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ELIGIBILITY GUIDELEINES FOR PLAYERS WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY

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Introduction

Cricket for those with Physical and Learning disabilities has come a long way in a short space of time. Not too long ago we had one competition played with an Incrediball and no national squads at all. While this has all changed now the one aspect of our game that has never changed is the application of the profiling criteria.

Profiling has been a part of physical disability cricket ever since it was introduced, over 20 years ago. The rules of the previous county competitions have always required players to meet one of the profiles listed in the Coaches Guide to Functionality.

Crickets' problem has been that it never engaged or trained anybody to conduct these assessments properly. It was clear that something needed doing to to address the implementation of the profiling system. In the absence of a cricket specific profiling system, the DSE model provides the most robust assessment process available to us.

The DSE process ensures that all physical disabled players within our game at county level and above meet the minimum standard for disability. The process is carried out by profile-trained physiotherapists, who are completely independent of the ECB.

In order for cricket to become a credible disability sport and now that the ECB have adopted this process all players that compete in the ECB Inter County Cricket Competitions will need to undergo an assessment. The ECB believe this system provides the best fit for cricket.

The system called 'The Profiling System' has been adopted by the ECB and is used by and continually developed by EFDS (English Federation for Disability Sport) and is used by a large number of other sports' governing bodies.

Development of the Profile System

The Profile System was developed by Dr Christine Meaden as a result of trying to make classifications sports specific. Initially, the definitions of the classes were made specific to swimming, then, an attempt was made to do the same with athletics specific to track events and to field events (different criteria for running as opposed to throwing).

This became repetitious because it became necessary to repeat the same description of each type of disability. If each disability type were allocated a number, or name, the description of the types of disability in a particular competition group would be more succinct.

For example, if all competitors with severe impairment in one leg are given a letter (say x) and those with moderate impairment in both legs are given a different letter (say Y), it would be easier to quote for javelin throwing, group 1 is composed of 'X' type competitors and group 2 is composed of 'Y' type competitors whereas airguns group may comprise of competitors from both 'X' and 'Y' type competitors together.

Thus, if each type of disability were given a number, it would be unnecessary to keep repeating the description of the impairment when creating groups for each sport. It was decided to call each

disability type a 'profile of functional ability'. Following a presentation, both verbally and in written format, the rule books of every disabled sport was obtained, and every definition used by these international organisations were recorded and combined if they had the same functional ability and each definition was allocated a profile number.

As a result of the International Sports Organisations continual use of the old method of defining the classes, a variety of problems occurred regarding minimum criteria for each class and eligibility. Classifiers were finding it difficult to keep up to date in classes for all sport, whereby they really needed to specialise in one sport. The new profiling system did away with this need because when the impairment is measured and a profile number allocated, the competitor can be categorised for any sport chosen. Thus, the need for specialist sports knowledge by assessors is not necessary.

Measure of Impairment

"Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as a significant deviation or loss" (World Health Organisation 2000)

Impairments can be divided into four broad categories:

- **Loco motor**
- **Sensory**
- **Intellectual**
- **Other (eg Visceral, transplant)**

It is possible to clinically measure and record the impairment of motor, sensory or intellectual functions using recognised tests.

Impairment (deviation or loss)

Disability (loss of function, limits ability)

Restriction in Participation (limits role)

Impairment leads to disability or loss of function. If the disability is used to classify an athlete then an individual with a severe impairment, who has trained, overcome their impairment to some degree and become skilful, would be considered minimally disabled because they have successfully compensated for their loss of function.

Therefore, classifications must be based on impairment, because impairment does not change. Disability, loss of function, limitation of activity and participation can be changed by various factors and also varies from individual to individual. In disability, sport classification enables people to compete as fairly as possible.

Eligibility Process

All players with a physical disability who wish to play in the ECB D40 QUEST, D40 PURSUIT or the S9 REGIONAL competitions will have to undergo a profiling assessment.

In the first instance, players will be required to register with their respective counties by completing a Player Registration Form. These forms will be collated by each county manager and sent to ECB. (forms can be found at www.disabilitycomps.play-cricket.com or from your County Manager).

As part of the player registration form, page 5 is a ***certificate of diagnosis***. It is vital that this form is completed by a health professional such as your GP, Consultant, or a practice nurse, a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.

The completed certificate will need to handed to your county manager who will in turn pass it to the ECB.

From there the certificate will be assessed by an independent sports classifier who will be able to assign the appropriate disability sport category to you.

For people with a physical disability, this process will normally only need to be carried out once. It is unlikely that you will be asked to repeat the process unless you have a condition that fluctuates to the point where your condition finds you outside the scope of our profiling system.

Ineligibility

It is difficult to measure subjective and variable impairments e.g., pain, absence or dysfunction of organs, progressive conditions. To say that someone is not currently eligible is not to say that they are not disabled.

