated into curling leagues or curling teams.

Either as a team of four wheelchair curlers or as an individual wheelchair curler – minimal changes to the game or the team is required.

The sport of wheelchair curling does not require sweeping therefore any stone delivered by a w/chair curler will not be swept.

W/chair curlers deliver their stone from an area on the centre line approximately 8 feet back from the hog-line.

Joining as a team of four wheelchair curlers:

- At the start of each end - w/chair curlers will move their stones along the side lines – closer to their place of delivery.
- W/chair curlers will position themselves along the side lines - between the hack and the top of the house - while the opposing team is delivering their stones.
- When it is the w/chair curling teams turn to deliver a stone – they will position their stones and themselves in the appropriate area.

Joining a curling team/league as an individual wheelchair curler:

- The team will need to agree to have one less sweeper – unless the w/chair curler plays in the skip position.
- Ask the w/chair curler if they would like to have their stones swept.
- Ensure that all teammates are familiar with how to “anchor” the person who is w/chair curling – they will need to be anchored each time they deliver their stone.
- At the start of each end - stones that will be delivered by the w/chair curler can be moved along the side lines – closer to their place of delivery.
- The w/chair curler will position themselves along the side lines – between the hack and the top of the house – while the opposing team and their teammates are delivering their stones.
- The w/chair curler will move their stone to their delivering position and will ask if they need assistance.

Whether you are integrating a team of w/chair curlers or individual w/chair curlers into your league or team – it will not take long before a process between teammates and/or opposing teams is established.

With minimal adaptation made to the game of curling - integrating the sport of curling with wheelchair curling allows full participation for everyone in the community.
Never hesitate to ask what kind of assistance a w/chair curler requires – more often than not it will be very minimal if any at all!

**Adapting the sport or the activity**

**Key principles**

In some instances, adaptation of a sport may be necessary to enable participants with a disability to fully enjoy the activity.

Whether adaptation occurs on a recreational or a competitive level, a key principle to keep in mind is to adapt only if necessary. Needless to say, it must always be the sport or the activity that is adapted, not the person with a disability. If a sport or an activity must be adapted, it should be kept as close as possible to its traditional counterpart. This is important to maintain the integrity of the sport for everyone involved — the person with a disability and the other participants. The challenge must remain adequate and reasonable for everyone.

Key parameters that can be used to adapt an activity include:

- space
- time
- speed of execution
- equipment
- environment
- rules

Creativity in the design and modification of equipment and rules can make almost any sport accessible to athletes with a disability.

**Examples of adaptation**

The sports of wheelchair tennis and racquetball are virtually the same for able-bodied players and athletes with a disability. The exception is that the wheelchair player is allowed two bounces instead of one bounce in which to return the ball.

In wheelchair basketball, the court dimensions and height of the hoops are the same as in able-bodied basketball, and the length of games is the international standard 40 minutes. A player may wheel the chair and bounce the ball simultaneously; however, if the ball is picked up or placed on the player’s lap, the athlete is allowed to push only twice before he or she must shoot, pass, or dribble the ball again. There is no double dribble rule in wheelchair basketball. A traveling violation occurs if the player takes more than two pushes while in possession of the ball and not dribbling.
In the sport of wheelchair curling, all aspects of the game are the same as in the sport of curling except there are no sweepers – therefore shot selections and strategy approach might differ slightly.

Part 5: Accessibility

Accessibility is a multi-faceted issue

Accessibility for persons with a disability remains an issue in today’s society. There are many facets to the issue, and many improvements still to be made and recognized by governments, building operators, and the population in general.

Improved accessibility can benefit everyone

Accessibility can benefit everyone, not only people with a disability. For example, people traveling with children in strollers or with heavy luggage probably prefer an elevator to an escalator. People with a temporary leg injury may benefit from a railing on an access ramp. It should be noted that the term accessibility not only means easy to reach, but also easy to use.

Canada has a strong track record when it comes to improving accessibility. Still, there are older buildings or more remote communities that could have some accessibility issues. Another detriment for Canadians with a disability can be the weather. Manoeuvring a wheelchair or, for someone with a visual impairment, even just walking can be arduous and treacherous on snow and ice.

“In Canada, for the most part, our facilities are accessible,” says Greg Lagacé. “That’s because of law. Still, a coach has to be cognizant of that major barrier. It’s great to have a program that’s well developed, but unless people can get to the facility, it’s all for naught.”

“Coaches must be knowledgeable about accessibility issues,” adds Cathy Cadieux. “Then they’ll find it easier to find solutions.”

Transportation

Transportation is an accessibility issue for persons who us a wheelchair. The cost of accessible vehicles and the availability of those vehicles are other major concerns. Renting a bus with a lift for people in wheelchairs costs about three times more than renting a regular bus.

Coaches should be aware of and sensitive to transportation issues and can assist in overcoming this barrier by exploring options. Perhaps another athlete in the program lives close to the athlete with a transportation need and can help.
“Coaches must always keep the accessibility and transportation issues on their radar and on their check sheet,” concludes Bob Schrader. “They should know how each of their athletes with a disability is getting to a venue. It may be an issue.”

Some people in wheelchairs require adaptable vans and special buses; however, those buses don’t go by the front door every 10 minutes. They must be reserved.

“Many persons with a disability can’t just hop in the car,” says Chris Bourne. “They may have to book their transportation two days in advance, they might be late, and they might be sitting around after practice waiting for their ride.”

