



ROWING

ROWING made its Paralympic debut at the Beijing Paralympic Games in 2008. Adaptive rowing, as it was called at the time, made its debut at the World Rowing Championship 2002, and the sport was selected three years later in 2005 for inclusion in the 2008 Games.

BASIC RULES

Paralympic team boats are mixed men and women, thereby achieving gender parity through teams consisting of equal numbers of male and female athletes. All events are held over 2000 meters, the same as the open Olympic distance, using a six lane progression system of heats, repechage, and finals. Other than a change to the start commands to include an audible for visually impaired athletes, all FISA rules of racing apply to both Olympic and Paralympic events.

CLASSIFICATION

In order to be eligible for the Paralympic Games in rowing, the athlete must be classified internationally for either a physical disability (PD) in the PR1, PR2, or PR3 categories depending on the severity of the impairment, or a visual impairment (VI) in the B1, B2, or B3 categories. The classification also determines which event the athlete will be eligible for: the PR3 mixed 4+; the PR2 mixed 2x; or the PR1 mens' 1x or women's 1x.

EQUIPMENT

The PR3 mixed 4+ event most closely resembles team boat rowing typical of US clubs and colleges for open athletes, as the equipment is the same, and athletes in the PR3 category have an impairment that is at the minimal level required for Paralympic eligibility. In fact, many top US PR3 rowers have successfully competed on NCAA rowing teams alongside their able-bodied teammates. In the PR1 and PR2 categories, the seats are "fixed" and not sliding, to accommodate rowers whose disability limits the use of the lower body and/or trunk in the rowing stroke. These boats have custom seats bespoke to each athlete, and the hulls they row are standardized to be shorter in length and flatter below the water line to minimize the risk of capsizing. The use of stabilizing pontoons on the riggers also increases the stability of the hull overall.

GETTING STARTED

If you think you have an eligible impairment and want to try rowing, we encourage you to get started by connecting with a local adaptive sports organization for rowing or to get involved in your local rowing club. To find a list of clubs in your area, please visit, <https://uspara.us/findaclub>.

For more information on rowing, please visit their webpage at <https://USRowing.org/>.

PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

- Ataxia, Athetosis and Hypertonia
- Impaired Muscle Power
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Limb Deficiency
- Leg Length Difference
- Visual Impairment

PARALYMPIC CLASSES

- PR1 men's single sculls (PR1 M1x)
- PR1 women's single sculls (PR1 W1x)
- PR2 mixed double sculls (PR2 Mix2x)
- PR3 mixed coxed four (PR3 Mix4+)

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES

The World Rowing Championships are held each year as an integrated event, where the Para Rowing events are part of the overall program of events, where a world champion is determined. In addition to the Paralympic boat classes mentioned above, the World Rowing Championships also conducts races for:

- PR3 men's 2-
- PR3 women's 2-
- PR3 mixed 2x
- PR2 men's 1x
- PR2 women's 1x

COLLEGIATE RESOURCES

Many PR3 athletes successfully row on open college teams. College championships are beginning to add events for athletes with disabilities in the PR2 and PR1 category to also compete.