

**INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT FEDERATION  
PARA ATHLETES COMMISSION**



**RULES FOR PARADRAGON RACING**

## **CONTENTS**

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. RACE CATEGORIES</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. GENERAL APPROACH USED IN THESE RULES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. PROCEDURE FOR THE DETERMINATION OF POINTS FOR IMPAIRMENTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. SAFETY</b>	<b>9</b>

## **LIST OF ANNEXES**

<b>A Points System</b>
<b>B Equipment and Adaptations</b>
<b>C Maximum Points Allowed for Race Categories</b>
<b>D Paradrakon Certificate of Diagnosis</b>



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Paradrasons is the term used by IDBF to describe paddlers who have some form of physical, psychological, neurological, sensory, developmental or intellectual impairment.
- 1.2. IDBF seeks to provide maximum opportunities for Paradrasons to participate in the sport of dragon boating through its provision of specific Paradrason racing.
- 1.3. The IDBF Para Athlete Commission (IDBF-PAC) is responsible for the development of the rules relating to, and the management of, Paradrason racing at IDBF competitions.
- 1.4. These IDBF *Rules for Paradrason Racing* set out the way in which Paradrason racing is to be conducted at IDBF events.
- 1.5. These rules complement IDBF's rules of competition as set out in:

1.5.1. *IDBF Competition Regulations*<sup>1</sup>; and

1.5.2. *IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing*<sup>2</sup>

and must be read in conjunction with them. The *Rules for Paradrason Racing* shall only have primacy where there is direct conflict with the general competition regulations and rules of racing referenced above (see Section 1.7 below).

- 1.6. The Chief Official (as defined in Rule R3.1 of *IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing*) may vary these rules to suit the specific needs of a competition.
- 1.7. Attention is drawn to the following key areas where these rules will normally have primacy:
  - 1.7.1. Racing classes. Paradrason racing will all be undertaken as 'open' (as defined in CR2.1 of *IDBF Competition Regulations*). Mixed and women's classes are not offered. Note that these rules do include a scoring adjustment for gender (refer to Annex A).

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<sup>1</sup> IDBF Competition Regulations, Edition 8.0 dated 1 January 2020

<sup>2</sup> IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing, Edition 8.0 dated 1 January 2020

- 1.7.2. Age. Paradrage racing will all be undertaken as 'Premier Division' racing (as defined in CR2.4 of *IDBF Competition Regulations*); Junior and Senior classes are not offered. Note that these rules do include a scoring adjustment for age (refer to Annex A).
- 1.7.3. Equipment. Modifications to the boat, reduced paddle size, and prostheses are all permitted by these rules in order to allow participation by Paradrage paddlers. Further information can be found in Annex B.

## 2. Race categories

2.1. The following Paradrakon race categories may be offered at IDBF events:

2.1.1. Full Paradrakon (PD1)

2.1.2. Partial Paradrakon (PD2)

2.1.3. Specific Paradrakon (PD3)

2.2. Full Paradrakon (PD1). The Full Paradrakon race category (abbreviated to PD1) requires that every paddler in the boat qualifies as a Paradrakon (but see Section 2.2.3 below for exceptions to this requirement).

2.2.1. The paddlers in the crew need not have the same or similar impairments but must, together, satisfy the 'scoring' requirement described in Annex C.

2.2.2. The steerer (or helm/sweep) and the drummer need not be Paradrakons themselves but, if they are, do not form part of the overall team score per Annex C.

2.2.3. In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Safety Officer following a risk assessment (Rule 3.13 of *IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing*), crews competing in the PD1 category may be required to include one or more unimpaired paddlers in order to race. In such circumstances, the organisers are to ensure that each participating team is treated consistently.

2.3. Partial Paradrakon (PD2). The Partial Paradrakon race category (abbreviated to PD2) broadens the scope for participation by Paradrakons by allowing teams to comprise a mix of Paradrakons and unimpaired paddlers.

