

Assistive Device Document User Guide

Introduction

This guide is to be used by judges, classifiers, and others to assist with understanding the reasons behind the rules related to use of Assistive Devices and with interpreting them when considering the use of new or unique pieces of equipment.

Pictures will be used to help clarify how devices are to be measured. Some pictures will also identify legal and/or illegal equipment. They are simply provided to assist coaches, archers, and judges in understanding how the rules are to be interpreted and demonstrate possible examples in some categories of device. THESE EXAMPLES ARE NOT EXHAUSTIVE OF TYPES OF EQUIPMENT THAT IS ALLOWED OR NOT ALLOWED. It is important to understand the philosophy behind the rules when considering archers equipment.

It is also important to remember that any shooting equipment not covered in the Assistive Device document does not require authorization by classifiers and must comply with WA rules as specified in the Rulebook.

1. Wheelchair

A wheelchair of any type (provided it does not have more than four wheels touching the ground) may be used and subscribes to the accepted principle and meaning of the word “wheelchair”. Use of a wheelchair will be on the classification card.

- a. Power wheelchairs are allowed but must be powered off when on the shooting line.
 - i. They must conform to the length and number of wheels allowed on the ground.
 - ii. The seat should be in a neutral upright position.
- b. Scooters are not allowed.



- c. A fifth wheel is allowed on the field of play but not on the shooting line.



- d. No part of the wheelchair may support the bow arm while shooting.

- e. For all wheelchair athletes, any lateral support defined as anything that prevents the athlete falling sideways in the chair by providing support to the side of an athlete's trunk above the pelvis is allowed.
 - i. Below is a picture of side support that does not give trunk support to an athlete because it is below the pelvis (waist height). Because it is not giving support, it can be greater than half the body width of the athlete.



Support below the pelvis

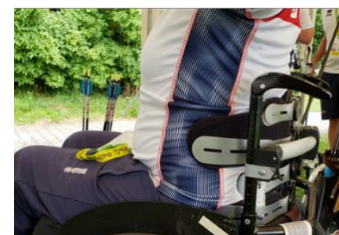
- f. A lateral support may not protrude further forward than half the width of the athlete's rib cage measured as the half point between the base of the sternum (breastbone) and the spinous process at T7 (mid back)



Measuring half the body width



Uprights as lateral support



Molded seat back

- g. All parts of the chair back and lateral support shall be at least 110mm below the athlete's armpit while shooting at any distance. In the case of uneven/rotated shoulder height, (e.g., scoliosis) the distance is measured from the lower armpit.
 - i. The intent behind this rule is that the back of the chair does not support the shoulder blade which is part of the shoulder joint.
 - ii. If an athlete has a fixed scoliosis and one side of the chair does not meet the 110mm minimum, it will be noted on the classification card in the comment's section.



Measuring from the highest part of the chair



Distance being measured

- h. For W1 sport class athletes, if there is a medical reason for the back of chair height to be less than 110mm below the armpit, the reduced height may be approved by classifiers and noted on the athlete's classification card in the comment section.
- i. Push handles attached to the uprights of the wheelchair back are considered part of the chair and must conform to this measurement or be removed.
 - i. The handles are measured because the athlete can lean back against them and support their trunk or shoulder blade.
- j. Push handles that are not directly attached to the uprights of the wheelchair back are not considered part of the chair back for the purpose of this rule.
 - i. The highest part of the chair will be measured from the back of the chair in the example below because the athlete is not able to lean against the push handles.



The athlete cannot lean against these

- k. The wheelchair shall not exceed 1.25m in length.
 - i. This includes the feet of the athlete.
- l. The use of anti-roll devices is allowed.
 - i. The purpose is to keep the chair from rolling backwards.
 - ii. They can be mechanical and attached to the wheelchair.



- iii. An interpretation in 2012 allowed for external chocks as long as they do not provide extra stability to the wheelchair.



- m. Neither the feet of the athlete nor the footplates of the wheelchair may be in contact with the ground when shooting.
 - i. This adds stability to the athlete.
- n. Anti-tipping devices are allowed provided they do not touch the ground
 - i. These keep the chair from tipping backward



2. Strapping

Strapping in any class is only to be used for medical or safety reasons and not to enhance performance.

- a. W1 athletes, when their classification card allows, may use any amount of strapping in any combination to maintain body stability if no support is given to the bow arm while shooting.



- b. W1 athletes may use any *non-rigid* corset-type body support and/or chest straps in any combination as medically necessary and as approved by the Classifiers.
- c. W2 athletes, when their classification card allows, may have only a single strap of not more than 5 centimeters wide at any point and wound only horizontally and only once around the torso and must sit at or below the 110mm height restriction.



- d. For some wheelchair athletes, leg strapping may be authorized as specified on their international classification card and is limited to 5 cm wide. Leg straps are available to use for safety reason and may be placed around the ankles, knees and/or mid-thigh and are not limited to one strap.
- e. Where, for medical reasons and with a prescription from a medical specialist, a rigid or non-rigid corset type support is required for a short period of time, it may be temporarily approved by Classifiers for a specified time. The W2 athlete may not use the corset in conjunction with strapping.
 - i. The time limit must be designated with a fixed review date on the classification form and be determined by a classification panel. The reason for the temporary use should be clearly described in the comments on the back of the classification card.



