BlazeSports
Wheelchair Rugby
Manual

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Introduction

This manual is an updated and expanded version of the 1994 edition of the United States Quad Rugby Association (USQRA). We would like to thank the writers and editors of the first manual for their many hours of time developing a solid base for expansion ten years later. Special thanks to Judy Pfiester, Pam Ewers Wimberley, Ed Suhr, Terry Vinyard, Reggie Richner, Steve Kaliszewski, Alan Seals, Dave Gould, Steve Truels, Terry Hanson, Angelo Nicosa and Brad Mikkelsen for their time and dedication developing the first manual.

Wheelchair Rugby is considered a rapidly developing sport, as it first emerged in the early 1970’s. This expanded version of the manual was a large project because of how game of Wheelchair Rugby has evolved over the past 10 years. The USQRA would like to thank BlazeSports Clubs of America for sponsoring this project and seeing it through to completion. Many of the top coaches in the United States have contributed their knowledge and expertise to the project. Acknowledgement and appreciation goes to Wendy Gumbert, Kevin Orr, Ed Suhr, Brad Mikkelsen and Terry Gumbert for sharing their years of experience and knowledge with us all. The editing and layout would not have happened with out Carol Mushett and John Bishop. Their patience and excitement definitely kept this project moving forward.

The purpose of this manual is to introduce you to this sport and to help you develop as coaches and athletes. We hope that it will shed some light on the unique skills and strategies of the game, and will help to improve your practice sessions and competitive performances. It is our goal that this manual will assist in promoting opportunities for athletes, enhance team performance and contribute to building the profile of Wheelchair Rugby as the most exciting sport in the world!

History
Quad Rugby, or Wheelchair Rugby as it is also called internationally, is a sport with roots going back to wheelchair basketball and ice hockey. This is not surprising since it was developed by three Canadians from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Ben Harnish, a professor of Architecture at Manitoba University and two wheelchair athletes, Duncan Campbell and Gerry Terwin. The sport, originally called Murderball because of the aggressive nature of the game, would eventually become the quadriplegic equivalent to wheelchair basketball.

In1979, the Murderball team from Winnipeg organized an exhibition game at a regional track and field meet at Southwest State University in Marshall, Minnesota. Later that same year Canada held their first National Championship. Two years later in 1981, Brad Mikkelsen, with the aid of the University of North Dakota’s Disabled Student Services, formed the first US Quad Rugby team, The North Dakota Wallbangers. When the game was brought to the United States the name was changed from Murderball to Quad Rugby to reflect the sport’s professionalism, legitimacy and to facilitate fund development and sponsorship.

The first Quad Rugby match in the US was between the North Dakota Wallbangers and the Minnesota Rolling Gophers. It was an exhibition game at the 1982 National Wheelchair Games, also held in Marshall, North Dakota. This same year, the University of North Dakota hosted the first International Quad Rugby Tournament with participating teams from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota and Minnesota.
In 1988, six teams; Minnesota, Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, Los Angeles and North Dakota met at the University of North Dakota for the first ever US National Championship. At this tournament the United States Quad Rugby Association was formed to help promote and regulate the sport in the USA.

In 1993, seven countries met at Stoke-Mandeville England for the World Wheelchair Games and formed the (IWRF) International Wheelchair Rugby Federation. The goals of the IWRF were to establish an international infrastructure for the sport, provide championship competition and to seek recognition from the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). After lengthy negotiations with the Atlanta Paralympic Organizing Committee (APOC) and the IPC, Wheelchair Rugby was added as an exhibition sport in the 1996 Summer Paralympic Games. Shortly thereafter, the United States captured the Gold medal over Canada, and New Zealand won the Bronze.

Following the 1996 Games success, Wheelchair Rugby was officially added to the Paralympic Program as a full medal event. In 2000, Wheelchair Rugby took Sydney by storm, as one of the most watched and most exciting competitions of the 2000 Summer Paralympic Games in Sydney. More than 10,000 fans watched the Gold Medal game between USA and Australia, and were treated to the closest international finish to date with the USA defeating Australia by just a point. New Zealand again received the Bronze medal, this time over Canada.

Today, Wheelchair Rugby is played in over 22 countries and is considered to be the fastest growing wheelchair team sport in the world. Here in the USA there are over 40 organized teams, however, USQRA would like to see that number grow; there are many more potential athletes out there that do not know about the sport. This manual is one more way to create more opportunities in Wheelchair Rugby the USA and worldwide.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPORT OF WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

THE SPORT

Competition is played by two (2) teams, each team consisting of four (4) players each.

All players use wheelchairs and are classified according to the USQRA or IWRF classification system. Currently athletes are classified on a point scale as: 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0 or 3.5 (refer to classification section for details). Higher classification numbers depict increased function.

Teams may not exceed a total of more than eight points on the court at one time. Quad Rugby is played on a regulation basketball court. Goals are located at each end of the court and designated by two cones. A key (restricted) area is marked as shown below. A penalty box is located on the side of the court opposite the scorer's table.
The sport consists of four (4) quarters of eight (8) minutes each. A white regulation volleyball with six (6) pounds of pressure is used. The ball is played with the hands or forearms or is carried on the lap.

**BASIC RULES:**

- The ball may be passed, thrown, batted, rolled, dribbled or carried in any direction subject to the restrictions defined in the rules.
- The offensive team has ten (10) seconds to inbound the ball.
- The offensive team has fifteen (15) seconds to get the ball into the front court.
- An offensive player in possession of the ball may hold or carry the ball for a maximum of ten (10) seconds at a time. S/he then must either:
  1. Bounce (dribble) the ball once or
  2. Pass the ball to a teammate.

- Offensive players are allowed in the key (restricted) area for only ten (10) seconds at a time.
- Only three (3) defensive players are allowed in the key (restricted) area at a time.
- The goal is scored when an offensive player in possession of the ball touches the goal line with any two (2) wheels of their wheelchair.

**PENALTIES:**

- Penalty for defensive fouls is one (1) minute in the penalty box.
- Penalty ends when the time (1 minute) expires or when an opponent scores.
- Penalty for offensive fouls is a loss of possession. Throw-in is awarded to opponents.

**Common Fouls are:**

1. Holding the ball for more than ten (10) seconds without a dribble.
2. Holding an opponent and/or their chair with the hands or arms.
3. Illegal contact or deliberate contact with opponent’s body such as slapping, hitting, elbowing, or excessive leaning on opponent.
4. Pushing a stationary player from a position they hold.
5. Spinning or making contact with an opponent causing his/her chair to abruptly change direction.
6. Inability of offensive team to inbound the ball within ten (10) seconds.
7. Inability of offensive team to advance the ball to the front court within fifteen (15) seconds.
8. Offensive player remaining in the key area for longer than ten consecutive seconds.
9. Four defensive players in the key at the same time.
10. Back court violation (when offense has possession of the ball in their front court and one of their players is the last person to touch the ball before it enters the backcourt and an offensive player is the first person to touch the ball in the backcourt.

11. Deliberate and/or advantageous chair contact during any stoppage in play.

A penalty goal is awarded to a team if, in the opinion of the official, a player in possession of the ball has a clear path to the goal line and is fouled, causing prevention of a goal. The one (1) minute time penalty is not served if the goal is awarded.

These rules are just the basics to get you started. It is highly recommended that coaches read the full complete rules for the game of Wheelchair Rugby. The United States Quad Rugby Association’s Rules may be downloaded from www.quadrugby.com.

Coaching Philosophy

Leadership occurs both on and off the court. The coach must present a self-confident, controlled demeanor on the court. This will allow them to make adjustments and recommendations that are purely objective as well as develop a good rapport with the athletes. It is the coach's responsibility to set a good example and always display the same self-discipline they expect from the athletes. Off the court, the team camaraderie should start between the players and extend to include the coach at appropriate times.

A coach must recognize his/her own attributes; leadership, discipline, foresight and determination are but a few. In addition, a coach must be able to communicate his/her ideas and be willing to teach others. Once a coach allows these qualities to evolve they can develop their own coaching style. Top coaches never stop learning. This could either be thru players, other coaches, and/or tapes. A good and effective coach is approachable and willing to try new ideas.

The coach should adopt a disciplined structure for practice. Being organized and prepared for practice demonstrates a coach’s expectations of the players’ attitudes and performance during practice. Having a format gives the players a sense of accomplishment as they see their skills improve each week. However this does not preclude having fun at the practice.

Winning consistently is no accident. Preparation for every game and practice is essential. Knowing your opponent is important, but not nearly as important as knowing the abilities of your own athletes. Players need feedback from the coach. A coach must remember to praise the athletes and offer constructive criticism. When delivered properly, these tools will convey a proper message while preserving the player’s self-esteem.

The coach’s determination and enthusiasm will foster team progress. The coach must ensure the involvement of support staff, stimulation of community interest and attain adequate sponsorship to keep the team moving in a positive direction. The determination to succeed must be a joint effort of the team. Everyone must strive to do their personal best.

A coach needs to always remember to enjoy their involvement. Wheelchair Rugby is a want to not a have to. The rewards are many; watching talent develop in new players, seeing the team “pull together” to fight hard for a victory, providing encouragement when the victory eludes them, feeling a great sense of
accomplishment when the hard work is reflected in their performance and finally, the feeling of success when each player's hard work allows them to attain the team goals as well as their personal goals

### Keys to being a successful coach

- keep winning in perspective
- develop a functional coaching philosophy
- communicate with and motivate athletes
- teach sport skills effectively
- develop a sound physical training program
- guide athletes to better nutrition
- reduce injuries by effectively managing risks
- manage equipment, facilities, schedules, and other team logistics
- lead by example
- be willing to make a sacrifice, ask no more of your team than you would of yourself

### Athlete Eligibility

Wheelchair Rugby was developed for athletes with quadriplegia (also called tetraplegia). To be eligible to play the sport of Wheelchair Rugby athletes must have a neurological diagnosis, which affects at least three limbs, or a non-neurological condition that affects all four limbs. Disability groups usually found on the rugby court include: quadriplegia secondary to spinal cord injuries C5-7, high level paraplegia with a brachial plexus injury, Guillian Barre Syndrome, Post Polio, Quad Amputees, Cerebral Palsy, and many more.

### Classification

BlazeSports uses the USQRA’s Classification System. In the sport of Wheelchair Rugby athletes are assigned a point value (class) under the guidelines set forth by the USQRA classification system. The point value assigned can be one of 7 classifications, .5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0 or 3.5. These classes are determined through manual muscle testing and function based on neuromuscular potential (by classifiers who are members of the USQRA classification committee). These classifiers are typically physical therapists; occupational therapists or medical doctors who are trained in manual muscle testing and have an understanding of the sport of Wheelchair Rugby. They are required to participate in a classification workshop to learn the classification process.

- The 0.5 athlete usually has proximal weakness and no triceps. Functionally they move their chair with elbows out and limited wheel contact.
- The 1.0 athlete has stronger muscles proximally; a more balanced shoulder and can have limited triceps function. The 1.0 player has longer wheel contact, with elbows closer to the athlete’s body.
- The 1.5 class was created to handle those players who fall between the 1.0 and 2.0 classes or those players with stronger but not normal triceps in both arms.
- The 2.0 athlete has more normal triceps function and more balanced wrist function. They have an effective chest pass.
- The 2.5 class was created to handle those players who fall between the 2.0 and 3.0 classes, or who possess limited hand function bilaterally.
- The 3.0 athlete has functional grasp and release and significant hand strength.
- The 3.5 class is the highest functioning class. These athletes can possess significant hand function and/or trunk function.
*Please note any class, except .5, may have trunk function, which is added to the arm function point value giving the athlete his/her final class. *Also note that classification is based on function, not athletic ability.

**Recruiting Athletes**

When recruiting athletes you need to look for eligible quadriplegic athletes (see Classification System). Each athlete must have impairment in his/her upper extremities. Wheelchair Rugby is a combination of physical skill and mental skill. Rules, strategy, plays, and sport psychological skills are involved in the game. Important qualities to look for include chair skills, hand-eye coordination, stamina, and a fierce competitive spirit. Analytical thinking, problem-solving, memory and impulse control are all important cognitive skills for successful play.

Athletes with previous sports experience definitely possess the court skills needed to execute a good defense and offense. The basic offensive and defensive strategies are very similar to other mainstream court sports (basketball, football, soccer, etc). Newly injured players and players who were not athletic prior to injury may take more time to develop these qualities. Athletes must be medically stable to play the sport and meet the minimal disability eligibility requirements as specified in that USQRA Classification System.

**Recruiting Coaches**

A good candidate for a coach is someone with a coaching or sports background, strong *sports mind*, a willingness to dedicate of time, and a commitment to and love for the game. This sport takes a lot of time, so coaches are usually found from within: family members, rehabilitation professionals, retired rugby athletes. Other candidates could be rugby enthusiasts, therapeutic recreation specialists, adapted PE teachers, and parks and recreation professionals.

**Successful coaches:**

- know how to communicate effectively with athletes
- understand the learning process and training principles
- understand and implement appropriate teaching methods
- understand the capabilities of players
- understand the disabilities of athletes and their contraindications
- advise athletes on equipment and equipment setup
- understand the causes and recognize the symptoms of over-training
- understand how to reduce the risk of injury to athletes
- prepare training programs to meet the needs of each athlete
- assist athletes in developing new skills
- use evaluation tests to monitor training progress and predicting performance
- advise athletes on their nutritional needs
- understand and know how to develop the athlete’s energy systems
- advise athletes in psychological skills training including relaxation, arousal regulation, visualization and imagery, and goal setting.
Goal Setting

Encourage athletes to enjoy their participation in Wheelchair Rugby. Each participant should be challenged to develop goals that motivate him or her to achieve their highest level of performance and their continued improvement in all aspects of the game.

Players need team and individual goals that are realistic. Goals must be attainable; therefore, each athlete must know their strengths and weaknesses. Since progress is fostered through success, athletes need to establish several short-term goals, rather than only one long-term goal. However, goals should be challenging enough to motivate them toward continued progress. Specific goals help players increase their enjoyment and improve their individual as well as their team’s performance.

The Facility

**Gymnasium:** A single court gymnasium is required; a double gym is helpful once the team numbers grow to over 16. The court needs to be fully accessible with a hard surface (hard wood is preferred). It is important to check the door widths for ease in getting the Rugby specific chairs inside the doors. Don’t forget to check the restroom for wheelchair accessibility. Never rule out a gymnasium at first glance. Often modifications can be made to accommodate the needs of Wheelchair Rugby players. Good contacts might be Parks and Recreation facilities, YMCA’s, Optimist Clubs, and local schools.

**Temperature Regulation:** Many Wheelchair Rugby athletes have dysfunction of the sympathetic nervous system that may have significant problems with regulation of the internal body temperature. Athletes may not sweat effectively or have adequate vasodilation. This can result in an ability to cool through sweating or warm through shivering. Medications can also cause increased vulnerability to heat. Therefore, the air temperature must be carefully regulated and athletes closely monitored to ensure safety. Water, ice, wet towels, and misters should be readily available for cooling and warm-ups/blankets for warmth.