2.3.1. The Paradrakon paddlers in the crew need not have the same, or even similar, impairments but must, together, satisfy the 'scoring' requirement described in Annex C.

2.3.2. The steerer (or helm/sweep) and the drummer need not be Paradrakons themselves but, if they are, do not form part of the overall score per Annex C (neither do the unimpaired paddlers).

2.3.3. The unimpaired paddlers can be of any age or gender and do not attract any points - instead, the only consideration is how many are included. Annex C sets out how the numbers of unimpaired paddlers in the crew affect the overall maximum score permitted for the Paradrakon paddlers.

2.4. Specific Paradrakon (PD3). The Specific Paradrakon race category (PD3) provides the opportunity for paddlers with similar impairments to race each other. For example, a PD3 race category could be provided for teams where all the paddlers are blind or profoundly visually impaired, and a different one where all the paddlers have total or profound hearing loss.

**At this stage, these IDBF rules for Paradrakon Racing do not address the PD3 race category, but the rules for the category will be developed in due course.**

### 3. General approach used in these rules

3.1. As described above, all Paradrakon racing will take place as 'Premier Open' racing. In order to provide reasonably fair competition, each Paradrakon paddler will be given points according to the paddler's:

3.1.1. impairment;

3.1.2. gender; and

3.1.3. age

Annex A provides detail for the apportionment of points.

3.2. The points for each Paradrakon paddler in a crew will then be added together.

3.2.1. The resulting total score for the crew must not exceed those set out in Annex C.

3.2.2. Provided the total score does not exceed the maximum set out in these rules, the composition of the crew is entirely up to the crew's nation or club.

## 4. Procedure for the determination of points for impairments

### 4.1. General. IDBF will use a combination of:

4.1.1. diagnosis certificates (submitted before the competition); and

4.1.2. sample assessments of selected athletes (at the competition)

to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the points awarded to each athlete for that competition are fair and reflect the ethos of Paradrakon competition.

### 4.2. Prior to the competition. Prior to the competition, teams entering Paradrakon race categories will be required to obtain diagnosis certificates from a qualified medical practitioner for each of their Paradrakon paddlers. These certificates must:

4.2.1. be completed in English;

4.2.2. use the format provided in Annex D; and

4.2.3. be returned to the relevant official identified in the race bulletin by the date stated.

### 4.3. Determination of provisional points 'scores'.

4.3.1. The relevant race officials (appointed by IDBF-PAC) will then review each diagnosis certificate and allocate a provisional points 'score' for the individual.

4.3.2. These scores will be advised to the team so that it can make appropriate decisions on the composition of crews in order to conform to the requirements of the rules.

4.3.3. Where a Paradrakon paddler has more than one impairment described on the diagnosis certificate, the impairment assessed to affect the paddler the most will be the one that is 'scored'. In other words, only one impairment will be 'scored' per paddler.

4.4. Impairment not listed in Annex A. In the event that an individual's impairment described in the diagnosis certificate is not listed in Annex A, two options are available to IDBF:

4.4.1. For a relatively prevalent condition. IDBF-PAC will:

- discuss the condition with appropriate medical practitioners;
- determine the points attributable for that impairment; and
- in due course generate an amended Annex A to these rules.

4.4.2. For a relatively unusual impairment or an impairment that can present differently (eg Cerebral Palsy or Scoliosis). Prior to competition, IDBF-PAC will do all it can to try to determine an appropriate score for the impairment(s) of the particular athlete. This may also require that athlete to be specifically assessed at the competition and a 'spot' score determined by IDBF-PAC.

- Such a score will be temporary (ie event-specific), and Annex A will not be amended.
- The score will not be able to be appealed at the event by the athlete, the team, or the relevant national federation.

Clearly, the scoring of impairments at the time of competition is not preferred because appropriate medical advice may not be readily available, and the time pressures of competition may anyway preclude proper assessment. If an impairment is not listed in Annex A, and is considered to materially affect the ability of someone to participate in dragon boating, it would be much better for the impairment to be properly assessed before the competition starts.