Accessible facilities, venue, curling rinks

In Canada, most facilities, whether schools or community centres, are accessible. That’s good news, because access to the playing field can be a major barrier for anyone wanting to pursue a sport. Still, there are other facility concerns, including accessible changerooms and washrooms. However, most modern facilities house rooms that can at least be modified to be accessible.

Requirements for Curling Centres to be “Functionally Accessible”

It is not necessary to have a fully accessible facility to invite wheelchair curlers to participate in your curling centre however the site must be ‘functionally accessible’.

Please find below, a small list of the “minimal” physical accessibility requirements that are needed in order for people in wheelchairs to participate in the sport of wheelchair curling.

- Level or ramped entry into the curling facility
- Access to a washroom – wide doorway into toilet stall
- Level or ramped access to the ice area
- Portable ramp for access from the backboards to the ice level
- Room on the near backboards for wheelchair access to the on ice ramp

Lightweight aluminum ramps for access onto the ice level can be purchased at a small cost or wooden ramps can be made at a very minimal cost – 32” wide and 1ft. long for every inch of rise.
Travel Considerations

Travelling with a team of wheelchair athletes is always an adventure! Patience and organization is the key to successful trips.

Extra assistance on over-seas trips is helpful as there is always lots of luggage and equipment that is often difficult for some athletes to manage – extra tires, long stick bags and tubes, bath benches, medical supplies.

Knowing your athletes needs and what they can or cannot do when travelling is essential in order to have clear communication with airline staff, hotel staff, taxi services, restaurant staff, etc. - regarding wheelchair accessible requirements.

At airports - always leave time for potentially long bathroom breaks, longer time spent at security check points due to medical and wheelchair tools and supplies that will be hand checked and of course every wheelchair athlete will have a “pat down” which is time consuming.

Excellent time management is the key to successful travel with a wheelchair curling team – everything takes longer!

Accommodation

Know what your athletes need in regards to their hotel accommodation and how to communicate this with the hotel staff – kind of bath bench, bath or roll in shower, width of doors, height of beds, space in room, etc.

It is OK to involve your athletes and have them confirm with the hotel staff that their needs are being met.

In investigating each situation involving logistics, the use of the word ‘accessible’ is not specific enough. Use phrases like “wheelchair accessible”, “is the room designed for use by a person in a wheelchair”, “are the bathroom amenities suitable for a person using a wheelchair.” For example, what is the tub height, are there grab bars in the shower/tub area and at the toilet, what is the specific width measurement of the doors into the room and into the bathroom, can a wheelchair reposition and turn once inside the bathroom space and inside the room?

You cannot assume that airlines, restaurants, taxis and hotels will be aware of your athlete’s limitations. Know the questions you need to ask.

A good sense of humor and a positive attitude that centers on constructive problem solving is a must.

Awareness is the key!
The amount of assistance required will vary depending upon the athlete’s degree of disability.

There are a few tricks to managing team travel for athletes with a disability. The key words are organization and preparation. Wheelchair athletes often travel with additional equipment, which can include their wheelchairs, canes, prosthesis, shower benches, commode chairs, and extra baggage for their personal and medical supplies.

In airports, for example, a wheelchair repair kit may not be popular with security officials these days, but it’s just an accessory of everyday life for a person in a wheelchair. For overseas trips, it should be noted that some international airlines require that each person in a wheelchair has an able-bodied assistant on the plane.

There are potentially some additional accessibility logistics in hotels. While accessing the hotel itself is not a problem in most Canadian cities, inside the rooms, bathroom doors may not be wide enough for wheelchair access and the free floor area may be cramped, especially at two per room. Therefore, on road trips, able-bodied support and care may be needed. The experienced athletes also tend to help the novices.

“When a player goes on the first road trip it’s very beneficial,” says Tim Frick. “The more experienced athletes have all these tips, techniques, and shortcuts that work in real life.”

**Competition Planning for a Wheelchair Competition**

- The process of outlining a competition plan is similar for wheelchair curling athletes as it is for able bodied athletes; elements to be included are: nutrition, rest, timing of travel, meeting times, pre-game preparation, post-game debrief and recovery, family interaction etc.
- Extra time is required for travel to allow for the loading and unloading of the wheelchairs; extra time may be required to wait for wheelchair accessible transportation such as special buses.
- Athletes will vary on the amount of personal care time required at the start of the day and between games; generally athletes require more time to prepare and washroom breaks take longer.
- Nutrition, rest, pre-game preparation, post-game debrief and recovery are the same as for the able bodied athlete.
- Rest and recovery will require time for athletes to take a break from their chair.
- During wheelchair curling competitions volunteers are available on each sheet to clean rocks and help clear the ice of rocks at the completion of an end; the coach is responsible for providing a list of athletes to the officials in order to ensure the volunteers order the stones correctly and know whether to provide the stone to the left or right hand of the athlete; timing of the game may be
affected by the ability of the volunteers to clear the stones and bring the stones out to the delivering athlete; also the volunteers sometimes ‘chat’ with the athletes or with each other while on the ice; this can become a distraction for athletes and should be discussed with the team prior to the competition with a plan on how to handle these issues.