Autonomic Dysreflexia is a syndrome that can occur when the spinal cord is higher than T6 and is characterized by marked elevation of blood pressure. Headache, decreased heart rate, goose pimples, shivering and flushing may result. This can be life-threatening and medical care should be sought immediately. Refer to the BlazeSport Medical Guide for more information.

**Equipment Storage:** A place for equipment storage is a perk. Wheelchair Rugby players do not transport equipment as independently as basketball players, so being able to store equipment at the practice site makes the job easier. The problem with community storage is often security. Equipment disappears or is not replaced the way it was found (flats, spokeguards, hand rims, pumps, tool boxes, etc.). **Suggestion:** Just leave chairs, but make sure they are labeled properly, store them with wheels in place and each wheel should be labeled. Do not leave spares, tools, balls, pumps, etc., as they are what tend to get borrowed and not returned in the same condition.

Equipment

**Rugby Specific Chair:** As the sport has continued to grow, the Wheelchair Rugby court chair has become sport-specific. The rules and regulations regarding the Wheelchair Rugby chair have been developed to ensure safety and equal play. Chairs are designed differently depending on the role and position of each athlete. **Low pointer chairs** are designed for blocking and picking, therefore the front ends are very long with lots of creative hooking devices. They usually sit low, and have a lot of camber. **Mid pointers chairs** are a cross between a blocking chair and an offensive chair. **A high pointers chair** is offensive; it usually has wings to push through the low pointer picks. The spoke guards are flush with the push rim.

**Chair Specifications:** The specifics can be found in the rules section, but they can also be found on the quadrugby.com web-site. Please note that the wheelchair specs are always changing and the major manufactures are usually up to date on the rules, but coaches should understand what is needed and what is allowed in the rules. Make sure to check the most current chair specifications before purchasing a
chair. Since Wheelchair Rugby is a contact sport, the equipment used must be durable and spare parts need to be readily available.

**Safety:** A functional fifth wheel is mandatory on all Wheelchair Rugby chairs. It is also no longer recommended to use everyday chairs, due to safety.

**Strapping:** Strapping should be mandatory. It not only improves the athlete’s performance, and balance, it is also a safety tool. The wheelchair is like a pair of athletic shoes, they are always secured to the legs/feet and fitted as to size. Well that concept is the same for wheelchair sports, especially Rugby. The chair is a part of the athlete’s body, secure. A waist strap, leg straps for both legs, and foot strap to secure your feet should always be used.

**Waist Strap:** The size of this and positioning is dependent upon the athlete’s trunk balance. It is best to have a strap around the hips and then if needed one at the abdomen. There might be a need to have a strap at the chest for more severely impaired athletes.

**Leg Straps:** For Wheelchair Rugby leg straps are used to secure the legs and also create a pocket for the ball to be held. This works best if a pocket is created between the thighs, using straps.

**Foot Straps:** It is very important for safety reason to keep the feet back as to not hit the toes. Securing heels so they don’t hit the ground or the casters is also beneficial for performance.

**Securing Straps:** If possible securing straps to the wheelchair is the best way to keep up with them and thus makes them easier to assemble.

**Safety:** All strap positions should be checked for skin integrity. Straps should not irritate the skin thus preventing pressure sores. Check for redness that does not go away.

**Taping:** Tape is used to secure the wrist. Tape is also used to protect the fingers and forearms from friction burns. Players, who choose not to wear gloves, may prefer to apply tape directly to their fingers and/or palms.

**Other Athlete Equipment:** Gloves (The most popular are: rugby green gloves, softball, football, and handball), reversible jersey, tape, extra tubes for wheels, spray bottle, spare parts and tools for specific chairs, at least one spare wheel per athlete (a minimum of 2 spares is recommended for high pointers).

**Team Equipment:** Classic rugby balls (recommend one per player), first aide kit, extra athletic tape, cones – lots (minimum 4), tool kit, spare tubes, spray bottles, whistles, station signs, pump, ball needles, presto valve adapters, and reversible jerseys.

**Equipment Maintenance**

Wheelchair Rugby is a high maintenance sport. Most importantly the staff will need to become familiar with using tools and will need to learn how to change a tire. There are many maintenance items associated with rugby chairs, most are very similar to the needs of an everyday chairs.

**Wheels:** Wheels are the most abused equipment item in this game. They will need to be regularly trued, spokes replaced, and spokeguards replaced. The best way to tend to truing and spoke replacement is a good local bike shop. The local bike expert may need to be educated a little to the differences of the wheelchair compared to bikes. Once they are familiar with the small differences, they will be ready to assist you whenever the need arises. When athletes begin playing on a regular basis, they will need to take their wheels about once a month for repair.

**Changing a Tire:** Changing a flat tire or damaged rim is very important to the success of the team and must be mastered by the staff. The staff will be asked to assist with changing tires at practice and competitions. It is very similar to changing a bike tire, so usually there is someone who can teach the staff. It is not hard to learn. Also the tires will need to be replaced once the tread is worn down.
Air: The air pressure in the tires can make a huge difference in their performance. Most beginners do not realize that they only have about 60 lbs. of air in their tires. For standard tires you want to put 110-120 PSI, for continental tires you want to put 120-140 PSI.

Casters: The casters need to be regularly maintained. The caster bolts get clogged with items from the floor (dirt, hair, etc.), these needs to be taken apart and cleaned about once a month. The bearings in the caster housings need to be replaced. This frequency is dependent upon how much time is spent in the chair. Someone using their chair 2-3 days a week should do this about every 3-4 months. These bearings are the same as are used in rollerblades and can be found at many sports stores. Additionally, the rollerblade wheels will wear down and need to be replaced.

Other moving parts: All moving parts on a chair need to be checked, tightened, and cleaned on a regular basis. This will prevent future maintenance problems with your chair.

Apparel

Athlete: Competition: Team uniforms should be either a t-shirt, uniform, or reversible jersey. Some athletes prefer to wear a t-shirt underneath their uniform. This is allowed, but it should be the same color as the uniform. They should either have on shorts or sweatpants that match the uniform top. No jeans, cut-offs, or dress pants should be worn. Athletic shoes are also required. For safety concerns the shoes should be closed-toe. No hats are allowed on the court.

Practice: It is always required that athletes wear athletic (closed-toe) shoes, athletic shorts or pants, and a shirt. It is beneficial for the coach to have each athlete wear a reversible jersey. This makes team identification easier.

Coach: Coaches should wear long shorts, warm-up pants, or slacks; athletic shoes; and a t-shirt or collared shirt promoting the team or sponsors. Coaches should adhere to relevant professional standards of dress. It is also very beneficial for a coach to have a whistle, and a small portable chalk/dry erase board.

Coach’s Safety Checklist

Coaches Training: Coaches should hold a current first aid and CPR certification.

Cellular/mobile phone: Coaches should always have immediate access to a telephone for use in emergencies. If a mobile/cellular phone is to be used, be sure to check reception/signal strength in advance of emergencies and to ensure the battery is fully charged.

Facility: Gym sites optimally should have wood flooring. Space within the site should allow for ample space between the goal line and walls or other permanent structures. This requirement is secondary to the speed of the game during the scoring process and the potential for injury is great when space at the end lines is limited. It is recommended that the wall behind the goal and or any other obstructions; doors, poles, etc be padded with gymnastic mats. The temperature of the facility needs to be carefully regulated as most athletes eligible for the sport have impairments of their temperature regulation systems. Air-conditioning and heat (in moderation) is necessary.

Athletes: Athletes must have access to ample water supplies that are cool but not cold (to prevent cramping). In addition, spray bottles and towels help to keep athletes from overheating. Overheating can be life threatening. Athletes, who require assistance transferring into and out of their rugby chairs should provide clear instructions to the individual assisting them, remember rugby chairs do not have wheel locks and there is potential for injury to you or your helper. A therapist could assist in providing transfer training to those who might need it. It is also best to use two persons in completing a 2-man transfer for those athletes who are dependent transfers. Other injuries which may occur as a result of the physical nature of the sport include; cuts, scraps, smashed fingers and head concussions. Please be aware that the athlete’s anti-tip/fifth wheel is in good working order to prevent athletes from tipping over backwards and striking their heads.
Developing a Season Plan

Having a season plan is very important. First, secure the competition schedule before the first practice starts. The season should be divided into pre-season, season heart, and peak season. Focus on being at your best by the peak season. The bulk of the year should be used to build your base.

Pre-season: Pre-season should focus a lot on conditioning and fundamental skills. No matter what level the athletes are, it is good to go back to the basics at the beginning of every season. This means, dribbling, basic passing, basic defense (1-on-1), ball pick-ups, and chair skills. Gradually add the game components to the basic fundamental skills until the athletes are eventually playing full-court. This means start with 1-on-1, then go to 2-on-1, then 2-on-2, and so on. Eventually they will be playing 4-on-4 full-court. It is best to break each part of the game down. This means inbounds, trapping, blocking, holding, press break, each area of a press, half-court, and so forth.

Season Heart: This is when the team can begin to truly focus on the game strategies, specialty plays (tip-offs, corner plays, power plays, penalty box plays, clock management, possession arrow, etc…) and specific offensive and defensive plays. This is also a time to begin focus on strategies to stop your specific opponents. Through all this time conditioning should still be a big part of practice as well as a visit to fundamentals. Conditioning and hard work should be continuing to build, building up to the final phase of the season.

Peak Season: This is when the final touches are put on offensive, defensive and specialty plays. During this phase a lot of focus is spent on the opponents and their weaknesses and how to take advantage of them. This is a short period where the athletes are able to perform at their best; this period does not last long. The team should reduce the quantity but increase the quality of practice during the week prior to the preferred peak performance (championships).

Teaching the Skills of the Sport

Teaching methods include:
- Verbal instructions
- Demonstration
- Video
- Diagrams

The three stages to learning a new skill are:
- Identification and development of the component parts of the skill
- Linking the component parts into a smooth action
- Developing the learned skill so that it becomes automatic

Planning a Training Session

Each training session should have a specific goal or component of the game on which to focus. It could be fundamentals, defense, specific defense, or specialty plays. It could be specific or a bit broader. Once the focus is chosen then plan the practice around the important components. Start with a warm-up. Conditioning may be done in the beginning, end or incorporated into the full practice. Start with a few warm-up drills usually passing and advance into more active drills then go into drills focusing on the game components. At the end of practice a controlled play time can be scheduled in focusing on what you have worked on all during practice. This should not be an open scrimmage. The athletes need to be in control and keep their focus on what they learned that day.
Example: Focus – Y and T defense
7:00 pm  Warm-up – 15-20 laps each direction and stretching
7:20 pm  Passing Drill – Lead Pass, Weave, Caterpillar
7:40 pm  One-on-one drill
7:55 pm  two-on-two (focus trapping)
8:10 pm  three-on-three
8:25 pm  Break (encourage restroom at this time)
8:35 pm  basic Y press (walk through, 70%, 100%)
8:50 pm  Controlled press full-court (use whistle to stop action and teach)
9:15 pm  basic T press (walk through, 70%, 100%)
9:30 pm  Controlled press full-court (use whistle to stop action and teach)
9:50 pm  Cool down / stretch and practice points to remember session

Example: Focus – Conditioning & Fundamentals
7:00 pm  Warm-up – 15-20 laps each direction and stretching
7:20 pm  Passing Drills – Pepper-pop, Star passing, Sweden
7:45 pm  Station Drills (Start easy at beginning of season and build on the time per station and the number of stations. So imagine this being mid-season) (8 stations at 4 minutes each, with one minute rest between – chose from the stations listed below or make up some of your own) (see glossary for description) Partner Reverse, Backwards rolls, ups/backs, tip drill, over / under, keep away, wall ball, slalom, u-turns, stop & start, medicine ball (b-ball), Ball handling, challenge pass, sprints, v-pass, partner scoops, and long pass/bump.
8:35 pm  Break
8:45 pm  half-court offensive plays
9:15 pm  controlled full-court half-court scrimmage (verbalizing plays, keep up with fundamental turnovers)
9:35 pm  Coopers Test
9:50 pm  Cool Down / Stretch and practice points to remember session

Warming up and stretching before and after practice/competition

Proper warm up followed by stretching is very important to prevent injury. Every athlete should spend 10-15 minutes pushing at a moderate speed prior to stretching. A cool down of 5 minutes followed by another stretching session allows for muscles to elongate as they cool down and will help in prevention of overuse injuries that are associated with the sport. See diagram attached of recommended stretches for Wheelchair Rugby athletes.

Skill Assessment Test (Adapted from US Paralympics Rugby)

USA Rugby’s High Performance Training Program includes a skill assessment test that is used to evaluate the fundamental skills (passing, sprint speed, agility, endurance, and quickness) of wheelchair rugby athletes. The test is best done at the beginning of the season, mid-way through and when the athlete is at peak form.
**Scoring:** Each athlete is given three trials for each skill and all three scores are averaged together, giving each athlete one score per skill.

**Passing Skill Test**

![Diagram of Scoring Grid]

**Dimensions:** Rectangle 24" wide X 18" high, Center Square 6" X 6", Outside Diamond to intersect with rectangle.

Directions: Athletes will throw the ball at a target from three different positions (left, straight, and right). Low pointers (.5-1.5) will throw or bump from 10 and 15 feet. High pointers (2.0-3.5) will throw or bump from 15 and 20 feet. The right and left passes will be six feet from center; athletes will be expected to throw or bump the ball with the hand on that respective side. Each athlete will get 5 passes from each of the spots and score according to the location on the target in which they hit. The center square will score 3 points; the rectangle will score 2 points, and in the diamond will score one point. When the ball hits a line the inside score is recorded. Missing the target altogether will score 0 points.

**Sprints**

Directions: Athletes will sprint from a stationary position through 20 meters. Athletes will start from a stationary position on the mark on the baseline. The coach will ask the athlete when they are ready. The athlete when acknowledged by the coach can begin their sprint. Upon initial movement the coach will start the stopwatch. When the front casters cross the 20-meter line the coach will stop the watch. Three trials will be attempted for each athlete.

**Endurance Sprint**

Directions: Athletes will sprint from a stationary position starting at the half-court line and pass around the rugby cones all the way to the baseline then reverse direction finishing where they started. Three trials will be attempted for each athlete going clockwise direction and 3 trials in a counter-clockwise direction.

**Up and Backs**

Directions: Athletes will start from a stationary position from the baseline to 7 lines measuring 36 inches apart with the first line 40 inches from the start. The athlete will pass two wheels over each line and then reverse direction back to the baseline each time. After completing the final line at the baseline the time will stop.
**Slalom**

Directions: Athletes will start from a stationary position from the baseline on the left side of the cones. The athlete will weave through 7 cones measured 48" apart. Trials will be with and without a ball. Trials for each will start from both the right and the left side. For each cone hit one second will be added to the time. When in possession of the ball the ten second rule applies. If a violation occurs 5 seconds will be added to the time.

![Slalom Diagram]

**FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS**

**Chair Mobility**

General pushing techniques will vary according to each player's level of function. To propel forward, the player should push from about 12 o'clock to 5 o'clock on the pushrim. They should maintain contact with the pushrims whenever possible. Players with trunk and back function should use these muscles to fully maximize their push. Not all players will use the pushrim to make contact, some use the tire and others use the spokes. When pushing a chair, you should not grip the wheel on each push, only when desiring a change of direction, decreased speed, or to stop. It should be a power push/hit on the pushrim.

