

Paralympics Fact File

All About Wheelchair Rugby

What is Wheelchair Rugby?

Wheelchair Rugby is a very popular and technical Paralympic sport. It is a quick-moving sport which requires plenty of skill and toughness.

Wheelchair Rugby is played on a regular basketball-size court by teams of four, using a white ball the same shape and size as a volleyball.

Wheelchair Rugby teams are mixed with men and women competing equally in the same team.

Wheelchair Rugby is for athletes who have a physical and sensory difficulty due to paralysis caused by illness or injury, resulting in the partial or total loss of use of all four limbs and torso.

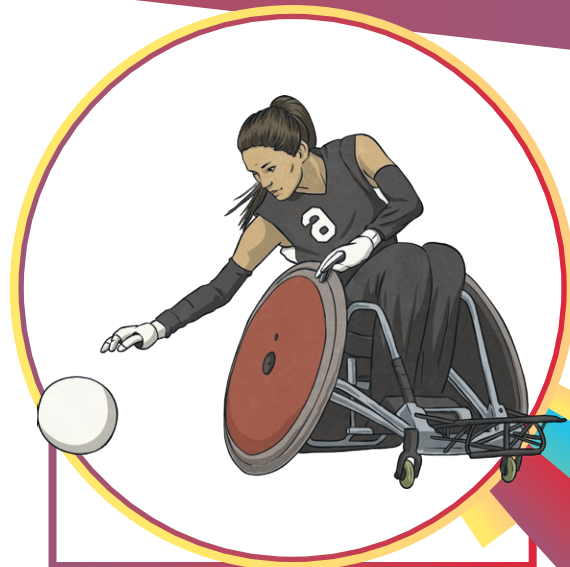
Wheelchair Rugby was invented in 1970 in Canada by a group of quadriplegic athletes looking for a different sport to Wheelchair Basketball.

The first international tournament was held in 1989 in Toronto, Canada.

Wheelchair Rugby first appeared at the World Wheelchair Games in 1990.

The Rules

- A full match consists of four, eight-minute quarters and the team scoring the most goals wins.
- To score, an athlete must cross the opposing team's goal line with the ball. Two wheels must cross the goal line for a score to count.
- Athletes must dribble or pass the ball every 10 seconds; if athletes fail to do this, the referee hands the ball to the opposite team.
- Wheelchair contact is allowed, although hitting another athlete's chair behind the back wheel results in a foul.
- If a foul is given, this may be loss of the ball, a one-minute penalty or an athlete may be disqualified.



Facts About Wheelchair Rugby:

- Wheelchair Rugby is a very popular sport; it is played in many different countries.
- The GB wheelchair Rugby team have missed out on medals in the last 4 Olympics. Coming 4th in 2004 and 2008, and 5th in 2012 and 2016.
- In the Rio 2016 games, Australia took the gold medal, the US took silver and Japan took the bronze.
- In Rio 2016, Team GB came 5th after defeating Sweden in the Classification 5-6 stage.