- Travelling to meals is a challenge with a wheelchair curling team even if there is ample time to eat; more than one vehicle or wheelchair accessible taxi may be required if eating places are not available in easy rolling distances; restaurants that are busy at meal times often do not have room to accommodate large numbers of wheelchairs especially on one level; advance phone investigation or visual checking of eating establishments is advised.
- Wheelchair athletes mobility can be limited in the snow; even curling centres within in an easy ‘walk’ of the hotel may not be accessible by wheelchair if roads and sidewalks are not well maintained; do not assume that rolling to the event is reasonable; many teams plan to always rent a vehicle to ensure transportation to the event and eating places is assured.
Appendices
### APPENDIX 1 – DISABILITY MUST KNOWS: ATHLETES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

**Mobility Impairment - Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)**

**Description:** Disruption of the spinal cord prevents transmission of nerve signals from the brain to the muscles, keeping muscles below the level of injury from functioning. Spinal cord injury is most often acquired through traumatic injury.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key characteristics</th>
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<th>Special considerations</th>
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<tr>
<td>The level of disability is related to where in the spinal cord injury occurs. The nearer the injury is to the head (higher up the spinal cord), the greater the disability. <strong>Quadriplegia</strong> means that arms, trunk, and legs are affected. <strong>Paraplegia</strong> means that the trunk and legs are affected. Most SCI athletes use a wheelchair both for daily living and for sport. Different sports use different wheelchair designs for high performance sport. A “sport” type daily living wheelchair is adequate for wheelchair basketball, tennis, cross country skiing, downhill skiing. With appropriate adaptations to equipment and rules, SCI athletes take part in almost all sports. People who were athletes before injury often adapt to wheelchair versions of sports more readily than people who were not involved in sport before injury. Transportation and facility accessibility are major barriers to participation. Wheelchair-accessible transportation to and from training and competition can be difficult. Facilities need to be equipped with wheelchair-accessible playing surfaces, pools, washrooms, doors, ramps, etc. In addition, alternate formats of signs are needed, and facility staff must be sensitive to the needs of athletes with a disability.</td>
<td>SCI athletes engage in all wheelchair sports and most other sports. Popular competitive sports are quad rugby, wheelchair basketball, tennis, track and field, cross country skiing, and downhill skiing. With appropriate adaptations to equipment and rules, SCI athletes take part in almost all sports. People who were athletes before injury often adapt to wheelchair versions of sports more readily than people who were not involved in sport before injury. Transportation and facility accessibility are major barriers to participation. Wheelchair-accessible transportation to and from training and competition can be difficult.</td>
<td>Sport participation for people with SCI is important to their cardiovascular health, since it is more difficult to raise the heart rate to a “fitness-benefit” level when the large muscles of the hips and legs are not used. Sport develops good wheelchair handling skills and endurance, which make daily living easier. Athletes with a disability have a feeling of being included. SCI athletes use wheelchairs for both daily living and sport, and in both cases almost all of the motion is in a forward direction. This uses some muscles around the shoulder much more than others and can lead to overuse injuries. For this reason, pre and post exercise stretching is important, and training should strengthen all the muscles in the shoulder region. If the muscles of the trunk function poorly, then sitting balance will be difficult, and the upper body will need to be supported by the wheelchair design, including proper strapping. Difficulties with bowel and bladder control may require athletes to interrupt or discontinue a particular training session.</td>
<td>SCI athletes use wheelchairs for both daily living and sport, and in both cases almost all of the motion is in a forward direction. This uses some muscles around the shoulder much more than others and can lead to overuse injuries. For this reason, pre and post exercise stretching is important, and training should strengthen all the muscles in the shoulder region. If the muscles of the trunk function poorly, then sitting balance will be difficult, and the upper body will need to be supported by the wheelchair design, including proper strapping. Difficulties with bowel and bladder control may require athletes to interrupt or discontinue a particular training session.</td>
<td>Think of the wheelchair as a piece of sporting equipment, like a kayak, that is propelled by the arms:</td>
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<td>- Pushing on the hand rim causes wear and tear on the hands. Athletes should protect their hands with gloves or tape.</td>
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<td>- For best communication get eye-to-eye with the athlete by kneeling or sitting. Don’t make the athlete always look up at you.</td>
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<td>- Be aware that the surface the athlete is wheeling over makes a huge difference to how hard the athlete has to work. Smooth hard surfaces are better than rough soft surfaces.</td>
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<td>The key message is that athletes need to self-identify their needs and their abilities.</td>
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<td>Don’t ask what caused an athlete’s injury. If athletes want to tell you, they will.</td>
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### APPENDIX 2 – DISABILITY MUST KNOWS: MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS - AMPUTEES

**Description:** A person who has had all or part of a limb removed/amputated or is born without a limb.

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<tr>
<td>Loss of a limb can be either congenital or acquired.</td>
<td>In lower limb amputees, the energy required for daily living and sport activities increases the higher on the leg the amputation occurred. The athletes may grow fatigued more rapidly. Sport prostheses are as important to amputees as sport equipment is to able-bodied athletes.</td>
<td>The higher level of energy required for daily living activities in lower limb amputees encourages a sedentary lifestyle. Sport and physical activity offer important contributions to reducing weight, increasing fitness, and protecting against heart disease and diabetes.</td>
<td><strong>Care of stumps is a critical daily activity for people with an amputation, and sport performance may place additional wear and tear on both the stump and any prosthesis. It is therefore important for the amputee to pay particular attention to breakdown in the skin of the stump and to any hair follicle infections.</strong></td>
<td>Amputees who use a wheelchair for sport activity frequently tip their chairs over and fall out of them. This is due to their higher centre of gravity (no legs to bring the centre of gravity down lower) and no ability in many cases to brace the body in the chair using their legs. Tipping backwards is particularly common, and for this reason many athletes playing basketball or tennis have small wheels attached to stability arms coming out the back of the wheelchair. When the chairs tip back, these small wheels come in contact with the floor and stop the chairs from tipping.</td>
<td>In some ways, these athletes most closely resemble their able-bodied peers, and it is easier for many coaches to concentrate of the technical aspects of coaching when working with these athletes. Treat these athletes as you would any other athlete you coach.</td>
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<td>With the use of a prosthesis (artificial limb) many athletes can compete in both able-bodied sport and Paralympic sport.</td>
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APPENDIX 3– DISABILITY MUST KNOWS - DISABILITY: CEREBRAL PALSY (CP)

