



INTERNATIONAL FLOORBALL FEDERATION (IFF)

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IFF ParaFloorball Report 2015

The IFF now cooperates with three international organisations that have floorball on their program, the International Committee of Electric Wheelchair Hockey (ICEWH) and Special Olympics (SO) and the Manual Wheelchair Floorball organisation.

The most official cooperation is currently with the Special Olympics and in December 2011 the IFF and SO signed a Proclamation. In 2014 IFF received the information that Special Olympics Floorball is recognised as an official Special Olympics sport for the first time in the Special Olympics Winter World Games in

Special Olympics

Special Olympics was founded in USA in 1968 and the SO Head office in Washington and the SO Europe central office is in Dublin. Special Olympics is recognised by the IOC and is the largest sports organisation for persons with Intellectual Disability, including 4,2 million athletes from 183 countries.

Special Olympics and Paralympics are two separate organisations, both approved by the IOC . Special Olympics does not focus only on the competitions whereas the Paralympics focusing more on the elite. The Special Olympics do want to give everyone an opportunity to participate and also supports the intellectually disabled athletes in other ways.

So Floorball countries (at least 24 official): Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Gibraltar, Hungary, Ireland, (Isle of Man), Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malta, (Maryland), Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine.

More potential countries participated at floorball demonstrations: Australia, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Greece, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Timor Leste, Thailand, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, American Samoa, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Venezuela.

Current activities:

- SO Floorball was recognised as the 8th official Special Olympics Winter World Games sport. SO Floorball will be played as an Official sport in the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Graz and Schladming in Styria, Austria.
- The IFF held a coaching seminar in Dublin in cooperation with Special Olympics Ireland, both SO coaches and UKFF & IFA coaches attended.
- IFF has tried to help SOI to find equipment suppliers so that SOI can assist their countries
- SO demonstration matches have been played in all major IFF events (WFC 2010, WFC 2011, WFC 2012, CC 2013, WFC 2013 & WFC 2014).

SO World Games

The SO World Winter Games is a multi-sport event for athletes with intellectual disability and take place every four years (altering with SO Summer Games). In addition to floorball the SO athletes



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compete in seven sports including Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboarding, Snow Shoeing and Speed Skating.

Pros/cons:

- Floorball a sport well suited for Special Olympics athletes
- Currently there is only one other team sport in the SO Winter World Games (floor hockey)
- Already well established organisation with lots of sports & resources
- Possibility to reach new countries, floorball might gain a foothold in many new countries
- Possibility to develop floorball in cooperation with SO organisations in existing countries
- Mutual coaching & refereeing seminars can be organised
- Not IPC sport, a separate organisation recognised by IPC
- Floorball now established in the SO and a growing SO sport
- Challenge for SOI to organise floorball equipment system with partnerships

International Committee of Electric Wheelchair Hockey

ICEWH is a sport section of the International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation, IWAS, and is the International head committee of Electric Wheelchair Hockey (EWH). Electric wheelchair floorball is also known as EI – hockey. This sport is suitable for severely handicapped players, some of which use a normal floorball sticks and the other a so-called T- sticks on the front of the wheelchair. The sport is currently played in 15 countries.

This sport was already developed in the 1970s, when floorball was not yet an established international sport, so the sport was called hockey and in some countries the sport cooperates with field hockey. More floorball regulations have constantly been added to the ICEWH regulations and the sport is played with floorball equipment.

The sport is played in at least 15 countries and is close to reaching the IPC criteria of 18 countries on 3 continents. There is a challenge get Canada and USA to enter the events, as they are using more ice hockey-like rules. Also for example Norway and Sweden play with own rules and have not yet played in ICEWH events. ICEWH classification criteria that meet the IPC requirements have been launched and the criteria will for the first time be used in the 3rd World Championships played in Germany, 2014. IFF has received an invitation to attend the event.

Recent activities:

- A complete turnover in the Sport Technical Executive Committee in 2014.
- The Sports Assembly and the nations decided the new name of Electric Wheelchair Hockey will be POWERCHAIR HOCKEY
- Powerchair hockey exhibition matches have continuously been played in the IFF events (WFC 2011, WFC 2012, WFC 2013 & WFC 2014).
- There is still not an official partnership agreement between the IFF and ICEWH, the last meeting was held in autumn and there is continuous cooperation. A challenge for this sport



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has been to determine which sport to identify and cooperate with, floorball or field hockey. The ICEWH does not want to make the decision.

Pros/cons:

- A member of IWAS (that is a member of IPC)
- Can become a possible future IPC sport (meeting many of the criteria)
- The sport is played with floorball equipment and similar rules
- The sport is called hockey and does not want to change
- The sport wants to benefit from both floorball/hockey cooperation and not choose sides.
- Different versions of the “similar” sport played in e.g. Sweden, Norway

Manual Wheelchair Floorball

The International “Committee” was first established in 2012 and after that the sport has evolved and is currently played in seven countries. The group is not officially that organised. The sport has been played twice in the Para Games Breda, 2011 (4 teams) and 2013 (7 teams), a multisport event approved by IPC.

Recent activities:

- The group from Sweden had a meeting with IFF during WFC 2014 and expressed the interest to become affiliated IFF members.
- The already established annual club tournament, Prague Wheel Open, will be played in August 2015 and also the Paragames
- Demonstration matches have been played in IFF Events WFC 2013 & WFC 2014
- A meeting is to be held in autumn 2015 with all countries involved, IFF hopes to receive an update then.

Pros/cons:

- A sport similar to regular floorball - Interesting to watch
- Has potential to grow
- Seem to have challenges in uniting the countries (different information from different groups)
- Also has connections to field hockey in e.g. Netherlands
- Should have some kind of “own” organisation who to cooperate with