

USA Triathlon Rule Modifications for Physically Challenged Athletes

PC 1.0 General.

Physically challenged athletes (hereafter known as PC athletes), as defined under rule USAT rule PC1.2 shall be governed by all USA Triathlon (USAT) competition rules with the following modifications.

PC 1.1 Classification.

Athletes may compete in USAT sanctioned races without official classification in categories set out in rule PC1.2. However, in order to compete in USAT/PC National Championships and national teams, PC athletes must be classified and placed in a competition category in accordance with those outlined in rule PC1.2 by a physician. Athletes shall provide classification to race directors upon registration.

PC 1.2 Competition Categories.

Physically Challenged Competition Categories shall be established based on physical disabilities. Medical evidence shall be required as to disability and classification.

The six (6) categories as of February 1, 2008 are as follows:

- TRI 1 - Handcycle: Paraplegic, Quadriplegic, Polio, Double Leg Amputee. Must use hand-cycle and racing wheelchair on run.
- TRI 2 - Severe Leg impairment: Above-knee Amputees. Athlete must ride bicycle and run with above knee (or similar) prosthesis or crutches.
- TRI 3 - Les Autre: Includes athletes with Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy, Double Leg Amputee (runners) or Paralysis in multiple limbs. Must ride a bicycle and run. (May use braces or prosthesis)

- TRI 4 - Arm impairment: Including Above and Elbow Amputees or "impairment" in one or both upper limbs. Athletes may use prosthesis, brace or sling on the bike and/or run.
- TRI 5 - Leg impairment: Below-knee amputees. Athlete must ride bicycle and run with prosthesis or crutches .
- TRI 6 - Visual Impairment: Legally Blind. (20/200 vision with best corrective vision). A handler of the same sex is mandatory throughout the race. Athlete is tethered during the swim. Athlete uses a tandem bicycle and may be tethered during the run.

Testing: There will be functional testing of limbs, trunk, etc., to determine the disability of each athlete. In order to qualify for national or international championship competitions under the proposed standards, an athlete must be permanently and specifically impacted in terms of strength, range of motion, and/or coordination by at least 15%. Additionally, amputations must be at least 15% of any limb.

‘Tri 3 Les Autres’: Any impact must be permanent and always present. Athletes with disabilities such as relapsing or remitting multiple sclerosis or arthritis, etc., will have to show a "significant permanent functional impact" as defined by these proposed standards and that impact must not involve any period of remission (whether controlled with medication or otherwise), however brief. Athletes with disabilities such as (but not limited to): incomplete spinal chord injuries, traumatic brain injuries and/or muscular dystrophy, etc., will be evaluated as to the "significant permanent functional impact" of their disability and on its specific functional effect as defined by these proposed standards.

Ineligible disabilities: Athletes with miscellaneous conditions such as (but not limited to): intolerance to temperature extremes, impacted cognitive ability, organ transplants,

joint replacements (endoprosthetics), kidney dialysis and/or migraine sufferers are not eligible as defined by these proposed standards.

Verification: In most cases, a simple doctor's note will no longer be sufficient to compete in PC (AWAD) categories. Even after initial testing has been completed by the individual athlete, all athletes will be re-evaluated by trained IPC classifiers at national and international events and will be prohibited from competition if they do not meet the minimum standards.

PC1.3 Swimming Conduct.

Wetsuits are allowed but not required at any water temperature.

PC1.4 Handlers.

Physically Challenged athletes shall be permitted the following in regard to handlers/aides:

Each PC athlete is required to identify all handlers and describe their duties to the appropriate race official prior to the start of each competition. Handlers are specifically allowed to assist PC competitors by:

- a) Assisting/carrying athletes from the water to transition area.
- b) Helping with prosthetic devices.
- c) Lifting participants in and out of handcycles and wheelchairs.
- d) Removing wetsuits or clothing.
- e) Repairing flats and other equipment.

PC 1.5 Transition Areas.

With the exception of the Handcycle category (T1), PC athletes must ambulate (walk/run) through transition by the use of either crutches or prosthetic device. If crutches are used, handlers may accompany the competitor to and from the mount line of the bike portion as long as they do not impede the progress of any other participant.

PC 1.6 Cycling Conduct.

Physically Challenged athletes shall be governed by the following with regard to cycling conduct:

- a) Category T1 equipment (handcycles) must conform to the specifications established by the USHF (United States Handcycling Federation) under USCF rule 1J5: A **handcycle** is a 3-wheeled cycle with standard bicycle drive train and standard bicycle crank arms. The cycle must be operated by pedaling and shifting using only the upper body to perform said functions. The maximum wheelbase for a handcycle is 72 inches. Handcycles must have a chainring guard to protect the rider from the drive train. All handcycles must have 2 separate working brake calipers (or discs) and a fully functional lever for each.
- b) All bicycles and handcycles shall be propelled by human force (either legs or arms).
- c) No recumbent style bicycles are allowed.

PC 1.7 Running Conduct.

Physically Challenged athletes shall be governed by the following with regard to running conduct:

- a) Prosthetic devices and/or crutches are allowed.
- b) Category T1 equipment (Racing wheelchairs) must conform to specifications as established by the WSUSA (Wheelchair Sports USA):
 - 1) The wheelchair shall have at least two large wheels and one small wheel.
 - 2) Any device or design element that exists for the purpose of reducing air resistance will be permitted provided that said device or design is limited to the area between the rear wheels and must not extend beyond the lateral edges of the large wheels or extend in front or behind the edges of the tires except that fenders may protrude two inches (2") past the circumference of the inflated tire.

- 3) The maximum diameter of the large wheel including the inflated tire shall not exceed 70cm. The maximum diameter of the small wheel including the inflated tire shall not exceed 50cm.
- 4) Only one round handrim is allowed for each large wheel.
- 5) No mechanical gears or levers shall be allowed that may be used to propel the chair.
- 6) Only hand operated mechanical steering devices will be allowed.
- 7) No part of the chair may protrude behind the vertical plane of the back edge of the rear wheels.
- 8) Athletes must ensure that no part of their lower limbs can fall to the ground or road during an event.
- 9) It will be the responsibility of the competitor that the wheelchair conforms to all the above rules and no event shall be delayed while the competitor makes adjustments to the chair.
- 10) Chairs may be measured in the transition area and may not leave that area before the start of any event. Chairs which have been examined may be liable to re-examination before or after the event by the official in charge of the event.

PC 1.8 T6 Blind Athlete Guide Conduct.

The following additional rules apply to blind athletes and their guides:

- a) Blind athletes must use a guide of the same sex in competition and with few exceptions, must furnish the guide.
- b) The blind athlete may choose to use an elbow lead, tether lead or to run free.
- c) The runner may receive verbal instruction only from his/her guide.
- d) Bicycles, paddle boards or any other mechanical means of transport may not be used by guides on the swim or run.
- e) At no time may the guide "lead" or "pace" the athlete.
- f) At no time may the guide propel the athlete forward by pulling or pushing.
- g) Whether or not a tether is being used, the athlete and guide shall not be more than 0.5meters apart at all times.

h) As the blind athlete crosses the finish line, the guide must be beside or behind the athlete but not further than the required 0.5 meter maximum separation distance.

Infringement of any these rules shall result in a disqualification (DQ).