Description: Injury to different parts of the developing brain during gestation, birth, or early infancy results in muscle weakness, paralysis, poor coordination, and uncontrolled limb movements. The person’s disability can range from very mild to very severe. Although most individuals with CP have the same intelligence as individuals without a disability, some may also have an intellectual impairment.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP may affect the arms, legs, trunk, or head, and may affect one side of the body more than the other or some limbs more than others. This disability affects all people differently. Some people with CP can run, walk and talk, some are in wheelchairs, and others have speech impediments. There are three major types of CP. <strong>Spastic CP</strong> is characterized by weak muscle tone, poor coordination, and muscle contractures that make affected limbs “stiff”. <strong>Atetoid CP</strong> is characterized by almost continuous uncontrolled, purposeless movements that may involve the face and tongue as well as limbs. <strong>Ataxic CP</strong> is characterized by poor balance, uncoordinated movements, and a lack of spatial awareness. Lack of coordination and movement control does <em>not</em> mean that the athlete is less intelligent than other athletes.</td>
<td>CP athletes engage in a wide range of sports, with higher participation in swimming, basketball, cycling, bocce, soccer, and track and field. Lack of coordination and difficulty with rapid purposeful movements makes high level participation in ball sports or other sports with fast movements difficult. Since this condition is almost always present from birth (or very early in life), overprotective parents and caregivers may not permit young children with CP to engage in the full range of childhood activities that develop sport-related skills. It is therefore important to expose individuals with CP to a wide range of sport-related activities.</td>
<td>CP athletes benefit from sport participation physically, socially, and psychologically. Successful sport participation increases self-esteem and opens up additional possibilities for social interactions. Water-based sports in which the water supports body weight reduce the balance and coordination symptoms of the disability. Sport participation may improve balance and coordination, and systematic stretching activities may improve range of movement in affected limbs.</td>
<td>Since balance is often affected, falling is an ever-present risk for many CP athletes, and care should be taken to remove as many obstacles from the environment as possible. Situations in which the athlete is required to make rapid controlled movements to avoid collisions with other participants or objects should be avoided or undertaken with extreme care. Swimming, climbing, and similar activities should be approached slowly and with caution, using appropriate protective equipment.</td>
<td>Stress, fatigue, and even hunger can have a large effect on the extent to which CP impacts movement and learning. Calm, well-rested, and well-fed athletes learn best. Care should be taken to allow the CP athlete to attempt new skills where they will not be the centre of attention. Despite historical concerns that resistance training might increase spasticity, the experimental evidence suggests that resistance training can improve movements of daily living, provided adequate stretching is also part of the training program. People who suffer head injuries that affect motor skills can be classified using a similar system as the one employed with CP athletes.</td>
<td>Athletes with CP have difficulty learning skills using methods in which they have the whole skill demonstrated to them and are then asked to copy that skill. For optimum learning, they need the skill to be broken down into very small steps and they need to master each step before continuing. Do not continue trying to teach a new skill when the athlete is fatigued, excited, or overly frustrated. Some athletes with CP have speech difficulties that can make communication difficult, which can frustrate the coach, who wants to understand the athlete but cannot. Although this may be a new situation for the coach, it is a familiar situation for the athlete. Don’t pretend to understand if you don’t, ask the athlete to repeat what was said, and, if necessary, get help from the athlete’s family, friends, or caregiver.</td>
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See the person, not the disability!
Appendix 4 – Disability Must Knows; Disability – Les Autres

Description

The category of Les Autres (the others) covers many different disabilities that do not fit within the other disability categories (e.g. clubfoot, dwarfism, etc). The people in this diverse group of athletes may be in this classification as a result of congenital or acquired conditions.

Considerations for coaches

Because of the wide range of disabilities that make up this category, it is almost impossible to provide any all-encompassing guidelines beyond talking to the athletes and, of course, the parents, guardians, or caregivers. The general recommendations below should also be considered by coaches:

- During workouts, coaches should encourage the athletes to indicate what they can and cannot do.
- The intensity, duration, and complexity of athletic activities should be extended slowly and progressively.
- From a safety point of view, coaches should pay attention to the loss of sensation in the affected limbs of some athletes; this is an important consideration to ensure limbs are not being damaged during exercise.
Appendix 5: Sports in Which Athletes with a Disability Train and Compete, and Classifications for Competition Purposes

Canadian Paralympic Committee sports

The following summer and winter sports fall under the umbrella of the Canadian Paralympic Committee. A classification system based on the degree of function loss presented by the disability is in place to ensure fair competition among athletes.

Summer sports

Archery, athletics, boccia, cycling, equestrian, fencing, football 5-a-side, football 7-a-side, goalball, judo, powerlifting, rowing, sailing, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tennis, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, sitting volleyball.

