



**VICTORIAN POWERCHAIR LEAGUE
HANDBOOK & GOVERNING RULES**

JANUARY 2021

PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Powerchair League is a sporting competition, designed specifically for people who use powerchairs for mobility.

The Victorian Powerchair League is facilitated by Powerchair Sports Victoria.

The purpose of this Handbook is to assist administrators, organisers and donors or sponsors alike and to provide a comprehensive manual on all aspects relating to the running and conduct of the Victorian Powerchair League.

Competition Overview

Eligibility

Players competing in Victorian Powerchair League MUST have a disability and use a powerchair in all competition matches. Any disputes will be dealt with by PSV Committee.

Competition structure

Each Premier League team will play 15 matches throughout the regular season.*

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 2020-21 season may be reduced.

Premiership

Points are awarded for each win or draw and the team with the most points at the end of the regular season is awarded the premiership in each sport.

All regular season matches score:

3 points for a win
1 point for a draw
0 points for a loss

If two or more teams are tied after the points are awarded, the tied team's percentage is worked out as follows:

- Percentage for Powerchair Football (Goals for divided by goals against)
- Percentage for Powerchair Hockey (Goals for divided by goals against)
- The team with the highest percentage is the winner.

Forfeits

A team must have a minimum of 2 players in Powerchair Football and a minimum of 3 players in Powerchair Hockey on court at the designated starting time of the match. If a team has less than the minimum number of players, they will be forced to forfeit the match.

If a match is forfeited, both teams may include players from the other Division for a scratch match. There will be no award voting after a forfeited match.

Championship

A championship match will involve the two teams who finished first and second during the regular season in both Powerchair Football and Powerchair Hockey.

To be eligible to play in the Championship match in either Division, players must have been selected in at least 50% of matches throughout the season.

Players are only eligible to play in one Championship match; they cannot play in both Division 1 and Division 2 finals.

Match duration

All matches throughout the regular season and finals series will consist of two 20-minute halves.

Half time breaks in all sports will be of two minutes duration during the regular season. All finals will consist of a five-minute half-time break.

Extra time in finals

Refer to each individual sports rules.

Division 1 and Division 2

Team managers will submit their Division 1 and Division 2 team lists following the approval of their preliminary team lists to the Technical Director prior to the season commencing.

The Technical Director can reject a submission if they believe it will impact the quality and evenness of the competition.

If a submission is rejected, the Technical Director will inform the club and the reasons why it was rejected. The club involved can appeal this decision or submit a new team list within 14 days of the decision.

Players selected in Division 1 will not be eligible to play in Division 2 on the same day, and vice-versa.*

Players from Division 2 may be promoted to Division 1 but must remain in that division for a minimum of two matches.

*If numbers are shortened over a period of time for a particular reason then Division 1 spots can be used up by division 2 players.

There are two purposes for each division:

Division 1

- Competitive league for the top players in Victoria
- Club participation and pathway to national competitions

Division 2

- Developing new and inexperienced players
- Preparation for Division 1 promotion

Pre-match

All players must prepare for kick-off 15 minutes before their scheduled match time. To ensure all matches finish on time and allow teams an appropriate warm up.

Three minutes prior to the commencement of a match the Central Referee will blow their whistle. During these three minutes, participating teams are to be present for toss of the coin and take up their positions on court, inform referee of goal keepers and be ready for play. If a team is not ready within this time their match will be forfeited.

Referees

A designated coach of a club cannot referee in their own clubs matches. This applies to the central referee, however, will be enforced to sideline referees depending on availability of personnel.

PSV will encourage external referees to officiate throughout the season. These referees will be led by the Technical Director. All referees and coaches shall meet prior to each round to discuss rule interpretations and court conduct.

Technical Director

The Technical Director role will develop and train new referees and coaches. The role will also be to answer any questions about any disputes arising during a game or to clarify any rule interpretations.

The Technical Director will oversee the competition structure, team lists and overall quality of the competition.

This person will be available any time throughout the competition. The technical director shall not be a coach, manager, or team player.

A group of three people decided by the committee will approve team lists, line-ups and trades. This will be led by the technical director.

Role of Victorian Team Selectors

Each team is invited to nominate one person to become a Victorian selector each year. Each team is only allowed 1 representative on the Selection Panel.

The duty of the selection panel is to select up to 8 players and 2 coaches deemed to be the best overall throughout the season.

