



Handbook

Basics of Wheelchair Basketball Sport and Management



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Sport and Management

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■ INTRODUCTION

The project POWER – Empowering Wheelchair Basketball: Building Capacity and Sharing Knowledge Across Borders was created out of a genuine need to strengthen capacities in the field of wheelchair basketball.

Although the sport continues to grow, challenges such as the lack of qualified coaches, limited resources, and weak international connectivity still hinder its full development.

POWER is a response to these challenges.

Through the Erasmus+ Sport programme, it has brought together partners from Croatia, Serbia and North Macedonia, with the support of the academic community, to jointly develop an educational programme that integrates sporting, managerial and social dimensions.

The project has three main objectives:

1. Education and capacity building – the creation of modules for coaches, leaders and managers in sport.
2. International cooperation – connecting clubs and federations through joint activities and knowledge exchange.
3. Visibility and sustainability – developing materials and tools that remain accessible even after the completion of the project.

METHODOLOGY OF SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT

The script was not created “behind closed doors” but is the result of joint collaboration between project partners and engaged experts. A combination of methods was applied:

- Needs analysis of partners – conducted through *Questionnaires* and *Self-assessment Tool 1*, available at power.com.hr;
- Planning tools – such as the *Basic Project Planning Pack* and the *Dissemination and Communication Plan*, which ensured that each part of the content was aligned with the project’s objectives and Erasmus+ priorities;
- Practical tools – the *Toolkit for Organizing Wheelchair Basketball Events* and the *Event Management Checklist* served as the foundation for concrete exercises and examples;
- Partners’ experience – each partner contributed specific expertise: federations provided their practical experience in managing clubs and competitions, the academic community contributed theoretical knowledge and research, while clubs offered hands-on experience in working with players.

The script is written as a combination of three levels:

1. Theoretical – scientific and historical facts;
2. Practical – concrete exercises, examples, and tools;
3. Motivational – interesting facts (*fun facts*), motivational stories, and practical examples.

Fun fact:

Erasmus+ Sport projects do not only fund sports equipment or competitions, but also education, research, and the development of methodologies – POWER is one of those examples.

WHY THIS SCRIPT?

Many coaches, managers and leaders in clubs across the region learn “along the way” – through experience, trial and error. While such an approach brings valuable lessons, it often results in the loss of time, resources and motivation.

This script was created to offer:

- Clear foundations (101 approach) – how to coach, how to manage a club, how to write projects;
- Structured modules – each with defined objectives, content and practical examples;
- A tool for new generations – material that can be used in future educational programmes, camps and workshops.

Through this, the POWER project leaves a lasting impact even after its completion – organisations wishing to develop wheelchair basketball will have access to a free, clear and practical handbook.

WHO ARE THE USERS?

The script is intended for a variety of groups:

- Coaches – as a tool for planning and conducting training sessions;
- Managers and leaders – to better understand project financing and club management;
- Players and volunteers – to enhance understanding of the sport, their rights, responsibilities and opportunities;
- The community – to increase awareness of the importance of parasport.

Fun fact:

There are currently more than 100,000 registered wheelchair basketball players worldwide – making the sport one of the most widespread parasport disciplines.

HOW TO USE THIS SCRIPT?

- As a textbook – to learn fundamental concepts;
- As a practical guide – for founding a club, writing projects or planning training sessions;
- As inspiration – each module contains engaging facts and practical real-life examples;
- As a workshop resource – content can be easily divided by modules and used for educational purposes.

The script is not intended to be “final” – it is designed to encourage further development, improvement and adaptation to the needs of other organisations.

THE ROLE OF THE POWER WEBSITE

All tools, documents and materials used within the project are publicly available at power.com.hr. This ensures transparency and long-term accessibility of project results.

Examples of materials available in the “Downloads” section include:

- Basic Project Planning Pack – project planning;
- Toolkit for Organizing Wheelchair Basketball Events – organisation of sporting events;
- Dissemination and Communication Plan – promotion and sustainability;
- Questionnaires and Self-assessment Tool – needs analysis;
- Activity Timeline – implementation tracking.

Fun fact:

The POWER website is not only informative but also interactive – it serves as a knowledge base and a practical tool for everyone interested in building a network for wheelchair basketball development across Europe.

CONTEXT AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Wheelchair basketball is one of the most developed parasports in Europe and worldwide. However, although sport’s popularity continues to grow, significant barriers still slow down its full potential. According to data from the European Paralympic Committee, recent years have seen an increase in the number of clubs and athletes, yet the growth remains uneven. While some countries have stable leagues, systemic support, and a high level of participation among persons with disabilities, others struggle with fundamental issues such as the lack of sports halls, qualified personnel, or adapted equipment.

For the countries participating in the POWER project (Croatia, Serbia, and North Macedonia), a shared challenge lies in the systemic development of the sport within environments of limited resources, where parasport still lacks visibility compared to Olympic sports. Therefore, participation in the Erasmus+ project is crucial – it enables access to a European network, knowledge exchange, and the establishment of new standards.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHALLENGES AMONG PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

An analysis conducted among partner organisations through questionnaires and self-assessment surveys (*Questionnaires* and *Self-assessment Tool 1*, available at power.com.hr) identified several key challenges:

Lack of formal educational programmes – Coaches and sports managers in wheelchair basketball gain most of their knowledge through practice and personal experience. Structured education programmes are scarce, and clubs largely depend on the enthusiasm of individuals.

Limited resources – Most clubs lack a sufficient number of quality sports wheelchairs, as the cost of professional equipment (ranging from €5,000 to €10,000 per chair) presents a major obstacle. Access to sports halls is also often restricted due to infrastructural barriers, especially in smaller communities.

Inconsistent practices between clubs and federations – The absence of a unified framework and knowledge exchange results in each organisation developing its own approach to club management, training, and promotion, leading to disparities in quality and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Weak international cooperation – There is a lack of sustainable mechanisms for collaboration through joint training sessions or regional initiatives. Few clubs participate in international tournaments, and existing international cooperation is mostly rare and informal.

Need for youth inclusion – The lack of systematic promotion in schools, camps, and inclusion programmes means that young people with disabilities often have no opportunity to become acquainted with adapted sports designed for persons with physical disabilities using wheelchairs.

NEEDS ANALYSIS – WHY SYSTEMATIC EDUCATION?

Systematic education of coaches, managers and leaders in the field of sport for persons with disabilities has proven to be a key prerequisite for the development of adapted sports. These needs can be divided into several levels:

- Coaching level – there is a need for programmes that combine technical knowledge, adaptation of training to different types of disabilities, and safety protocols;
- Managerial level – clubs require individuals with the necessary knowledge and experience to write project proposals, attract sponsors, manage finances and cooperate with the local community;
- Leadership level – organisations need individuals capable of representing them publicly, promoting the sport, building networks and ensuring long-term sustainability.

OPINIONS OF ATHLETES AND COACHES

During the preparation phase of the project, representatives of the partner organisations conducted interviews with players, project managers and coaches. Although their experiences differ, several consistent viewpoints emerged:

- Players emphasise that sport gives them a sense of belonging, confidence and physical activity, yet they often feel marginalised due to the limited resources available to clubs;
- Coaches highlight the lack of professional literature, educational materials and opportunities for knowledge exchange;
- Project managers point out the need for practical tools that would assist them in project writing and facilitate the everyday functioning of clubs.

POTENTIAL AND OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the challenges, a number of opportunities have been identified:

- **Growing public interest** – parasport is gaining increasing media attention, which creates room for improved visibility and sponsor engagement
- **Support from EU policy** – inclusion, diversity and healthy lifestyles are among the key priorities of the Erasmus+ programme, meaning that projects such as POWER receive strong institutional support.
- **Digital tools** – through the project, online tools (Toolkit, Plans, Checklists) have been developed and made available to a wider audience, enabling greater professionalization
- **Examples of good practice** – countries such as Spain and Germany have demonstrated that parasport can successfully develop through synergistic cooperation between clubs, federations and local communities.

It is also important to highlight the potential athlete base: within the European Union, there are approximately 80 million people with disabilities, representing almost 15% of the total population. Within this population, the number of individuals with spinal cord injuries (SCI) is estimated at over 135,000, with a prevalence of around 300 cases per million inhabitants.

The context and needs analysis clearly show that wheelchair basketball in the partner countries is at a turning point. There is an existing base of players, clubs and enthusiasts, yet without systematic education and international cooperation, this sport will find it difficult to take the next step forward.

The POWER project provides exactly what has been missing – an educational programme that develops technical, managerial and leadership skills, connects partners through joint activities, and delivers tangible tools for the future growth of the sport.

Fun fact:

It is estimated that over 80 million persons with disabilities live in the European Union, yet only a small percentage participate in sporting activities. Each new initiative, such as POWER, increases the opportunity to expand that number and make sport more accessible to all.

STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

In both sport and education, knowledge is most effectively acquired through structured units that are clear, coherent and interconnected. For this reason, the POWER project applies a modular approach. Instead of producing a single comprehensive but difficult-to-apply script, the content is divided into seven modules. Each module represents an independent unit and addresses a specific area of wheelchair basketball development – from its history and rules, through technique and tactics, to club management, ethics and promotion.

This approach ensures flexibility: club and federation representatives can explore individual modules according to their needs, coaches can use them as teaching units, while players and managers can study them at their own pace.

For example, representatives of a newly established club may begin with the module on association management to learn the basics of administration and leadership, while coaches can start by applying the technical and tactical modules. In this way, the POWER project ensures that the script serves both beginners and those with prior experience.

STRUCTURE OF THE MODULES

Each module consists of:

- **Content section** – a detailed elaboration of the subject with explanations and examples;
- **Practical tools** – examples of exercises, templates and recommendations;
- **“Fun fact” corner** – interesting facts that help make the content memorable and motivating;
- **101 tips** – concrete suggestions that allow users to quickly apply the content in practice.

This writing approach allows the modules to function both as standalone units and as part of a comprehensive whole. Accordingly, the completed script can be used as a handbook, textbook or workbook for workshops and training sessions.

DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING PROCESS

To ensure the quality of the content, the applied methodology included several key steps:

- **Data collection and needs analysis** – project partners conducted research using Questionnaires and the Self-assessment Tool 1, identifying the specific needs of clubs and federations, such as the lack of trained coaches, the absence of methodologies for club management, and the need for better promotion of the sport;
- **Content development** – based on the collected data, the modules were developed using planning documents (Basic Project Planning Pack, Dissemination and Communication Plan) to ensure that the content remained consistent and aligned with the objectives of the Erasmus+ programme;
- **Pilot testing** – the modules were tested during workshops organised as part of competitions and camps such as Croatia Camp, 2025 Serbian Wheelchair Basketball League, 2025 Serbian 3x3 Wheelchair Basketball Championship, International Wheelchair Basketball Tournament “Ohrid 2025”, Wheelchair Basketball Training Session in Skopje/North Macedonia, and Wheelchair Basketball – Sport and Inclusion in Osijek/Croatia Outline, where coaches and players were invited to provide feedback;
- **Evaluation and adaptation** – each activity was accompanied by a Meeting/Activity Report and participant evaluation, and the feedback collected was used to refine and improve the content;
- **Publication and accessibility** – all materials were published on the project’s official website (power.com.hr), ensuring transparency and permanent availability of results.

APPLICATION IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT

At the local level, the modules are used as a tool for:

- **Training new coaches** – clubs can organise internal training sessions using the script as teaching material;
- **Managerial development** – federations, clubs and associations can use the module on club and project management as a foundation for educating their own members;
- **Raising community awareness** – through engaging facts and examples, the script can serve as promotional material for schools, media and local institutions.

Example:

A club in Osijek can use the module on promotion to design a campaign for recruiting new players from the local community, while a club in Skopje can use the management module to familiarise itself with the principles of project financing and secure additional funding.

APPLICATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

At the international level, the **POWER** modules serve to:

- **Exchange knowledge** – partners from different countries use the same methodology, which facilitates mutual understanding of activities and the transfer of best practices.

- **International camps and workshops** – the modules can be used as working material during international meetings and events.
- **Network building** – shared tools (*Toolkit, Checklists, Timeline*) ensure standardization and professionalization of work.

Example:

During a joint camp in Croatia, coaches from Serbia and North Macedonia can use the module on technical and tactical skills to plan joint training sessions, while managers and members of governing bodies can simultaneously work through the module on project financing and club management.

ENSURING QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure quality, the POWER project applies a three-step model:

- **Self-assessment** – partners regularly assess their own needs and capacities.
- **Activity evaluation** – each workshop and camp concludes with a questionnaire and report.
- **External validation** – results and modules are shared beyond the project (with schools, federations and local institutions) to gather additional feedback.

For sustainability, the digital component is key: all materials remain permanently available online, and partners have committed to using them even after the project’s completion. In this way, a lasting knowledge base is created, one that can continue to evolve through future initiatives and projects.

The structure and methodology of the POWER project are based on clearly defined modules, practical testing, and continuous evaluation. This ensures that the script is not merely a theoretical resource, but a practical tool for clubs, coaches, and managers.

In the local context, the script helps clubs to professionalise their operations and attract new members, while in the international context, it establishes a common language and shared standards of cooperation. By combining needs analysis, planning tools, and practical testing, the POWER script becomes a fundamental document for the development of wheelchair basketball in the Balkan region and beyond.

Fun fact:

During an *Erasmus+ Sport* project in Portugal, coaches used a similar modular handbook, which contributed to an increase of over 40% in the number of active young wheelchair basketball players. This example demonstrates the power and effectiveness of systematic education that is accessible to a wide audience.

■ EDUCATIONAL MODULES

■ MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

■ THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

The origins and development of sports for persons with disabilities (PwD), including wheelchair basketball, can be traced back to the period following the Second World War and the need to reintegrate a large population of war veterans with disabilities into everyday social activities. Although unofficial competitions in wheelchair basketball, organised as part of physical therapy and social rehabilitation, had been held earlier, the first official game of this sport—then known as **“wheelchair netball”** – was played on **25 September 1946** between teams from two American hospitals: **Corona Naval Station** in California and **Framingham Hospital** in Massachusetts.

The most influential figure in integrating sports activities for persons with disabilities into the rehabilitation process in Europe was **Dr Ludwig Guttmann** (see Figure 1), Director of **Stoke Mandeville Hospital** in Aylesbury, United Kingdom, and one of the founders of the Paralympic Movement. The first official competition for persons with disabilities, which included wheelchair basketball, was held in Europe in **1948** under the name **“Stoke Mandeville Games”** (see Figure 2).

Under its current name, **wheelchair basketball** appeared in **1956** at the **International Games in Stoke Mandeville**. As sport’s popularity grew and the number of clubs increased, wheelchair basketball—one of the most dynamic and inclusive team sports for persons with physical disabilities, earned its place in the programme of the **first Paralympic Games**, held in **Rome in 1960**.



Picture 1.: Dr Ludwig Guttmann



Picture 2. Stoke Mandeville Games

Modern wheelchair basketball, one of the most popular and dynamic parasports in the world, is governed by the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF), which establishes clear rules for the game, equipment, and player classification systems.

The IWBF is divided into four zones – Americas, Oceania, Europe, and Asia – through which it coordinates and collaborates with 108 national organisations and associations responsible for the development of wheelchair basketball.

Under the jurisdiction of the IWBF (see *Picture 3*), competitions are organised for both men's and women's divisions, including continental and world championships, as well as wheelchair basketball tournaments held as part of the Paralympic Games.

For junior categories, continental and world competitions are held with specific age limits – under 22 for men and under 25 for women.

In the senior category, the European Championships are divided into three men's divisions (A, B and C) and two women's divisions (A and B).



Picture 3. IWBF

Throughout the history of wheelchair basketball, the most successful men's national teams have come from the **United States, Great Britain, Israel, France, Canada, Australia, and Germany**, while in the women's competition, **Canada, the United States, and the Netherlands** have been the dominant nations.

RULES OF THE GAME

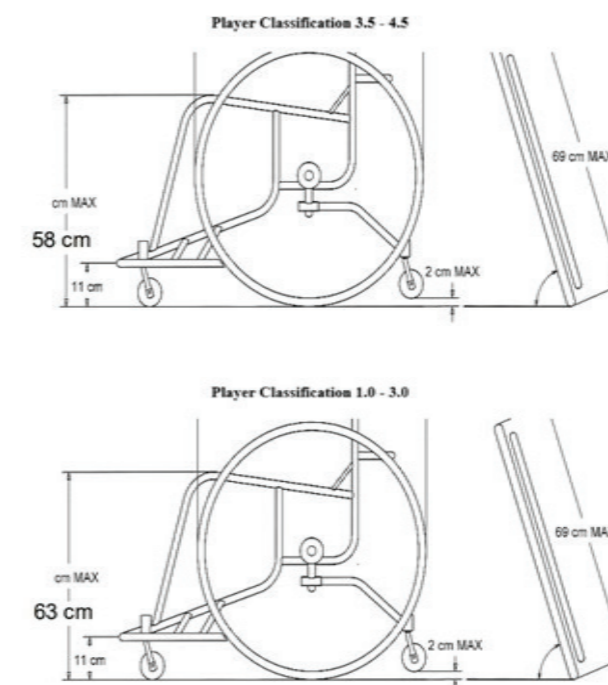
The rules of **wheelchair basketball** closely mirror those of conventional basketball for non-disabled players. The similarities between wheelchair basketball and the original game are clearly visible and include:

- **Court dimensions** – 28 x 15 metres;
- **Basket dimensions and height** – rim positioned at 3.05 metres;
- **Team composition** – 12 registered players per team, with 5 on the court at a time;
- **Game duration** – four periods of 10 minutes each;
- **Shot clock and backcourt rules** – 24 seconds for an offensive possession and 8 seconds to advance the ball to the opponent's half;
- **Scoring system** – 1, 2, and 3 points;
- **Statistical recording** – points and total score, assists, turnovers, rebounds, and fouls;
- **Timeouts** – each team is entitled to five timeouts of one minute each (two in the first half and three in the second half).

To ensure **equality among participants** and maintain **fair play**, as well as to accommodate the use of sports wheelchairs, certain adaptations have been made to

the rules (as defined in the *IWBF Official Wheelchair Basketball Rules, 2024*). The most significant differences compared to traditional basketball include:

- **Movement within court boundaries** – players must remain within the lines of play and cannot gain an advantage by leaving the court, even with part of their wheelchair;
- **Two-push rule for ball control** – when in possession of the ball, a player may push the wheelchair wheels twice (either simultaneously with both hands or alternately with one hand and then the other), after which they must dribble or bounce the ball on the floor. This action can be repeated indefinitely during play;
- **Ball control after dribbling** – players are allowed to regain control of the ball with both hands after each individual dribble.
- **participation of players who meet the minimum eligibility criteria for disability**, as defined by the rules of wheelchair basketball. This regulation applies to official international competitions held under the jurisdiction of the **International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF)- Dimensions and structure of specialised sports wheelchairs**, which include the regulation of seat height (see *Picture 4*). The seat height, including the cushion, must not exceed **63 cm** for players with a classification rating between **1.0 and 3.0**, and **58 cm** for players with a classification rating between **3.5 and 4.5**.



Picture 4. Dimensions of Specialised Wheelchairs According to Player Classification Categories

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

In all sports designed for persons with disabilities (PwD), including wheelchair basketball, one of the key mechanisms that ensures fairness and equal opportunities for all participants is the classification system.

In the early stages of wheelchair basketball, classification focused solely on the neurological assessment of the athlete's impairment. However, as the sport evolved, and particularly since 1982, the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF)

introduced significant modifications. The current Functional Player Classification System (PCS) is far more effective, as it assesses players based on the degree of impairment and their physical and functional mobility in the wheelchair.

To be eligible to compete in IWBF-sanctioned tournaments, a player must have a permanent impairment that reduces lower limb function to a degree that limits or prevents the performance of certain voluntary movements (such as running, turning, or jumping) with the same speed, control, stability, and endurance as an able-bodied basketball player.

Players are required to present supporting documentation, such as medical, paramedical, or medico-legal reports, and/or the results of clinical examinations, clearly describing the nature and history of their impairment and confirming their eligibility to play wheelchair basketball.

During observation of movement without assistive devices or prostheses, the documentation must confirm a loss of function in one or both lower limbs, which alters the biomechanics of running movements involving changes of speed and direction in a measurable and demonstrable way, and which negatively affects performance.

For the purposes of IWBF classification, pain level alone is not considered a measurable or permanent impairment.

