

## Sport - Where Everyone Can Play!

Parasports, including wheelchair sports, are open to a wide array of abilities depending on the sport. Some sports, such as sledge hockey, have an open classification system in which anyone can participate. Other sports, like wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, and athletics, use a classification system that athletes get assigned in relation to their physical ability. This is meant to ensure a consistent level of competition in these sports.

Some parasports are also open to those without a disability, in which they can play up into the national championships. Some common disabilities that we see in parasport include those with degenerative/unstable joints or injuries which would prevent their full participation in stand-up sports (referred to as a minimal disability), lower and upper limb amputations, Spina Bifida, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, and acquired injuries which may affect both the lower and upper limbs.

Regardless of what disability or impairment you might have, it is possible to find a sport for you to enjoy.

## Opportunities in Paralympic Sport

The only limit to Paralympic sport is decided by the athlete themselves. Most athletes who participate in sport are there to be physically active and to play a sport that they enjoy. However, for those who want more, there are numerous opportunities to advance further in the sport. This includes inter-provincial competitions such as the Canada Games, earning a spot on the National Team, receiving a university scholarship to play sports in college or university, or possibly participating in a professional league. How far do you see yourself going?

There are numerous Paralympic sports available in Manitoba. Please visit [www.mwsa.ca](http://www.mwsa.ca) or contact our office directly for more information.

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# A Guide to PARASPORT IN MANITOBA



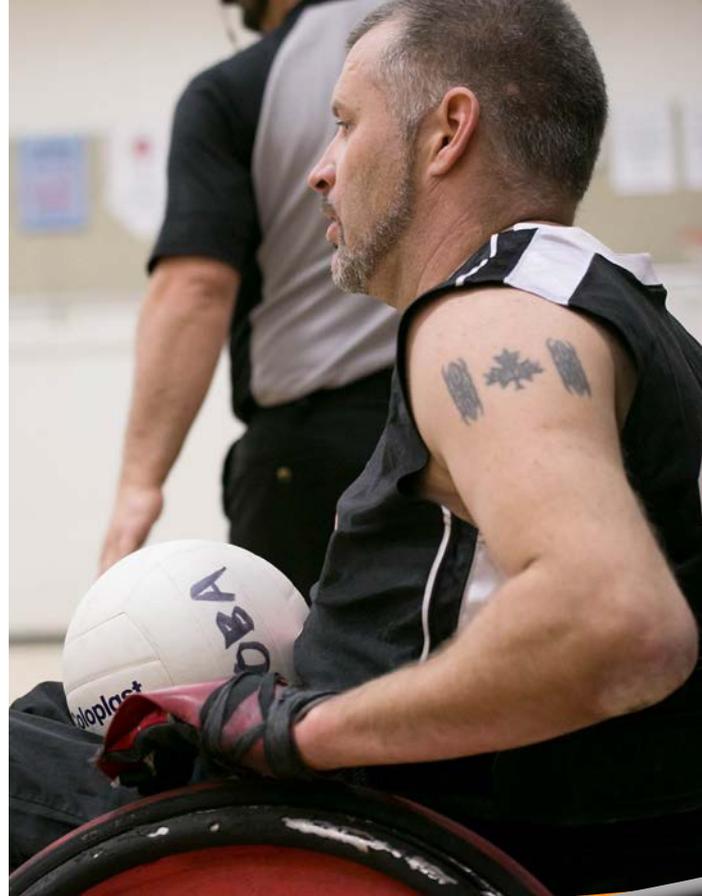
**MWSA**  
MANITOBA WHEELCHAIR  
SPORT ASSOCIATION





## WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Wheelchair Basketball is played similarly to the stand-up version of the sport with adjustments to the rules around travelling, double-dribbling, and the equipment used in the sport. Additionally, wheelchair basketball uses a classification system in which athletes are assigned a class between 1.0 and 4.5. A combination of all the athlete's classification values cannot exceed 14 points while on the court at the same time. Athletes without a disability are automatically classed as a 4.5. Other aspects of the sport, including court dimensions, net height, 3-point line, etc. are the same as stand-up basketball.



## WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

Invented in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1976 as an alternative to wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby is one of the hardest hitting sports in the Paralympics. Athletes in this sport carry the ball through the designated goal area virtually by any means necessary, including hitting the wheelchair. Athletes use specially designed wheelchairs which are re-enforced to absorb the level of contact in this sport. The sport was designed for those who are affected in at least three limbs or more as well as in their trunk muscles. Athletes are then classified between 0.5 to 3.5 with a maximum of 8 points allowed on the court.



## WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

Wheelchair tennis is one of the fastest growing Paralympic sports internationally. The only adjustment to this sport from the stand-up version is athletes receive a second bounce of the ball before it becomes unplayable. Wheelchair tennis has two categories: para and quad. The para-division encompasses all disabilities, whereas the quad division is for athletes who have impairments in their upper limbs as well as their core muscles. For some athletes in this category, the racquet is taped to the player's hand to compensate for grip strength.