



LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO CLASSIFICATION

Swimming is the only sport that combines the conditions of limb loss, cerebral palsy (coordination and movement restrictions), spinal cord injury (weakness or paralysis involving any combination of the limbs) and other disabilities, such as Dwarfism; major joint restriction condition across classes.

- **Classes S1-S10 – are allocated to swimmers with a physical impairment**
- **Classes S11-S13 – are allocated to swimmers with a visual impairment**
- **Class S14 – is allocated to swimmers with an intellectual impairment**
- **Class S15 – is allocated to swimmers with a hearing impairment**
- **The Prefix S to the Class denotes the class for Freestyle, Backstroke and Butterfly**
- **The Prefix SB to the class denotes the class for Breaststroke**
- **The Prefix SM to the class denotes the class for Individual Medley**

The range is from the swimmers with a more severe impairment (S1, SB1, SM1) to those with the impairment (S10, SB9, SM10)

In any one class some swimmers may start with a dive or in the water depending on their impairment. This is factored in when classifying an athlete.

The following examples are only a guide - some conditions not mentioned here may also fit the following classes

THE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (FCS)

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS

S1, SB1, SM1

Swimmers in this class would usually be wheelchair users and may have a higher dependency for their every day needs.

Examples: Swimmers with very severe coordination problems in all four limbs or have no use of their legs, trunk, hands and minimal use of their shoulders only. Swimmers in this class usually only swim on their back.

S2, SB1, SM2

Examples: The athlete able to use their arms with no use of their hands, legs or trunk or have severe co-ordination problems in all four limbs.

S3, SB2, SM3

Examples: Swimmers with reasonable arm strokes but no use of their legs or trunk; swimmers with severe coordination problems in all four limbs and swimmers with severe limb loss to all four limbs.

S4, SB3, SM4

Examples: Swimmers who use their arms and have minimal weakness in their hands but have no use of their trunk or legs; swimmers with coordination problems affecting all four limbs but predominantly in the legs; swimmers with limb loss to three limbs.

S5, SB4, SM5

Examples: Swimmers with full use of their arms and hands but no trunk or leg muscles; swimmers with moderate coordination problems.

S6, SB5, SM6

Examples: Swimmers with full use of their arms and hands with some trunk control but no useful leg muscles; swimmers with coordination problems (usually these swimmers walk); swimmers with major limb loss of two limbs; achondroplasia (dwarfism < 130cm for women and 137cm for men)

S7, SB6, SM7

Examples: Swimmers with full use of their arms and trunk with some leg function; coordination or weakness problems on the same side of the body; major limb loss of two limbs.

S8, SB7, SM8

Examples: Swimmers with full use of their arms and trunk with some leg function; limb loss of two limbs; swimmers with the use of one arm.

S9, SB8, SM9

Unless there is an underlying medical condition usually all of these swimmers will start out of the water. Examples: Swimmers with severe weakness in one leg only; swimmers with very slight coordination problems; swimmers with one limb loss.

S10, SB9, SM10

Examples: Swimmers with very minimal weakness affecting the legs; swimmers with restriction of hip joint movement; swimmers with both feet deformed; swimmers with minor limb loss of part of a limb.

VISUALLY IMPAIRED CLASSES

S11, SB11, SM11

These swimmers are unable to see at all and are considered totally blind. They must wear blackened goggles if they swim in this class. They will also require someone to tap them when they are approaching a wall for turning and finishing.

S12, SB12, SM12

These swimmers can recognise the shape of a hand and have some ability to see. There is a large range of vision ability within this class.

S13, SB13, SM13

Swimmers who are the most sighted but are legally considered to be blind.

INTELLECTUALLY IMPAIRED

S14, SB14, SM14

Swimmers who have a recognised intellectual impairment according to international standards as recognised by the World Health Organisation i.e. IQ testing of 75 and below.

HEARING IMPAIRED

S15, SB15, SM15

Swimmers who have a recognised hearing impairment according to international standards i.e. minimum hearing loss of 55db, averaged over 500/100/2000 hertz in the better ear.