The Panel will select the Victoria Coach and Captains.

The Selection Panel will meet towards the middle point of the season (March – April) to select a squad of up to 12 players. A final team of up to 8 players will be selected after this for any upcoming national events such as N.E.W.S or APFA National Championships.

Clubs Overview

Club structure

Each club must designate a team manager and a coaching group and submit to the Technical Director for submission prior to the season. This is also to ensure all teams have the correct number of players and all players have paid their registration fees.

The Technical Director can reject a submission if they believe it will impact the quality and evenness of the competition or the reputation of Powerchair Sports Victoria.

If a submission is rejected, the Technical Director will inform the club of the reasons why it was rejected. The club involved can appeal this decision or submit a new coaching group within 14 days of the decision.

Team Lists

Team managers must submit their preliminary squad list prior to the season start date. This applies to both Powerchair Football and Powerchair Hockey.

Each club will be sent a team registration form prior to the season commencing. All players listed on the Team List must be financial members of Powerchair Sports Victoria.

Team registration forms are to be sent to the Technical Director.

Team composition:

Teams may include a maximum of 6 players per Division at the start of the season.

The maximum number of players per Division will remain at 6 each round, all throughout the season.

Team Line-ups:

Teams must submit their line-up for each upcoming round to the Technical Director on the day before matchday (Saturday). No more than 2 changes can be made after this submission. If a team fails to comply, a deduction of 1 goal per change will apply to the team's total score after the match.

Registrations & fees

Player registration fees will be \$200 for the season which includes both sports. If players only want to play one sport registration fees will be \$120.00. Fees must be paid prior to the season start date. Players will be ineligible to compete if fees have not been completed. Please submit your player registration forms to the PSV Competitions team.

Recruitment

It will be the individual club's own responsibility to manage, develop and recruit new members for their squads. Clubs will get first choice with any players they meet or see at their own events.

At mutual events (PSV ran), each player will be deemed a free agent and can be approached by either club until a written agreement is reached between that player and club.

Trading

Club coaches, captains and team management will discuss any trades amongst themselves in the pre-season (before team submissions) and at the midpoint of the season (March – or otherwise specified at season start). To then be approved by the technical director.

Players Joining Mid-Season

Will be deemed free agents for a maximum of 2 rounds. If there are no open spots on either team a new team will be established to join DIV 2. If there are players found at any teams particular event, that club will be given priority access to that player.

Marquee Players

Teams in both sports can allocate 1 additional spot (on top of the 6 players) to a marquee player from another state/country.

A marquee player must be signed in the pre-season trade period or mid-season trade period.

Any allocations must be submitted to the Technical Director for approval. The approval will depend on the quality and evenness of the competition.

A marquee player must attend at least 50% of matches to be eligible for the Championship Round.

Player-interviews

All clubs are required to provide one DIV 1 player for post-match interviews after each match.

Score sheets

It is the responsibility of the coaches from each team to report to the scoring table post-match. Each coach must check the score sheet after their match has finished.

Providing volunteers

Teams must provide one volunteer to assist with scoring and filming each round. This will rotate between teams each round. If a team is unable to provide a volunteer, they will be deducted 1 goal from the competition match.

Uniforms

Players shall wear their team colours during play, i.e. team tops or penalty points will be deducted from team total goals at the end of each match, 1 per player. Referees will indicate on team sheets, any incorrect uniform. If a match ends 0 - 0, the deduction will still apply to the goal difference.

Each team must provide a description of their playing kits for the 2020/21 season to avoid any clashes throughout the season.

Integrity, Equipment & Safety Overview

Playing equipment

Prior to the start of the season, each player's equipment will be assessed. Players will be ineligible to compete if their equipment is not legal and teams will be forced to forfeit if they do not have enough players with legal equipment. This will be judged and enforced by the Technical Director, following the standards set out by the FIPFA/APFA and the IWAS/APCHA guidelines.

Seat Belts & Harnesses

Seat belts **MUST** be worn during play for safety reasons and **MUST BE** clicked into place. Players that require harnesses **MUST** also have these strapped and clicked in properly. Referees will perform checks on this prior to each match. Any player not wearing a seat belt, or a required harness is ineligible to compete until they are attached and clicked into place.

Arm rests, foot plates and trays

A powerchair with arm rests are to be set down in place and footplates shall be used during play in all sports, for safety and standardisation reasons. Only standard parts can be used for repairs. All protruding, non-essential items must be removed from wheelchair for the duration of the game e.g. bags, flags, etc.