4.5. At the competition, a sample of Paradrakon paddlers from each team will be assessed in person by an official appointed by IDBF-PAC. As a result of this assessment, the provisional points awarded for that individual's impairment (refer Section 4.3 above) may be adjusted if, in the opinion of the official, the impairment(s) presented by the athlete do not reasonably align with conclusions that could be drawn from the relevant diagnosis certificate.

- 4.6. At the competition, if any race official observes behaviour or physical activity that is not consistent with the impairment(s) set out in the individual's diagnosis certificate, an ad hoc assessment may be ordered and the points previously awarded adjusted. If this assessment can only be done after a race, then the results of that race may also need to be adjusted if the individual's revised points score results in the maximum points 'cap' for his or her crew being breached.
- 4.7. Protests. Except as not allowed in accordance with Section 4.4 above, teams have the right to protest the points attribution for the impairments of their Paradrags by utilising the procedures set out in Rule R9 of *IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing*.

## 5. Safety

- 5.1. Safety is paramount and Paradrakon races will create hazards and risks not normally present in racing undertaken by unimpaired crews.
- 5.2. The wearing of buoyancy aids by all crew members in Paradrakon racing may be mandated by the Safety Officer (Rule R3.13 of *IDBF Competition Regulations & Rules of Racing*).



## POINTS SYSTEM

### SCORING ADJUSTMENTS FOR IMPAIRMENTS

#### Notes:

1. The following table sets out the 'scoring adjustments' for specified impairments.
2. The table is not an exhaustive list of impairments. Should a Paradrragon present with an impairment not listed in the table, IDBF-PAC will classify that impairment against the criteria for effective delivery of power in dragon boating
3. Because IDBF-PAC's understanding of the impact of an impairment on a Paradrragon's performance may evolve over time, so might the points set out in the table be adjusted.
4. In the event of a paddler suffering from multiple impairments, only the condition causing the greatest impairment to paddling will be scored (refer Section 4.3.3 above)
5. 'Passive range of movement' (Passive ROM) means the joint movement that can be achieved regardless of muscle power. Where Passive ROM is the principal impairment presented by a para athlete, loss of at least 50% of the Passive ROM in at least one major joint (hip, knee, shoulder and elbow) is necessary to qualify for competition. Examples of conditions para athletes may present with include: rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile chronic arthritis, and arthrodesis
6. Certain conditions (for example: cerebral palsy and scoliosis) can result in a range of impairments and will always be 'scored' on a case-by-case basis (refer Section 4.4.2)

Impairment	Remarks	Points
<b>BASELINE</b>	<b>An unimpaired male paddler who is over 20 years of age and under 40 years of age</b>	<b>20</b>
Minor physical and/or some loss of vision or hearing	Covers a range of minor physical impairments that inhibit or prevent a person from exercising the normal range of movements and application of power that would normally be expected of someone of a similar age. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some loss of vision that impacts ability to train or race;</li> <li>• loss of thumb OR two fingers;</li> <li>• arthrodesis of an elbow;</li> <li>• incomplete hearing loss</li> </ul>	19
Psychological	Covers a range of mental disorders or conditions that influence emotions, cognitions, and/or behaviours. Includes PTSD, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder	18
Visual – full blindness	Race officials may order wearing of blindfolds	
Hand	Impairment of thumb AND two fingers on same hand (due to amputation, dysmelia, or other cause of loss of power and range of movement)	
Passive range of movement – lower limbs excluding hips	Restriction or a lack of passive movement in one or more joints caused by chronic joint immobilisation or trauma affecting a joint	
Hearing – fully deaf	Straight line races	16
	Longer distance (>1km) and turn races	
Hand	Loss of, or loss of use of, all digits on one hand	17
Limb deficiency - loss of lower limb(s)	Use of prostheses permissible	17
Intellectual impairment	Straight line races up to 1km	17
	Longer distance races (>1km) and turn races (over any distance)	16
Passive range of movement – hips		16



