



INTERNATIONAL FLOORBALL FEDERATION (IFF)

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IFF ParaFloorball Report 2016

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 2017.

The ParaFloorball sector might become even more important for the International Federations including the IFF in the future. In June 2016, the IOC informed that the IOC and IPC signed long-term agreement supporting the Paralympic Movement. A Memorandum of Understanding outlining the principles for a new long-term agreement between the organisations was signed. The new agreement runs through 2032. This agreement is also an important milestone in the implementation of Olympic Agenda 2020.

Under this new agreement, the IOC and IPC will cooperate with the aim of:

- Increasing the visibility of the Paralympic Games and enhance the Paralympic brand;
- Deepening existing cooperation, specifically on the implementation of Olympic Agenda 2020, the strategic roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement;
- Ensuring the financial stability and long-term viability of the IPC, the Paralympic Games and the Paralympic Movement.

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 4,4 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.

IFF signed an official Proclamation with Special Olympics International in St. Gallen December 2011 and have close cooperation with the organisation.

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.



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A total of 42 countries have applied to play floorball at the World Games 2017.

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

Recent 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 and/or SO have held coaching seminars in Austria, Iran, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Singapore, South Africa, and Uruguay, some in cooperation with IFF MAs. A seminar is planned to be organised during WFC 2016 for new floorball countries. In total around 50 nations have been at a seminar.
- IFF MAs have now also signed official partnerships with National Special Olympics Programmes (countries).
- IFF has tried to help SOI to find equipment suppliers so that SOI can assist their countries, but seems tricky.
- SO demonstration matches have been played in all major IFF events (WFC 2010, WFC 2011, WFC 2012, CC 2013, WFC 2013, WFC 2014, WFC 2015 & WFC 2016).

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 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
- Already well established organisation with lots of sports & resources
- IFF has signed an official Proclamation with Special Olympics International in 2011
- 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

IWAS Committee for Powerchair Hockey (IPCH)

(Previously called International Committee of Electric Wheelchair Hockey)



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Powerchair Hockey is a sport section of the International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation, IWAS, and IPCH is the International head committee of Powerchair Hockey (PCH). Electric wheelchair hockey/floorball is also known as EI – hockey in some countries (played with different rules/chairs). This sport is suitable for severely handicapped players, some of which use a normal floorball sticks and players with more severe handicaps play with so-called T- sticks on the front of the wheelchair. The sport is currently played in 15 countries.

A complete change was made in the Sport Technical Executive Committee in 2014. There have been new contact persons since then and other organisational changes, which has taken time. The Sports Assembly 2014 decided the new name of Electric Wheelchair Hockey will be Powerchair Hockey. In some IFF MA countries it's called electric wheelchair floorball. The name Powerchair Hockey was mostly chosen in order to better attract North America.

There is no an official partnership agreement between the IFF and IPCH but some continuous cooperation. A challenge for this sport has been to determine which sport to identify and cooperate with, floorball or field hockey. The IPCH does not want to make the decision until they have to (if separated from IWAS)

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 ICPH regulations and the sport is played with floorball equipment.

The sport is played in 18 countries. IPCH has worked hard to reach IPC status, but it has become very difficult. According to the new IPC guidelines there now needs to be 24 nations (on 3 continents), which is more than before. In addition, soccer is taking many athletes, so there is big competition between different sports played with electric wheelchair. The original nations are still strong, but there are no new countries. 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 IPCH events.

Recent activities:

- Powerchair hockey exhibition matches have continuously been played in the IFF events in the countries where the sport exists (WFC 2011, WFC 2012, WFC 2013 & WFC 2015). The next possible country to organise demonstrations would be Czech Republic in 2018 (no activity in LAT or SVK at the moment)
- The last meeting skype was held in summer 2016. IPCH then informed that they are getting closer to floorball, but changing the name (again) is not on the agenda.
- EC was organised in Netherlands 2016 and next WC is to be organised in 2018 (no bid yet).
- The IPCH will probably not make any decision on sport belongingness in the near future (unless they for some reason must).
- IPCH has made some classification changes, approved by Sports Assembly 2016. The classification of players was previously based on disability, but to follow IPC guidelines in



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more detail, the classifications will instead be made based on impairments (the actual performance level).

- Potential new countries: Japan, maybe Sweden (some teams now) & Austria.

Pros/cons:

- A member of IWAS (that is a member of IPC)
- Can become a possible future IPC sport (meeting many of the criteria), but hard
- 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, North America
- IPCH is starting a similar project than the IFF’s Each One Teach One project, were bigger nations are to help developing nations. IFF provided some guidelines on the EOTO.
- The cost of the chairs is a challenge when thinking of entering new countries and new continents (around 8 000-18 000 €)

Manual Wheelchair Floorball

The International “Committee” was first established in 2012 and after that the sport has evolved and is currently played actively in seven countries. The group is not officially that organised. The sport has been played twice in the Para Games Breda, 2011 - 2015 a multisport event approved by IPC and the Prague Wheel Open is organised annually.

The organisation has had challenges in establishing an organisation, but now have a contact in IWAS (Mrs Charmaine Hooper) and also look forward to closer cooperation with the IFF.

At the moment the ICWF has contacts in:

Sweden, Czech Republic, Switzerland and the Netherlands, Poland, Belgium, USA (Michigan), Portugal (Loule, Porto), Canada, Morocco (Casablanca), France (Nantes, Lille, Lyon), Germany.

Some contacts also in: Slovenia, New Zealand and Australia. ICWF is looking for contacts in: Norway, Finland, Denmark, Great Britain and Ireland.

Recent activities:

- The group from Sweden had a meeting with IFF during WFC 2014 and expressed the interest to become affiliated IFF members and in 2016 a more international group has been in contact with the IFF.
- The already established annual club tournament, Prague Wheel Open, will be played in August and also the Paragames
- Demonstration matches have been played in IFF Event: WFC 2013 & WFC 2014
- A meeting was held during the Prague Wheel Open 2016 in August and IFF received the information that the intention is to participate as countries inside the IWAS and to establish a



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board of the ICWF in order to have a more formal organisation. ICWF countries to give their input in October 2016.

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 had connections to field hockey in e.g. Netherlands, but seems now to be more floorball oriented
- Should have some kind of “own” organisation who the IFF could cooperate with. IFF should get more details soon.