■ PLAYER CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Participation of players in competitions organised by the **International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF)** is permitted only after completing the official **classification process**. This process is conducted in **three phases**, as follows:

PHASE I

This phase includes:

- Electronic submission of the player's **medical documentation** at least **60 days prior to the competition**.
- A **signed consent form** authorizing the classification process, along with a completed **Medical Diagnostic Form (MDF)** containing detailed information on the player's health condition and level of impairment.
- A **document verifying the chronology** of medical events and/or treatments, signed by a physician.
- Submission of **supporting medical documentation** issued by medical professionals, including:
 - › results of a **manual muscle test** for players with impaired muscle strength.
 - › an **assessment of passive range of motion** for players with limited passive mobility.
 - › an **ASIA test** for players with spinal cord injuries or spinal damage.
- **Photographs** of the lower limbs and full body for players with limb deficiency or amputation, or for those with a noticeable difference in leg length. All documents and photos must include the player's name, and photographs must also display the face for identification purposes.

PHASE II

This phase involves:

- **Verification of the submitted documentation** by the **Eligibility Assessment Committee**, which, upon positive review, grants the player eligibility to participate in IWBF competitions.

PHASE III

This phase includes:

- **Observation of the player's abilities** during training sessions and competition games;
- **Assessment meetings** where classifiers review performance and confirm the player's **classification score**.
- **Final classification decision** issued after the player's last game of the competition.

■ CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE AND CRITERIA

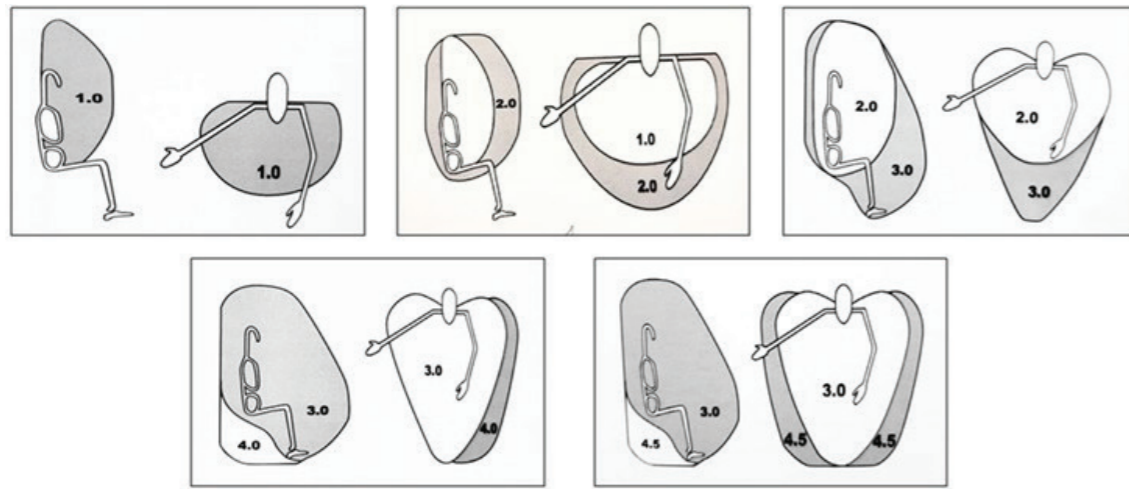
The classification process is conducted by a **committee of three to six certified classifiers** appointed by the **IWBF**. Based on the aforementioned procedures – analysis of medical and supporting documentation, range of motion, trunk stability and control, observed characteristics, and the player's demonstrated abilities and skills in a seated position during dynamic game situations – the committee assigns each player to an appropriate **classification category**.

According to the **IWBF Classification System**, wheelchair basketball players are divided into **eight categories**: five primary classes (**1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, and 4.5 points**) and three intermediary subclasses (**1.5, 2.5, and 3.5 points**). Subclasses are assigned to athletes who demonstrate abilities that fall between two adjacent classes.

Player classification ratings, based on the range and control of movement in a seated wheelchair position, can be visually represented as shown in **Picture 5**.

- **Class 1.0** – minimal or no controlled trunk movement in the frontal plane; inability to actively rotate the trunk; significantly impaired balance in both the frontal and sagittal planes; when balance is lost, players restore their upright position using their arms for support.
- **Class 2.0** – partially controlled trunk movement in the frontal plane; active rotation of the upper trunk but inability to rotate the lower trunk; limited movement in the sagittal plane
- **Class 3.0** – good trunk mobility and balance in the frontal plane; limited or no movement of the trunk in the sagittal plane.
- **Class 4.0** – normal trunk mobility with reduced movement to one side due to limitation in one lower limb.
- **Class 4.5** – normal trunk mobility with no limitations in any direction.

Each player is assigned one of the aforementioned classification scores, ensuring **inclusivity** within the sport and providing all participants with **equal opportunities for success**. According to the current **IWBF official game rules**, the **total combined classification score** of the five players from a single team on the court during an official international competition **must not exceed 14 points**.



Picture 5. Differences in Players' Range of Motion Depending on Classification Category (1.0 – 4.5)

Fun Fact:

The first European wheelchair basketball league was established in 1974, and today it is known as the EuroLeague – the wheelchair basketball equivalent of the EuroLeague in “standing” basketball

MODULE 2: INDIVIDUALISED TRAINING APPROACH

ADAPTING TRAINING CONTENT AND DYNAMICS TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISABILITIES

One of the key prerequisites for successfully performing the role of a coach in parasport is a thorough understanding of the functional capabilities and psychophysical characteristics of athletes with disabilities, as well as comprehensive knowledge of the methodological approach and execution process of adapted physical activities, which differ significantly from traditional sports activities designed for able-bodied individuals.

Unlike the conventional sports system, which focuses primarily on athlete specialisation and achieving competitive success, the system of sports for persons with disabilities places particular emphasis on the inclusion of individuals with various types of acquired or congenital impairments and on the promotion of the benefits of an active lifestyle. This approach contributes to the healthy psychophysical and social development of persons with disabilities, ultimately improving their overall quality of life.

The competencies of coaches in parasport depend on their understanding of the differences between conventional and adapted sports activities. These differences are reflected in specific regulations, rules, and functional classification systems characteristic of each sport.

Eligibility for participation in a Paralympic sport requires a permanent impairment that falls within the categories recognized by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC)

and verified through a classification system conducted by the classification panel of the respective sport or discipline.

In wheelchair basketball, according to the classification rules set by the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF), eligible participants are individuals with physical disabilities, primarily involving impairments of the lower limbs.

According to the rules established by the **International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF)**, participants in wheelchair basketball are individuals with **physical disabilities**, primarily involving **impairments of the lower limbs**.

Under the **IWBF Player Classification System**, the acceptable types of physical impairments that qualify an athlete to participate in this sport include the following:

- **Impairment of muscle strength** – conditions resulting in partial or complete loss of voluntary muscle contractions and the inability to generate muscle force. This category includes spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida.
- **Impairment of passive range of motion** – limitations or deficiencies in joint movement, including contractures caused by chronic joint immobilisation or trauma, as well as arthrogyrosis.
- **Limb deficiency** – partial or complete absence of bones or joints due to trauma, disease, or congenital malformation (dysmelia).
- **Leg length difference** – conditions caused by growth and developmental disorders or by trauma affecting one or both legs.
- **Hypertonia** – increased muscle tone and reduced muscle flexibility and relaxation ability, which may result from cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, or stroke.
- **Ataxia** – a condition characterised by uncoordinated movements resulting from damage to the central nervous system, most commonly caused by cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, stroke, or multiple sclerosis.
- **Athetosis** – slow, involuntary, and often writhing movements that may occur as a result of cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, or stroke.

Understanding the above types of eligible physical impairments, classification norms, and the range of movement in a **seated wheelchair position**, together with the individual **functional and psychophysical characteristics** of players, enables wheelchair basketball coaches to design tailored **training programmes** and structure **individual training sessions**.

These sessions must be developed to enhance the specific abilities of each athlete, ultimately improving **team performance** and supporting the implementation of **team strategies** aimed at achieving defined competitive goals.

Comprehending and appropriately applying this knowledge significantly enhances coaching effectiveness in wheelchair basketball, strengthens tactical capacity, and consequently improves the overall performance and results of the team.

STRUCTURE OF TRAINING SESSIONS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Before conducting a wheelchair basketball training session, it is important to note that the person leading the session must possess **appropriate knowledge of adapted physical exercise** and have **practical experience working with persons with disabilities**. It is also recommended that the coach be familiar with **manoeuvring sports wheelchairs** specifically designed for wheelchair basketball activities.

Additionally, wheelchair basketball coaches must be thoroughly prepared and well-informed about the **exercises planned within the training cycle** (micro, meso, or macrocycle). They should familiarise themselves with the exercises through relevant **literature, presentations, pictures, or video materials** that include detailed descriptions and methodologies. The coach should also know the **number of participants** in the session and ensure that all **equipment and training aids** required for the successful execution of the planned activities are available.

The structure of a wheelchair basketball training session should focus on both **physical conditioning** and **technical-tactical development** of the players. According to the recommendations of sports professionals experienced in wheelchair basketball, a standard session should consist of **three parts**, with total duration depending on the time available in the sports hall (60, 90, or 120 minutes).

A typical training session includes:

- **Introductory part** – composed of warm-up exercises and moderate-intensity activities designed to prepare the body for physical exertion. These include wheelchair manoeuvring drills with changes in direction and speed to activate muscles, with short breaks between exercises. Additional exercises should target ball control, flexibility, and injury prevention, focusing on upper body preparation (neck, shoulder, chest, arm, abdominal, and back muscles).
- **Main part** – includes exercises interspersed with breaks for rest and hydration. Depending on players' experience and skill levels, this part should cover:
 - › **Conditioning training** – improving wheelchair manoeuvrability (speed, explosive strength, agility);
 - › **Technical training** – developing basic or advanced basketball skills (dribbling, ball control, passing, and shooting);
 - › **Tactical preparation** – practising offensive and defensive strategies in half-court or full-court play;
 - › **Competitive phase** – small or large group games, depending on the number of players present, incorporating technical and tactical elements trained during the session and developing quick decision-making and situational awareness during gameplay.
- **Final part** – consists of low-intensity exercises for cooling down and stabilising physiological parameters at the end of training. This includes static shooting, free-throw shooting, stretching exercises, and a short analysis of the elements practised and the team's overall performance during the session.

