



1st Conference for International Archery Classifiers

REPORT

Vichy (FRA) – 7 August 2010

Participants:

Classifiers: John NYLAND (USA), Bastienne OEHME (GER), Didier GRASPBERGER (FRA), Lucia DOGNAZZI (ITA), Roman SUDA (CZE)

Para-Archery Committee: Pauline BETTERIDGE (Head of Classification), Marco CARPIGNANO and Rita VAN DRIEL (Chairperson).

Background of the conference

FITA Para-Archery envisions a developed and sustainable archery sport system from national development to international competition, providing opportunities for all persons with a physical disability (including visual impairment) to participate in the sport of archery.

One of the priorities set by the Para-Archery Committee is to establish standards and framework for education, training, accreditation and certification of classifiers by FITA in compliance with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Classification Code. The structure to be developed for classification should achieve long term sustainability and credibility within the FITA organisation.

In the action plan of the Para-Archery Committee the following actions were defined:

- Establish mechanisms to classify athletes on all levels (national, regional, etc.)
- Design and implement a formal assessment template for classifiers
- Recruit and train continental classifiers

To start the process to come to a classification structure the Para-Archery Committee decided to organise a conference for international classifiers in conjunction with the European Para-Archery Championships. All international classifiers were invited to participate in the discussions.

Report and action points following the conference

1. The classification system and the way forward

There was some general discussion whether the present system was adequate and provides the information we need and can justify.

The main items from the discussion were:

- The classification system should be more evidence based as it is now, but we need to make sure that the classification does not become too complicated, because it is 'elegant in its simplicity'.
- The medical evidence should give sufficient detail of the status of the condition of the archer.



- We should have quantifiable tests that can be prepared by their own physiotherapist to bring with them as part of their medical portfolio.
- We are looking for simple, practical tests that are both reliable and valid.

We should reconsider the minimal disability score:

- Could we use a student to see where the points have been lost in the current system?
- Which column of points was used most?

In short we are trying to determine the characteristics of each group, including those that are the most consistent, and those that are the most variable.

1. Action points, answers to send to Pauline BETTERIDGE by 15 October 2010:

- 1.1 To see if there are suitable neurological tests that will give us a reliable marker of the balance
- 1.2 Questions to be drafted for archers and coaches about performance and classification, to see what they perceive as their functional ability with the following:
 - Sitting balance
 - Use of a strap
 - Use of a release aid
- 1.3 Come with suggestions how to change the minimal disability

2. Education and accreditation

2.1 National

At national level it is the responsibility of each member nation, this may mean developing their own system or for smaller countries to cooperate with a country nearby that has an established system.

For the education and accreditation of continental and international level classifiers we will consider how we can make use the FITA system that is developed for judges.

The main items from the discussion were:

- That we link Africa with Europe and Oceania with Asia to make the system work.
- Should we have coaches as classifiers? Definitely not while still active as a coach.
- Athletes can train as classifiers, but cannot be involved above national level while still competing.

What is the basic knowledge level to become classifier?

- There must be a basic knowledge of archery.
- It is preferred to have a medical background, e.g. physiotherapists or doctors. Others, who may be interested, must have a basic understanding of medicine and its testing systems used. (How do we deal with the confidentiality issues for non medical persons?)
- We must move to the situation where ALL archers are classified nationally before coming to an International event.
- We must find a way of encouraging Member Associations (MAs) to cooperate with National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) to use their expertise in classification. We



should write to MAs with this suggestion and at the same time write to NPCs to encourage helping the MAs.

- Depending on the activity per country, to define how many classifiers are needed. At least each country should have a classification coordinator and one classifier.
- For smaller countries, or those with a small interest in archery it could be possible to make an arrangement with a neighbouring country that is better established.
- National classifiers must have an access code to be able to update the information about their classified archers.
- There should be on line support via the website.

2.2 Continental and international

We need to establish a continental level of classifier but need to define how people progress from national to continental classifier and from continental to international classifier.

The main items from the discussion were:

- How many of each of the levels do we need? Depending on:
 - Number of competitions
 - Number of classifications
- For each level there needs to be a chief classifier who will be the contact person and who coordinate activity in their area.
- We should continue to use the seminar as at present for classifiers to progress.
- We should have a collection of difficult cases on DVD for discussion (consent of the archer would be required).
- It would be possible to have candidate international classifiers to assist at the seminar.

3. Other suggestions

- We must produce a strategic plan for classification.
- We must produce an easy guide about classification for information of coaches, judges etc.

4. Follow-up

- Arrange a meeting in Lausanne (SUI) from 5–7 November 2010 with the classifiers who were in charge at the European Championships in Vichy to discuss the responses from the request for information.
- Define who is responsible for the different action points related to the strategic plan for classification.
- Make a proposal for the offer from EMAU to have an education opportunity in March or April 2011.
- Make a proposal for an education and accreditation opportunity along with the World Championships in Torino in July 2011.

For further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Pauline BETTERIDGE by email (pauline.betteridge@gmail.com).