



# PARAFENCING

**WHEELCHAIR FENCING** also known as parafencing in the United States was first introduced by Sir Ludwig Guttmann, the founder of the Paralympic Movement, in 1953. In 1960, wheelchair fencing debuted as a part of the Paralympic program at the first-ever Paralympic Games in Rome, Italy.

## BASIC RULES

The rules for parafencing include the fixed distance between fencers. The target for foil and saber competitions is exactly the same as for able-bodied competition. In epee, the target is everything above the waist, with a conductive apron worn below the waist to aid in cancellation of these touches. Athletes compete in wheelchairs that are fixed to the floor, limiting the movement of the chair. Feet must remain on the footrest and the fencer must remain seated. The chair must be fixed at a 110 degree angle to the central bar. As athletes rely on ducking, half-turns and leaning to dodge their competitors' touches, fencers can never raise up from the seat. The first fencer to score five touches is declared the winner. Athletes play the best of three rounds.

## COMPETITION FORMAT

One athlete versus one athlete. Competition in both individual and team formats.

## EQUIPMENT

Items needed for all fencing disciplines in parafencing include: weapons, body cord, wheelchair for competition, and a fencing frame used on the piste (fencing strip) for fixation of the wheelchair. In addition, clothing items needed are a mask, jacket, glove, pants, socks, pants and plastron. For sabre, a mask cord is required for competition. A conductive jacket is required for both foil and sabre and a conductive apron is needed for epee. A chest protector is compulsory for women and option for men.

## GETTING STARTED

We encourage you to start by getting involved with a local fencing club. To find a list of clubs in your area, please visit <https://member.usfencing.org/clubs>.

## CLASSIFICATION

Classification determines which athletes are eligible to compete and how athletes are grouped together for competition. If an athlete has a Paralympic eligible impairment, the athlete may be eligible for a classification appointment. Once an athlete is ready to compete regionally or nationally, an athlete should seek national classification.

For more information on parafencing, please visit [www.usafencing.org/parafencing](http://www.usafencing.org/parafencing).

## PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

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

## PARALYMPIC WEAPON CATEGORIES

### Foil (Men and women)

- Light weapon derived from the court sword.
- Target area is the trunk.

### Epee (Men and women)

- Derived from the traditional dueling sword.
- Target area is the whole body from the waist upwards.

### Sabre (Men only)

- Derived from the cavalry sword.
- Target area is the trunk above the waist, arms and head.

## PARALYMPIC CLASSIFICATIONS

- **Class A:** Fencers with the greatest mobility, including (usually) full control of their abdominal muscles and good upper body strength.
- **Class B:** Generally paraplegics with little-to-no abdominal control and good upper body, arm, and hand strength.
- **Class C:** Fencers with the least mobility, generally no control of abdominal muscles, and often loss of grip of hand strength in one or both hands