Winter sports

Alpine skiing, curling, Nordic (cross country and biathlon) skiing, sledge hockey. Wheelchair curling

At the Paralympic Games, Canada currently competes in all summer and winter sports with the exception of football (soccer) and sitting volleyball.

Paralympic classification system

Classification is simply a structure for competition. Not unlike wrestling, boxing, and weightlifting, where athletes are categorized by weight classes, athletes with disabilities are grouped in classes defined by the degree of functional ability. It is important for coaches to ensure that their athletes are classified both appropriately and early in their training and competition process.

Classes are determined by a variety of processes that may include a physical and technical assessment as well as observation in and out of competition. The classes are defined by each sport and form part of the sport rules. Classification is both an ongoing and an evolving process. When an athlete starts competing, she or he is allocated a class that may be reviewed throughout the athlete’s career. Sports certify individuals to conduct the process of classification, and these officials are known as classifiers.

More specific details about the Paralympic classification system applicable to a sport can be obtained by contacting the Canadian Paralympic Committee or the national sport organization in question.
Appendix 6: Glossary

Excerpt from “Sport for People with Disability - Final Report COACHING”

Access – the availability of programs, services and facilities to persons with a disability. It also refers to attitudes and support systems that ensure that persons with a disability can be participating and contributing members.

Accessibility – promotion of the functional independence of individuals through the elimination of disadvantages.

Accommodation – the providing of the supports necessary for a person with a disability to participate.

Adapt – to change something (the activity or environment, not the individual) to make it more suitable.

Acquired – not present at birth.

Adventitious – a loss of ability acquired through accident or disease.

Barrier – an obstruction which prohibits movement, personal growth, or access to activities, services or resources. Barriers can be attitudinal, physical, or systemic.

Classification – a system whereby athletes are divided according to degree of disability, to promote competition against peers in level of ability.

Congenital – present at birth.

Disability – reduction of functional ability resulting from impairment.

Divisioning - The fundamental difference which sets Special Olympics competitions apart from those of other sport organizations is that athletes of all ability levels are encouraged to participate and every athlete is recognized for his or her performance. Competitions are structured so that athletes compete with other athletes of similar ability in equitable divisions.

Dysmelia - Congenital abnormality characterized by missing or foreshortened limbs, sometimes with associated spine abnormalities; caused by metabolic disturbance at the time of limb development.

Equality – treating people the same despite their differences, or treating them as equals by accommodating their differences.

Equity – rules and principles based on fairness, justice, and equality of outcome.

Impairment – anatomic, physiological, or functional loss, which may or may not result in a disability.

Inclusive – everyone can participate equitably.

Inclusion – the inclusive process whereby everyone is included in a regular or mainstream program, service, or other component of society. The key word is include.

Integration – the process whereby individuals participate in a full continuum of experiences, for example in sport.

Intervener – an individual who provides a communication link between a person who is deaf-blind and a sighted, hearing person, and in specific circumstances, between a person who is deaf-blind and their environment.

Invisible disability – a disability which is not immediately apparent upon meeting an individual.

Sign language interpreter - an individual who facilitates communication between a person who is deaf and a hearing person.
Appendix 7: Disability Awareness

Persons with a disability should be described in words and expressions that portray them with dignity. The following guidelines and terms are supported by some 200 organizations that represent or are associated with Canadians with a disability.

In general, remember to:

- describe the person, not the disability
- refer to a person's disability only when it is relevant
- avoid images designed to evoke pity or guilt
- ask before offering assistance
- address the person, not his or her assistant
- ask if in doubt; most persons with a disability will be more than willing to help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use ...</th>
<th>Instead of ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person with a disability</td>
<td>Disabled, handicapped, crippled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who has ... or, person with ...</td>
<td>Crippled by, afflicted with, suffering from, victim of, deformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who is mobility impaired</td>
<td>Lame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who uses a wheelchair</td>
<td>Confined, bound, restricted to or dependent on a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who is deaf, hard of hearing</td>
<td>Deaf and dumb, deaf mute, hearing impaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with a developmental or intellectual disability</td>
<td>Retarded, mentally retarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with cerebral palsy</td>
<td>Spastic (as a noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with a physical disability</td>
<td>Physically challenged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with a mental illness, person who has schizophrenia, person who has ...</td>
<td>Mental patient, mentally ill, mental, insane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with a learning disability</td>
<td>Learning disabled, learning difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who is visually impaired, blind</td>
<td>Visually impaired (as a collective noun)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 8: Organizations that can Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone/fax</th>
<th>Internet site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability</td>
<td>720 Belfast Rd., Suite 104 Ottawa, ON K1G 0Z5</td>
<td>Toll-free: 1-800-771-0663 Tel: (613) 244-0052 Fax: (613) 244-4857</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ala.ca/">http://www.ala.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Cerebral Palsy Sports Association</td>
<td>305 - 1376 Bank Street Ottawa, ON K1H 7Y3</td>
<td>Toll-free: 1-866-247-9934 Tel: (613) 748-1430 Fax: (613) 748-1355</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ccpsa.ca/">http://www.ccpsa.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Paralympic Committee</td>
<td>85 Albert St., Suite 1401 Ottawa, ON K1P 6A4</td>
<td>Tel: (613) 569-4333 Fax: (613) 569-2777</td>
<td><a href="http://www.paralympic.ca/">http://www.paralympic.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association</td>
<td>2255 St-Laurent Blvd., Suite 108 Ottawa, ON K1G 4K3</td>
<td>Tel: (613) 523-0004 Fax: (613) 523-0149</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cwsa.ca/">http://www.cwsa.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Association of Canada</td>
<td>141 Laurier Ave West, Suite 300 Ottawa, ON K1P 5J3</td>
<td>Tel: (613) 235-5000 Fax: (613) 235-9500</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coach.ca/">http://www.coach.ca/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directory of National Sport Federations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.coach.ca/e/partners/nsf.htm">http://www.coach.ca/e/partners/nsf.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Canada</td>
<td>16th Floor, 15 Eddy Gatineau, QU K1A 0M5</td>
<td>Toll-free: 1-866-811-0055 Tel: (819) 956-8003 Fax: (819) 956-8006</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada/">http://www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References and further readings