Foot guards are not compulsory to be worn in Powerchair Hockey but are strongly recommended. These guards must not be of a size or design that could be potentially dangerous to other athletes.

Hand trays may be used but must be of a safe nature, i.e. rubber/foam covering on the rounded edges. If trays are deemed to be unsafe by officials they will have to be removed.

Batteries

Powerchairs can be charged before and after each match but not during. No battery changes (replacing whole batteries) shall occur during the playing time of any competition matches.

Playing Courts

The technical director will perform checks on the playing courts prior to each round to make sure they are safe to play on (e.g. slippery, rough areas). Depending on location of the matches, court markings may vary in colour but the primary objective is that players and referees should be able to clearly distinguish the lines belonging to each sport.

A reserved area for officials and players during play will apply to all sports. If venue is unable to cater for this arrangement then the PSV committee must clearly designate individual team areas, prior to each round.

Interchange Area

Substitutes shall remain in their team's interchange area during play.

Coaches shall remain in their team's interchange area during play.

Speed testing

A maximum speed limit of 10km/hour shall apply to powerchairs in Powerchair Football and 15km/hour in Powerchair Hockey. If chair speed of the tested player exceeds the limit during a match, the match the team is playing in will be forfeited. The speed limit is the speed tested with the occupant in the wheelchair.

Random testing may be carried out by referees before, during or after every game during competition. Speed Tests to be conducted in a manner that requires the wheelchair to be tested with the player driving in forward and in reverse. A speed test device is to be used to test the speed of all chairs used in competition. If this is not available, the distance/time speed testing method is to be used.

Penalties for speed test violations are as follow:

- a) If a player fails the speed test during the match then the team that the player is competing for will be stripped of any points accrued for the game in which the speed test violation occurred.
- b) Any player failing a speed test is automatically ineligible to receive any Best and Fairest Award votes for the round.
- c) If a speed test is failed before a match, the player can redo the speed test. If a player fails the speed test for a second time, they will receive a red card and be ineligible for the match.
- d) If a player fails a speed test after a match then the team that the player is competing for will be stripped of any points accrued for the game. The player will also receive a suspension for the following round.

Formula:

(Distance travelled in metres) / (Time in seconds) x 3.6

An electric wheelchair is deemed to be travelling at 10 km/hr when the wheelchair is driven by the occupant over a distance of 12.5 metres in a period of 4.5 seconds.

Method:

The start line (**Point A**) will be the base line of a basketball court. The timer will start when the driver of the wheelchair crosses the free throw line (**Point B**) of the same basketball court. The finishing line (**Point C**) will be set at 12.5 metres beyond the free throw line. When the driver of the wheelchair crosses **Point C**, the time will stop. The player being speed tested will be asked to do the test three (**3**) times and the average time set after the three (**3**) attempts will be the registered time.

Results:

If a wheelchair travels the 12.5 metres on three occasions, with an average time of significantly less than 4.5 secs, i.e. 4.4 (10.2 km/hr) will be deemed to be travelling in excess of 10 km/hr. If the average time is equal to or greater than 4.5 secs, then the wheelchair will be deemed to be travelling at 10 km/hr or less and is therefore legal.

If a player is believed to not be pushing their joystick to its full extent or deliberately slowing down their wheelchair will be asked to repeat the test from scratch. If the player continues to deliberately slow down their wheelchair, they will be deemed to have failed the speed test.

Requirements:

- Technical Director to supervise, time and record speed tests.
- A representative from the team whose player is being speed tested.
- 1 spreadsheet in which pre-competition and competition speed testing records are to be written.
- 1 professional stop-watch.
- The player who is being speed tested will be asked to demonstrate the extent to which they can push their joy-stick forward.
- Powerchairs should be fully charged before full speed testing.

Pre-competition (before round 1) testing:

Pre-competition testing is voluntary but is recommended to all players who may be concerned about the speed of their powerchair, for the purpose of competing in Victorian Powerchair League.

It is optional at this point for athletes to submit to pre-competition testing.

Players who are concerned about their speeds can ask for their pre-competition testing to be recorded by the Technical Director. Players can independently check their speed at any time.

Penalty Card

The umpire shall carry a yellow card and a red card during all matches.

YELLOW CARD

Where a player offends persistently against the rules, or commits an infringement in such a way that a free hit or penalty is less than sufficient warning, the referee may officially warn the player by showing a yellow card.

