



Race Organizer Guide

Guidelines for Sit Ski Courses

This document contains information and general guidelines to consider when designing Nordic courses for sit skiers. Good beginner sit ski terrain is also great for new and recreational skiers, so designing a trail within these guidelines can have a great positive impact on your club growth and the skier friendliness of your trails.

The International Paralympic Committee has compiled standards for World Cup courses, linked here: http://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/121112173934521_Appendix_V_IPC_Nordic_Skiing_Homologation_Guide_2012.pdf

Keep in mind that these guidelines are intended for the best skiers in the world. They are a great place to start if you are designing a World Cup course. If you are designing a course appropriate for the rest of the 99.9%, we recommend scaling back from what is recommended by the IPC. If you are interested in hosting sit ski races to run in conjunction with your citizens' races or regional/national competitions, these guidelines will still help you create great course options. Here are a few points to keep in mind:

- For someone who is in a wheelchair, the “start” of their ski experience is where they park, not necessarily the trailhead or stadium. How are they going to get to snow? Are there steep ups/downs, large snow banks, or large unplowed or snowy areas they will have to get around in order to get to snow? Thinking through this will help inform where you want to start your sit ski trails.
- Sit skiers should be able to get to the stadium in their wheelchair or easily and safely in a sit ski from wherever they start skiing.
- Make sure there is terrain that is sit skiable in and around the stadium. We recommend short loop options with no steep uphill (not greater than 10%) and only gradual turns.
- If you are interested in hosting races, designing a course of 750-1000m around the stadium that follows the above guidelines will give you a good start. It is better to have a short, well-designed course on which sit skiers can ski multiple laps than longer, less optimal courses.
- Before you design a course, spend some time in a sit ski, to gain appreciation of the significant challenge of the sport. Try skiing without using your core muscles, as many sit skiers must. Terrain that you may not have registered as an uphill when skiing standing up may prove to be quite a serious challenge in a sit ski. Also, try maneuvering in the sit ski to get an idea of the radius and types of turns that may or may not work on a sit ski course.

Considerations for biathlon courses and range:

- Make a biathlon range entry and exit that works for sit skiers (easy grades and gradual turning radius).
- Ideally, create biathlon sit ski race loops of 1km, 1.5km, 2km, & 2.5km with a 100-150 meter penalty loop. Use the guidelines above for the design of the courses and remember that well-designed courses are preferable to more or longer courses.
- Paralympic biathlon uses 10m ranges and .177 caliber air rifles. If possible use the same shooting line as the 50m range so they can be used at the same time. Air rifle shooting points can double as 50 meter shooting points, if you design a method for targets to be hosted at 10m and removed when they are not needed, or when all 30 points of the 50m range are needed.

For more information contact U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing program at uspnordic@gmail.com