**Class 0.5 and 1.0**

Wheelchair propulsion for players classified as 0.5 or 1.0 is generally most successful by pushing with the heel of the hand on the rim/wheel, attempting to maximize shoulder muscles and compensate for lack of triceps. This push often looks awkward since the shoulders roll forward, forcing the elbows out. These players attempt to stop by forcing their forearms and wrists below the push rim. Players are encouraged to tape their wrists and forearms to protect their skin.

Sometimes players use their thumbs (excessive tape is used for protection) in the spokes to get started and to turn. After propulsion, some of these athletes go to a backhand push. They use the back of their hand with their wrist twisted in to make contact on the push rim to get the power push. This is adapted from a track technique for low pointers.

Low point players turn their wheelchair by placing their forearm/wrist below the rim (at neutral position - 12 o'clock) on the side in which they desire to travel, while at the same time pushing the opposite wheel forward.

Reverse propulsion for the 0.5 player is accomplished in one of two ways:

1) When the forearm/wrist are placed against the push rims and pulled backwards
2) By placing the heel of each hand directly on the tire near the back post of the wheelchair, then rolling the tire backwards while leaning the upper part of the body forward.

**Type of pushrim and spokeguard**: The preferred pushrim is “Red Rims.” These rims are hard to find. Information may be found at www.quadrugby.com for sources. The easily obtainable rim is black plastic coated.
Athletes that use enough tape and sticky substance are able to use very worked in anodized pushrims. Hint: When taping the wrist and forearms, reverse the tape for additional tackiness. You will have to replace a layer usually around half time of a game.

**Class 1.5 – 3.5**
The forward pushing technique for players classified as 1.0 to 2.5 is performed by placing the heel of the hand on the tire and/or handrim and utilizing as much of the 1 to 5 o’clock push as possible. These players’ elbows usually remain closer to the body, since they have functioning triceps.

Stopping and turning by these players is usually accomplished by hooking and gripping the fingers under the handrim, however it is very common for the higher function athletes to have spokeguards that connect to the pushrim, allowing no room between pushrim and spokeguard. They then accomplish turning and stopping by applying pressure / friction to the spokeguards by squeezing inward.

**Players with Trunk Balance:** Players with trunk control may also use their trunk function by shifting their weight to assist in accelerated turning and stopping.

**Turning the Chair:** Players should attempt to turn in the smallest space possible. Therefore, they should first eye the turning point (goal line, sideline, half-court, etc), then lean or dip the shoulder in the direction they wish to turn the wheelchair. As the turn is being executed, the player should change the area of focus from the turning point back to the open court.

**Types of Pushrim and Spokeguards:** It is most important to use wheels and spokeguards that the athlete can manage. If the athlete can get enough grip from an anodized pushrim this will add the least amount of weight to the chair. Your wheelchair manufacturer can inform you of the different options for wheels. Spokeguards have gone to being a solid piece of plastic or metal connected to the pushrim or placed with no space between the two. This is to prevent any chance of getting hooked on the pushrim by a low pointer. There are spokeguards that can be purchased which offer adequate finger space.

**Ball Handling**

**Dribbling:** In Wheelchair Rugby, dribbling is accomplished by a single bounce. The type of dribble executed is usually determined by the player’s functional ability as well as the game situation.

**Fundamentals of the dribble:** The ball should be bounced between the front caster and the rear wheel. There is usually a bit more floor space in this area. Be cautious of bouncing directly over the wheel as most rookies bounce the ball off the base of the cambered wheels. Do not bounce the ball too hard - just enough to get your hand back under it about waist level and pull it back into your possession. The quicker and more diverse (right & left hand) your dribbling the more effective you are as a player. Learn to dribble without having to watch the ball.

The three basic types of dribbling are the:

1) one-handed dribble
2) two-handed dribble
3) front dribble.

**One-handed dribble:** This skill is achieved by removing the ball from the lap, bouncing it on the court, retrieving the ball, then returning it to the lap. This method is usually attempted with the dominant hand; however, players who have the functional ability should develop the one-handed dribble with each hand.

**Two-handed dribble:** This dribble is similar to the one-handed dribble described above except both hands are used. Lower functioning players are encouraged to use the two-handed dribble for better ball control.

**Front dribble:** The front dribble is accomplished when a player leans over their legs and bounces the ball in front of the footrest. This only works for players with short front-ends. There are times when the
front is the only safe area to dribble. Tossing the ball out in front away from your chair (the air dribble) is not recommended. The high contact nature of the game creates a need for the ball to never leave your immediate team control. By throwing the ball out in front, the player gives his/her opponents the opportunity to gain possession.

*Remember:* Each player should develop their dribbling skills even if they rarely handle the ball. This diversity will allow the team alternatives to standard play.

**Dribbling Do's:**
The ball-handler should:

1. Vary the timing and placement while in the proximity the defensive player. As a general rule, the wheelchair should be used to shield the ball from defensive players. Hence, the ball should be dribbled on the side opposite the defender.
2. Always be aware of their wheel base when bouncing the ball to prevent the ball from rebounding off of the base of a chair.
3. Try to time the dribble prior to the development of the play to maximize time (a full ten seconds) to execute the play.
4. Keep their head up to ensure visual awareness of the court and all players.
5. Become proficient at dribbling on both sides of the chair.
6. Know and "feel" a ten second count. Even on the break away, a dribble might be necessary prior to crossing the goal line.
7. Practice, practice, practice

**Ball Pickup:** It is important to be able to retrieve the ball from the floor while maintaining forward momentum. All players should develop this skill on both right and left sides.

This can be accomplished by:

1) Aligning the ball with the front caster,
2) Leaning towards the ball (if necessary, hold onto the opposite side of the chair for balance)
3) Trap the ball against the push rim at the floor.
4) Allow the wheel's motion to bring the ball around to the top of the wheel.
5) Pull the ball over the top of the rim into your lap.

**Passing and Catching**

Prior to rugby, many quadriplegics attempted to play basketball; however, the weight, size and texture of the basketball made it difficult (if not impossible) to participate effectively. Therefore, the idea of using the volleyball was introduced specifically to address the upper extremity weakness quadriplegics possess. The lighter weight and smaller circumference allowed these athletes the opportunities for higher success with passing and catching.

There are many types of passes. The type of pass varies with individual preference and physical ability. There are, however, a few basic concepts to keep in mind while developing passing skills.

It is very important for a ball-handler to know their intended receiver’s abilities. As previously discussed, there is a wide range of abilities among players. When throwing to a class 0.5 or 1.0 player, the ideal pass is a soft, accurate lob into their lap. Players classified as 2.0-3.0 can receive a pass which is thrown harder and from a longer distance since they usually have the ability to reach for a pass. Since the 3.5 player posses more trunk control, they can usually catch more difficult passes.

**Executing a Pass:**
The intended receiver must be aware of the pass. With so much activity on the court, the ball-handler must communicate to any potential receiver to ensure a well executed pass. This is usually done with eye contact, a nod, or voice command. It is important to evaluate the potential success of the pass by reviewing the entire court situation. The ball-handler must consider his/her own ability, the ability of the
receiver, and the length of the pass. Remember, the farther the pass must travel, the longer it takes to reach its destination, thus giving the defender more time to interfere.

**Catching Zone:**
The optimal catching zone is the area between the lap and shoulders and the width of the body (i.e. at the numbers).

**The Receiver:**
The receiver should establish good body position by facing the ball-handler with their own chair and body. If the receiver cannot see the ball-handler his/her chance of seeing or catching the ball is reduced. The receiver can give the ball-handler a target by placing their hand(s) in a receiving position. The receiver should alert the ball-handler when they feel ready to receive a pass. Many times the ball-carrier is so focused on their position that they are unable to see all the opportunities on the court.

**Receiving a Bad Pass:**
If the ball is passed outside the target area, the receiver can adjust by moving their chair or reaching with their hand(s). If the ball is out of the receiver’s reach, they may be able to deflect the ball off their hand(s) or forearm(s) into their body. If the ball is thrown too low where it will hit the frame of the chair or the wheel, the receiver can use their hand to deflect the ball and bounce it off the floor. Then the ball can be bounced until it has enough height to be pulled into the lap.

**Different passes are described below:**

- **Flip Pass:** Holding the ball with one or both hands (on side and slightly under the ball) the ball handler uses their biceps to flip the ball in the desired direction. Most effective when thrown sideways.
- **Chest Pass:** With one hand on each side of the ball, throw the ball from chest level.
- **Bounce Pass:** Throw the ball so that it bounces two thirds of the total distance to the receiver.
- **Lob Pass:** Throw the ball in a high arc to avoid being blocked by another player.
- **Baseball Pass:** With the ball balanced in one hand pass it from behind the ear at shoulder level by rotating the arm forward and following through. Especially effective when attempting to throw the ball a long distance down court.
- **Lead Pass:** Ball thrown ahead of the receiver so they can maintain their momentum as they push under the ball and approach the goal.
- **Push Pass:** Balance the ball in one hand, then put the ball as in a shot putting motion.
- **Two handed overhead Pass:** Two handed pass thrown from just over the head (be careful not to extend the ball behind your head).
- **Bump:** Bounce the ball on the floor at the side of the chair or hold in the palm of the hand, then hit the ball in an upward motion with the heel of the hand or fist.

**Picking, Blocking, Screening**
Picking blocking and screening are integral parts of the game. Players must know the intent of their picks or blocks. The purpose of these maneuvers is to create an advantage for the team. The intention may be to pick and hold a more functional opponent to give the team a point advantage in an area of the court. Another reason may be to keep a defensive player out of position. It may also be advantageous to release a pick or block at will so the offensive player is at liberty to receive a pass, move into a scoring position or move to set a another pick. If this is the intention when setting the pick, care must be taken to prevent the defensive player from locking up the offensive player.

When setting a pick, remember that the initial point of contact must be ahead of the rear axle to prevent spinning the opponent and drawing a foul.

**Blocking:** If possible, it is best for the blocker to maneuver their chair in front of the opponent’s front end. This will stop the forward motion of the chair and cause the athlete to change direction or alter their desired path. For high point players with the very small front end chair, this fundamental is very
important, due to the inability to stop or change someone’s direction by trying to catch the side of the chair. It is very important to use the angles of the court when chasing someone down. Use the goal pylons as your target of when you are forcing the athlete.

**Holding a pick:** The tactic of holding a pick varies greatly due to the make-up of the various chairs. Some athletes find an area they can hold in the back of the chair around the fifth wheel or inside the wheels; just in front of the front wheel, or front caster housing. It is important for low point players to scout the chairs and see where their chair will be able to hold each specific chair.

**Pick & Roll:** This maneuver is used to take an opponent off the ball carrier, while breaking the press or in the half-court offense. The ball carrier sets up the defensive player by leading them one direction. The offensive partner sets up the pick and roll by following the defender until they feel they are in position to block the defender’s progress. They then call out which direction the ball carrier should turn. When the defensive player tries to follow, they run into the ball carrier’s partner. Ideally, the player setting the pick will use the back of his/her chair so that both offensive players may then move forward with the defensive player behind them.

**Jam Pick:** When attacking in the half-court offense, an offensive player waits at the side of the key. If the defensive corner man cheats towards the center far enough to allow two chairs behind them, the offensive player will move in and seal the corner man to the inside. They must ensure there is enough room behind them for the ball-handler to score.

**Backpick**

Teams must transition quickly from defense to offense. As soon as the opposition scores, they must be prepared to get the ball from the referee so that he/she will blow the whistle to start contact. Following the opposition’s goal one or two offensive players must shadow the opponent until the whistle sounds, then make contact to hold the opponent out of his/her usual defensive position. This is called a back pick. Once a defensive player is caught by a backpick the offense has several options. If the offensive player holding the backpick is much faster than the defensive player, they can release their pick at an opportune time and join the offense for a 4-on-3 advantage. If the offensive player is faster than the defensive player, they can hold that player until a 0.5 or 1 from their team is in place to get a good hold on the defensive player. The faster player can now release and join the play. If the offensive player with the backpick is a lower functioning player than the defender they are holding, they should hold the pick which would give his/her team a point advantage on the offensive end of the court.

**Offense**

In Wheelchair Rugby the numbering system is used to identify the different positions on the court. The #1 player being the quarterback, ball handler, and play maker. This player usually has good ball skills and speed, usually a high point player. The #2 player is the second ball handler, outlet passer, and blocker. This athlete is a good receiver, and has some speed as well. The #3 player is the third ball handler, and a blocker. This player is usually your weaker mid-pointer or a low point player. The #4 player is a blocker and is your low point player.

**Half-court Offense**

Half-court offense is a very important part of the game. If this is an offensive weakness for a team, then teams will capitalize by dropping into the KEY on defense. The primary strategy for teams that have a lead is to drop into the key on defense to slow the game down. Offensively, there is no limit to the number of players who can be in the key at a time; however, there is a limit on the time. Offensively, an athlete cannot stay in the key for more than 10 consecutive seconds. This time limitation demands the offensive team to coordinate their offensive attack and each player to be aware of their time in the KEY. A player must have a purpose to enter the KEY; otherwise, they consume valuable space and actually assist their opponent in defending the goal line. The #2 player should attempt to: 1) create sufficient space for the ball-handler to score or 2) set up in the key to receive a pass. There are two types of half-court offense: Ground Attack and Aerial Attack.
**Ground Attack**

The GROUND ATTACK is the safest method of scoring, since it eliminates passing. Every time the ball is passed there is a higher margin for error. When possible the player wants to keep the ball on the ground (in the lap). Keeping the defense spread is the key to a successful ground attack.

If by utilizing a backpick you can prevent the defense from setting up in their desired positions then the defensive set will be weaker.

A solid ground attack should be patient and the offense must read the defense. Each team should have a few basic set-up offenses, but all half-court plays have numerous options depending on how the defense reacts. The offense must be ready to react to the defense and capitalize on the opening that is created by the defense’s decisions. The ball handler’s job is to set-up a potential hole by faking to one side and drawing the defender toward him/her thus allowing a teammate to position a block behind the defender. The ball-handler must try to be conscious of how long his/her teammates have been in the KEY and alert them to retreat and start the play again when no scoring opportunity exists. When a player gets trapped in the box for close to the 10 seconds, it is the trapped player’s job to call a timeout to keep the team from getting a turnover.

When blocking or picking a hole for the ball-carrier, it is important to position correctly so the player does not block the hole themselves. See Diagrams 2A and 2B:

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As soon as the offense realizes the space is inadequate for a scoring opportunity, they must communicate and pull out of the key to avoid a ten second violation. A team’s offensive timing is developed through numerous hours of practice.

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The most common mistake with new players and teams is their lack of awareness of the endline. Any wheel touching the endline when that player does not have full possession of the ball is considered an out-of-bounds position, resulting in a turnover. Players must always be conscious of their position in the KEY, especially in relation to the endline.
The plays listed below provide ground attack options from a basic spread offensive set-up.

**PLAY 1**

The play begins with 04 (low pointer) and 03 on the corner men in the key. Their job is to keep the cornermen honest by harassing them from behind and on the sides of their chairs.