The severity of the disability is not in doubt, but some disabilities do not fit into the current classification system. Being ineligible for classification does not mean that an individual cannot participate in cricket; it just means that they will not be able to participate in the ECB County Cricket Competitions.

With the increasing number of disability cricket projects that are now taking place across each county board, it should be possible for an individual to access a level of cricket that will be appropriate.

The Assessment.

From the Certificate of Diagnosis, the independent classifier will be able to allocate a profile category to each player, however, it may be necessary for the profiler to contact the player (or parent / guardian) to clarify certain conditions.

In some cases, it may be necessary for the player to undergo a physical assessment by a profiler. Should this be the case, then a suitable appointment will be organised.

Physical Assessment

Should the need arise for a physical assessment, then an appropriate date, time and venue will be organised by ECB.

The assessment itself is divided into two parts. The vast majority of competitors normally only have to complete the first part of the assessment. The second part is only necessary for those players where an appropriate environmental examination is required (i.e. to watch the player perform on a cricket pitch)

The first part of the process involves a examination of the players by a qualified independent profiler. The examination takes the form of some initial questions regarding the players' impairment ad will be followed by a series of physical tests to determine loss of function.

The profiler carrying out the assessment may be accompanied by a second person, who will be recording the scores. The scores are based on the findings of the profiler for each practical test and will form the basis of the overall result.

The initial assessment can take up to 45 minutes to complete, however, in general, these assessments are completed in around 20 to 30 minutes.

Following the physical assessment, the competitor will be informed of the result following a brief summary by the profiler.

The conversation with the player will be one of three possible outcomes:

1. The assessment has been completed successfully and the player will be informed of the allocated profile number from the profiling system. This profile number will also be made known to the players' County Manager.
2. The assessment has been completed and as a result the profiler's findings are inconclusive. You will need to undergo the second part of the assessment. This takes the form of an observation during game play. This will be carried out by a profiler (not necessarily the same profiler) during the season or at the earliest possible opportunity. As a player, you will be able to continue playing until this second stage assessment is carried out.

The second stage of observation will confirm or otherwise the findings of the original assessment and will be used to substantiate the players eligibility or not based on a practical assessment of loss of function.

You will not be informed beforehand when the observation will take place as the profiler will arrive at a match unannounced and without your knowledge. Once the observation has taken place, you will be informed of the fact and of the result of the observation.

3. The assessment has been completed and the findings are that you do not meet the eligibility criteria to take part in the ECB County Cricket Competitions. As a result of this, you will be informed by an ECB representative (Who will usually be present at the assessment, but not taking an active part). At this stage the ECB representative will provide advice as to what options are open to you in cricket should you wish it.

Protests and Appeals

Should a player be classified as ineligible they have the right to appeal. Any appeals made must be done so through their County Management and not direct to the ECB. If an appeal is to be lodged, then it must be done so in writing to their County Manager within 14 days of the original

classification assessment. Appeals will NOT be accepted outside of this period under any circumstances.

An appeal form (see page 7) will be forwarded to the player, which will need to be completed and forwarded to the address shown on the form. The completed form will need to be accompanied by a payment for £50. The payment is to avoid unduly speculative appeals and is used to help offset the cost of the classification process. The payment will be redeemable should the appeal be successful. If the appeal is unsuccessful then the payment will be forfeited by the competitor.

A second assessment will be carried out as soon as is practicably possible for that players and will be carried out by a qualified profiler who was not involved with the original assessment. The decision of the appeal will be made clear to the player, the player's County Manager and the ECB, in writing. The appeal will either affirm the decision or overrule the decision.

Whilst the appeal process is taking place, the player is free to continue to play ECB County Cricket.

The appeal decision will be final and not subject to any further appeals.

Disability Cricket - Profiling Classification - Appeals Form

Date of Appeal
Name
Address
Post Code
Telephone Number
Email Address
Date of Original Assessment
Nature of Appeal

Please return competed form to Richard Hill: ECB Disability Competitions Manager. 25 Nutfield, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 1UL

Office Use

Name of Original Assessor
Original Assessment Outcome
Date of Re-Assessment
Result of Re-Assessment

Certificate of Diagnosis

England & Wales Cricket Board

FULL NAME ……

ADDRESS……

……

TELEPHONE NUMBER…… DATE OF BIRTH……

REGION/COUNTY…… MALE OR FEMALE (delete one)

CLUB ……

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE……

MEDICAL DETAILS

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY A Consultant, GP or Physiotherapist

NAME OF APPLICANT……

DIAGNOSIS……
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……
……
……
……..

ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS, e.g. EPILEPSY, DIABETES, HEART DISEASE, HAEMOPHILIA.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE-NAMED PERSON HAS THE DIAGNOSIS SPECIFIED ABOVE.

SIGNATURE
……
Profession……
…….

Contact details *(in case of need for further information*)……