Impairment	Remarks	Points
Passive range of movement – upper limbs	Where athlete cannot raise arm >90deg or has lack of hand grip or missing digits	15
Incomplete paraplegia	The athlete still has some active muscle control around the hips. This could be active hip flexion on both sides, or hip flexion and knee extension on one side	14
Limb deficiency – lower limb(s) – no stump on one or both sides	Use of prostheses permissible	13
Muscle power - paraplegia		12
Elbow / upper limbs	Loss of an elbow, example a through or above elbow amputation, OR loss of both upper limbs below the elbow (prostheses assumed)	
Neurological	Ataxia, spasticity, athetosis, stroke and multiple sclerosis	10
Limited use of one upper limb	One whole arm is affected by loss of power and range of movement, for example by an Erbs palsy.	10
Loss of use of both upper limbs	Where one is affected below the elbow and the other above the elbow (prostheses assumed)	8
	Where both limbs are affected above the elbow (prostheses assumed)	6
Limb deficiency - loss of one upper limb	From a disarticulation through the shoulder joint or a nerve injury such as a brachial plexus lesion	4
Muscle power - tetraplegia		2

### SCORING ADJUSTMENTS FOR GENDER AND AGE

*(Where gender and age are determined per IDBF Competition Regulations)*

Having determined the points attributable to the athlete's impairment, further adjustments are to be made as necessary to that score to take account of the athlete's gender and age:

Gender adjustment		Age adjustment				
Male	Female	U20	20-40	Senior A	Senior B	Senior C
0	-2	-1	0	-1	-2	-3



## EXAMPLES OF CALCULATIONS

1. A **female** Paradrragon with both **Ataxia and complete blindness** and **aged 45**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
10	-2	-1	=	<b>7</b>

Note: Ataxia is considered to impact paddling ability to a greater extent than blindness, so the 'score' for Ataxia is used.

2. A **female** Paradrragon, **visually impaired** (not fully blind) and **aged 19**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
19	-2	-1	=	<b>16</b>

3. A **male** Paradrragon with **PTSD and above elbow prostheses on both arms** and **aged 62**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
6	-0	-3	=	<b>3</b>

Note: the above elbow prostheses on both arms is considered to impact paddling ability to a greater extent than PTSD, so the 'score' for this impairment is used.

4. A **male** Paradrragon with **PTSD** and **aged 41**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
18	-0	-1	=	<b>17</b>

5. A **male** Paradrragon who is **fully deaf and competing in a 2km race** and **aged 31**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
16	-0	-0	=	<b>16</b>

6. A **female** Paradrragon who is **partially deaf and competing in a 2km race** and **aged 31**:

Impairment	Gender	Age		TOTAL
19	-2	-0	=	<b>17</b>

Note: Incomplete loss of hearing would attract 19 points, and there is no further adjustment for the type of race.



## EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTATIONS

Adaptations, in the context of these *Rules for Paradrakon Racing*, refers to:

- prostheses;
- other (non-paddling) equipment required by a Paradrakon to be able to paddle;
- adaptations to the seating arrangement in a boat necessary to facilitate participation by a Paradrakon; and
- changes to the dimensions of the paddle used by the Paradrakon compared with IDBF rules on paddle size.

All such adaptations are to be consistent with the following statement (which will, in due course, amend part of Regulation CR13.1 of the *IDBF Competition Regulations*):

**Prostheses and other devices or equipment that result in dragon boat performance not primarily being generated by the athlete's own physical prowess (but being generated by automated, mechanical, computer-aided, or robotic devices) are prohibited in IDBF-sanctioned competitions and events.**

### PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS

1. Adaptations to seating arrangement. Due to the nature of their impairments, some Paradrakons may require modifications or adaptations to the normal seat arrangement in the dragon boat. Such adaptations are permissible provided race officials are satisfied that the adaptations:
  - a. are not a source of unacceptable risk to anyone in the crew (for example, sharp edges or strapping arrangements that 'fix' the paddler to the boat and which cannot quickly and easily be released); and
  - b. are used only to facilitate participation and do not confer a material advantage to the user.