The ball handler (01) takes the ball behind the chaser thereby forcing two things. The chaser will try to come back allowing 02 to post up on the chaser (back to him). During this same time the middleman in the key will shift over to protect the key.

Once this happens, the ballhandler will spin out and come back around the chaser. At the same time 02 goes down on the middleman in the key and blocks him from coming around. Meanwhile both 03 and 04 will stay on the cornerman.

At this point the ballhandler has a choice to go between 02 and the cornerman or force the cornerman to dive further into the key thereby allowing for a quick corner that has been taken by 03 or 04.

**Keys**

1. 03 and 04 must stay on the corners.
2. Chaser has to be moved over by ballhandler allowing 02 to post up on him.
3. 02 getting pick on centerman
4. communication
The play begins with 04 (low pointer) and 03 on the corner men in the key. Their job is to keep the cornermen honest by harassing them from behind and on the sides of their chairs.

The ball handler (01) takes the ball behind the chaser forcing two things. The chaser will try to come back allowing 02 to post up on the chaser (back to him/her). During this same time the middleman in the key will shift over to protect the key. Once this happens the ballhandler will spin around and begin to bring the ball around. At the same time, 03 will come down from the cornerman to the middleman sealing him off. 02 will then go down on the cornerman 03 was on sealing him off. The ballhandler then has a space between 03 and 02 in which to run a goal.

Keys
1. ballhandler must allow 02 to setup on chaser.
2. 02 and 03 must seal their picks
3. communicate
4. timing

Aerial (Passing) Game

Every player should develop passing and catching skills, even if rarely used in a game. A successful pass has two elements: ball release and catching. Team ball control is essential at all times. Therefore, players must be familiar with their teammates' abilities and limitations as well as their own. It is best in Rugby to develop a soft pass as most players can catch these types of passes regardless of their abilities. Consistent passing is a difficult task to master and should always be practiced. Making a pass is always a risk, so players should seek the highest percentage pass. If keeping the ball on the ground is an option, then a pass should not be made. The passing frequency of a TEAM is determined by the skill level and performance of the team.

Each player must know and execute their role to accomplish a successful pass attack. The ball-handler must have freedom to position for a successful pass; therefore, a blocker must be on the chaser to
protect the ball-handler. The #3 player will work with the post player (#2) to get a post position on the middle defensive player. The post position should be a stationary position with the chair positioned at an angle to the goal line. It is important not to have to turn the chair towards the goal once the post player receives the ball. The player should be able to catch the ball and take one push over the line. Once the post player gets in position, they should back into the defender located behind them. This not only creates additional space for their teammate to execute a successful pass but it also makes it harder for the defense to get around them to take away the post position. See the Diagram below.

The diagram below shows the post player setting up a cornerman. It is key that the ball handler reads where the post player sets up. It is the ball handler’s job to get the ball to the area of the court to execute a successful pass.

Another scoring option is the DOUBLE POST PLAY. This is created when two players post up in the KEY simultaneously. The ball-handler now has two passing options. It's the ball handler's job to quickly decide who will have the best opportunity to score after the pass. The double post play can be accomplished in two ways:
1. Each post-man posts inside a wing defender, as shown below:

![Diagram 6]

Note the ball-handler's two options. This play isolates the center player who usually commits to defending the stronger offensive post player. After the center commits to one side, the ball-handler passes to the open post-man. In some instances, the center may be able to recover from their one-man commitment and defend the post-man receiving the ball. When the center picks or blocks this post-man with the ball, the original ball-handler must be prepared to push through the key expecting the ball to be returned from the post-man.

2. A double post on the center can be quite effective as well. It is strategic for the two post players to strike together. The ball-handler should swing toward side which opens as the wing defender is drawn to block the post-man. The following diagram illustrates the double post on the center:

![Diagram 7]

If the defender chooses to defend the corner, a pass to the post-man is imminent. However, if the wing man slides over to assist the center defender, the ball-handler can score in the corner without a pass.

This play can be run to either side, but it is important that the fourth offensive player has a block on the chaser. If the chaser is a strong higher function player, the offense must put more blocking power on the chaser. Although the "Double Post Play" may be taken away, the single post offense is easier to execute since the key will be weaker. The offense must always protect their ball handler. Taking the chaser out of the play will reduce pressure on the ball-handler; therefore, minimizing errors and increasing scoring potential.

Many options can be derived from the basic plays. Individual teams must experiment, practice, and determine which plays they execute most successfully. Performance, individual and team, requires numerous hours of drill work. Scrimmages and games are good for testing the product developed from practice.
The play begins with 04 (low pointer) and 03 on the cornermen in the key. Their job is to keep the cornermen honest by harassing them from behind and on the sides of their chairs.

The ballhandler then must wait for 02 to post-up on the chaser. Once this happens the ballhandler shoots the gap between the middleman and the cornerman (opposite 02). This forces the middleman and the cornerman to commit to the ballhandler.

Once this happens 02 drops down and posts up on the other cornerman.

Meanwhile 04 performs a pick allowing 02 to get in position for a pass. The ballhandler now has a simple pass to 02 and a goal.

Keys
1. 02 must be posted on chaser.
2. The ballhandler must force the cornerman and the middleman in by shooting the gap.
3. Cornerman must be held by 03 and 04.
4. Simple passes
5. Communication
6. Timing

Defense

Good defense has become one of the best tools to winning games. Teams need to practice this part of the game. It is important to know your role and trust your teammates. Good defense can be either half- or full-court. There are several variations for both of these strategies. When deciding which strategy a team should use, it is important to consider several factors such as the player's skill, speed, stamina, and experience as well as the game situation.
**Half-Court Zone**

Half-court is a defensive strategy a team would choose if their opponents had more speed or have a weak offense. Note that a half-court key defense should not be run when a team is more than a few points behind and when you do not want to run down the clock. It is very easy for the offense to slow down the pace of the game and run the clock down.

The basic premise of the half-court zone is to force the offensive team into a turnover or to slow the game down, thus utilizing a lot of time. To accomplish these goals, the defense must be alert, disciplined, and constantly communicating with each other.

**Aggressive Chaser**

There are two variations for approaches to setting up the zone defense. The role of the chaser creates the change in the defensive scheme. The first option is to employ an aggressive or "roving" chaser. In this scheme the defense sets up as follows:

- Player #1: Strongest/most skilled player plays as the center
- Player #2: Next in skill level plays as the chaser
- Player #3: Plays in one corner
- Player #4: Plays in the other corner

Players #3 and #4 are responsible for keeping the offense from scoring in their respective corners. They will position themselves off the endline just high enough so a wheelchair cannot fit behind them. This “High in the Key” position prevents the defense from going out-of-bounds on contact while still preventing an attacker from scoring behind them. It also creates space for a defensive teammate to come behind his/her blocked teammate to stop a score.

Player #1 is responsible for the key area between players #3 and #4. They should position themselves high in the center area of the key. They should position their chair at an angle, so that with one push they can attack in either direction. Their role is to defend this area from players trying to establish a post position. Should a player establish a good post position, Player #1 should try to keep their chair free of a hold so that they can attempt to move around the offensive postman to block a pass.

In this defensive scheme, Player #2 is the chaser. The chaser’s job is to patrol the area in front of the defensive key. They should apply as much pressure as possible to the ball-carrier. Sometimes an offensive team will use two players to contain the chaser. If this happens the chaser should try and remain closer to the key. If the chaser gets trapped by the two defenders there would be a large area near the key cluttered, thus making it even harder for the two offensive players to score on the three defensive players. This will be most effective against a team with an inexperienced ball handler.

- Note that only three defenders are allowed in the key at a time. It is a “Four in the Key” defensive violation.
Passive Chaser

The second method of a half-court key defense uses a passive chaser. The roles of the defensive players change as follows:

Player #1: Plays middle
Player #2: Plays corner
Player #3: Plays corner
Player #4: Least functional player plays chaser

 Players #2 and #3 are now responsible for defending the corners of the zone. Player #1 maintains responsibility for the middle of the zone. Player #4 assumes the role of the chaser. The chaser's role is to maintain a position blocking the lane between the centerman and cornerman (usually the weakside). If an offensive player goes into the key, the chaser should try to block the path for that athlete to get out of the key, forcing the offense into a 10 seconds in the key violation. The chaser must still make sure they remain out of the key to avoid a "four in the key" violation on defense.

Two / Two Half-court Defense

This defense is most effective with a high / low offensive team (two high pointers and two low pointers). The set-up for the defense is to have your #3 and #4 defensive players playing very high in the key. The #1 and #2 defensive players are both positioned above the key area. They focus on the ballhandling threats and attempt to deny them into the key. The #3 and #4 players come out of the key to assist their teammates as needed. This is an attacking defense with a lot of rotation by the defensive players. This is a good defense to fall into after a team has successfully gotten across the half-court line, but did not have a breakaway goal.

Full-court Press Defense

The full-court press defense is used to capitalize on an advantage in speed and stamina, rattle an inexperienced opponent or trying to comeback late in the game. It is an effective tool when used properly. There are two basic types of full-court presses, the man-to-man press and the zone press.

The objectives of a press defense are to a) force a ten second violation or a time-out during the inbound play, b) cause a fifteen second violation when the offensive team fails to get the ball over half-court or c) force a bad pass that will result in a turnover and easy score.

One key to any full-court defense being successful is utilizing your chair for defense and not trying to use your hands. Athletes should be taught not to reach in the backcourt. The 15 seconds call requires patience, it will happen.

Man-to-Man Press:

The Man-to-Man defense is most effective when you are better matched than your opponents. A man-to-man defense will usually not work with an unbalanced lineup verses a balanced lineup.
The set-up for the man-to-man press is fairly straightforward. The defense's strongest player (D1) guards the offense's strongest player (O1). The next player (D2) guards (O2) and so on. The alignment on the court would look like the diagram below:

![Diagram of man-to-man press]

Depending on the match-ups, the defense may find it advantageous to leave the weakest offensive player alone and double team one of the stronger players. This set-up would look similar to the diagram below:

![Diagram of man-to-man press with double team]

The defense has its greatest advantage during the inbound play. Since one offensive player must inbound the ball, the defense has a 4-on-3 numerical advantage on the court. The defense should use this advantage to keep the ball away from their primary ball handler(s), thus forcing the ball into the hands of someone who is less used to handling the ball. Once the ball is passed inbounds, the defense must cover the player entering the court.

Depending on the distance of the inbounder's passing abilities will determine if your team can play a *deny* man-to-man or straight man-to-man. If the offensive inbounder does not have a lot of distance on his/her pass then a *deny* man-to-man can be very effective. This means your athletes deny their man from coming to the ball. Watch out for a long bump, you want your players to stay close when shadowing their man.

If the inbounder has good distance on his/her pass, then you want your athletes to stay between their man and the goal. Once the ball is inbounded they must be in defensive position for the stop or trap.
Your off-ball offensive players need to keep their players in front of them and they need to look to take away the next passing lane.

In a man-to-man defense there is a lot of switching, therefore communication is very important. A man-to-man defense starts out with the man match-up, but as the ball is inbounded it becomes the same as a zone press with traps and switches. The free man closest to the backcourt usually is the one who covers any fast breaks or long passes deep.

Keys to man-to-man defense:

- Individual match-up of strengths
- Know where the threats are and communicate for switches
- Low pointer or #4 will assist #1 unless their opponent’s #4 is a threat, then players match up directly

**Double/Double Press:**

The Double/Double is a defense designed for unbalanced teams or for teams that have a primary ballhandler inbound. Unbalanced line-up example: 3.0, 3.0, 1.0, 1.0. By double teaming their two high point players, you are forcing the ball to be inbounded to a low pointer, thus usually causing problems.

Keys to Double / Double:

- Force ballhandlers away from inbounder
- Defense’s #4 and #1 defend the offense’s #1, and defense’s #2 and #3 defend the offense’s #2
- Inside players #2 and #3 leave to pick up inbounder

**Zone Presses**

Another way to full-court pressure a team is with the zone press. When using a zone press, each defensive player defends an area of the court. These types of presses can still be successful even when a few of your positions cannot match-up to the offense. To have a successful zone press your athletes have to trust each other and there must be a lot of communication.

**Diamond Press**

The Diamond press is designed to use the corners of the court to trap the opposing team's ballhandler. The defense sets up with its #4 player in the middle of the court about one meter off the baseline. The #2 and #3 players set-up about fifteen feet from the baseline and five to ten feet from the sideline. The #1 player will set up in the middle of the court as deep as possible. S/he must play deep enough that a long pass cannot go over his/her head.
The defense will allow the inbound pass toward either corner of the court. Player #4 and the wing near the ballhandler will work together to trap him. The #4 man must make sure he does not allow the ballhandler to cut back between him and the baseline. Player #1 and the opposite wing (Player #2, in this case) will stay away and play the passing lanes. Player #1 is still responsible for protecting against the long pass.

The Diamond defense is a very introductory defense. It captures the basics of pressing in a very simple set-up. This press is very easy to break offensively by a team that knows the game. This press is best to use as a base to learning all the other presses.

**Y Press**

The Y Defense is a zone press designed to trap the opposing team’s ballhandler. The defense sets up with their #4 player in the middle of the court near the baseline. The #3 player will initially position himself five to ten feet behind the #4 player. The #1 and #2 players will position themselves deep enough to prevent any long pass from going behind them as shown below.
Once the ball is given to the inbounds and the whistle is blown, players #3 and #4 will work together to trap the ballhandler. Player #4 will cut off the baseline while Player #3 swings the trap closed from the top. If the ball is inbounded to the offense’s #1 player, players #3 and #4 will continue to hold him while players #1 and #2 play the passing lanes and look to intercept the pass. Players #3 and #4 should not reach since this defense is designed to force turnovers on bad passes and fifteen second violations.

If the ball is inbounded to another offensive player, player #1 or #2 must come up to defend while the other one rotates back to protect against a long pass or a breakaway as shown below. Players #3 and #4 do not release their man. They will hold him as long as they can or until the whistle blows.

If the ball is inbounded to the ballhandler near the sidelines and Player #3 or #4 cannot get to him then the deep man on that side must come up and help trap. The deep man on the other side must rotate back to play safety.
**T Defense**

The T defense is a zone press that is best used against a low point or a weak offensive passer as the in-bounder.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the T defense can be applied in 2 ways – Deny or Trap.

Deny is just what the name implies. The front defensive players (3) are so close to the baseline that no offensive player might gain position for a "safe" pass from the weak in-bounder. There by forcing the offensive team into a bump, timeout or turnover position.

Trap T defense is designed to keep the pass from the in-bounder to the receiving offensive player in front of the defensive (3) front. There by assuring a trap.

Variations of the T have defensive players moving throughout the defensive scheme. An example might be having the #4 player on the defensive team playing the #1 role. Theory being you might be able to trap or deny better with your best players low. Traditionally the T is run like you see diagrammed below. The purpose of the the traditional way is to keep all offensive players in front of your #1 player and also to use your #2, #3, and #4 players to trap the offensive ball-handler. You can also change the positioning up putting your #1 & #2 players on the corners, your #3 player back, and the #4 player in the center. This positioning only works if your #3 player has good speed. You have to play with the position of your athletes and see what works best for your team.