Should a player offend against the rules in such a manner that a second official warning is deemed to be required, the offending player shall be shown a red card.

RED CARD

A player who commits an offence involving deliberate violence to another player or an official, or who deliberately interferes with another players wheelchair may be shown a red card in the first instance.

A player who has been shown a red card must leave the field, including interchange area and may not be replaced.

Any player who is shown a red card during a match will be ineligible to receive any best and fairest awards from the officiating state body.

Procedure for showing cards

Only the central referee may show either yellow or red cards to players, though the referee may seek advice from linesperson/s.

When showing either card, the umpire shall hold the card aloft, inform the player of the infringement, and in the case of a red card, inform the official scorer of the suspension.

A player suspended from play shall report to the official score table area.

Decisions of the referee

The decisions of the referee regarding the facts connected with play are final.

The referee may only change a decision on realising it is incorrect or, at his/her discretion, on the advice of lines person, provided that they have not restarted play.

Judiciary Panel

If a player is sent off during a match by receiving two yellow cards, they will automatically serve a one game suspension during the following round. If a player receives a straight red card, a minimum of one game suspension will be served, with further sanctions to be decided, if necessary, by the judiciary panel. Clubs have 3 days from the sending off to put together an appeal to the panel.

One independent person not involved with the PSV committee is to be chosen by both teams.

One representative from each team is to be on the judiciary panel.

Each competing team is required to appoint a person to be part of the judiciary panel at each round.

The role of panel members is to be available to assist with the resolution of a judiciary hearing or to support a player from their own team who has been ordered to appear before the judiciary.

Illness policy

Our members are particularly vulnerable to illnesses such as COVID-19 and the common cold and flu, so we ask MEMBERS not to attend powerchair sports events when they are unwell. If you are visibly unwell, a PSV committee member may ask you to leave the venue.

Code of Conduct

All members are reminded that they are required to read and follow the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct will be followed much more stringently through the 2020/21 season. All athletes, coaches and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. All forms of abuse be they verbal or physical will not be tolerated. Offending persons may be asked to leave the venue. Please refer to the Code of Conduct document found on the Powerchair Sports Victoria website for more information.

Feedback

The PSV Committee is always willing to take feedback on board. Please feel free to approach any PSV committee member with any questions or feedback.

Awards

Umpire Award

(Combined across both sports)

Each player will nominate points (3, 2, 1) to referees after the end of the regular season. The referee with the most points for each sport will be awarded for their skill in umpiring each sport.

Rookie Award

(Combined across both sports)

The player who is deemed to be the most outstanding in the season of all other first year players in a particular year will receive the Rookie of the Year Award. The recipient is to be selected by the State Coach.

Andrew Brandreth & Sam Morgan Award

Most Valuable Player (Each sport)

Each team will be given 6 voting sheets with their team printed on it after each round (1 per player). Each player will vote for the player they think was the best player for that sport but cannot vote for a member of their own team. The completed voting forms are to be handed to the Technical Director. The player(s) who receives the most votes will receive the Players Player Award for that season.

Top Goal Scorer Award

Seasonal award given to the player with the most goals in their respective sport.

Scorekeepers will record each goal scored each match. A leaderboard will be kept public and the player(s) with the most goals at the end of the season will be awarded the Top Goal Scorer award.

Most Assists Award

Seasonal award given to the player with the most assists in their respective sport.

Scorekeepers will record each assist that directly results in a goal each match. A leader board will be kept public and the player(s) with the most assists at the end of the regular season will be awarded the Most Assists award.

Goalie of the Season Award

Seasonal award given to the player who is deemed the best goalkeeper in their respective sport.

The award will be voted on by the players at the end of the season.

Coach of the Season Award

Seasonal award given to the coach who is deemed to have contributed most to their club for the season.

The award will be voted on by the PSV committee at the end of the season.

Community Award

The award goes to an individual who throughout their sport has positively impacted his or her community, culture or society.

The award will be an open public vote by PSV members and supporters at the end of the season.

Volunteer of the Season Award

A volunteer who has demonstrated significant contribution or commitment in helping at a member club, team, special event, or program.

The award will be voted on by the PSV committee at the end of the season.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Award that acknowledges the length and breadth of an individual's contribution to Powerchair Sports Victoria.

Award shall be chosen by the PSV committee and with a maximum of two recipients per year.