The LTAD Model for Wheelchair Curling will help to ensure that new participants will continue to enter the system as well as ensure Canada continues to perform at a high level internationally.

Every athlete entering our sport should have the potential for a positive, individualized experience no matter what their level of participation.

Progression from recreational level programs through to high performance development will be enabled through a systematic integrated framework.
The framework for athlete development through all stages of recreational and competitive wheelchair curling is similar to other sports.

The key difference between this and the Curling for Life LTAD is the addition of two stages; First Contact and Awareness. Most people who begin wheelchair curling have acquired an illness or injury later in life and therefore do not begin at the typical age ranges of curling athletes.

The Awareness stage refers to the period when a person is adapting to their changing abilities due to illness or injury. They will not be aware of wheelchair curling unless opportunities are brought to their attention.

In the First Contact stage a positive experience with the sport of wheelchair curling will bring the person into the entry level skill development stages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING AREA</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>Physical Factors</th>
<th>IST SUPPORT/TRAINING</th>
<th>Yrs in the Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Active Start  | Introduction: ‘Discover Wheelchair Curling’  
Learn to Curl: Club Clinic/Orientation  
School Program: ‘Rocks & Rings’  
CAN CURL | Re Introduction to Physical Activity  
Ability and strength to use one arm to hold stick & push stone | | 0 |
| Awareness & First Contact | | | | |
| FUNdamentals | Basic Skills  
Intro to Recreational Curling | Remedial Physical Literacy | | 1 |
| Active for Life | Recreational League Play  
Recruitment  
Mentorship  
Learn to Curl Clinics | Maintain Physical Activity | | Any |
| Learning To Train | Club/Provincial Programs  
Develop Technical Skills  
Develop Positional Skills  
Introduction to Strategic/Tactical Comprehension  
Develop Individual Practice Plans  
Introduce Bonspiels | Equipment/Technique Adaptations and Modification to address Core, Postural, Balance and Strength Abilities | Effective Warm Ups and Cool Downs  
Introduce Mental Skills Training  
Introduce Nutrition Training | 2-3 |
| Training To Train | Club/Provincial Programs  
Enhance Technical Skills  
Refine Practice Plans  
Develop Strategy/Tactical skills  
Develop Team Practice Plans  
Introduce Competition  
Introduce Coach  
Talent ID | Continued Equipment Modifications  
Physical Assessment  
Endurance for multiple games per day | Introduction to Core, Posture, Balance and Strength Training  
Develop Mental Skills Training  
Develop Nutrition Training  
Develop Strategy/Tactical Training | 3-5 |
| Training to Compete | Provincial Program support  
Refine Technical Skills  
Exposure to National Program Training Camps  
Provincial Carding  
Develop Team Skills  
Enhanced Strategy and Tactics  
National Competitions  
Selection to National Development Program  
Talent ID for National Team Program | Physical Assessment and Training Plan  
Endurance for multiple games per day and per week  
Domestic Travel ability | Develop Core, Posture, Balance and Strength Training  
Integrate Mental Skills Training  
Integrate Nutrition/Rest & Recovery  
Integrate Strategy/Tactical Training | 4-6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Training to Win | National Program Support  
Individualized High Performance Skill Development  
Enhanced Team Skills  
Complex Strategy and Tactics  
Enhanced IST  
Selection to National Team Program  
National Carding  
World Championships  
Paralympics Games | International Travel ability  
Endurance for high pressure multiple game days and games per week | Adapt/Maintain Core, Posture, Balance and Strength  
Enhance Mental Skills Training  
Enhance Nutrition/Rest & Recovery  
Enhanced Strategy/Tactical Training  
Classification for International Competition Status  
Health & Wellness Monitoring and Support  
Doping Control | 5-7 |
| Active for Life (Transition from competition to recreational) | Retirement from Competition  
Mentoring and/or Coaching  
Return to Recreational Curling | Maintain Physical Activity | | Any |
Other Factors:

- Current Demographic Primarily Male and over 30
- Competition requirements is a mixed gender team
- Curling Centre Accessibility
- Physical Factors affecting sport enjoyment
- Geographic proximity challenges
Technical Skills for Wheelchair Curling

The technique described below are general guidelines for wheelchair athletes, however, each athlete may need to adapt their technique to accommodate their physical abilities. Coaches need to be flexible and creative in maximizing the athletes' abilities while still maintaining the principles below.