![T Defense Diagram]

**Inverted Y Defense (Triangle in One):**

The inverted Y defense is a zone defense designed to trap the opposing team's ballhandler. It is best run when the front two positions are of somewhat equal abilities. The basic set-up is # 3 and #4 just inside the Rugby key and spread about 10 feet apart, then the gate is played by the #1 player (unless the #2 player is taller with good mobility). The gate starts just inside the free-throw line. The front line should be at least one meter off the baseline so they will not be in danger of a meter violation if the inbounder moves along the baseline. The #2 player (or #1) is the safety and he is approximately ten-15 feet behind the gate player. The primary trap zone in this defense is between the low point players. This is shown by the dark shaded area below. The secondary trap zones are between the low point players and the sidelines as shown by the lighter shaded areas below. The front line wants to work together and get the first trap off the inbounds. The front triangle must make sure that no one gets in the middle to receive the inbounds. Once the first trap occurs, the gate will cover the next passing threat (could be the inbounder). The safety covers the long pass. If the two front line athletes are unable to get on the trap, the gate should get there and the off ball front line athlete will float to cover the next passing threat. If the safety has to come up to stop the ball then the other athletes must rotate to cover the court.

**Key to Inverted Y Press:**
- Don't let offense receive the ball in the middle of the triangle
- Force the offense to the outside
- Call switches and when off ball retreat to cover passing lanes
- Be aware of inbounder coming into the play
This defense is designed to allow the inbound pass to the ballhandler within one of the trap zones. If the ball is inbounded to the middle of the court, the two low point players will converge on the ballhandler and hold him. Player two will help to corral the ballhandler as shown in the figure below. Player #1 must stay deep to protect against a long inbound pass.

Once the low point players have the ballhandler trapped, Player #2 must leave and fill the passing lane since the ballhandler will have to pass the ball. The defense will now have their two strongest players against the offense's three weakest players. The two low point players will not release the ballhandler until the whistle blows unless they must clear the key after a turnover.

If the ball is inbounded toward the side, Player #2 must move toward the sidelines and trap with the low point player on that side. They should try to get the ballhandler in a position where he does not have a
full view of the court making it tougher for him to throw a good pass. They should hold the ballhandler and work for a fifteen second call. They should not reach in the back court.

The low point player on the other side must rotate back and fill the passing lane. Player #1 is still responsible for protecting against the long pass.

**Box Defense**

The Box defense is a zone defense designed to trap the opposing team's ballhandler. The defense sets up with its #3 and #4 players ten to fifteen feet apart along the baseline. They must be far enough off the base line to avoid a meter violation if the inbounder moves along the line. The #1 and #2 players line up behind the low pointers about fifteen feet from the baseline. The primary trap area in this zone is shown by the dark shaded area below. The secondary trap areas are shown by the lighter shaded areas.

If the ballhandler receives the ball between the #3 and #4 man, they will trap him and hold him. Players #1 and #2 will stay back and play the passing lanes or defend the secondary ballhandler. The #3 and #4
man must make sure that the ball handlers do not access the middle of the box, if this happens their set-up with a lot of press break opportunities.

![Diagram](image1)

If the ball is inbounded into one of the secondary trap zones, the high point player on that side must move up and trap the ball handler as shown below. The other high point player must stay back and play safety. The low point player (#4, in this case) must rotate back to play the passing lane.

![Diagram](image2)

**Press Break**

In a sport where game scores range from 20 – 45 points on average it is easy to see that there is a lot of offense in Wheelchair Rugby. This offense can happen in a number of ways but truly begins with concise role play and clear communication.

Depending on the make-up of your team you might modify ideas presented here.

Traditional – It all begins with the low pointer. The low pointer in a traditional offense is usually on the court picking for the #1 or #2 man. his/her goal is to set a pick that allows the above mentioned players easy access to the in-bounded ball. Once the ball is in-bounded the ball handler has the option to “pick and roll” or to spread the floor with his/her remaining #2 and #3 man.

Seagull or cherry picker – An effective technique employed by some teams to force the defense to cover more of the court. There by providing more space for the offense to work with. Usually a player is placed at half-court or further on the inbound. The remaining offensive players (#1 and #4) separate from one another and are set up for a inbound 5 to 6 ft from the baseline. This gives the in-bounder several options instead of just one or two and spreads the defense on the court.

Using a high pointer or low pointer to inbound. In press break one of the fundamentals is to force the defense out of what they comfortable with or what is working for them. This can be done with changing a in-bounder that can throw the ball a long way (class 3.0) or by having a low pointer inbound (1.0) which keeps stronger offensive players on the court for the in-bound.
These are but a few ways to break presses. Important concepts that also lead to press break are transition from defense to offense, players able to play multiple roles, and the aforementioned communication.

**Man-to-Man**

With more teams learning and implementing Man-to-Man presses it is imperative to know how to break a Man-to-Man press. The simplest way to accomplish this is to disrupt a pair of defenders that are acting as a tandem to trap the offenses top player(s). The offenses #4 player should be the person to do this. The #4 player should be blocking one of the two players that are double teaming his/her #1 teammate. He would want to focus on taking out the high point player, but any block is a good block. The #3 player might be your inbounder, and your #2 player should initially see if there is a block he can assist with on the double team of his/her #1 teammate. If still not released the #2 player should go to receive the ball. If the team is still having a hard time inbounding, then the #4 player can come to the end-line for a give and go.

**T-Press Break**

The "T" Press was basically designed as defense against a low point or short distance inbounder. Therefore when breaking a "T" Press the inbounder should try to go over the front line of the "T". If the inbounder can accomplish this, half the battle will be won. This leaves one defender to stop three offensive players. That defender is usually the defenses #1 player who might warrant two offensive players to block him while the third player takes the inbound. That third player should be a #1 or #2 player who can take the inbound and break up court before the defense can recover.

Proper execution of this play will lead to easier scores which will force a change of defense. If the defense moves the "T" back the offense must now adjust. With more room between the front line and the baseline the offense can now send a #1 or #2 player down low to get the inbound. They can still be trapped, however there is less of a chance of being pinned against the baseline. With a deeper "T" the #4 player may be needed to supply a block on the front line of the "T". This block will enable the receivers to come down lower for the ball since there is now more room up front with the "T" moved back.
Diamond Press Break

When breaking a "Diamond Press" it is important to identify a weaker side. You can look at attacking that side or providing blocks on the stronger side and the top of the diamond. The offense will then need to beat the weaker side of the zone. Avoid coming down low by the baseline. These are areas that the defense looks to use traps with their #3 and #4 players. If possible inbound over the bottom of the diamond. After this has been accomplished the inbounder must now beat the defender closest to the line which is usually the opponents number four player. The offense should now look to for mismatches like two on ones, and following blocks.

Box Press Break

To break a "Box Press", the offense needs to pick the two defenders on one side of the box to create the open sideline. The #1 and #2 offensive players need to start a few meters above the box. Once the inbounder has the ball they can time their blocks to cross and create the open lane for the ball handler. The ball handler needs to read the #4 player as to the side of the court he is blocking. The #4 player dictates the side of the court the offense will attack. Another option that can be utilized by inbounding to a player inside the box, thus creating passing lanes on each side of the box.

Situational Strategies

Tip Off Strategy

Tip off plays are an easily overlooked part of a rugby game. The tip off is a chance for a team to grab the early momentum in a game. A tip off is also used to start overtime periods when it is vital to score every
goal possible and control the momentum as much as you can. By winning the tip and scoring the first goal, you force the other team to play from behind.

There are two strategies to gaining control of the ball from a tip off. The first strategy is to win the tip cleanly. If you have a tall player with quick hands he can often control the tip by putting the ball in the direction he desires. You should determine who is the team's best tip off person in practices. Remember it is legal for a player to scoot or slide to the front of their chair to gain a height advantage. They must, however, keep contact with their seat and cannot push off the wheel with either arm. It is also legal for a tipper to direct the ball to the court and then retrieve it himself to gain possession.

The simplest tip off play is to direct the ball to stationary teammate who has good enough hands to control it quickly. The ball can be tipped backwards, forward, and even sideways as long as the players communicate this to each other. Any player may request a position between two players on the same team that are around the tip off circle. The players must alternate if the position is requested. The player receiving the tip off must always be aware of the half-court line to avoid a possible violation. This would give the opponent the ball and the next possession arrow.

The second strategy is used when the other team has a taller, dominant tip off man. In this instance, a team should not waste a high point player on the tip. They should use their lowest point player and try for the steal. His/her job will be to pick the opposing tipper when the referee tosses the ball. Players #2 and #3 will set up next to the opponent's top receiver and steal the ball if it is tipped in that direction. If possible, they should try to turn him away from the ball. This should leave the most mobile player to cover the opponent's #3 and #4 players.

Power Play

A power play is a must score situation that is set up when the opponent has committed a defensive foul. This creates a four on three advantage. If the defense retreats to the key, the offense should look to score a penalty goal. A penalty goal would keep the player in the box and a four on three advantage on defense for the next possession. This makes inbounding and breaking a press difficult. To achieve a penalty goal on an opponent in the key, it is best to block the center player with two offensive players who can hold him. The ball handler would follow his/her other blocker who tries to drive the weaker of two corner players close to or over the line. The ball handler will then attempt to score on the player close to the goal, which can draw a penalty goal. If the opportunity to score a penalty goal is not there, then the offense should take the easy goal.

In some situations, an offensive team having a power play will want to use most of the minute before scoring. This tactic is used when the shorthanded team has their number one or two player in the box and the offense team has a lead. The offense can control the ball with such an advantage and kill the clock. If the shorthanded defense presses, the offense would use their most protective ball handler in attempt to draw a foul from an aggressive defender. This could put a second defender in the box and kill time.
If a second defender does end up in the box the offense has a couple of options. They want to keep track of each player’s penalty so they can maximize their advantage. A quick score by the offense will release the first man penalized from the box. This will leave the second man in for the rest of his/her time or until the full strength team scores. The second option is changing the possession arrow if it is in favor of the short-handed team. The offense purposely gives up a held ball, which gives the defense possession. They now have the ball, but only two players to perform the inbound, which is nearly impossible. If the two players don’t execute the throw in ten seconds the full strength team will have successfully changed the arrow without using any time on the penalty clock. They can now score quickly and play for another turnover with a four-on-three advantage. The next held ball or arrow situation will go to them.

**Short Handed Situations**

Gaining possession when your team is minus a player is a rarity that is usually only achieved after a turnover caused by a press. This is why we recommend that short-handed teams employ a press. Some short-handed teams elect to retreat to the key. This sets up a very high percentage scoring advantage for the offense. It also leaves the defenders vulnerable to an illegal player call if they touch the line while defending the key. By using a Man-to-Man press on the inbound the numerical advantage is taken away. If the offense is able to get the ball inbouned then the defense should try to force as many passes as possible. It is very important to stay away from another foul that could land a second player in the box giving the offense a huge advantage. If the defense gains possession they should immediately look to advance the ball over half-court. If an eminent score is present then your team should take it. If there is not an eminent score the short-handed should look to kill the penalty then work for the score. By killing the penalty it gives the offense a chance to attack 4-on-4 instead of 3-on-4. It also allows the short-handed team to be at full strength for their next defensive try. When killing the penalty it is important to get the ball to the most sure-handed player while his/her teammates block the players most likely to cause trouble for the ball handler. It is also important to keep track of the time on the penalized player. If the shorthanded team cannot get the ball over they may elect to give up a held ball if the arrow is going the other way. This will at least switch the arrow in the shorthanded team’s favor for the next arrow situation.

**Changing the Arrows**

Moving or changing an arrow can mean the difference in the game. It takes a well-schooled, quick thinking team to execute arrow changing properly. The possession arrow is an all-important aspect of the game. If a team can have ball possession at the beginning of each quarter they have 3 extra possessions over the other team. This means the team will have to learn how to manipulate the arrow so they have possession at each quarter. Every team should closely monitor the table when it comes to changing an arrow. Many errors have been made in changing or not changing arrows by table officials. Several have gone unnoticed. These errors can be virtually eliminated if teams make the effort to monitor the table. The coach and the bench players should all share this responsibility.

Team members should be taught to always be aware of the possession arrow. In the last few minutes, if your team does not possess the arrow then as the coach you can give a few of your high pointers a green light to try and get a held ball. This should be done in the front court. You should not have your athletes reach in the back court unless there is less than 15 seconds on the clock. Rely on your defense in the backcourt and try and get a 15 seconds call rather than taking the risk of having to go a man down with someone in the box. A low point player should not be one of the athletes given permission to reach.

Another time to use the deliberate held ball is at the end of a period when the arrow is in the opponent’s direction. An example would be after a team scored with only three seconds left and have set up a press. If your team gets the ball in and the defense converges they may go after the ball. If they do get the held ball your team would quickly retreat to the key and leave the other team with a worthless possession. Your team will now have possession at the start of the next period.

If your team is going in for the last goal of the period and there is no eminent score your team should try for the deliberate held ball in the waning seconds. The deliberate held ball is also used when the offensive team has no time outs remaining and is in jeopardy of turning the ball over because of a violation. Examples of this would be a teammate is trapped in the key for 10 seconds without a scoring option. A fifteen-second
violation could be avoided the same way. Another similar situation is when a team has an eminent turnover like ten seconds in the key or a low pointer who may not be able to dribble then a team can try for the intentional held ball.

When attempting a deliberate held ball situation there are three options to use. The first is targeting a vulnerable player who is over-aggressive and will often reach-in without thinking. The second option is to give the other team the possession and quickly trap the ball in the opponent’s lap. The player must accept the ball for the referee to award a held ball. The usual target is the low point player who can’t protect the ball as well as a high pointer. The last option is one that rarely works however it is worth a try. When the offensive team has the ball with only four seconds or less and the defensive team wisely retreats to the key, the long bump option has been taken away by the defense retreating. The offense attempts a throw in. Two offensive players went for the long bump which was covered. This leaves an inbounder and low pointer in the back court to handle the inbound pass. The throw-in goes in and the low pointer attempts to pick up the ball but it goes under his/her chair which constitutes a held ball. Some referees will award this, but most will not award anything (which is the correct call).

**Clock Management**

Teams that manage the clock well will often come out on top in a close game. It is a big advantage to score the last goal of the period. The game is divided into four 8-minute periods so there are four opportunities for the last goal. This is even truer when a team scores the last goal and has the possession arrow as the next period starts. Setting up the last goal can be difficult. For this reason teams must practice scoring the last goal in a timed situation. Time spent during practice going for the last goal in situational play is advised for learning timing. Teams need to have a feel for how long they need to score against a press and against a team in the key. If the team with the ball is ahead with less than a minute left they can opt to go for the last score. The goal is to leave as little time on the clock as possible. By pressing, they can force the opponent to score quickly which will give them another possession with enough time to score. If a defensive team is in the key and the offensive team is going for the last goal they should have a predetermined time that they attack. Stronger teams attack with less than 20 seconds. This allows time for a second attack if the first one fails. Ideally, a team wants to score leaving less than 8 seconds on the clock.

Scoring the last goal is a very tricky play. There is a great advantage to gain from scoring the last goal. Remember you cannot take points off the board, so never turn away from a goal. If you have an open goal, time should be taken by slowing down and waiting for the defense to catch up to you, but you should not give up the chance to score.

