



**INTERNATIONAL VA'A FEDERATION  
PARA VA'A Rules & Classification System  
(Effective for 2022 IVF World Elite & Club Championships)**

**Section I: IVF PARA Va'a Rules for World Sprints**

1. Age requirement: Competitors must have reached the age of 16 by or during the calendar year in which the competition takes place.  
Please note: ICF rules require the adult age category start at 18. Anyone under 18 will automatically get a review status on their classification.
2. Eligibility determination:  
To determine eligibility to compete as a Para Va'a Paddler, all candidates must submit the following documents and participate to the best of their ability in a Classification testing procedure:
  - a) IVF Consent for Para Va'a Classification Form
  - b) IVF Classification Application Form
  - c) IVF Declaration of Medical Conditions that may require Emergency Measures Form
  - d) IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis completed by a medical doctor
  - e) Paddlers with a visual impairment must include an IVF Visual Impairment Form completed by an ophthalmologist to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate classification requirements
  - f) Paddlers with Cerebral Palsy must present a CP-ISRA card at class 4 to demonstrate that they classify as a VL1.
3. Para Va'a Paddler Classification score:
  - a) The IVF Classification Panel will allocate a race class and status (review/confirmed) for individual Para Paddlers following the Classification procedure
  - b) The IVF Classification Panel may observe paddlers anytime during training and/or competition and review the classification of any paddler whose performance in a canoe exhibits functional ability that markedly differs from that which was demonstrated during testing.
4. Classification System  
  
VL1, VL2 & VL3 are official classifications for the ICF.  
  
VL1, VL2 & VL3, VL4, VL1a – are official classifications for IVF  
  
If an athlete is classified as VL1, VL2 or VL3 at an official event their classification is recognized by the ICF and IVF  
  
V1 races will include the following classifications as divisions for IVF competition:  
VL1, VL2, VL3, VL4

V6 and V12 will include the following classifications:

VL1, VL2, VL3, VL4, VL1a

## 5. IVF Points System

Paddlers with a disability that does not lose sufficient points to meet the ICF Classification system as a VL3 *may* now be classified by the IVF as a VL4 (including those with vision impairment). They will contribute 4 points to a team total. Some impairments (such as pain) remain unclassifiable and do not qualify the paddler.

Paddlers who have additional impairments to those classified as VL1, and who the Classifiers determine to have a high level of functional impairment shall be classified by the IVF as VL1a. They may participate in V6 or V12 and will contribute 1 point to a team total.

	Points
VL1	1
VL2	2
VL3	3
VL4	4
VL1a	1

### a. V6 mixed team sprint competition:

- 1) teams shall include at least 2 female paddlers with disabilities ( It is acceptable to have more than 2 females and more female than males ratio)
- 2) the total number of points may not exceed **18** points (eg:VL4a+VL4a+3+3+2+2=18 or VL4a+VL4a+3+2+2+1=16, etc.)
- 3) A team may compete with a lower number of points.

### b .V12 mixed team competition:

- 1) teams shall include at least 4 female paddlers with disabilities and no more than 8 Male paddlers with disabilities (It is acceptable to have more females than males ratio)
- 2) the total number of points may not exceed **38**
- 3) A team may compete with a lower number of points.

## 6. Vision Impaired Paddlers

Vision impaired paddlers are to produce documentation by an Ophthalmologist or Optometrist certifying that their visual impairment would fall into the B1, B2 or B3 Paralympic categories. All VI paddlers are required to wear blinders (provided by the ICF/IVF) to occlude all vision. VI paddlers are placed in the highest functioning category which would now be VL4. Visually impaired paddlers in V1 races are allowed a sighted guide who shall paddle behind them in the same lane to give directional cues. Visually impaired paddlers are required to wear blinders in the team boats too.

The guidelines for Classification for athletes with vision impairment (VI) are determined by the International Blind Sports Association (IBSA).

IBSA Classes:

B1: From no light perception in either eye to light perception, but inability to recognize the shape of a

hand at any distance or in any direction

B2: From ability to recognize the shape of a hand to a visual acuity of 2/60 and/or monocular visual field of less than 5 degrees.