It is strongly recommended that race officials are alerted to any adaptations well in advance of racing so that appropriate assessments can be undertaken. Disclosure only at boat marshalling or boat loading may result in a team not being permitted to race because there is insufficient time to make the necessary assessment.

2. Paddle dimensions. Only paddles certified to conform to IDBF's Paddle Specification 202a are allowed to be used at IDBF events. However, Paradrakon paddlers may use a paddle that does not conform provided that:
- a. the blade of the paddle is smaller in area than the 202a specification and would fit inside the size proofing template;
  - b. the geometry of the blade is consistent with the 202a specification in terms of maximum thickness, and it shall similarly be smooth all over with no rough surfaces, dimples or concaves;
  - c. neither the shaft nor the connection between the shaft and the blade shall be cranked in any way; and
  - d. the overall length of the blade, shaft and handle shall not together exceed 130cm (noting there is no minimum length for a paddle used by a Paradrakon).

It is recommended that any paddle intended to be used in a race and which does not conform to the 202a specification, is shown to race officials before marshalling commences in order for race officials to have sufficient time to assess whether it is acceptable for racing.



## MAXIMUM POINTS ALLOWED FOR RACE CATEGORIES

Annex A above provides the mechanism for calculating the points attributable to each Paradrragon paddler. The points for each Paradrragon paddler are then combined to form a crew total.

The following tables set out the maximum crew total number of points allowed for the different Paradrragon race categories and boat types.

### PD1 Race Category

	Total Paddlers	Maximum allowable points
Standard Boat	20	320
	19	304
	18	288
	17	272
	16	256
Small Boat	10	160
	9	144
	8	128

### PD2 Race Category

	Total Paddlers	Number of Paradrragon paddlers	Maximum allowable points
Standard Boat	20	10	160
	19	10	160
		9	128
	18	9	144
		9	144
	17	8	112
8		128	
Small Boat	10	5	80
	9	5	80
		4	56
	8	4	64



## PARADRAGON CERTIFICATE OF DIAGNOSIS

Each ParadrAGON paddler must submit a 'certificate of diagnosis' to IDBF. This certificate (below) must be signed by a registered medical practitioner, as well as by the individual.

**This form must be completed in English. All items prefixed with a \* must be completed.**

PADDLER INFORMATION			
* Family name / surname:			
* Given / first name:			
* Gender:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	* Date of birth:
			Day      Month      Year
* Nation or club being represented:			
When moving towards a boat before loading, do you use:	Wheelchair <input type="checkbox"/> Crutches <input type="checkbox"/> Walking stick <input type="checkbox"/>	* Do you need assistance when loading or unloading the boat?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
* The wearing of buoyancy aids for ParadrAGON events will be compulsory. Can you swim 50m while wearing a buoyancy aid? (Note: this is to assist officials in planning racing; if you cannot swim 50m you will still be allowed to race)			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other information that may assist IDBF. For example:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help you need at boat loading / unloading</li> <li>• Information about your condition that may assist officials</li> </ul>			
	* Paddler's signature:		
	* Date of signature:	Day	Month      Year



<b>MEDICAL CONDITION</b> (to be completed by a registered medical practitioner):					
* Impairment (tick all that apply): Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological <input type="checkbox"/> Neurological <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental <input type="checkbox"/>					
* Diagnosis:					
Continue on a separate sheet if more space is needed					
Approximately how long has the individual been experiencing the impairment(s)?					years
* Are there any reasons why the individual should not compete in the sport of dragon boating?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please describe:			
		Continue on a separate sheet if more space is needed			
<b>DECLARATION</b>					
* Name:					
* Relevant qualifications:					
* I hereby certify that I have known the named individual for _____ years and that the individual has the impairment(s) I have described.					
* Address of medical practice:		Country: _____			
* Telephone number					
Email:					
* Signature of medical practitioner		* Date of signature			
				Day	Month
* Official stamp of medical practice					