**Using Time-outs**

In Wheelchair Rugby time-outs are your “get out of jail free cards”. Teach your players to use time-outs to save them from a turnover. Teaching them to not take them all in the first quarter is a bit trickier. Another bad time to take a time-out is when there is less than 5 seconds on the clock before the end of a quarter. Examples would be: a player is about to be called for 10 seconds in the key, the player is about to be pushed/hit out of bounds or into the key causing 4 in the key, or the team is about to be called for 15 seconds in the backcourt.

Time-outs should be used to help your team regroup, change up defenses, and talk strategy. Just make sure you measure the value of the time-out compared to a get-out-of jail free card.

**The Concept of Overplaying**

The concept of overplaying should be applied when double-teaming the opponent’s #1 or #2 players. If the opponent has a side that they favor, the stronger of the two defenders should attack that side. An example of this would be a class 3.0 who likes to go to his/her right. The defenders consist of a 2.5 and an 0.5. The 2.5 would force the offensive player to his/her weaker side which gives the 0.5 a better chance of effectively double-teaming the player.
When overplaying, the objective is to force the offensive player into the defender’s teammate. A common mistake when double-teaming is made when one of the defenders pushes directly at the offensive player. When a low function does this the offensive player can often make a strong move that eliminates both defenders. This mistake can also happen with a higher functioning player. The overplay concept should also be applied by the sidelines, especially with a solo defender. Remember, the sidelines, baseline and half-court are like extra defenders.

A tandem of defenders utilizing strong overplay will often force the offensive player to change directions more than once. If executed correctly the offensive player will lose ground and eventually become trapped. Once trapped, the defenders can work for front and back position to immobilize the opponent. Overplaying can and should be applied in any double-team situation.

**Long Bump Passes for a Quick Score**

The long bump pass is a risk, therefore it is best used in the waning seconds of a period. When executing this play the inbounder should remember that the ball must be touched in less than 10 seconds. Thus bumping after 6 to 7 seconds will usually result in a turnover. If the defending team is playing a tight Man-to-Man defense the intended receiver can set up a long bump play by taking the defense low then breaking towards the goal. He should try to leave the center of the court open for the bumper to drop their pass into. A long bump should always be directed through the middle of the court where it can be touched. Bumps that go out of bounds untouched set-up a quick scoring opportunity for the opponent (See Corner Sneak Play).

Note that the #4 player in the diagram tries to pick the coverage from the primary receivers to give them a clear path to the ball. If a defensive team is returning to the key the offense must execute quickly and send two players deep and hope the *Hail Mary* bump gets to one of them while the other player heads to the goal line. The low pointer should attempt to back-pick a high point defender. If s/he can’t achieve this s/he may opt to become a long outlet if uncovered.

A long bump on the court is also used to avoid a fifteen second violation. This is recommended when a team is out of timeouts. The bump should either be right to a teammate. If no teammate is over the half-court line then a high bump that dies in the frontcourt may allow enough time for a teammate to get to it.

**Corner Sneak Play**

Often, after an opponent has attempted a long bump pass in the final seconds, it will go out of bounds. The defense should help ensure this by blocking off the offense from touching the ball which starts the game clock. This will give the defense the possession (close to the goal area) at the point where the ball was inbounded. The team gaining possession must quickly transition to the key they score on. A player who can throw accurate long passes should take the inbound while the top post player sets up in the key to receive the inbound and go in for an easy score. It is important for the post player’s teammates to surround
him/her. This is called protection for the post player. If the post player does not get this protection from his/her teammates they may want to set-up another post in the key that will give the inbounder two options.

If the offense can only get one player to protect the post they should prioritize the inside position. This will protect more against a blocked inbound. It is important that the post player hold his/her position as the defense will be trying to knock him/her out of bounds, sometimes taking advantage of a contact before the whistle call.

**Attacking at the Half-Court Line**

The offensive team is often vulnerable when crossing the half-court line. The defense should try to time their hit when the offense is crossing the line. When any part of the player’s chair returns to the backcourt it will be a violation and result in a turn over. If the offense is close to a 15-second violation the defender should attempt to keep them from crossing. Defensive players should work together to trap offensive players near the line so a teammate can legally hit them into the backcourt. Defensively you want to leave the offensive player’s path to the backcourt open.

**Popping the Chaser into the Key**

The offensive team can take advantage of a weak, small or a chaser that positions too close to the key line. By using a stronger player to come in and legally hit the player into the key, you can set up a four-on-three advantage. Some teams opt to use a combination of two to knock the chaser into the key. Avoid the charging call because this will result in a turnover. For better results you may want to use a teammate to force the player into a perpendicular position so you can hit them head on in order to roll them straight into the key. Defenders will try to stay parallel to the key to avoid this from happening. The defensive players in the key should always keep an eye on their chaser. The wings should be ready to evacuate the key if their chaser might be forced into the foul. Another last resort is to call a time-out.

**Letting a Player Push Through**

Overly aggressive post players often try to move defenders with physical, brute strength. Sometimes you can outsmart them by moving out of the way and letting them push through. They may then cross the baseline, which is a turnover. If they stay on the court, the defender should push around them and take away the ball handler’s angle to the post player.

**Backpicking**

The idea behind setting a backpick is to give your team a manpower or point advantage on your offensive end of the floor. This is accomplished by transitioning to offense quickly after the other team scores or turns the ball over. Every player on the team has a role and must be ready to perform that role immediately. The inbounder must get to the ball quickly so that the whistle will blow right away. Two players will start shadowing opponents as soon as the change of possession occurs. When the whistle blows, they will set a
pick on the offensive player and prevent him from getting into his/her defensive position. The fourth player will prepare to receive the inbound pass. What occurs next will depend on the situation:

If a player who is equal to or more functional than another holds him until the team finishes the scoring drive, s/he may then assume a defensive position on the player who was backpicked.

If you stop a player who is lower functioning than you, either release him and push hard down court so that your team has a 4-on-3 advantage until the player picked out can get back into the play. Or, have a lower functioning teammate set a pick on the man. Once the pick is set, you can release down court and join the offense 3-on-3. You will now have a point advantage while attacking the key.

When deciding on whom to backpick, choose the player who can be caught, not someone who continually gets back safely. Target the bigger, slower opponents who play in the key. This will make them work harder and force a switch on defense as the chaser will now have to drop into the key. Sometimes you may come up empty and not backpick anyone but still have an advantage because they didn't get back to their original positions. Also remember that attacking 3-on-3 is an advantage. Without a chaser both gaps are open making posting and blocking easier. When you catch a higher pointer on a backpick he may require two players holding him. If two players hold an opponent make sure it is the #3 and #4 players so the team can run a two-man offense with the top two players.

Avoiding the Backpick

To prevent your team from getting backpicked, it is very important that everybody gets back into position. This can be accomplished if the team is alert and transitions quickly following a change of possession. There is no reason to delay getting back on defense unless the player’s chair is incapacitated. If there is a minor equipment problem, try to get back in the key and then fix it. Calling an equipment timeout on the offensive end of the floor allows the other team to get into position to shadow and then backpick a player. Remember this is a team game. The Chaser on defense should protect his/her key defenders while transitioning to the key. S/he should use his/her chair to obstruct backpick attempts by the offense. S/he should not, however sacrifice himself to protect a lower functioning player. If it is clear that a player is going to be backpicked, teammates should be alerted so that they can adjust the key defense accordingly.

A Rugby game does not stop when the ref's whistle blows. There is a constant struggle to get the best position on the court. Use this time to start shadowing an opponent for the position s/he desires. Do not allow an opponent to get into a comfort zone at any point in the game. If a player does the little things, s/he will have a better chance of winning each game.

Picking Up Your Own Inbound

This is a last resort play due to the risks involved. If the inbounder cannot find a receiver to inbound to and has no more timeouts s/he should look to use a player on the court to throw the ball off of. The back of a teammate or defender is the most effective way to safely get the ball inbounds. Once the ball is released the inbounder should quickly enter the court to retrieve the ball. Avoid throw-ins off the chair as it is too unpredictable where the ball may ricochet.

Turning Away from a Goal

Under current rule interpretations a player who has turned away from a goal as the defense crosses should not be awarded the goal and the defender would serve the one minute penalty. This can be used to the offense's advantage, especially later in the game when an opposing high pointer is chasing the offensive player towards the goal. The offensive player opts to turn away from the goal, while the momentum of the defender carries him/her over the goal line resulting in an illegal player call. This is a one-minute penalty and will put one of their top players in the box. This allows the offense to work close to a minute off the clock while in a power play situation. Often the defense who is now desperate may commit a second foul while short handed (See Power Play). This should only be executed when the other team's #1 or #2 player aggressively chases the offensive player to the goal and your team is ahead. When the player goes to the box the offense should constantly work to protect the ball handler. A turnover would backfire in this strategy,
thus it can be a gamble. Remember points on the board can never be taken away, so depending on the team sometimes it is best to take the score.

Stealing Position and the Contact Warning

A contact warning can be used to gain advantageous position on the court. It can also be used to get a trap or be more aggressive on defense prior to the whistle. Each team should always be aware of whether they have a contact warning to use. Until they receive that warning their defense can be more aggressive by rubbing up against the opponent, getting as close as possible before the whistle. This is recommended closer to the end of the half or game when the defense has not been warned. An early contact warning can haunt a team later. An offensive player can avoid a sure trap position by using the contact before the whistle to get out of the predicament.

A contact warning can also be used to breakup a corner sneak play. A strong legal hit on an offensive player who has good post position may help break up a potential scoring opportunity. Once the player is knocked out of position make sure to assume that defensive position. Legally, the player has to let the player back onto the court to start play, but try to disrupt the position as much as possible.

Improving Performance

To improve personal athletic performance it will take dedication, sacrifice, focus, and determination. As a coach your athletes have to want to put forth the effort to gain improvement. It is about perfecting the fundamentals and obtaining optimum conditioning. These are not things that can be accomplished by practicing once or twice a week. If athletes want to reach the next level of athleticism, they will have to take what they are taught in practice and develop a personal training regimen 2-3 days a week (other than the team practice time).

To see improvements in a recreational team with no additional training other than the once a week practice is possible. The amount of improvement is much smaller and at a slower pace. Focus practice time on fundamental skill development. Once they have accomplished the fundamentals the game becomes much more fun.

Good, sound and well-maintained equipment will help improve performance. Try to keep the athletes current with new technology in the sport. It will greatly help their performance and enjoyment of the game.

Tournament Strategy

Winning tournaments doesn’t happen accidentally. It requires hours of training and preparation. After a team is physically ready through training they must look at upcoming competition tactically. Obtaining a play schedule well before the tournament can help a team better prepare for known and probable opponents. Players must first focus on a key pool game and prepare for them. Although a team should take no team lightly, they typically focus on some teams more than others.

If the team has the luxury of meeting easier opponents near the beginning of the tournament try to get as much out of the bench players as possible. A solid game plan that has been used by top teams consists of the starters building an early lead through a press. If a team can get their bench in early it will give them more game time to develop. This can also give starters an easy day before the pool championship with the 3rd seed (if they beat the 5th seed). Coming out strong in the pool championship can make or break a team. If they end up in a close battle it may take a lot of energy out of them before the all important cross-over-play. Since pool championships are usually played the same day as the first cross-over-game it is very crucial that a team get in a position to set-up the next game. This can be done by effectively blowing out the opponent and using plenty of bench players.

Using the Bench

Bench play can be a real test of a coach’s ability. Coaches who effectively use their bench often get the most out of all their players. After establishing an early lead they should integrate bench players one or two
at a time rather than putting four new players on the court. The more gradual substitution will make it harder for an opponent to mount a comeback. With four new players on the court the defense has a far greater chance of making a run against a second string lineup. If the bench plays an opponent evenly over a period of time they have done their job. They will be closer to the end of the game, while at the same time resting their strongest lineup.

A coach must know their personnel well enough to realize for whom to substitute. A starter who fatigues before other teammates is usually the best choice. If this player has a regular problem with fatigue during games a coach will need to time his/her substitutions appropriately. The most efficient way is to sub for them in the middle of the period. After having two to three minutes of game time (approximately 4-6 minutes actual time) off they have usually recovered enough to go back in and play out the last two or three minutes before taking a one minute break after the period or, better yet, a five minute break for halftime. If they are strong enough you can also sub just before the quarter and with the quarter break, you can get them a couple minutes rest at one time. This tactic is best used in the first and third quarters.

Scouting

One of the best forms of scouting is by video. The best videos to view are prior matches that your team has played against the opponent. This will allow you to dissect the opponent as well as identify your own breakdowns. If a video is unavailable from a previous meeting then try to obtain a video of them in a game with a strong opponent. The key is you want to see them tested. An easy game for the opponent you are scouting is not nearly as helpful. When watching videos, a team should look for tendencies such as inbounding locations and where the opponents #1 and #2 players like to get the ball. Some teams favor one side of the court over the other. When scouting a team you always look for players who tend to go to one side regularly. This occurs quite frequently, especially with asymmetrical injuries and players with polio.

Tournament scouting is not as easy. There is no rewind or slow motion button when watching a team play live. However, you can pick-up on the opponent's current condition and their newest plays. A team can play into an opponents psyche by having the whole team watch them play. This shows an opponent that a future opponent is preparing for them. Whether watching a team live or on video the coach should look at the game from the beginning until the end (or at least while it is still close and the opponent still has to work). Look for how the opponent lines up for tip offs, key defenses and presses they employ.

Use of Scout Teams

Usage of scout teams to simulate the opponent is time well spent in practices before a tournament. Many teams do not have the luxury of enough players or high pointers to field a scout team. If this is the case they can supplement Para’s or able-bodies who have learned the game and chair skills. When forming the scout team simulate the opponent as closely as possible. Often, it is necessary to put more than eight points on the floor to achieve this. Sometimes the starters get frustrated going up against line-ups with more than eight points. The coach should reinforce that this will only make them stronger.

Selecting Appropriate Competitions

It is important for coaches to select competition that will challenge but not undermine the team with discouragement. A new team should look for lower to mid-level competition. If there is a top team in the area, ask that team to play their bench personnel.

Tournaments frequently label themselves as Division I or Division II. However, many tournaments have both levels present so make sure your team has an equal number of Division I and Division II games.

For a very new team, scrimmages can be set-up with other teams and the athletes can be mixed evenly to create a competitive game. This is good for teaching, but should not be done too frequently, as it will take away from individual team growth. Players will have to take the punches and learn as a team. Remember, every team started at the beginning stage and overtime gets better.
Developing a Wheelchair Rugby program will take a lot of work, but if done properly can foster great experiences. This manual will help the coach to understand every aspect of the game from the rules, recruitment, equipment, fundamental skills, to advanced game strategies.

**Official Competition Rules**

Reading the full set of Wheelchair Rugby rules is essential to being a good player and/or coach. The most current rules can be downloaded from [www.quadrugby.com](http://www.quadrugby.com).

**Additional Resources**

Visit the USQRA web-site at quadrugby.com. It has online newsletters, rules, and other informative material. There is a calendar of events and articles on current tournaments. A *talk page* provides an easy resource for getting answers to common questions.