Fun Fact:

If a player in a wheelchair falls to the floor during a game, play does not stop unless the situation poses a risk to the player's safety or to others on the court.

MODULE 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

PSYCHOLOGICAL STABILITY, MOTIVATION, AND TEAM COMMUNICATION

Teams in ball-based sports, including wheelchair basketball, represent a group of individuals integrated into a cohesive unit that serves as the foundation for developing and enhancing each player's individual abilities, all aimed at achieving a common team objective.

The development of players and their preparation for participation in a parasport is a comprehensive process of integrated training, in which physical, technical, tactical, theoretical, and psychological components are harmonized through both training and competition. Within this framework, psychological preparation and emotional stability play a crucial role in achieving defined sporting goals.

Psychological preparation is a long-term process involving the application of various mental training techniques and strategies used by sports psychologists and professionals to prepare individual athletes or entire teams, both in the short and long term. These techniques aim to develop self-confidence, concentration, motivation, stress management, and emotional control during the challenges encountered in training and competition.

High-quality psychological preparation strengthens players' self-esteem and confidence, contributes to emotional well-being, and enhances social inclusion. Well-prepared athletes and teams are better equipped to handle competitive pressure and maximize their sporting potential.

In addition to appropriate psychological preparation, motivation plays a key role in ensuring long-term progress and success in wheelchair basketball. Motivation can be defined as the directed effort toward achieving clearly defined, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound goals.

Motivation can be divided into two main types:

- **Intrinsic motivation** – authentic, stronger, and long-lasting, arising from a genuine love and passion for sport, a sense of personal satisfaction, and achievement.
- **Extrinsic motivation** – influenced by external factors such as praise, rewards, recognition, and other incentives.

The coach's role is to recognize the players' level of skill and experience and to encourage the development of strong intrinsic motivation, while also using external motivators in a balanced and constructive way. Through this approach, athletes are inspired to stay focused and committed to training, overcome setbacks, and achieve their full potential.

TEAM SPIRIT, SUPPORT, AND COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE TEAM

A stimulating environment and a sense of support within the team are achieved by surrounding players with positive individuals, encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experience, recognizing and celebrating individual achievements and progress, providing verbal praise, constructive feedback from teammates and coaches, and fostering initiatives for the team's continued growth. The motivation and constructive behaviors of team members have a direct impact on achieving established goals while also contributing to a supportive atmosphere, the development of team spirit, and the overall satisfaction that comes from collective success.

One of the fundamental elements in team sports, such as wheelchair basketball, is the development of team spirit, characterized by emotional and psychological cohesion among team members. It is built on a sense of unity and belonging, arising from effective verbal and non-verbal communication, mutual trust, support, and collaboration both on and off the court.

Cultivating these values requires consistent effort through the organization of team cohesion exercises, the assignment of roles based on players' characteristics and abilities, and the establishment of a culture of communication within the team that promotes ego control and the efficient resolution of potential conflicts.

Promoting open and effective communication between players on the court is essential for coordination, synchronization, and overall team alignment, ultimately leading to improved collective performance.

Effective tools for enhancing internal communication and developing communication skills during structured training sessions include specific drills based on verbal interaction between players when performing offensive actions ("cut," "pass," "cross," "shoot") or defensive tasks ("switch," "help," "rotate").

In addition to verbal communication, to better understand one another's roles and intentions during noisy or dynamic game situations, team members establish standardized non-verbal communication methods using prearranged eye signals, gestures, or hand movements.

Ultimately, high-quality and efficient communication within a sports team is a key element of success. It is a dynamic and continuous process that requires active participation and commitment of all team members.

Fun Fact:

In wheelchair basketball, players with different types of disabilities can play together on the same team – for example, an athlete with a spinal cord injury, amputation, and cerebral palsy or paresis can all be part of the same starting five.

MODULE 4: TECHNICAL FUNDAMENTALS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

BASIC TECHNICAL ELEMENTS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Wheelchair basketball is one of the most dynamic and visually engaging **intermittent parasports**, characterised by complex and fast-paced game situations that require numerous movements and sprints with frequent stops and changes of direction.

Given the specific characteristics of wheelchair basketball, coaches in this sport focus primarily on developing the **basic and specific motor abilities** of players, followed by their **tactical preparedness** and on-court interaction. In addition to developing basic abilities such as **strength, speed, flexibility, balance, coordination, agility, and endurance**, special attention in all sports – including parasports – must also be devoted to the **development of specific motor skills** and to the **technical preparation of players**.

One of the most important specific motor skills determining a player's performance in wheelchair basketball, and one that begins to develop as early as during the **rehabilitation process**, is **wheelchair manoeuvring**. This skill is later refined and adapted for the requirements of parasport disciplines.

Although wheelchair basketball is one of the most **inclusive parasports**, bringing together athletes with various types and degrees of physical impairment on the same court, **wheelchair manoeuvring training** is conducted uniformly, regardless of the type or level of injury, or the player's position within the team.

Successful participation and notable achievements in wheelchair basketball depend not only on mastering wheelchair manoeuvring techniques but also on the **efficient execution of technical elements** such as **dribbling, ball control, passing, and shooting**.

Fun Fact:

The most famous tactical element in wheelchair basketball is the **"pick and roll"**, executed in the same way as in standing basketball – with wheelchairs being used to set screens and block space effectively.

DRIBBLING TECHNIQUES IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Dribbling is one of the most frequently used technical elements in wheelchair basketball. By applying dribbling techniques correctly and in accordance with the sport's rules, players in possession of the ball can advance and create space on the court.

The dribble is performed by striking the ball with either the left or right hand, bouncing it on the floor in front of the large wheelchair wheels, on either side of the chair, and closer to the front caster wheel. During dynamic game situations, players may use either **stationary dribbling** (while in place) or **continuous dribbling** while simultaneously pushing the wheelchair and moving across the court.

Depending on the **height of the ball's rebound** after it bounces off the floor, three main types of dribbling can be distinguished:

- **Low dribble** – with the ball rebounding up to the level of the ankle joint;
- **Medium dribble** – with the ball rebounding to the level of the hips in a seated position;
- **High dribble** – with the ball rebounding to the level of the shoulders in a seated position (see *Picture 6*).



Picture 6. High Dribble in Wheelchair Basketball

■ BALL CONTROL TECHNIQUES IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Player movements in wheelchair basketball, much like in conventional basketball, can be divided into **movements with the ball** and **movements without the ball**. Although there are many similarities between basketball played by able-bodied athletes and that played by athletes with disabilities in terms of movement and ball-handling skills (such as dribbling, passing, and shooting), wheelchair basketball includes additional **specific technical elements and skills** that players must master to participate successfully in this parasport.

These specific movements and techniques involve a combination of **wheelchair manoeuvring skills** and **ball control**, both of which are essential for effective play. Among the characteristic ball-handling techniques in wheelchair basketball is intermittent dribble, or **dribble with stop** (see *Picture 7*), which consists of **three phases**:

- **Phase I:** Dribbling the ball on the floor with a controlled rebound;
- **Phase II:** Grasping the wheels with both hands to stop the wheelchair's movement;
- **Phase III:** Catching the rebounding ball with one or both hands.

This controlled sequence allows the player to maintain possession of the ball while simultaneously stopping or changing direction, ensuring compliance with the game's rules and preserving balance and stability during dynamic play.



Picture 7. Intermittent Dribble Technique with Stop and One-Handed Ball Control

The **dribbling technique with wheelchair rotation** (see *Picture 8*) is a key skill that allows the player to **maintain ball possession** while preventing the defender from stealing the ball during **directional changes**. This movement combines precise dribbling control with coordinated upper-body and wheelchair movements to achieve a smooth and efficient turn.

The technique is performed through the following **phases**:

- **Phase I – Controlled movement and dribble:**
The player moves the wheelchair in a controlled manner while dribbling the ball on the same side toward which the rotation will occur. The dribble is performed with a steady rhythm and controlled rebound close to the wheelchair.
- **Phase II – Initiating the turn:**
The player leans the upper body toward the side of rotation while simultaneously gripping the top of the wheel and pulling it backward with the hand that was dribbling. At the same time, the opposite hand pushes the other wheel forward, enabling a smooth 180° turn of the wheelchair.
- **Phase III – Continuation after rotation:**
After completing the 180° rotation, the player catches the ball with the **opposite hand** (the one that was not used for dribbling) and continues moving in the **new direction**, ready to resume dribbling or initiate another offensive action.

Mastery of this technique allows players to change direction swiftly while protecting the ball from defensive pressure. It enhances **mobility, coordination, and situational awareness**, contributing significantly to effective **offensive transitions** and maintaining **possession control** during fast, dynamic play.



Picture 8. Dribbling Technique with Wheelchair Rotation

One-Handed Ball Pick-Up Technique (see Picture 9) – this technique enables a moving player to gain possession of a ball rolling on the court surface. It also consists of three phases:

- **Phase I:** While moving, the player steers the wheelchair toward the ball rolling on the floor from the side (laterally to the player’s body), leans the upper body toward that side, and with fingers spread wide, pulls the ball in and presses it against the spokes of the large wheel on that side of the wheelchair.
- **Phase II:** Using one hand to control the ball, the player rolls the wheel, lifting the ball upward along the spokes of the large wheel toward the trunk.
- **Phase III:** Once the ball reaches the top of the wheel, the player catches it with one or both hands and continues moving forward.



Picture 9. One-Handed Ball Pick-Up Technique Using the Wheelchair

■ PASSING TECHNIQUES IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Timely, accurate, and well-executed passing is one of the most important elements in any team sport – and wheelchair basketball is no exception. Effective passing has a direct influence on the game’s tempo, team coordination, and outcome.

In wheelchair basketball, the ball can be passed to a teammate in several ways using different techniques – either **one-handed** (such as the dribble pass, bounce pass, “baseball” pass, behind-the-back pass, hook pass, or lob pass) or **two-handed** (such as the chest pass or overhead pass).

