

Wheelchair Rugby

Values: Respect for sporting achievement
Activity: Practicing Wheelchair Rugby skills

GENERAL GOAL

Students gain respect for the performance of athletes with a movement impairment.

SPECIFIC GOALS

- To gain understanding of the specific needs based persons with a movement limitation.
- To experience a Paralympic Sport for athletes with a disability in four limbs (tetra/quadruplegia).
- To experience specific Wheelchair Rugby skills using simulated limitations.
- To gain respect for the sporting abilities of Wheelchair Rugby players.
- To learn about the rules of Wheelchair Rugby.

ENVIRONMENT

Indoor sports hall or outdoor area.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

- Wheelchairs.
- Hula-hoops, volleyballs.
- Tape, bands (to secure the students into the wheelchairs).

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITY

Session leader, assistants and athletes (if available).

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

- Wheelchair propulsion techniques (see Activity 16: Equipment).
- Seminar on disability awareness.

STARTING THE ACTIVITY

The session leader gives a brief introduction of Wheelchair Rugby and explains what tetra/quadruplegia is. After the explanation, the session leader assigns one wheelchair per student, tapes their four fingers together (see the instructions on page 2) and uses waistbands to secure the student's trunk to the chair. In doing this, you are limiting their range of mobility. The session leader then groups the students in pairs. Hula-hoops are placed around the area, with one volleyball lying in each hoop.





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RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

Hoola Hoops

One group member sits by the hula-hoop. On the session leader's signal, players move around the sports hall, picking up volleyballs one at a time from another hoop and place it in their own hoop. The ball should be carried properly; placed on the lap. Students are allowed to "guard" the volleyball(s) in their hoop. The first team to get three volleyballs in their hoop yells "Rugby" and the game is over. This activity can be repeated several times.

Pass And Catch Rugby

One student sits by the hoop and stays there. That student is the receiver. The other partner is the thrower, who pushes the wheelchair through the sports hall to pick up the volleyball. The ball is then passed to the receiver. If the ball is caught by the receiver, the group keeps the ball in their hoop. If the ball is not caught, the thrower must place the volleyball back in the hula hoop they took it from. The first team to get three to four volleyballs in their hoop yell "Rugby" and the game is over. The session leader can repeat several times and partners switch roles.

Wheelchair Rugby Game

Students are divided into equal teams of five players per team. The session leader describes the basic rules. The purpose of the game is for players to score goals by touching or crossing the opponent's goal line while maintaining possession of the ball. Using the volleyball, players carry, dribble or pass the ball while moving toward the opponent's goal area. The player in possession of the ball must dribble or pass at least once every ten seconds. A goal is scored when a player in control of the ball touches the goal line with two wheels. The team with the greatest number of points upon completion of the game is declared the winner.

how to limit the mobility range?

- attach the student's upper body to the back of the wheelchair.
- tape the four fingers together in wrist-position but keep the thumb free (see photos below).



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GUIDELINES FOR ADAPTATION TO YOUNGER PARTICIPANTS

- Use various sized balls (size, weight, texture, colours).
- Use modified rules during actual game play (e.g., eliminate time rule limit).
- Do not tape the student's hands or tape only one hand.

GUIDELINES FOR ADAPTATION TO OLDER PARTICIPANTS

- Allow more time for regulation (modified) Wheelchair Rugby game.
- Create a small tournament which exhibits a realistic Wheelchair Rugby game.

REFLECTION

In order to reach the desired goals of this activity, it is extremely important that in the reflection process, the session leader emphasizes the challenges of the activity. Through a group discussion, the session leader directs the conversation towards the realization that only through precision and skill can persons with tetra/quadruplegia practice a challenging sport like Wheelchair Rugby.

Sample Questions

- How did you feel playing Wheelchair Rugby? What was most difficult?
- How would you describe Wheelchair Rugby?
- What skills and abilities must one gain to become an elite Wheelchair Rugby player?
- What difficulties might these players face in daily life? How might they overcome those difficulties?

bart's story

The majority of people today are unaware of the time and effort a person with tetra/quadruplegia must devote to their daily morning routine.

Bart is a sixteen year old boy who attends a mainstream school daily and is an active Wheelchair Rugby player. After a diving accident at the age of 12, Bart acquired quadriplegia.

Over lunch one day, Bart and his classmates had a discussion about what time they set their alarms to get up that morning. With the exception of Bart, all his classmates set their alarm for approximately 8:00 which would insure they are on time for school at 9:00.

For Bart, the above is completely different. This is what it takes for him to be at school on time:

The night before: Bart lays out his clothes, gathers his backpack, and he asks his mother to help him prepare his medication for the morning.

6:30: Bart wakes up, begins his 20 minute stretching routine, which helps reduce involuntary spasms and also increases his range of motion for activities of daily living such as transfers from his bed to his wheelchair.

6:50: Bart transfers to his wheelchair after his stretching routine is completed. He spends approximately 25 minutes on the toilet. He devotes extra care to his bowel and bladder routine which his doctor has prescribed.

7:20: Bart then takes a shower which may last up to 30 minutes.

7:50: Breakfast

8:20: After this time-consuming routine, Bart is now ready to push his wheelchair to the bus stop which is about 500m from his front door, and catch the bus at 8:40. Because Bart uses a manual wheelchair, taking the bus saves him a considerable amount of time and energy which would otherwise be wasted by walking to school with his friends.

Did you know...?

In 2005, a film called 'Murderball' was shown around the world, telling the story of the US Wheelchair Rugby team on their way to the ATHENS 2004 Paralympic Games. In 2006, the film was nominated for an Oscar!



The official rules of Wheelchair Rugby can be found at www.iwrf.com.

LINKS

Website: www.paralympic.org/release/Summer_Sports/Wheelchair_Rugby
PSD Manual: Section Two, Chapter 8