Equipment:
- Wheelchair (manual or power) wheels and undercarriage should be clean
- Delivery Stick – longer stick (Extender 56”) is recommended to allow for more control/delivery options. A longer stick will enable better alignment/direction control and assist with producing more power as the stick angle moves more along the plane of the ice.
- Some athletes may customize their wheelchair by adding a stabilizing bar to foot rest (see section on “Non throwing Hand Position” below)
- Remove push rims to allow closer stick proximity to chair

Set up:
- Most wheelchair curlers will deliver the stone positioned between the top of the house and the hog-line of the throwing end of the ice
- Curlers must be positioned so that when the curler and the delivery stick is fully extended at the end of the delivery, there is no hog-line violation. This may be as far back as 7’ from the hog-line.
- As a curler’s skill progresses (i.e. their ability to throw more weight) they may move back closer to the hack. This will allow the stone more distance to curl in certain ice conditions.
Start Point of Stone in Relation to Centreline
- Stone is positioned first, with a general proximity to the centerline. For ideal ice conditions, the stone will be placed touching the centre line, utilizing the guideline of one third/two thirds depending on which side of the sheet the thrower is aiming for (the greater portion of the stone is positioned on the side of the centerline that the curler is aiming for).
- Stone can be adjusted within the 18” allowable in the rules on either side of centerline to accommodate ice conditions and the shot called.
- Stone may start closer to the chair for takeouts and farther away for draws, this is to allow for generation of different stone speeds.

Alignment

Once the Stone is positioned, the curler should back up, align and position chair to allow the throwing arm to extend to the target.
- Position of chair will depend on whether the curler throws from “inside the chair arm” (Position A) or “outside the chair arm” (Position B).

Position A
- Erect body position with throwing arm positioned inside the chair arm
- Non throwing arm stabilized holding wheelchair rim or something stable that allows the shoulders to square to the target
- Body press back and forward fall to develop momentum
- Stick needs to be extended as parallel to the ice as possible to ensure maximum momentum
Position B
- Side lean to accommodate throwing arm alongside wheel rim
- Non throwing arm stabilized holding wheelchair rim or something stable that allows the shoulders to square to the target
- In this position a 90 degree angle with throwing arm and stick will allow the stick to move forward along the plane of the ice to ensure maximum momentum
- Stick needs to be parallel to the wheel rim in set up and forward motion to ensure straight delivery along the target line.

Grip on Stick
The hand position or “grip” on the delivery stick is very individual and is based on the athletes and their physical skills.

In general the following guidelines apply to all
- Gripping the stick at the end will allow for the production of more force, some curlers may alter the position of the grip to change the force production on the stone (i.e. at end of stick for takeouts, further from end for draws).
- Hand must be positioned so that when rotation is applied, forearm and wrist are able to rotate so that the stone will be released in the 12 o’clock position

Applying Rotation
- Stone’s handle will start with an offset at approximately 11-11:30 or 1:00-1:30, if referring to the stone like a clock face
- Stone rotation is applied by a deliberate forearm and wrist rotation
- Rotation is applied after the stone is set in motion
- Stone is released with the handle at the 12 o’clock position
- Ideal number of rotations are 2.5-3 for a draw
Generating Momentum
The stone’s speed is generated by the body speed. Body speed is generated in two ways, upper body forward fall, and arm extension. Curlers may use a combination of both. Note the amount of “fall forward” range may be dependent on the individual curler’s physical abilities.

In this “outside the chair arm delivery,” the curler’s throwing arm is bent and his upper body is erect in the chair.

The stone is set in motion, first by moving the throwing arm shoulder, the upper body begins to “fall forward.”

At release the upper body will be forward, and the throwing arm is completely extended on the target line.
Non Throwing Hand Position
The non throwing hand should be kept in a position to allow for the upper body to be square both upon set up and throughout the “follow through” of the body upon release. Some curlers will brace themselves on the opposite wheel to their throwing arm, or customize their chair with the addition of a stabilizing bar (attached to foot rest).

Follow Through
As the upper body falls forward, the throwing arm fully extends towards the target. The delivery stick should be as “flat” or parallel to the plane of the ice surface as possible. It’s important to keep the throwing arm “elbow rotated inwards” to ensure straight extension of the delivery stick on the target line. Shoulders and body need to remain square to target.
## Performance Factors Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set up</th>
<th>Well Done</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Relearn</th>
<th>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair set up well back from hogline (approximately 7&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone is set up with 18&quot; of centerline, in general touching the centreline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone is positioned on the centreline with 1/3, 2/3 division (favouring target side)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone positioned closer to the chair for takeouts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone positioned further away from the chair for draws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curler backs up wheelchair to align chair to target line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair is aligned parallel to the target line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair positioned so that throwing arm/delivery stick is aligned to target line (regardless of Position A or B)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grip</th>
<th>Well Done</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Relearn</th>
<th>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand positioned on stick near the end of the stick to allow for maximum force production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand position on stick may change with different shots (i.e. at end for takeouts, further up stick for draws)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand is positioned so that rotation of forearm and wrist allows for stone to be released at 12 o’clock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone’s handle is offset to either 1:00-1:30 position, or 10-10:30 position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Motion</td>
<td>Well Done</td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
<td>Relearn</td>
<td>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone begins to move by throwing arm shoulder moving first</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper body falls forward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone is in motion before rotation is applied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing arm fully extended with elbow rotated “in”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing arm and delivery stick extended on line of delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Throwing Hand Position</th>
<th>Well Done</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Relearn</th>
<th>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non throwing hand in a position to allow for body to be square throughout delivery and release</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotation</th>
<th>Well Done</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Relearn</th>
<th>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rotation applied after the stone is set in motion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotation applied with a deliberate rotation of forearm and wrist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone is released at the 12 o’clock position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone rotates 2.5-3 rotations on a draw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow Through</td>
<td>Well Done</td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
<td>Relearn</td>
<td>Comments or Prescriptive Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing arm fully extended on target</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery stick parallel to plane of ice (flat as possible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing arm elbow “rotated in” to ensure straight extension on target line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulders and body square to line of delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wheelchair Curling Strategy

Wheelchair curling strategy does differ slightly from able-bodied curling due to the fact that there is no sweeping. The lack of sweeping makes it more difficult to manage a shot in motion, and alter the outcome of the shot. Wheelchair curlers have to be even more accurate when delivering their stones.