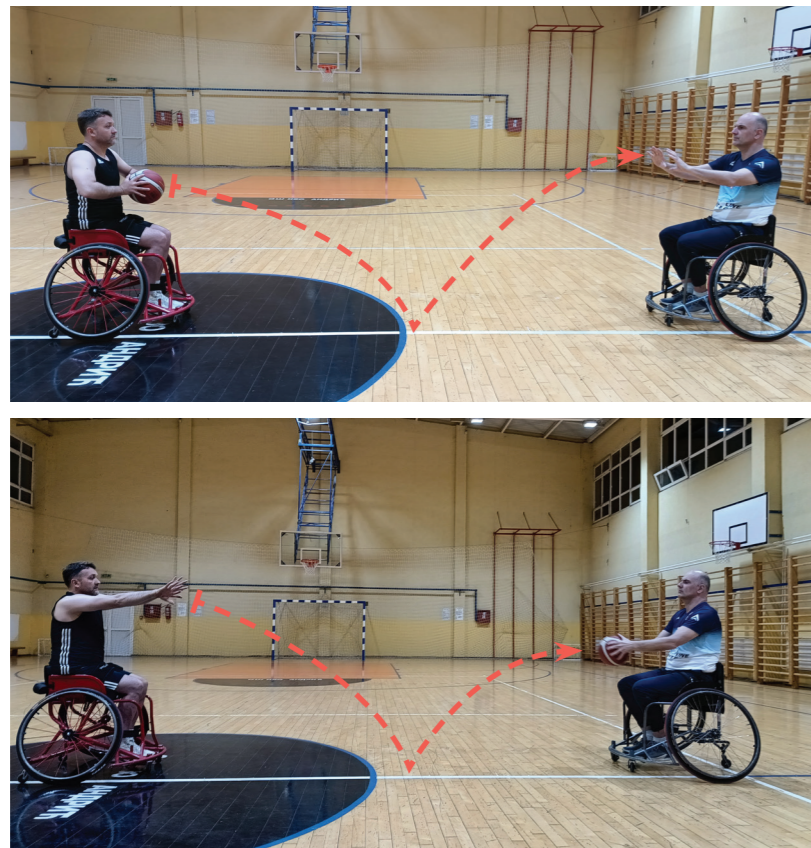
For **beginner training**, three **fundamental passing techniques** are most commonly used. Among them are:

- **Two-Handed Chest Pass** (see Picture 10) – this technique is performed with the player in an upright and balanced position. The hands are placed on both sides of the ball, drawing it toward the chest while bending the elbows. Then, through an **explosive forward motion**, the arms are extended at the elbows, and the ball is pushed in a straight line toward the teammate. The palms turn outward, and the thumbs rotate downward immediately after releasing the ball.



Picture 10. Two-Handed Chest Pass Technique

- **One- or Two-Handed Bounce Pass** (see Picture 11) – this technique is performed with the player in an upright and balanced position. The hands are placed on both sides of the ball, pulling it toward the chest while bending the elbows. Then, through an explosive forward motion, the arms are extended at the elbows, releasing the ball in a straight trajectory so that it bounces off the floor approximately halfway (ideally around two-thirds of the distance) between the passer and the receiver. The palms turn outward, and the thumbs rotate downward after the release.



Picture 11. Two-Handed Bounce Pass Technique

- **Hook (Lob) Pass** (see Picture 12) – this technique is performed with the player in an upright and balanced position, turned sideways toward the teammate.



Picture 12. Hook (Lob) Pass Execution Technique

While holding the wheelchair with one hand on the metal wheel rim (the hand closer to the defender), the player uses the other, extended arm holding the ball to execute the pass over and above the head. During the release, the player's upper arm should brush past the ear, ensuring a smooth, high-arching pass over the defender toward the intended teammate.

SHOOTING TECHNIQUES IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Proper shooting technique and accuracy are key elements that directly influence both individual efficiency and overall team performance.

Experts in this field have determined that in wheelchair basketball, the ball release technique varies significantly depending on the player's classification category, reflected through various kinematic parameters such as release height and angle, entry angle of the ball into the basket, joint positioning, and angular velocity in the shooting arm. The execution technique also differs between players with lower classification scores (1.0–2.5) and those with higher scores (3.0–4.5).

Therefore, coaches are advised to focus on developing individualized shooting techniques for each player, based on their functional ability, experience level, and performance consistency.

In practice, during the learning process, younger or less experienced players typically begin by mastering the two-handed shooting technique, while more advanced players progress to executing the one-handed (dominant hand) shot – a technically and physically more demanding movement.

- **The two-handed shooting technique** is performed as follows:
Players sit in an upright and balanced position, holding the ball with both hands at chest level, elbows bent, and eyes focused on the basket. The shot is executed through an explosive arm extension, fully straightening the elbows and wrists at release.
- **The one-handed (dominant hand) shooting technique** (see Picture 13) is performed as follows:
Players are positioned upright and balanced, with the wheelchair adjusted so that the shoulder of the dominant shooting arm is closer to the basket. The ball is held with both hands in front of the body, with the thumbs forming a "T" shape.



Picture 13. One-Handed (Dominant Hand) Shooting Technique

The shooting arm is then flexed at the elbow to shoulder height, with the upper arm parallel to the floor and the forearm angled approximately 45° relative to the upper arm. The ball is positioned above the forehead, with the palm of the shooting hand facing upward and supporting the ball using the fingertips, without the palm touching it. The non-shooting hand stabilizes the ball from the side.

The shot is executed by fully extending the shooting arm at the elbow and pushing the ball explosively toward the rim using the fingertips. The index finger is the last to contact the ball, determining its direction and imparting backspin. After the release, the wrist and fingers naturally follow through, with the hand finishing in a downward position, facing the floor.

MODULE 5: TACTICAL FUNDAMENTALS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

OFFENSIVE TACTICAL MODELS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Tactics in wheelchair basketball are highly complex, and the implementation of a coach's tactical concepts depends on numerous factors closely linked to the understanding of both the players' characteristics and the sport itself. Tactical preparation is an integral part of the overall process that includes a range of activities aimed at the individual development of players, as well as defining their roles and integration into the collective unit that forms the team.

Work on the team's tactical preparation begins during the **pre-competition period**, supported by detailed analysis and scouting of opposing teams, as well as **team brainstorming sessions** held before matches against known opponents. These sessions are designed to identify and select the most effective strategies for offensive play and defensive positioning.

The choice of an appropriate offensive strategy depends on the team's style of play, the defensive formation of the opposing team, and various in-game situations – whether attacking a set defence under the opponent's basket or implementing different variations of fast transitions of players and the ball toward the offensive half for a quick counterattack.

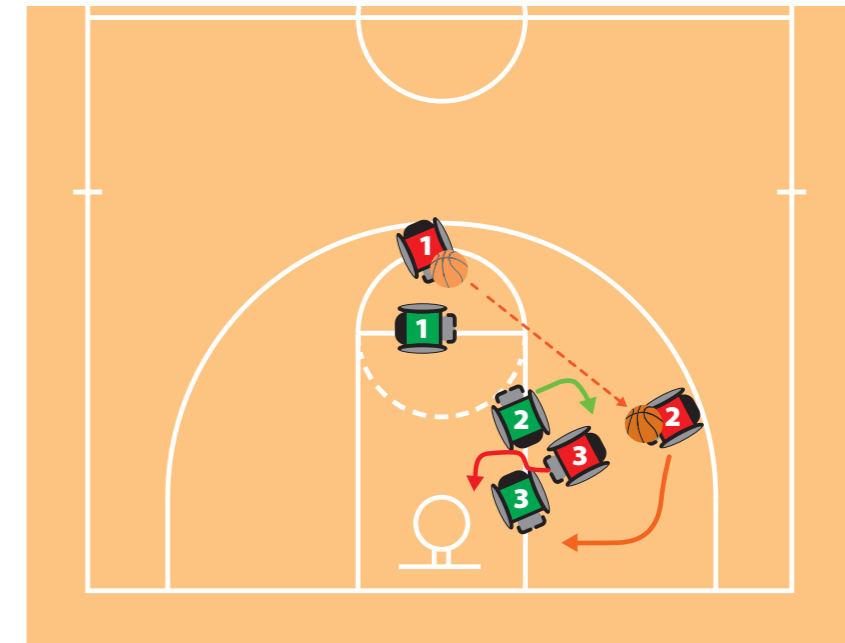
Offensive concepts and tactical models used against a set defence rely on predefined, rehearsed plays that exploit defensive weaknesses or errors. In these tactical systems, players are assigned specific roles and movements according to planned patterns, ensuring efficient ball circulation and overloading one side of the opponent's defence (typically with three attacking players). This creates open space for a drive, assist, or shot.

One of the fundamental offensive tactical models against a set defence is proper player positioning and the creation of conditions for "pick and roll" play. The key to executing this model lies in the positioning of the player setting the pick (screen) and in their movement after successfully performing the block, which opens up space for the ball handler to drive to the basket, take an open shot, or make a pass.

The execution of the pick and roll play can be presented in the following stages:

Phase I – Preparation:

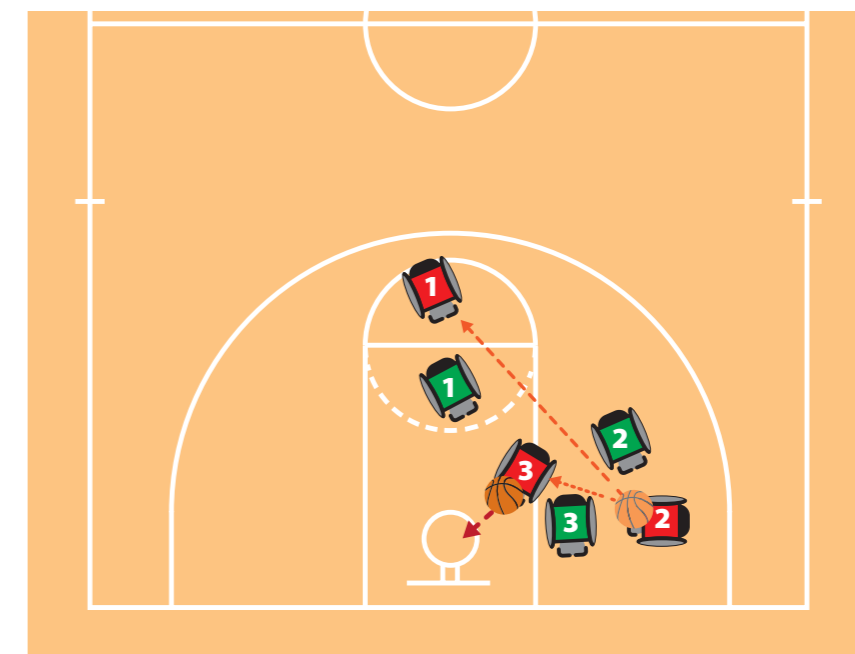
The player setting the pick positions themselves at a specific distance in front of the teammate with the ball, ensuring an unobstructed shot opportunity (see Picture 14). This forces a reaction from the defending player, drawing them out of the defensive formation, while the screener positions their wheelchair on the defender's path to prevent them from following the ball handler.