B3: From visual acuity above 2/60 to visual acuity of 6/60 and/or monocular visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees

## 7. Adaptive Equipment

- a. Para Va'a Paddlers must supply their own adaptive equipment with the exception of Vision Impaired paddlers who will be required to wear blinders supplied by the Para Va'a Committee in all of their races
- b. Para Va'a Paddlers who use personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, seating support, etc. during the Classification testing procedure must use the same equipment when racing.
- c. When racing, Para Va'a Paddlers may not use additional personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, support, etc. not used during the Classification testing procedure. For example, a paddler with limb amputation may not use a prosthetic device when racing if it was not used during the Classification testing procedure

## 8. Athletes with Cerebral Palsy

Paracanoe currently lacks test protocols to classify paddlers with Cerebral Palsy. Athletes with this condition holding a CP-ISRA card at **class 4 only** will be allowed to compete and automatically will be placed in the VL1 class. Paddlers with this classification wishing to compete in the IVF World Sprint Championships must present the classification panel with their CP-ISRA class 4 card. Please note, all other CP-ISRA classes currently **are ineligible and cannot compete** in IVF International events.

## 9. Overturns

- a. In V1 races, in the case of overturns, the contestant is eliminated from the race when it is not possible for them to resume their place in the va'a within three minutes, without any outside help.
- b. In V6 races, overturns will be cause for automatic disqualification so immediate assistance can be given; paddlers will not be permitted to continue in the race

## **Section II: IVF/ICF Classification System for Va'a events**

The IVF has adopted the ICF Para Va'a Classification system and admits athletes with disabilities on the same basis.

By adopting and extending this common core Classification system, the IVF Para Va'a Committee intends to assist the organizers of IVF World Sprints (and like events) to provide elite competition opportunities to those athletes with a functional impairment precluding their involvement in either open competition.

**Note** that the classification system does not include athletes with intellectual disability.

### **Functional Classification of Va'a (Outrigger Canoe) Paddlers. Purpose of a Classification System**

- a) Enable fair and equitable competition at all levels, for mildly, moderately and severely disabled Va'a canoe paddlers
- b) Encourage crews of mixed disability, from mild to severe, to compete and complement each other
- c) Measure only the functional limitations caused by physical disability
- d) Not be affected by the canoeing skills, training or talent of the paddler

### **IVF/ICF Classifiers**

There are two types of Classifiers:

1. Medical Classifier: a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, or physiotherapist (physical therapist)
2. Technical Classifier: a person with extensive practical knowledge of outrigger canoeing, such as a canoeing coach, sport scientist, physical educator or similarly qualified person.

The IVF Classification Panel consists of teams of classifiers, each team contains one medical and one technical classifier and a head classifier (3 total).

Classifiers have undergone training and qualification by the ICF and all classification at the IVF World Sprint Championship will be recognised as official by the ICF moving forward

## **PROCESS FOR CLASSIFYING VA'A (OUTRIGGER CANOE) PADDLERS WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY**

### **Application Process for Paddlers Seeking IVF Classification**

Before commencing the classification process, all paddlers are required to submit the following documents:

- IVF Consent for Para Va'a Classification Form
- IVF Classification Application Form
- IVF Declaration of Medical Conditions that may require Emergency Measures Form
- IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis completed by a medical doctor
- Paddlers with a visual impairment must include an IVF Vision Test Form completed by an ophthalmologist to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate classification requirements

Note: Paddlers previously classified in ICF World Sprints do NOT need to submit a Certificate of Medical Diagnosis unless they have been given a 'Review' status

## **Classification Procedure**

Para Va'a paddlers are responsible for bringing all completed required forms to IVF World Sprints and delivering them to the IVF Classification Panel at the classification evaluation meeting.

Para Va'a paddlers must report to a classification evaluation meeting to a timetable determined by the IVF Classification Panel and declare all personal assistive devices, adaptations, prosthesis, seating support, etc. that they intend to use when racing.

### **Method of Assessment**

An IVF Classification Panel conducts the standard ICF/IVF classification process. This process includes the following, parts, where appropriate:

1. Review of IVF Certificate of Medical Diagnosis
2. Review of an IVF Vision Test Form using IBSA (International Blind Sports Association) standards completed by an ophthalmologist for paddlers who are blind or visually impaired
3. Review of CP-ISRA card.
4. Trunk function tests, lower limb function tests and/or upper limb function tests undertaken in the testing lab by the Medical Classifier assisted by the Technical Classifier.
5. On Water tests undertaken by the Technical Classifier assisted by the Medical Classifier.
6. Observation during training and competition. The classification of any paddler whose performance in a canoe exhibits functional ability that markedly differs from that demonstrated during the Functional Movement Test, may be reviewed. Paddlers who misrepresent their disability, to gain access to a race-class for more impaired athletes, put themselves at risk of sanctions that may exclude them from competition.

Quota for IVF Para V1, V6 and V12 at the 2022 IVF World Sprint Championships can be found here:  
<http://www.ivfiv.org/event-quota.html>