

Paralympics Fact File

All About Wheelchair Fencing

What is Wheelchair Fencing?

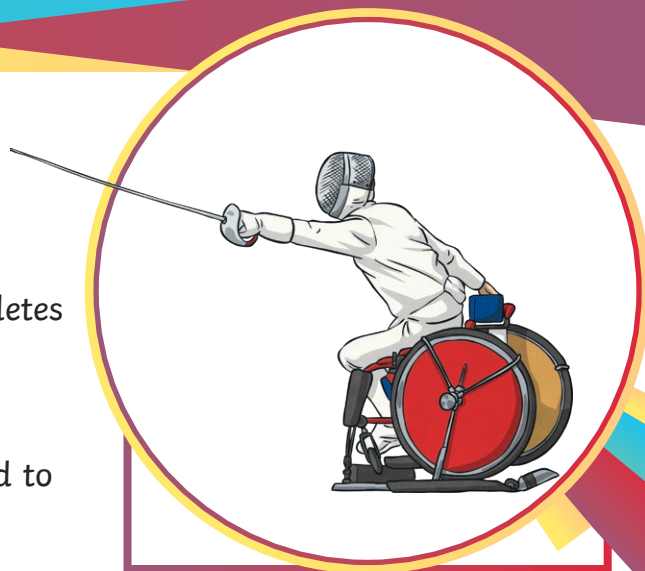
Wheelchair Fencing is for athletes who have spinal injuries, lower leg amputations or cerebral palsy. Athletes who regularly use a wheelchair are also able to play the sport.

During competition, athletes' wheelchairs are fastened to the floor.

In the Beijing Paralympics, only one British athlete competed in the Wheelchair Fencing event, although since then the sport has worked hard to develop new talent.

The Rules

- The competition takes place in the form of pool stages, followed by direct elimination rounds. During a contest, the fencers' wheelchairs are fastened into metal frames on the floor, allowing freedom of the upper body only.
- Although fencers cannot move back and forth, the fact there are no restrictions to upper body movement means duels are as exciting and fast as in non-disabled fencing events.
- Fencers record hits by striking their opponent cleanly in the valid area, with successful hits recorded by the electronic equipment.
- There are three disciplines in Wheelchair Fencing, and they are based on the type of sword used – the Foil, the Epee and the Sabre.
- In the Foil event, fencers are only permitted to strike the trunk (the main body) area of their opponent, whereas in the Sabre and Epee, anywhere above the waist is a valid target area.
- Bouts last a maximum of four minutes in the preliminary stages, with victory going to the first fencer to score five valid hits or the one with the most hits at the end of the four minutes. Bouts in the first round of competition are the best of nine hits. The top competitors are promoted to the elimination stage, where bouts are awarded to the first person who gets 15 hits.
- In the knockout stages, bouts consist of three rounds of three minutes. The winner is the first to score 15 hits, or the highest scorer at the completion of the contest. If there is a tie, an extra one-minute sudden death bout is held, with the first person to score a valid hit taking the contest.



Facts About Wheelchair Fencing:

- Wheelchair Fencing was first introduced to the Paralympics in Rome, 1960.
- In the London 2012 Paralympics, the following medals and rankings were given:
 - 1 - China (six gold, three silver, one bronze)
 - 2 - Hong Kong (two gold, one silver, four bronze)
 - 3 - Poland (two gold, zero silver, one bronze)
- In Rio 2016, Piers Gilliver won a silver medal in the Men's Individual Epee Category A Overall, Team GB came joint 9th in the medal standings.