Picture 14. Preparation for "Pick and Roll" Execution

Phase II – Execution:

This phase involves the efficient movement of the ball handler and the use of the established screen by moving close to the player setting the pick. This forces the defending player to become trapped in the screen, preventing them from maintaining defensive coverage. Simultaneously, the screener reacts by rolling (moving away) from the screen and driving toward the basket.



Picture 15. Execution of the "Pick and Roll" Play

Depending on the specific game situation and the movement of defensive players, this action provides the ball handler with multiple offensive options – to drive toward the basket, take an open shot, or make an assist to a teammate positioned either at the top of the key or to the teammate rolling out of the screen (see *Picture 15*)

A part of every team's offensive strategy must be dedicated to selecting and practising the most effective models of fast offensive transition, meaning the efficient movement of both the ball and players into the opponent's half, and the use of a numerical advantage to quickly score points. These situations typically occur when the opposing team's defence is outnumbered or not yet properly set.

A characteristic offensive transition model in wheelchair basketball is the "man out" play (double-teaming). This model is applied when, during the transition from defence to offence, following a change of possession caused by a rebound, a made basket, or a turnover, players double-team and hold back one or more opponents on their defensive half, thus creating a numerical advantage (5-on-4 or 4-on-3) for their team in the attacking phase.

The fast break is the quickest and most effective offensive model for scoring points, and one that coaches in wheelchair basketball expect their players to execute efficiently whenever possible. It is implemented in situations where the team has a numerical advantage in offence (1-on-0, 2-on-1, or 3-on-2). This offensive model, in its various combinations depending on the number and type of players involved, is used after a blocked shot, a rebound under one's own basket, or a steal or lost ball by the opposing team.

In summary, the successful execution of offensive tactical models and strategies depends on thorough tactical preparation, analysis of the opponent's play, and above all, on effective teamwork, mutual understanding, and trust among all members of the team.

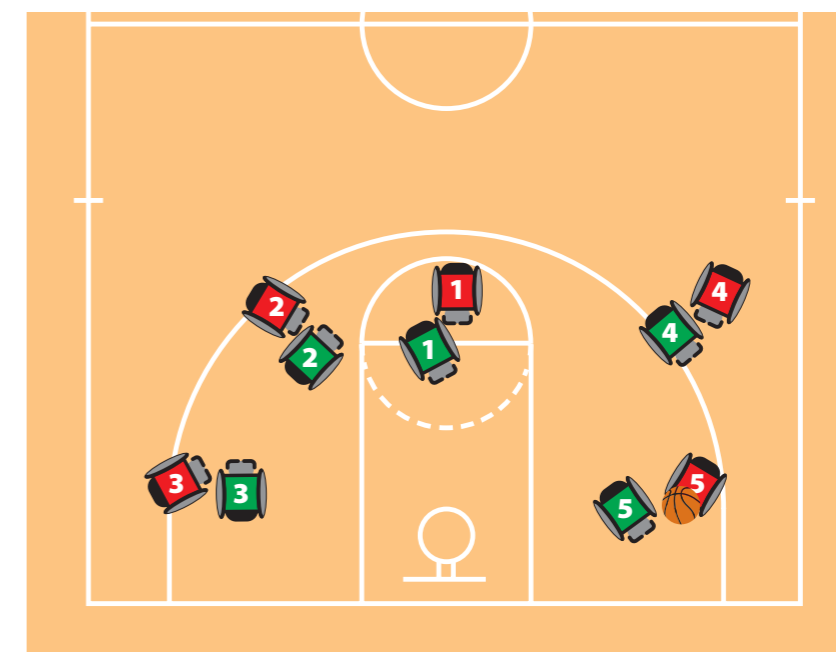
DEFENSIVE TACTICAL MODELS IN WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Depending on the structure of the team and the analysis of the opponent's playing style, wheelchair basketball coaches can apply different defensive systems such as zone defence (team defence) and individual defence (man-to-man), each with its own tactical variations. These defensive models require players to invest significant energy and effort in developing strong defensive skills, adhering to individual defensive principles, and maintaining a high level of communication with teammates. They are practised both during the preparatory period and throughout the competitive phase before each match.

When applying **individual defence**, each player on the team is responsible for performing specific defensive tasks against an opposing offensive player, based on a prior analysis of that player's main offensive characteristics and abilities.

The basic defensive principles include positioning the defender between the attacker and the basket, continuously tracking the movement of the ball during the opponent's offensive play, and maintaining constant communication with teammates on defence (*Picture 16*).

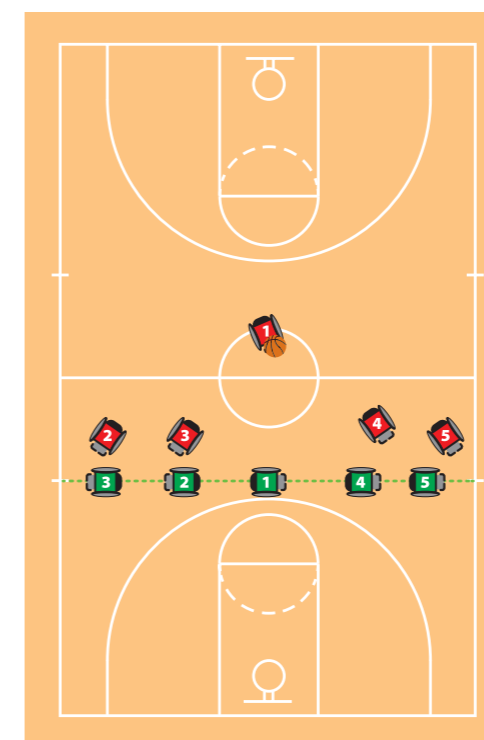
Zone defence is a team-based defensive model in which each player on the court is assigned a specific area to protect, focusing on preventing the opponent's players from advancing or penetrating toward the basket. This type of defence can be executed in several variations, such as half-court or full court pressing, which aim to disrupt the opponent's transition and apply pressure on the ball.



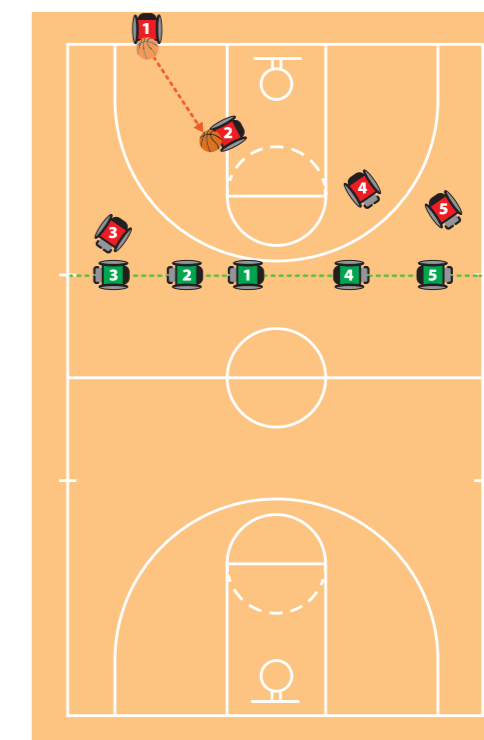
Picture 16. Man-to-Man Defence on the Defensive Half of the Court

Zone defence can also be organised in different formations or spatial player arrangements (1-2-2, 2-1-2, 5-0, 2-3, 3-2, 1-3-1, 1-1-3), which are categorised according to the number of players positioned in the first defensive line.

The 5-0 zone formation, with five players positioned in a line either on their own half (Picture 17) or on the opponent's half of the court (Picture 18), is one of the most frequently used defensive strategies in wheelchair basketball, designed to disrupt the opponent's offensive organisation and slow their progression across the court.



Picture 17. Zone Defence in a 5-0 Formation on the Team's Own Half of the Court

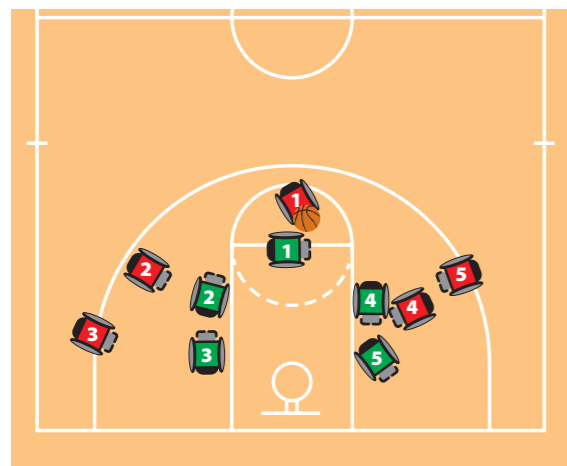


Picture 18. Zone Defence in a 5-0 Formation on the Opponent's Half of the Court

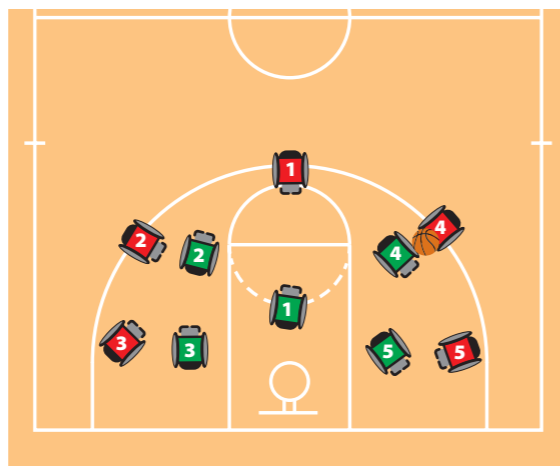
Among beginners in wheelchair basketball, zone defense formations are most commonly used because they allow weaker defensive players to receive support. These formations position players in three defensive lines on their own half of the court, typically under their basket: zonska odbrana u formaciji 1-2-2 u kojoj se u prvoj liniji na vrhu reketa nalazi jedan igrač koji vrši

Zone defence in a 1-2-2 formation – one player is positioned at the top of the key in the first line, applying pressure on the offensive player with the ball. Two players are positioned in the second line along the sides of the key, near the free-throw line, while two more players form the third line along the sides of the key, closer to the baseline (Picture 19).