Factors to Consider in Wheelchair Curling Strategy

Teams need an overall game plan. End Plans and Shot Plans are critical to the execution of the overall game plan.

Other factors that come into play:
- Tactics (How the shots are played)
- Performance Goals
- Ice Reading
- Ice Conditions
- Execution Tolerance
- Shot Difficulty

Strategic Performance Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Technical</td>
<td>Improvement - Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Processes</td>
<td>Game Readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Communication</td>
<td>Understanding Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical Range</td>
<td>Comfort with Rocks in Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positioning Lead Stones</td>
<td>Shot Difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental &amp; Physical Endurance</td>
<td>Execution Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Players - Engaged - Accountable - Trust</td>
<td>Situational Preferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Track * Debrief * Assess * Maintain * Modify
Shot Difficulty for Wheelchair Curling:

Low: within a three-foot path  
Medium: within a two-foot path  
High: within a one-foot or less path

**Draws:**

1/4: The rock can stop in any one of three zones with a low/medium direction requirement.

2/4: The rock can stop in any one of two zones with a low/medium direction requirement.

3/4: The rock can stop in one zone with a medium direction requirement.

4/4: The rock needs to stop in a particular location with a high direction requirement (ex. Draw to the button or a freeze).

**Takeouts:**

1/4: A hit and roll-out is acceptable

2/4: A hit and stay in any part of the house is acceptable.

3/4: A hit and stay in a particular part of the house (ex. Hit and stay in the four-foot).

4/4: A hit and stick or roll to an exact location

**Wheelchair Execution Percentage**

1/4: 70%  
2/4: 50%  
3/4: 30%  
4/4: 10%
National Wheelchair Program

Process Goals
- Processes - Start point of the stone
  - Communication
  - On and off ice routines
  - Present focus
  - Distractions management
  - Rest recovery nutrition

Performance Goals
- Shot difficulty total of <19 per end
- Execution tolerance +

Outcome Goals
- Game ready - enjoyment
- Win semi-final → podium finish
- Top 4 after R.R.
- Semi-final → Podium finish
- Top 4 after R.R.
## Protecting/Defensive vs. Pursuing/Offensive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Protecting/Defensive</th>
<th>Pursuing/Offensive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimize Scoring Opportunities</td>
<td>Maximize Scoring Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammer</td>
<td>Without</td>
<td>With</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Mid/Late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Up in Points</td>
<td>Down in Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Objectives</td>
<td>Force Opposition to 1 pt</td>
<td>Score 2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hold Opposition to 1 pt</td>
<td>Steal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant Shots</td>
<td>Take Outs</td>
<td>Draws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draws in the House</td>
<td>Tap Backs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tap Backs</td>
<td>Freezes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Conditions</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>Curl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heavy/Normal/Quick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Rocks in Play</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Positioning</td>
<td>In House</td>
<td>Guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>Zone 2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zone 3/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abilities of Players</td>
<td>Able to throw up weight</td>
<td>Weights Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direction Accuracy</td>
<td>Execution Tolerance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ZONES

- **ZONE 1**
- **ZONE 2**
- **ZONE 3**
- **ZONE 4**
- **Zone 5**
Timing Stones
General Guide in Optimal Conditions

+/- Choices  +/- Timing  +/- Execution  =  +/- Outcomes
Shot Selection Process

Evaluating Strategic Decision Points

Establish Facts:
- Score
- End In Play
- Last Rock Advantage
- Number of Stones Remaining in End

Ask the Questions:
- What is our Primary End Objective?
- What is an Acceptable Outcome?
- What is an Unacceptable Outcome?
- Will we Risk for the Bonus?
- Is our End Goal still Achievable?
Decision Making Questions:
- Who is shot?
- Who is 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 4\textsuperscript{th} shot?
- Do we need another stone in play?
- Do we need to score?
- Which stone will benefit us? Which stone will benefit the opposition?
- Is it time to peel?
- Guards...Too many? Negative angles?
- Do we need to protect?
- If we....What will the opposition play next?
- What do we want to leave the opposition?
- Do we play a defensive or offensive shot to achieve desired outcome?
- Is it a makeable shot?
- What is the Shot Difficulty on a scale of 1-4?
- Do we know how to play the shot?
- What is the best procedure for shot success? (Tactics)
- What is the Execution Tolerance?
- Will we risk an unacceptable outcome?

Shot Selection Process:
- Develop a process for player input
- Select shot options and assess Facts/Questions
- Thrower preferences/abilities + conditions = Tactics
  ✓ All Team Mates ‘On Board’ – Consensus/Acceptance
  ✓ Confidence and Commitment to Shot Selection and Tactics
  ✓ It’s a Team Shot – Let’s Execute!
Situation #1 – Without Hammer
First End
Our Lead’s first stone
We are red rocks

Situation #2 – With Hammer
First End
Our Lead’s first stone
We are red rocks