

Para-Biathlon Information Sheet

About the sport

Para-biathlon was introduced in Lillehammer in 1994 and is open to athletes with a physical or vision impairment. It consists of a 7.5km route divided into three 2.5km stages. Between the two stages athletes must hit two targets located at a distance of 10 metres. Each miss is penalised by an increase in the overall route time.

The percentage-system is an adjusted time formula, which is used to determine overall place of each competitor relative to all other racers. This formula assigns a percentage to each competitor based on each athlete's race class. The athlete's actual time is multiplied by this percentage to determine their adjusted finishing time. Success in Para-Biathlon relies in the capability of alternating the skills of physical endurance and shooting accuracy during the competition.

Athletes who have a vision impairment compete with a guide and are assisted by acoustic signals, which depending on signal intensity, indicate when the athlete is on target. Athletes with a physical impairment may compete standing or using a sit-ski.

Who can compete?

Para-Biathlon is open exclusively to athletes with a physical or vision impairment. Athletes are required to submit medical reports and meet the minimum impairment criteria in order to compete.

Eligible impairments	Description	Minimum Impairment Criteria
Loss of limbs	Partial or complete absence of bones or joints due to amputation or deficiency from birth.	Arm: loss of one arm above the wrist OR shortened arm of similar length Leg: loss of one leg above the ankle or shortened leg of similar length

Eligible impairments	Description	Minimum Impairment Criteria
Muscle weakness/Impaired muscle power	Muscle weakness or paralysis from conditions such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, nerve damage, spinal cord injury or other spinal condition.	Leg: Loss of strength in a hip, knee or ankle Arm: Loss of strength in a shoulder, elbow, wrist or hand
Co-ordination impairments - Hypertonia, Ataxia, Athetosis	Impairments from neurological conditions such as acquired brain injury, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis that affect co-ordination and smoothness of movement and balance.	Co-ordination or movement difficulties in at least one arm or leg.
Restricted joint movement/Impaired passive range	Restricted movement or tightness in a joint/s from conditions such as joint fusions and other restricting conditions.	Joint movement restriction in at least one hip, knee ankle, shoulder, elbow or wrist.
Leg length difference	Significant difference in leg length due to a deficiency at birth or trauma.	The difference must be at least 7cm between both legs
Vision Impairment	Impairment of the eye structure, optic nerves or pathways, or vision area of the brain, resulting in a loss of vision in both eyes. Caused by conditions such as albinism, macular degeneration, macular or cone rod dystrophy and retinitis pigmentosa.	Visual acuity loss in both eyes (how far they can see) with best corrected vision less than or equal to 0.9 LogMAR; or (NS3 Only) Binocular Visual field restriction in both eyes (how wide they can see) less than or equal to 60 degrees diameter with best corrected vision if acuity is better than 0.9 LogMAR.

Para-Biathlon Sport Classes



Sport Class	Description (Guide Only)
Athletes with Physical Impairment – Standing (LW=Locomotor Winter)	
LW2	Athletes with a significant impairment in one leg who use two skis and two ski poles. Athlete can ski with a prosthetic leg if required.
LW3	Athletes with impairment in both legs who use two poles two skis. Athletes generate most of their forward power through their upper body and legs.
LW4	Skiers with a mild impairment affecting one leg. Athletes ski with two skis and two ski poles.
LW5/7	Skiers with an impairment of both arms who do not use a prosthesis. Athletes ski with two skis and no ski poles and use adapted trigger mechanisms.
LW6	Skiers with a significant impairment in one arm. Athletes ski with two skis and one ski pole and may have assistance when setting up to shoot.
LW8	Athletes with a mild impairment in arm that affects the ability to grip. Athletes ski with two skis and one pole and may have assistance when setting up to shoot.
LW9	Athletes with impairments in the arms and legs. Athletes must ski with two skis and either one or two ski poles.
Athletes with Physical Impairment – Sitting	
LW10	Sit skiers who have significant impairment in the torso and legs. Athletes require strapping and support to maintain a sitting position and use their arms to generate power.
LW10.5	Sit skiers with impairments in the legs and torso who have some abdominal strength to balance their sit ski. They generate power using their arms over the legs to the test table and will not be able to move.
LW11	Sit skiers with impairments in the legs who have quite good control in the stomach and back muscles. They can generate power using their torso and arms, allowing for longer pole reach with their push.

Sport Class	Description (Guide Only)
LW11.5	Athletes with moderate impairments in the legs who can generate good powerful reach and push during movement and balance well during shooting.
LW12	Athletes with impairments in the legs who have excellent control of their sit ski and aim during shooting.

Athletes with a **Vision Impairment**

NS1	Light perception without measurable visual acuity or no light perception. Athletes wear blacked out goggles for the duration of competition.
NS2	Athletes who have very low vision in both eyes either in how far they can see (visual acuity 2.3-3.5 LogMAR inclusive).
NS3	Athletes who have low vision in both eyes, but more vision than NS2 athletes. Vision is affected either in how far they can see (visual acuity 0.9-2.2 LogMAR inclusive) or how wide they can see (Binocular visual field ≥ 60 degrees diameter) if acuity is better than 0.9 logMAR.

Not Eligible

Not Eligible (NE)	Athlete does not meet the minimum criteria for the Para-sport classes, but may still be able to compete. Contact Biathlon Australia for more information.
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Find out more

To get involved or for more information contact:

Biathlon Australia

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Note: The classification information provided is intended as a guide only. Only authorised classifiers are able to provide a formal classification in accordance with the rules of the sport. Not all classes may have events at the Paralympic Games