**Drills**

Drills are used for training to increase the players' performance by concentrating on specific skill development. When a player is new to the sport, more emphasis is placed on basic ball-handling skills, chair mobility and endurance. As players become more proficient, training focuses on speed, positioning, passing, catching, picking and hitting becomes more predominant. More advanced teams are able to combine many of these skills in the same drill.

Before practice, players should warm-up on their own. Most gyms have sufficient room around the perimeter of the court to push laps. Approximately 18 times around a regulation size court is a mile. At the beginning of the season, players should warm-up with a mile push and increase the distance as the season progresses.

**Pushing Drills**

**Sprints / Suicides**

The easiest pushing drills incorporate sprints from one endline to the other. The team can build upon this simple sprint by pushing to every marked line, turning to the right, pushing back to the baseline, then turning to the left and pushing up the court to the next line, etc. This modification is referred to as suicides or horses. Most courts are marked with the rugby key line, the basketball foul line, half-court, the far foul line, the far key line and the endline. It is important for players to develop their ability to turn both left and right. Another variation of the sprint drill is to push to each marked line, then return to the endline by pushing backwards. An additional sprint drill includes pushing to each line, completing a 360 degree turn, then continuing towards the endline. It is advisable to limit the number of lines, so players do not become dizzy. Depending on the total number of players at practice, the players may have to be divided into groups by speed to allow sufficient room for their turns.

**Perimeter Drill**

A good drill for developing starts and stops is the perimeter drill. This is implemented by pushing around the perimeter of the court and switching between top speed and moderate speed upon the coach's command. The speed changes with each whistle blast. You can incorporate turning by using a verbal command for reverse direction.

**Wave Drill**

Another chair mobility drill is accomplished by lining up on the endline, pushing towards center court and changing direction (left, right, forwards, backwards) according to the coach's instructions. Once again,
the coach may use whistle blasts to signal direction change. It is important to have adequate space between players to prevent them from hitting each other.

**Slalom Drill**

A simple, yet effective way to train on chair mobility is a slalom course. The slalom course can have many variations. The simplest method is to place cones in a straight line with enough space for a wheelchair to pass through. Players weave back and forth through the cones without hitting them. The slalom course can be expanded as the coach desires. Players can perform this drill with or without the ball. When using the ball, they should be required to dribble at least every ten seconds. Timing players and keeping a record of their score adds a competitive spirit to the drill by allowing them to compete against teammates or their own times.

![Slalom Diagram]

**Ball Pick-Up “Bowling for Quads”**

Learning to pick up the ball off the floor while moving is essential; therefore, the next drill "Bowling for Quads" was developed. The players line-up on the endline, then one at a time push down court. Someone rolls the ball from behind the endline, past the player pushing down court, on the left or right of his/her chair. The athlete attempts to pick it up while continuing to move forward. As players approach the ball they lean to the side of the chair the ball is on (lower functioning players may have to hook the opposite push handle) when the player is even with the ball he will pin the ball against his/her wheel and hold it there, the motion of the wheel will bring the ball up to the players lap, when it reaches this point he should roll it over the pushrim into his/her lap. In the beginning, the person rolling the ball may want to verbally indicate which side of the chair the ball will be rolled. As the player becomes more experienced, they usually have better skills and awareness so they can handle either side without verbal cues.

**Passing Drills**

Passing drills should build from simple stationary drills to more intricate drills encompassing passing and pushing. Passing the ball from a stationary position is first. One of the simplest drills is to have players form a circle and have every one pass the ball to the player on their right. The direction can then be reversed until the players are comfortable passing in both directions. A simple variation of this drill is to skip a player on every pass, thus forcing the players to pass a greater distance and over another player. Another practical drill is *monkey in the middle* this forces players to complete passes over another individual.

**Caterpillar Passing Drill**

The players split into two evenly numbered groups and lineup on either side of the basketball free throw lane facing one another. One ball (or several can be used) starts with the player(s) closest to the baseline. After the player passes the ball, the player will spin to the outside and go to the end of the line on their side. This works the same for the line on the other side. This continues until the line reaches the other end of the court. Variations of the passes used should be applied in this drill (i.e. chest pass, right and left hand pass, bounce pass, etc.).
Pepperpot Drill

A more advanced stationary drill is the "pepperpot" drill. Four players line up with a fifth player facing them approximately three to four feet away. The first two players in line start with volleyballs. The first player throws the ball to the player facing them, who then returns it to the 3rd player in line. As soon as they release the ball, the second player throws the other volleyball to the player facing the group, who then passes the ball to the 4th player in line. See diagram.

Weave Drill

The "Weave" drill, which is adapted from basketball, is very effective because it incorporates both ball-handling and chair mobility skills. Initially, the players line-up on an endline in groups of three. One group (A) positions him/herself in the center and the other two groups of players (B) and (C) line-up near the sidelines. The 1st player in the middle group (A) inbounds the ball to a player in either one of the other groups (e.g. B), then pushes towards him, crossing behind this receiver (B) and attaining the outer position. The current ball-handler (B) passes the ball to the third player (C), then pushes behind player (C) to attain the outer position. Player (C) becomes the ball-handler in the center and continues this weaving pattern with player (A) as his/her receiver. The players execute this drill while generally maintaining their distance so they can become more familiar with this positioning, which prepares them for breaking the press. This drill may also be utilized with closer positioning simply to improve their mobility and ball-handling skills.

Long Passing Drill

The players split into two lines, a passing line and a receiving line. The players will start at half-court. As the receiver advances closer to the baseline the passer will throw the ball to the receiver by leading them toward the baseline. After the reception the receiver will score the goal and circle around and pass the
ball to the next passer in line and get in line to pass the ball. The passing and receiving lines should switch at a certain goal to work on passing from both sides of the court. Variations of passes should be emphasized.

![Diagram of Diamond in the Rough drill](image)

**Diamond in the Rough**

The "diamond in the rough" drill can be used to incorporate chair mobility with stationary passing. This drill is performed with five players at a time. Four players form a circle and the fifth is in the center. The players in front and behind the center player will start the drill with volleyballs. When the center player faces them they will throw the ball to him and receive the pass back immediately. Once the center player has received the ball and returned it s/he will turn his/her chair 180 degrees and receive another pass and return then rotate his/her chair 180 degrees back and repeat this movement. When the center player turns away from the man with the ball the ball handler will pass to the player next to him/her in the circle who will return the pass before the center man is prepared to receive the ball again. The emphasis is on the center player's execution of quick, efficient turns and quick passes. Chair control is essential at all time. Any player may rotate to the center position. See diagram

![Diagram of Passing Tunnel](image)

**Passing Tunnel**

Another dynamic passing drill is the "Passing Tunnel". The players line-up in two rows facing each other on the sideline of the gym, staggering their positions. The ball-carrier pushes down the middle, passing, then immediately receiving the ball from each player before meeting the player on the opposite side. The emphasis should be on the ball-carrier. It is every player's responsibility to ensure successful passing and catching and make the ball-carrier look good.

**Four Corners Passing**

A minimum of six players is needed for this drill. Start with one - two balls (as many as four can be used depending on number of players) in opposite corners, two players should be in the line that starts with the ball. Additional players can fill into the other lines and balance out each corner. To start the drill, the
players that start with the ball (player #1 and #3) pass the ball to the adjacent corner (#1 to #2, #3 to #4). After the player passes the ball, that player will move toward the player s/he threw the ball to and look to receive the pass directly back. When player #1 catches the returned pass, that player will continue to move to the inside of (Player #2) and handoff the ball to Player #2. Player #1 goes to the end of that line. The drill on the opposite corner occurs simultaneously in the same direction (clockwise or counterclockwise). Player #2/#4 after the handoff will pivot and continue the drill to the next adjacent corner.

The opposite corners need to function together. All of the action is continued from corner to corner, the ball can be reversed on the corners from a simple cue of “reverse” at any point when the ball is on the corner. You decide an ending point.

**Lead Passing**

Players need to also practice long distance passes. The passer will line up at the centercourt line near the sideline. The receivers will line up on the opposite side of the court on the center line. The receivers will push towards the goal and the passer will hit them with a lead pass. Receivers will catch the ball on the move and carry it across the goal line. Passes should always lead the receiver towards the goal.

**Hitting Drills**

Hitting is an integral part of Wheelchair Rugby and should be performed with finesse. The most important purpose of hitting another chair is to interfere with an opponent's catching or passing without endangering anyone. Using a side-swipe motion to attempt a wheel-to-wheel hit is an acceptable method since it minimizes the possibility of a spin, but still knocks the opponent off course. The players can practice hitting with this simple drill. Players line-up on opposite sides of the center line, facing the endline. Each player on the left possesses a ball to simulate offense. In the beginning, the coach may want to match players of similar function to accomplish the most successful drill execution. Both players push hard towards the same corner of the key, attempting to collide "wheel-to-wheel". The defensive player attempts to knock the ball-carrier into the cone and/or the offensive player tries to hit the defensive player's chair out of the way. The players should rotate positions down the left and right lines so everyone has an opportunity to be the ball-carrier. This "wheel-to-wheel" hit is an important skill, since it can be used anywhere on the court to bump an opponent off the play.

Drills are used for training to increase the players' performance by concentrating on specific skill development. When a player is new to the sport, more emphasis is placed on basic ball-handling skills, chair mobility and endurance. As players become more proficient, a training focus on speed, positioning, passing, catching, picking and hitting becomes more predominant. More advanced teams are able to combine many of these skills in the same drill.

**Ball Pick-Ups**

Learning to pick up the ball off the floor while moving is essential; therefore, the next drill "Bowling for Quads" was developed. The players line-up on the endline, then one at a time push down court. Someone rolls the ball from behind the endline, past the player pushing down court, on the left or right of
his/her chair. The athlete attempts to pick it up while continuing to move forward. As players approach the ball they lean to the side of the chair the ball is on (lower functioning players may have to hook the opposite push handle) when the player is even with the ball he will pin the ball against his/her wheel and hold it there, the motion of the wheel will bring the ball up to the players lap, when it reaches this point he should roll it over the pushrim into his/her lap. In the beginning, the person rolling the ball may want to verbally indicate which side of the chair the ball will be rolled. As the player becomes more experienced, they usually have better skills and awareness so they can handle either side without verbal cues.

Station Drills

Station drills are a good way to practice fundamental skills and conditioning in a short period of time. The initial set-up is time consuming, but once the players know your stations, it can be explained and set-up very rapidly.

To conduct station drills, choose the fundamental drill that the team needs to work-on (can be from 4-8). The number of stations conducted per practice can be altered depending on the time of the season and the condition of the athletes. The duration of the drills will fluctuate as well. It is best to start with 2-3 minute stations but do not exceed seven minutes. Most teams get up to about 5 minute stations. You have your athlete’s partner-up with a teammate of equal skill level and then divide them out amongst the different stations. On the whistle they begin the fundamental drill of the station they are assigned. After the designated time has elapsed the whistle is blown and a 45 second to one minute rest is given. During the rest the athletes should be getting water and moving to the next station (clockwise). This routine is continued until everyone has completed the entire cycle of stations. It is helpful if you have signs designating the specific drill for each station. Laminating these and keeping them for future practices is best.

A note of caution is to please separate the drills that have a lot of pushing or cause a lot of stress on the shoulders. Please listen to the athletes, because some athlete’s shoulders and wrists may become sore from performing some of these drills.

The actual fundamental station drills are endless. They can be pulled from regular drills that are conducted as a group, developed individually, or found from various sources. Following are a just a few for consideration:

½ Court Tow: One athlete lines up on the end-line and the other athlete positions themselves behind their teammate and holds onto the backrest (have able-bodied staff assist with this if the athletes grip can not keep a hold). Then the athlete sprints (with teammate in tow) to the ½ court line, the teammate gripping the backrest releases and then both athletes continue the sprint to the opposite end-line.

Backwards Roll: One partner faces backwards, while the other partner holds onto the front of their teammate’s chair (utilize able-bodied volunteers if the athletes can not keep a grip on the chair). Then have the athlete push backwards around the exterior of the court. The teammate or staff holding onto the front will assist with the steering.

Ball Handling: Give each partner a ball and have them go through ball handling skills. This means dribbling continuously on each side of the chair and in the front, bobbling the ball back and forth in their hands all around the chair (high, low, and on both sides), passing the ball behind their backs, etc. The athletes will alter the ball handing to their functional abilities. For high functioning athletes, have them try bouncing two balls at once. Athletes may not be good at this drill at first, but they will amaze themselves if they push their skill level.

Challenge Pass: Have the athletes pass to each other creating a challenge for the receiver. This means the passer should purposely throw the ball to the sides, low, high, fast, and slow to work on the athlete’s receiving skills. Make sure to work both sides. If sufficient staff is available, it is good to have a staff member be the passer and the athletes can then practice accurate passing back to the staff member.
High Pass: The two partners practice their high passes but over exaggerating the height of the pass.

Keep Away: One player is given a ball (have the athletes back up against the wall or have them out in the open), an able-bodied staff member stands over the athlete and for a one minute period tries to aggressively knock the ball out of the athletes hands (be careful not to be too aggressive and hurt the player or not allow any success, push them to their limits, but allow them some success). The player must maintain the 10 seconds no dribble rule. After about a minute, have the players switch and repeat with the new player. Then start the rotation again until the station time elapses.

Medicine Ball: This drill involves regular passing, but a heavier ball is used. A basketball should be used first and then later in the season maybe the high pointers can go to a lightweight medicine ball. Make sure the athletes are careful with their shoulders and practice utilizing both arms to pass.

Over / Under: The station needs two balls. Each player has a ball and they face each other about 10-15 feet apart. One teammate passes in the air (chest pass) and the other does a bounce pass. The passes are done simultaneously. Continue and at a designated time, one teammate will be the lead and will call switch. At that time, they rotate throwing a bounce pass and a chest pass. Put a team challenge for the most completed passes without a turnover.

Partner Reverse: Two teammates line-up facing a side-line (side-by-side). The first teammate pulls the chair back, rolls/turns outside (towards the opposite wall) his/her stationary teammate, and then pull his/her chair in next to his/her teammate on the opposite side where s/he started. The second teammate now does the same thing and they continue this partner reverse for the duration of the time.

Sprints: Full out sprints to ¾ court.

Stop & Starts: Start on the end-line, take three pushes from a stop position. Work on the initial start-up phase of the push (short quick strokes) and then have the athlete come back to a stop and repeat the process.

Tip Drill: Each partner should have a ball. They practice throwing the ball with two hands over their heads on the wall. Ideally, they are trying to catch it and toss it back-up without having to bring the ball or their arms down. They will quickly feel the burn.

Ups and Backs: Pick 4-5 lines with-in the front court. Have the athletes line-up on the end line. They will push forward to the first line and then pull backwards. They will repeat this to each line designated and then start from the first line again. Line examples can be the key line, volleyball boundary line, another line before the free throw line, and then the free throw-line. You want the furthest line to be the free-throw line.

Wall Ball: There should be two lines placed on the court about 8-12 feet away from wall and about 10-15 feet apart, they should be perpendicular to the wall (once you practice this with the team they will get a feel for the distances). The athlete then passes the ball off the wall at an angle from behind one of the lines, s/he then has to push to retrieve the ball, then turning and throwing the ball from the opposite line. This process is repeated.

