TABLE TENNIS CLASSIFICATION
Information for Athletes

What is Classification?

Any person with a disability is able to participate in some kind of sport or physical activity if they wish to do so. Classification is not required for general participation in Table Tennis.

Classification is an assessment process, which allows us to group athletes whose disability causes similar limitations in a particular sport in order to allow for meaningful competition.

Why do I need to get classified?

If you are competing against others with a disability in a sport, you may be required to have a classification.

How do I get classified in Australia?

In Australia, Table Tennis Australia works with the Australian Paralympic Committee to ensure athletes have access to classification, relevant to their level of development as an athlete. This assists athletes to set goals and to assess their own performance against standards of competition set by other athletes of the same class.

Classification in Australia is conducted in line with International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) - Para-Table Tennis (PTT) division classification rules. It aims to give athletes as accurate an opinion as possible of what their international classification would be should they compete at this level. Classification must be a formal assessment process in order to ensure accuracy and to provide fairness to all.

Each event organiser will determine what level of classification is required for their event. The Organisers should advise you of this as part of the event entry process, as well as provide you with information about opportunities to attend classification.

There are two levels of classification that occur in Australia:

National Classification

National Classification is a sport specific classification assessment identical to the one used internationally. National classification is required for all National Championship events.

To determine an athlete’s classification for Table Tennis, a group of officials, known as classifiers, assess the athlete to determine how their impairment influences their sport ability, regardless of their level of training or development. A national classification is superseded once an athlete competes internationally.

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Provisional Classification

This process has been designed to allow athletes who do not have access to a sport specific classification panel, to gain an indication of their classification for their specific sport. This provisional classification must be given by a certified classifier, and is conducted in line with International classification rules for the sport. All provisional classifications provide an indication of a sport specific classification and are only valid for a 12 month period.

An athlete may generally participate at club level, school level or state competition. A provisional class is not valid for national championships. Athletes with provisional classification are not eligible for national seeding or national team selections.

Where and when does the classification occur?

Full national classification for athletes with a physical disability is held in conjunction with Table Tennis Nationals each year. All athlete that compete at this event must meet the Paralympic minimal eligibility criteria to be eligible to compete at this event. Those athletes that do not have a current, valid, Australian national level classification (with confirmed status) will be required to attend classification. If an athlete is found ineligible during the classification evaluation period, they will be allowed to compete in the rounds but will not be eligible for finals or medals.

Athletes with a Physical disability may also obtain a provisional classification at talent search days held in their own state, where a classifier is available to provide this.

What do I need to bring to classification?

For athletes with a Physical disability, you will need to come prepared wearing comfortable clothes, and may be asked to roll up shorts and t-shirts, so that the classifier can observe your movements properly. You may wish to wear close fitting shorts or singlet under your clothes for this reason. You will need to bring your table tennis bat and any equipment you may use during competition.

If you have Cerebral Palsy or any other neurological disorder, you will need to bring a letter or report from your specialist stating your diagnosis, and what the physical signs are (spasticity, ataxia, abnormal reflexes, and paralysis).
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*Athletes with an Intellectual disability or Hearing impairment competing at national championships*

These athletes will need to go through their respective classification channels in order to be eligible to compete at this event.

Deaf Sports Australia  

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**What happens during classification evaluation?**

During classification evaluation you, your parent or support staff will be asked to fill in and sign a consent form.

The classification panel will then conduct a series of physical assessments aimed at finding out how your disability affects your ability to perform sport activities. You will be asked to perform specific skills that are appropriate to your sport such as service and return etc.

Each athlete may be observed during competition to confirm the information collected during your classification assessment.

**What if I do not agree with my classification?**

In the case, where an athlete/team disagrees with the final classification decision made at a National championships, the athlete will compete at that event under the classification results determined by the National classification panel at that event. Individuals should contact Table Tennis Australia in the first instance to discuss the appropriate course of action following the event. Any classification reviews would usually be done at the next classification event.

If you disagree with a Provisional Classification, the usual process would be to present for a face to face classification assessment. Provisional classification, while endeavouring to be an accurate indication of class, is a general guide only and may change upon face to face assessment by a full classification panel.

If your condition has changed and an athlete feels that their current class may no longer be applicable, the athlete is responsible for advising Table Tennis Australia aware of this. Supporting medical documentation is required in such circumstances.

**What does it cost?**

There is no cost to you for classification.
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What is expected of athletes?

Athletes must cooperate at all times to the best of their ability with the classification process. Failure to do so may result in you being given a class of “Not classifiable” and you will not be permitted to compete as an athlete with a disability. You are expected to behave in an honest, courteous and sportsman-like manner at all times.

What is expected of the parent / coach / supporter?

Parents or sports staff who attend classification with an athlete:
• Are welcome to ask questions, and the classifiers will endeavour to answer these.
• Are expected to behave in a courteous manner at all times and to respect the decision of the classifiers
• Are able to observe, but not participate in the classification evaluation

What should be expected of classifiers?

Classifiers should treat you in a manner that is professional, courteous and safe at all times. Classifiers must treat athletes and coaches with respect, to support a cooperative and courteous classification process. They should provide you with sufficient information to understand the process, the decision, and the opportunities for protest or clarification. All information obtained during classification will be kept confidential.

Where do I go for further information?

Further information is available at the following links.

Table Tennis Australia
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