Zone defence in a 2-1-2 formation – used when the opposing team has taller players under the basket or more penetrative offensive players. In this formation, two players form the first line, positioned along the sides of the key near the free-throw line; one player in the second line “closes” the key area and provides help defence to the side players; and two players in the third line are positioned along the sides of the key closer to the baseline (Picture 20).



Picture 19.
Zone Defence in a 1-2-2 Formation



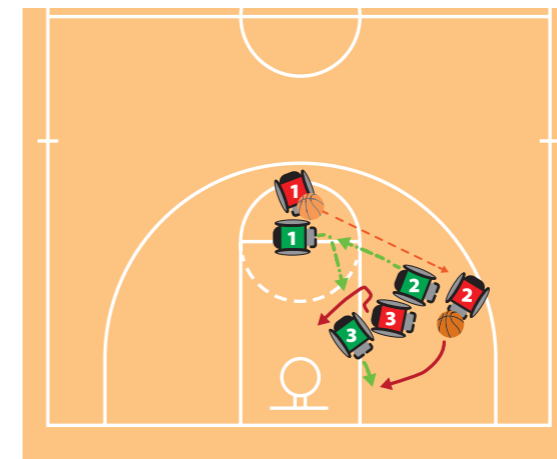
Picture 20.
Zone Defence in a 2-1-2 Formation

When developing individual defensive skills in wheelchair basketball, special attention should be given to practising specific defensive elements such as switching (“switch”) and the “yo-yo” defence, which are frequently used when defending against the opponent’s “pick and roll” plays. The focus in learning these defensive techniques is on proper positioning, continuous communication, and cooperation among defensive players. Training begins with pair exercises and two-on-two drills, gradually increasing the number of players involved in both offence and defence.

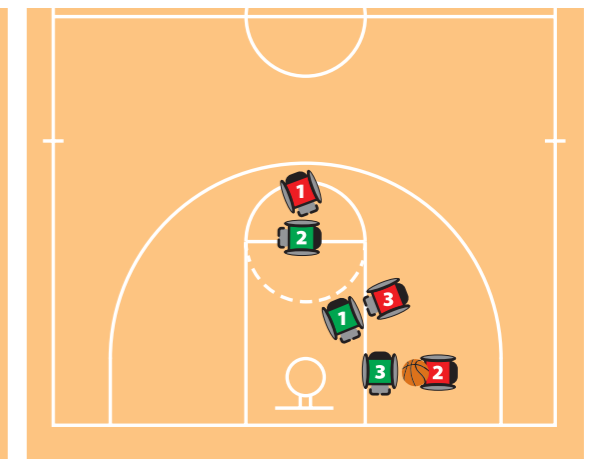
The defensive technique that incorporates these elements and is most commonly used to counter the opponent’s “pick and roll” play is known as triple or rotational switching (“triple switch”). It can be executed in several variations, and its mastery and implementation during gameplay are achieved through the following drills:

“Triple switch” defence on one side of the court with three players in offence and three in defence, where two defensive players are positioned along the sides of the key and one closer to the top of the key. In the initial phase (Picture 21), the upper side

defender (player no. 2), positioned closer to the free-throw line, leaves the formation to contest the shot. In the final phase (Picture 22), this defender finishes the defensive movement at a position closer to the top of the key, while the player initially positioned at the top of the key (player no. 1) performs the switch and moves down to take the side position along

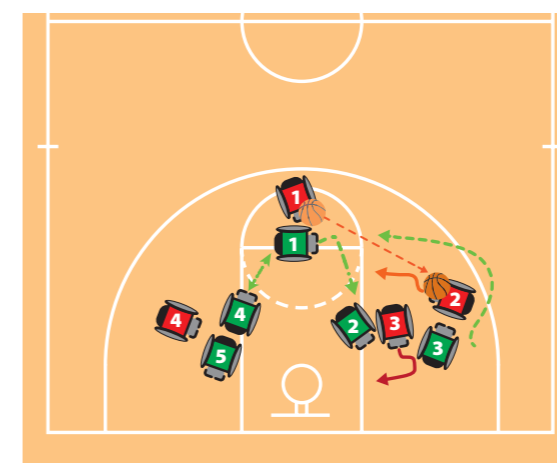


Picture 21. Initial Phase
with the Upper Defender Moving Out

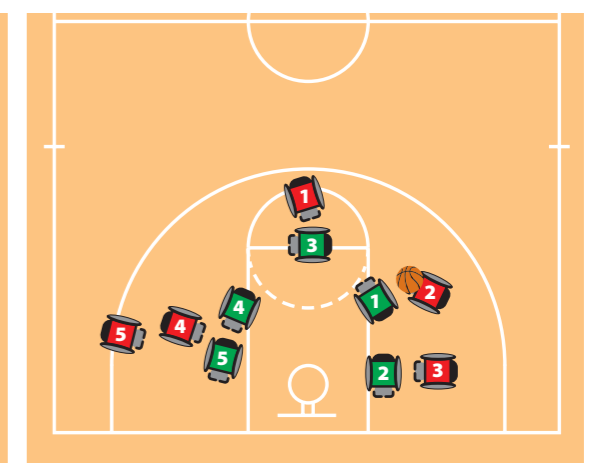


Picture 22. Final Phase
with the Upper Defender Moving Out

Exercise “triple switch” defence on one half of the court with five players in offence and five in defence, where two defensive players are positioned along the sides of the key on each side of the court, and one player is positioned closer to the top of the key. In the initial phase (Picture 23), the lower side defender (player no. 3), positioned closer to the baseline, leaves the formation to contest the shot. In the final phase (Picture 24), this defender completes the defensive movement at a position closer to the top of the key, while the remaining defenders (players no. 1, no. 2, and no. 4) first adjust their positions to stop the offensive drive, and then perform a positional rotation. Through these rotations and player switches, defenders no. 1 and no. 2 move to new positions along the side of the key, closer to the free-throw line and the baseline respectively.

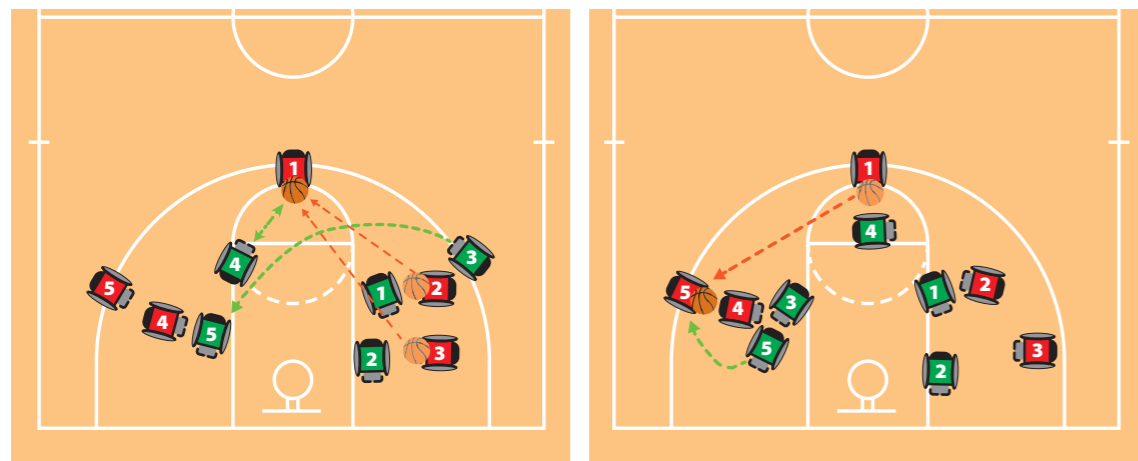


Picture 23. Initial Phase
with the Lower Defender Moving Out



Picture 24. Final Phase
with the Lower Defender Moving Out

Exercise “triple switch” defence with ball movement in offence and the lower side defender moving out, where in the initial phase (Picture 25) the lower side defender (player no. 3), positioned closer to the baseline, leaves the formation to contest the shot. In the final phase (Picture 26), this defender completes the defensive movement by taking the position of the upper side defender on the opposite side of the court, while the remaining defenders (players no. 1, no. 2, and no. 4) first make positional adjustments and then, through switching and rotation, reposition themselves to stop the offensive players’ penetration.



Picture 25. Initial Phase of Player Position Rotation

Picture 26. Final Phase of Player Position Rotation

Finally, it should be emphasized that wheelchair basketball coaches, depending on the score progression and in order to change the rhythm and flow of the opponent’s offensive play, often prepare tactical surprises and combine the mentioned defensive models. The implementation and success of these strategies depend primarily on the players on the court, who represent the final link in the execution of the team’s defensive strategy.

Fun Fact:

During training sessions of elite national teams, wheelchair basketball players can cover up to five kilometers on the court in a single two-hour session.

MODULE 6: CLUB AND EVENT MANAGEMENT

Managing a wheelchair basketball club requires the same level of professionalism as managing any other sports organisation. A club is not merely a group of players – it is an organisation that requires proper administration, financial management, strategic planning, and a long-term vision.

ANNUAL WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN

At the beginning of each year, every club should adopt an annual work plan. This plan includes the schedule of training sessions, matches, participation in tournaments, as well as additional activities such as promotional events or educational programmes. The financial plan must define all sources of income (membership fees, sponsorships, donations, public calls for funding) and expenses (equipment, hall rental, travel). This allows the club to monitor progress toward its goals and avoid unplanned financial difficulties.

Tip: Create an Excel table with a monthly overview of income and expenses – it will help ensure transparency and simplify the preparation of funding applications.

ORGANISATION OF TRAINING SESSIONS AND MATCHES

High-quality work requires regular training sessions held at agreed times. The club should ensure access to a sports hall, plan schedules according to age and competition categories, and set clear training goals (fitness, technique, tactics). Organising matches involves coordination with the federation, securing referees, a scorer’s table, and medical staff.

Tip: Keep a “training diary” – a simple document in which the coach records the exercises performed during each training session and the players’ responses.

MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATION AND REGISTRATION WITH THE FEDERATION

Every club should maintain a membership register containing basic information (name, surname, date of birth, contact details, membership status). Registration with the national federation is mandatory for players who wish to compete in official tournaments. Administration also includes managing membership fees, keeping records of mandatory medical examinations, and ensuring that all registered players are insured for the playing season.

Tip: Use a simple online tool (for example, Google Sheets) to maintain the membership database – this way, the data is accessible to all club members and can be easily updated.

PROJECT WRITING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Projects are an important source of funding and development for clubs. Organisations can apply for calls at the local, national, and European levels through official application procedures. The key elements of a project are clearly defined goals,

activities, budget, and evaluation. Project implementation requires regular reporting and documentation of completed activities.

Tip: Start with small projects (for example, local or city-level sports funding calls), and then gradually expand to larger ones, such as Erasmus+ Sport programmes.

WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers often represent the heart of wheelchair basketball clubs. They assist with logistics, managing social media, recording matches, or supporting players. The club must have a clear volunteer engagement strategy – from recruitment to recognition and appreciation of their contribution.

Tip: Build connections with secondary schools and universities – many students are looking for volunteering opportunities.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PROMOTION

Good public relations are crucial for attracting new members and sponsors. The club should maintain active social media profiles, regularly sharing news and photos, while also keeping contact with local media outlets. Promotion also includes public events such as open training sessions, presentations in primary and secondary schools or universities, and charity matches.

Tip: Create a short social media posting plan – aim for at least one post per week with photos or stories from the club.

EVENT ORGANISATION

Organising tournaments or training camps requires detailed planning – setting the date, booking the venue, inviting teams, managing transport and accommodation logistics, hiring referees, ensuring medical services and security, and maintaining media communication. Tools such as the Toolkit for Organizing Wheelchair Basketball Events and the Event Management Checklist greatly simplify this process.

Tip: Prepare a checklist at least one month before the event – clearly define who is responsible for each task and set deadlines.

Fun Fact:

In Spain and Germany, some wheelchair basketball clubs have more than 200 members, including juniors, amateurs, and professionals. Their matches attract large audiences, and top clubs have annual sponsorship contracts worth several hundred thousand euros.

MANAGING SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS (CLUBS) – 101

Running a sports club is not only a sporting task – it is also a managerial, financial, and social challenge. For many associations, especially those involved in parasport, the main issue is not a lack of ideas or enthusiasm, but rather the absence of structure and knowledge on how to build a club on solid foundations and ensure its sustainability. This section provides basic guidelines to help anyone who wants to establish or improve the operation of a wheelchair basketball club.

ESTABLISHING A CLUB

To establish a club in most European countries, several basic steps are required:

1. **Founding group** – usually at least three adult individuals are needed.
2. **Statute of the association** – the key document defining the club's goals, membership, governing bodies, and operational procedures.
3. **Founding assembly** – the founders adopt the decision to establish the club, approve the statute, and elect management bodies (president, general secretary, executive board).
4. **Registration** – the club is entered into the national register of associations.
5. **Opening a bank account** – necessary for financial operations.
6. **Joining the federation** – to participate in official competitions, the club must become a member of the national wheelchair basketball federation.

Tip: From the start, keep minutes of meetings and maintain clear financial records – transparency builds trust among members and partners.

Fun Fact:

The first registered wheelchair basketball club in Croatia was founded in Zagreb in 1972 and was among the pioneers of parasport in the region.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

A well-run club functions like a small organisation. This means a clear division of duties and responsibilities: the president is in charge of strategic decisions, the secretary manages administration, the treasurer oversees finances, while the coaches are responsible for the sporting side.

The club should have an annual work and financial plan, hold regular meetings, and produce activity reports. Effective club management also involves maintaining relationships with members, communicating with parents of young athletes, engaging volunteers, and cooperating with the local community.

Tip: Create a simple “work plan” document of 2–3 pages listing the goals for one year (for example, increasing membership, organising a tournament, applying for public funding).

Fun Fact:

Some of the largest wheelchair basketball clubs in Europe (for example, in Germany and Spain) have professional managers and more than 10 employees – yet all of them began as small, volunteer-run associations.

FINANCES AND SPONSORS

Without stable finances, a club cannot survive in the long term.

Common sources of income include:

- Membership fees – regular payments from club members.
- Public funding calls – local, national, and international institutions and organisations publish annual calls for sports programmes.
- Donations and sponsorships – local companies often support clubs, especially when visibility and social responsibility are part of the cooperation.
- EU funds – Erasmus+ Sport funding programmes support creative ideas in the field of sport and provide opportunities for receiving significant financial resources.

The club should prepare a sponsorship package: a presentation and cover letter clearly showing what the club offers the sponsor (visibility on jerseys, social media, and in the media) and what results it achieves.

Tip: Sponsors highly value concrete data – include information such as the number of members, match attendance, and social media followers.

Fun Fact:

In Spain, wheelchair basketball clubs regularly sign sponsorship contracts worth 100,000 euros or more per year – and most of them started with local shops that donated their first balls or wheelchairs.

PROJECTS (WRITING, IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION)

Writing projects may seem complicated, but it essentially comes down to several key steps:

1. Defining the problem – for example, young people with disabilities have limited opportunities to participate in sports activities.
2. Setting goals – include 20 new young athletes in wheelchair basketball.
3. Describing activities – training sessions, workshops, camps, promotional events.
4. Preparing the budget – determine the total cost of implementing the planned activities.
5. Defining evaluation – decide how success will be measured (number of new members, number of training sessions, participant surveys and questionnaires).

For successful project implementation, it is important to maintain proper documentation: reports, photos, participant lists, and financial invoices. Tools such as the Basic Project Planning Pack and the Meeting/Activity Report can be of great help.

Tip: Start with small projects at the local level – this will give you valuable experience and a reference for later applications to national or international funding calls.

Fun Fact:

In the past ten years, Croatian sports clubs have implemented more than 20 Erasmus+ projects, including various youth basketball exchanges, training camps, and development programmes.

Managing a wheelchair basketball club requires a combination of enthusiasm and professionalism. Through clear structure, planning, and effective use of available tools, every club can grow and become an important part of the community. This section provides fundamental information and practical advice on establishing, managing, and financing a club, with special emphasis on project-based funding as a key mechanism for development.

Fun Fact:

Today, there are more than 600 registered wheelchair basketball clubs across Europe – most of them are still run by volunteers. Manuals like this one help clubs professionalise their operations and ensure long-term sustainability.

ERASMUS+ SPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLUBS

WHAT IS ERASMUS+ SPORT?

Erasmus+ Sport is part of the broader Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. It is designed to promote sport and physical activity, strengthen cooperation among sports organisations, and address social challenges through sport. For parasport, and especially for wheelchair basketball, the programme provides a unique opportunity for clubs and federations to receive support for professionalisation and organisational development.

The main types of projects are:

Cooperation Partnerships – larger projects in which clubs and federations jointly develop tools, manuals, training programmes, and organise sporting events.

Small-Scale Partnerships – ideal for beginner clubs; they involve simpler administrative requirements and smaller grants, but provide sufficient funding to organise a camp, tournament, or educational activity.

European Sport Events – competitions, tournaments, and camps of European relevance.

Capacity Building in Sport – cooperation between EU member states and Western Balkan countries, offering opportunities for projects that strengthen regional networks.

HOW CAN CLUBS USE ERASMUS+ SPORT PROGRAMMES?

Ways in which clubs can make use of Erasmus+ Sport programmes include:

- **For implementing educational activities** – through projects such as POWER, modules and manuals are developed and made available to all clubs.
- **For carrying out promotional activities** – Erasmus+ projects increase visibility and attract media attention, helping clubs reach new members and sponsors.
- For establishing international cooperation – clubs connect their members with peers from other countries, which strengthens motivation and improves the quality of work.
- **For ensuring financial stability** – projects provide additional funding that clubs can invest in equipment, training, and event organisation.

When applying, clubs should pay attention to the following:

- **Preparation and planning** – the project must clearly define the problem, objectives, activities, and expected results.
- **Partnerships** – it is necessary to find partners from other EU (or regional) countries with similar needs and goals.
- **Administration and reporting** – EU projects require precise documentation, and clubs should develop internal capacities for project management.
- **Sustainability** – a project should not be a one-time event but should leave a long-term impact (for example, tools, manuals, or networks).

POWER AS AN EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

The POWER project demonstrates how Erasmus+ Sport can directly support wheelchair basketball clubs by:

- Developing educational modules for coaches, leaders, and managers.
- Producing tools such as the Toolkit for Organizing Wheelchair Basketball Events and the Dissemination and Communication Plan.
- Organising camps and workshops where materials were tested in practice.
- Creating a network of partners that extends beyond national borders.

All the above resources remain available at power.com.hr and can serve as a starting point for new projects.

MESSAGE TO CLUBS

Erasmus+ Sport is not reserved only for large federations or professional organisations – every club, regardless of size, can find its opportunity, whether through small-scale partnerships or participation in larger projects.

The first step is to take initiative – define an idea, find partners, and submit a project proposal. The second step is to use existing resources and materials such as the POWER manual, which will make preparation faster and more effective.

Fun Fact:

In 2023 alone, more than 300 projects across Europe were funded through Erasmus+ Sport – including several in the field of parasport. This means the opportunity is there; it's up to the clubs to make the most of it.

CONCLUSION

Wheelchair basketball is not just a sport – it is a means of empowerment, inclusion, and social transformation. This manual presents the fundamental elements that enable clubs and federations to improve their operations and elevate them to a higher level. These include a deeper understanding of the origins and development of the sport, the rules of the game and the classification system, the development of technical and tactical skills, as well as management, promotion, and project writing.

The key message is that success in wheelchair basketball does not depend solely on the players on the court, but also on the systemic support off the court – the education of coaches, the level of club organisation, the responsibility of leaders, and the engagement of the local community. Therefore, it is essential to build knowledge and capacities just as one builds the fitness or tactics of a team.

The POWER project has demonstrated how, through the collaboration of partners and the support of the Erasmus+ programme, effective working methodologies and tools can be created and made available to everyone, even after the project has ended. This represents a lasting value that goes beyond any single project, laying the foundation for the long-term development of sport for persons with disabilities in Europe.

The future of wheelchair basketball lies in the courage of clubs and federations to embrace new initiatives, take advantage of opportunities such as Erasmus+ Sport programmes, and recognise sport as a space where differences are not obstacles but strengths.

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