There are many more drills that can be added into your station drill options. These are just a few!
GLOSSARY

10 SECOND RULE:

10 SECOND RULE: When inbounding, the ball must be released by the inbounder and touched by any player or wheelchair on the court within 10 seconds.

In the Key: An offensive player may remain in the key for only 10 consecutive seconds.

Ten Seconds without a Dribble: The ball-carrier must bounce or dribble the ball every 10 seconds.

15 SECOND VIOLATION: When the offense, after obtaining possession of the ball in the backcourt, fails to move (pass or carry) the ball from the backcourt over the half-court line into the front court within 15 seconds.

ALTERNATE POSSESSION: The process of alternating the possession of the ball following jump ball and held-ball situations.

BACKCOURT: Half of the playing court which contains the goal line a team is defending.

BACKCOURT VIOLATION: When offense possesses the ball in their front court and one of their players is the last person to touch the ball in the front court before it enters the backcourt and an offensive player is the first person to touch the ball in the backcourt.

BALL-HANDLER: Offensive player designated to handle the ball.

BLOCKER: Offensive player who positions himself to prevent an opposing player from obstructing an offensive play.

BOUNDARY LINES: Lines marking the perimeter of the playing court.

CAPTAIN: Player(s) designated to lead a team while on the court. The only player who is eligible to communicate with the referee on the court.

CASTERS: Front and rear wheels of a rugby chair, usually small airless, hard rubber wheels.

CENTER: Player who defends the middle (center) of the key.

CENTER LINE: Marked line dividing the front court from the back court. The center line is considered part of the back court.

CHARGED TIME-OUT: When either team uses one of their four allotted time-outs.

CHARGING: When a player makes forceful contact with an opponent without an attempt to stop, slow down or change directions.

CHASER: The defender who plays outside the key area.

COACH: Person designated to give formal instruction and leadership to a team during the season.

CONES: Pylons (usually orange in color) used to mark the boundaries of the goal line - The base of each cone should be at least 10 X 10 inches.

CORNERS: The outer areas (away from the middle) of the key.

CUSHION: Used by some players to aid in seating position and protect against pressure sores on their buttocks.

DEAD BALL: Any time an official blows their whistle during play after a goal, violation, foul, held ball, end of period or stoppage of play.

DOUBLE TEAM: When a team uses two players to cover one player of the opposing team.
DRIBBLE: A positive act of bouncing the ball on the floor.

ENDLINE: Each line marking the end of the playing court.

EQUIPMENT TIME-OUT: An uncharged time-out used to adjust any player’s equipment on the court. If the equipment time-out exceeds one minute, the team of the player needing the equipment adjustment must substitute another player or a time-out will be charged to their team.

FAKE: Any motion with the chair, ball or body to deceive an opponent.

FIFTH WHEEL: Additional 1-2 small wheels attached behind the wheelchair frame, designed to prevent the player and their chair from falling backwards.

FOOTPLATE/FOOT REST: Front portion of the chair on which the player’s feet are positioned - The footplate usually can be adjusted to position the player’s feet higher or lower.

FRONT COURT: Half of the playing court where the offense is designated to score.

FUMBLE: When the ball-carrier accidentally drops or is forced to drop the ball, causing it to be free for the first person that can get to the ball to obtain possession. However, team control is maintained until a new possession is established.

GAIN ADVANTAGE: When a player performs any maneuver that gives their team a strategic advantage.

GLOVES: Hand protection

GOAL: Awarded when the ball-carrier touches the goal line with any two wheels while having full possession of the ball.

GOAL LINE: Marked line (8 meters) between the goal posts which a player’s two wheels must touch in order to score.

HEAD OFFICIAL: Tournament official designated to supervise all referees and umpires and make all decisions pertaining to ruling protests and or any official game conductor procedures.

HELD BALL: When opposing players share control of the ball, a ball becomes lodged under or between players’ chairs, or the ball goes out-of-bounds simultaneously off two players of opposing teams.

HOLE: A space between two players, usually in the key area - Also referred to as a gap, lane or chute.

IN & OUT: When a player touches the goal line with one wheel and then returns that wheel to the court prior to the second wheel touching the goal line. The penalty is a loss of possession.

INBOUNDER: Player who throws the ball in from the sideline or endline.

JUMP BALL: Tip off at the beginning of a game or an overtime period.

JUMP CIRCLE: Marked circle in the center of the court where the tip off takes place.

JUMPER: Player from each team who is designated to tip off the ball at the beginning of the game or overtime period.

KEY: 8M X 1.75M rectangular area centered on each endline.

LIVE BALL: 1) After the ball has reached its highest point in a jump-ball, it is tapped by the first player or 2) After a throw-in from out-of-bounds, it touches a player or wheelchair on the court.
MECHANICAL ADVANTAGE: Any wheelchair modification that gives a player an advantage over another.

OFFICIALS TIME - OUT: Stoppage of play for officials to clarify any matter pertaining to the game.

OUTLET: Player who positions himself to receive a pass from the inbounder with the intention of directly returning the ball to the inbounder.

PADDING: Any soft material used to protect players from injury - Players may pad themselves or their chairs for safety.

PENALTY: Any infraction of the rules (violation or foul) that is assessed.

PENALTY BOX: Area along the sideline opposite the scorer's table where the penalty official records fouls and where penalized players are stationed for the duration of their penalty (1 min. or goal release).

PENALTY GOAL: Goal that is awarded when a defender has a foul that could have prevented the ball-carrier from scoring.

PENALTY KEEPER: Person designated to record and monitor penalties during the game.

PHYSICAL ADVANTAGE: When a player pushes off the floor while possessing or attempting to possess the ball.

PICK: Player who moves into advantageous position making chair contact with an opposing player.

PLAYER CONTROL: When a player has the ball in sole possession and is in full control of the ball.

POSITION: Desired place on court to gain advantage over an opponent.

POINTS ON FLOOR: Total number of classification points allowed on the floor of the four players on the court can not exceed 8 points.

PRESS: When a defensive team applies pressure to the offensive team, attempting to cause a turn over. Usually executed during an inbounding situation in the backcourt.

POSSESSION: When a player or team has control of the ball.

POST-UP: When an offensive player establishes position (posts up) along the goal line to receive a pass and potentially score.

POWER PLAY GOAL: Goal scored while the defensive team has a player in the penalty box.

PUSHING: Shoving, boosting or similar action which is created by repeated pushes of the wheels after initial contact such that a player is moved away from their position.

PUSHRIMS: Rim on the outside of each rear wheel which a player contacts (pushes) in order to propel their chair.

PYLONS: Used to mark the boundaries of the goal line - The base of each pylon/cone should be at least 10 X 10 inches.

RAISED SPOKEGUARDS: Spokeguards which protrude from the spokes, but do not extend beyond the Pushrims. Specifically designed to prevent a player from holding their opponents wheelchair with their front footplate.

RECEIVER: Player whose assignment is to position them self to receive a pass.
REFEREE: Official responsible for enforcing the rules and conduct during the game.

REGULATION BALL: Soft Touch Volleyball, 6 pounds pressure and solid white in color used for Wheelchair Rugby (can order USQRA approved ball from www.quadrugby.com).

REGULATION OVERTIME: Three minute period played to determine the winner of a game which is tied after regulation play. There is no limit to the number of time-outs that can be played in a game.

RIDGED FRAME: Solid non-folding wheelchair frame

ROLL BARS: A device located under the footplate to allow the footplate to glide on the floor and prevent the wheelchair from tipping over forward - Also helps prevent scuffing of the playing surface.

SCORE KEEPER: Person designated to record goals, fouls and time-outs during the Game.

SCORING TABLE: Table at mid-court where scorekeepers and timekeepers work during a game.

SHORT-HANDED GOAL: Goal scored while the offensive team has fewer players on the court, usually when one or more of their players is serving a penalty in the penalty box.

SIDEGUARDS: Partitions between a player and the rear wheels on their wheelchair to protect them and their clothing - They usually are made of cloth, metal or plastic.

SPOKEGUARD: Plastic or metal disc covering that attaches to the spokes or the handrim of each rear wheel to prevent damage to their wheel. Also useful in avoiding picks from opponents.

STOPPAGE OF PLAY: Occurs after any goal, violation, foul, time-out and end of period.

STRAPS: Strapping to secure a player's position in or to their wheelchair - Bungee cords, nylon webbing with Velcro, used tire tubes, or tape are commonly used.

SUBSTITUTE: Player who checks in at the scorer's table and is prepared to enter the game and replace a teammate at the next opportunity (dead ball).

SUBSTITUTION AREA: Designated area on either side of the scorer's table where a substituting player waits to be called onto the court by an official.

TEAM BENCHES: Area on each side of scorer's table reserved for participating teams during a game.

TEAM CONTROL: A team controls the ball when any member of the team has control of the ball or was the last player to touch the ball.

THROW-IN: Used to put the ball back in play after a goal, violation, foul, time-out or any other stoppage in play.

TIMEKEEPER: Person who runs the game clock.

UMPIRE: An official who shares responsibility with the referee during the game.

UNFAIR ADVANTAGE: When a player goes out-of-bounds to gain advantage.

WAISTBELT: Belt or strapping used to secure the hips and / or midsection of a player to their wheelchair for stability and safety (Also referred to as a seatbelt or kidney belt).

WINGS: A shield of metal or plastic, attached to a chair frame, to protect the area between the front of the rear wheel and front bumper from being easily picked by an opponent. Check the rules for specifications on the legal height and dimensions of the area.
APPENDICES

Wheelchair Rugby Skills Sheet

Wheelchair Rugby Stretching Program

Rotator Cuff Exercise Program
BlazeSports Wheelchair Rugby

BlazeSports Clubs of America
Rugby Skills Sheet Developed by: Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation

| Athlete Name: ________________________________ | Age: _________ | Date of Assessments: (1) __________ (2) __________ (3) __________ |
| Disability: _____________________________________ | Staff Completing Assessment: ________________________ | Sport: ________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude / Speed / Endurance</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempt 1</td>
<td>Attempt 2</td>
<td>Attempt 3</td>
<td>Attempt 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of practice athlete can participate in (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athlete’s attitude (on &amp; off court)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 meter sprint (see skill sheet)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance Sprint (see skill sheet)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Laps around gym in 5 minutes (cones in four corners)</td>
<td>Rt. ___</td>
<td>Lft. ___</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair Maneuver Ability</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slalom w/ ball (see skill sheet)</td>
<td>Rt. ___</td>
<td>Lft. ___</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slalom w/out ball (see skill sheet)</td>
<td>Rt. ___</td>
<td>Lft. ___</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ups and Backs (see skill sheet)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can balance chair in tilt position (how long)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can transfer to chair independently</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ball Handling / Passing / Receiving</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance: ______</td>
<td>R.t. ___</td>
<td>Ctr. ___</td>
<td>Lft. ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance: ______</td>
<td>R.t. ___</td>
<td>Ctr. ___</td>
<td>Lft. ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary dribble w/ right hand (how many in 20 sec.)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary dribble w/ left hand (how many in 20 sec.)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passes received (#times out of 10, from ______ distance)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive a pass while in motion (#times out of ten, ______ distance)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive a bounce pass (#times out of ten, ______ distance)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrieve ball from floor--dominate hand (5 attempts)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrieve ball from floor-non-dominate hand (5 attempts)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can hold ball above head (15 seconds)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of Game</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of defense (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of offense (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of classification (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of rules of the game (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of wheelchair components and maintenance procedures</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can assemble / disassemble chair (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can change tire independently (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates appropriate hygiene of chair &amp; body (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands the use of and placement of straps (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of chair maintenance (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of chair adjustments (%)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rugby

Approximate time to complete = 12-15 minutes

A stretch should pull and it may feel like a "good hurt", but it should not cause or reproduce pain - ease off or change your position if you feel pain.

Neck Stretches

Sit in a position that is comfortable. Very slowly roll your head around in a full circle as you keep your back straight. While you are rolling your head around slowly you may feel that you should stop and hold a stretch at a particular place that feels tight. Do so, but don't stand. If you are holding a position, be relaxed and the area will gradually loosen up.

Upper Trapezius Stretch

Hold on to wheel or wheel rim with one hand, and lean the opposite way. Look straight ahead, and hold 30 seconds. Turn and look toward the floor while continuing to lean, and hold for another 30 seconds. Repeat for opposite side. Stretch is felt across neck and top of shoulder.

Trunk Rotation Stretch

Place right forearm on outside of left thigh. Pull chest, shoulders, and head around to the left. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat for opposite side.

Pectoralis Stretch

Sit next to a wall or door frame. Reach one arm behind you against wall or door frame. Keep your elbow straight. Lean or push forward until stretch is felt across chest and front of shoulder. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat for opposite side.

Stretch of External Rotators

Reach one hand behind chair, palm facing out. Slide hand up toward shoulder blades. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat for opposite arm.
REMEMBER TO BREATHE..............................DO NOT HOLD YOUR BREATH

Stretch of Internal Rotators

Sitting, __one__ forearm on table with elbow bent. Lean chest forward. Stretch is felt in front of shoulder. Hold __30__ counts. Repeat

Triceps Stretch

Hold your right elbow with your left hand, then gently pull elbow behind head until an easy tension stretch is felt in shoulder or back of upper arm (triceps). Hold an easy stretch for 30 seconds. Do not overstretch.

Biceps Stretch

Reach behind you, __elbow straight and palm up__. Hold on to a doorknob or rest hand on a table top. Push chair forward until stretch is felt in biceps and front of shoulder. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat for opposite arm.

Wrist Stretches

Bend __one__ hand up using opposite hand. Hold __30__ counts. Bend hand down and hold. Repeat

Deltoid Stretch

Hold your right arm just above the elbow with your left hand. Now gently pull your elbow toward your left shoulder as you look over your right shoulder. Hold stretch for 30 seconds. Do both sides.

Stretch of Shoulder Adductors

Sitting, __one__ arm on table with palm up. Lean body to table, sliding arm out to side. Stretch is felt under shoulder. Hold __30__ counts. Repeat

Apply stretch by pushing against palm or back of hand. Try not to apply stretch against the fingers (to preserve tenodesis).
Rotator Cuff Exercise Program

This exercise program was designed for the wheelchair user/athlete to assist in the prevention/treatment of shoulder pain. These exercises target the rotator cuff and posterior shoulder girdle.

These exercises should be done DAILY without fail. A few things to remember:

Exercises should not cause pain; if you can only do 5 reps without pain then just do 5, as you gain strength the pain will be eliminated allowing for increased repetitions.

Start without any weight and complete 10 repetitions. Once you can achieve 10 reps of each exercise without any increased pain, increase repetitions by 2-5 until you can do 30. When you can do 30 reps without pain add a #1 cuff weight, decrease reps to 10 and, begin to increase reps as before.

The same process applies to the therapy band exercises. Start with 10 reps (less if they increase pain) and increase as above. The beginning color is yellow, then green, blue, black and silver is the most resistance.

You can modify these exercises as needed, i.e. use only one arm at a time with the exercises on the tummy or do them from your chair by bending over at the waist putting your chest on your thighs.