3. Stool

A stool may be used by some athlete in the standing class athletes when allowed by a Classifier. It will be listed on the classification card.

- b. A stool must not have a backrest of any kind.
- c. The stool and athlete must fit within the shooting line space at an event.
- d. The classification panel may approve stool use for an athlete who scores fewer than the 38 qualifying points on the grounds of safety due to poor standing balance.
 - i. The rationale for approving the stool must be stated on the backside of the card under the comments section.
- e. The classification panel may approve a unique stool for an athlete based on their specific functional limitations.

- i. The rationale for approving the unique stool must be stated on the backside of the card under the comments section and should be accompanied by a picture of the unique device on the classification card.

4. Release Aid System

Classifiers may authorize the use of a simple system that assists the athlete to use a legal release aid based on the functional deficit of the athlete (e.g. simple harness system). The release aid system cannot function as a form of lateral support or as a rigid corset.

- a. Lateral or side support to the trunk gives an advantage to an athlete by stabilizing their trunk during shooting
- b. Any release aid system that is above the bottom of the rib cage is legal.
- c. Any release aid system that goes to the pelvis shall be considered lateral support.
- d. The rigid material of a release aid system may not wrap around the trunk of the athlete for more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of their body.
- e. Any exceptions will be clearly marked on the comment section on the front of the classification card and the rationale will be explained by the Classifier on the back of the card. A picture of the unique system should be placed on the front of the classification card



No trunk support



Trunk support given

- a. The release aid itself is governed by World Archery Rules, [Book 3, chapter 11](#) and must be approved for use by the judges at the event.
- b. Recurve Open athletes may not use a release aid system.
- c. Para athletes may use a mouth tab provided it is permanently attached to the string.



5. Bow Bandage

Para athletes with a bow arm disability may use a bow bandage to secure the bow grip to their hand as deemed eligible by the Classifier. A bow bandage represents any form of *non-rigid* strapping which assists with bow gripping while still allowing for bow movement. It may not add stability to the wrist.



6. Bow Arm Aid

An athlete who is unable hold a bow may use an artificial aid or prosthesis to do so. This aid may be attached to the bow, if it is not totally rigid or permanently fixed while still allowing for bow movement upon arrow release. Under no circumstances may it be electric or electronically controlled.



7. Bow Arm Splints

Para athletes with a bow arm disability may use an elbow splint and/or wrist splint, as deemed eligible by the Classifier based on the functional impairment of the athlete. This must be clearly described on the classification card.



8. String Arm Wrist Splint

Para athletes with a string arm disability may use a wrist splint or wrist splint-release aid combination as deemed eligible by the Classifier based on the functional impairment of the athlete.



9. Block or Wedge

Blocks or wedges do not require authorization to use. See rule 11.1.10.1. Devices to raise the foot or part thereof, attached, or independent of the shoe are permitted, if they do not present an obstruction to other athletes at the shooting line, are in contact with the ground, and such that they do not protrude more than 2 cm beyond shoe dimensions.



10. Assistant

With classification panel approval, W1 or ST any class para-athletes with severe upper limb disability who are unable to nock their arrows safely or efficiently or adjust their sight may be allowed an assistant for this purpose.

- a. The assistant may adjust the bow sight at any time during the shooting sequence.
- b. The assistant must not be a disturbance to other athletes and must wear the same uniform and number as the para-athlete.
- c. Coaching is allowed by the assistant
- d. If the para-athlete obtains approval to use an assistant, then the assistant should assist during both the qualification round and during match play. Classifiers must only provide authorization for an assistant based on the athletes functional ability and not because the athlete requests one for help during finals or match play.

NOTE

As classifiers it is our responsibility to ensure assistive devices are authorized fairly and based solely on the athletes' impairments. An assistive device is authorized to that match the level of impairment and are not to be authorized to enhance performance. Sometimes it is difficult to balance the athletes request for an assistive device and their need for one based on their impairment. Every effort must be made to complete a thorough bench assessment followed by a field assessment when required, before authorizing an assistive device.

One of the more challenging assistive devices to authorize is the use of an Assistant. An assistant is only to be authorized for W1 or ST class para-archers with **severe upper limb disability** who are unable to nock their arrows safely, or efficiently or adjust their sight may be allowed an assistant for this purpose. Just because the archer feels they want an assistant during elimination or finals does not mean they need one. We need to be clear that the archer must have reasons that they need one at any time. For example, an upper limb that does not function well enough to physically load the arrow, or significant tone that may be managed during regular competition but gets worse during the stress of finals may be relevant. But if they can efficiently and effectively load their arrows on the normal field of play and in various weather conditions, then they do not need an assistant during finals. That may give them a significant advantage over their competitors as they will have both an assistant and a coach available in head-to-head competition.

Be very cautious authorizing this assistive device so that we are confident we are maintaining a fair playing field for all.

11. Athlete's Agent

All athletes are entitled to use an agent to score and pull their arrows. An assistant may act as an athlete's agent.

12. Visually Impaired Equipment

There are no assistive devices authorized for visually impaired athletes.

Equipment includes blindfold, tactile sights and a spotter or a coach as outlined in World Archery Target Rule Book, [Book 3, chapter 21.12](#) "Para Archery".