

Para-Sailing

Para-Sailing is the sport of sailing designed for those with physical, motor or visual impairments. The Para-Sailors compete in one-person, two-person or three-person boats and all competitions are mixed (open to males and females).

Classification

In Para-Sport classification provides the structure for fair and equitable competition to ensure that winning is determined by skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability and mental focus – the same factors that account for success in sport for able-bodied athletes.

The Para-Sport classification assessment process identifies the eligibility of each Para-Athlete's impairment and groups them into a sport class according to the degree of activity limitation resulting from their impairment.

Classification is sport-specific as an eligible impairment affects a Para-Athlete's ability to perform in different sports to a different extent. Each Para-Sport has a different classification system.

More information on classification and sport classes is available under 'Classification detail' below.

Qualification – the road to Rio

A total of 80 places will be available with a guaranteed 11 women and 69 open gender positions.

Only one boat per nation can qualify for each event. The first qualification regatta was the 2014 IFDS Sailing World Championships in which the eight highest boats in the single-person, the five highest in the two-person and the seven highest in the three-person boat booked their ticket for Rio 2016.

The second qualification regatta was the 2015 Combined World Championships in Melbourne, where New Zealand qualified a boat in all three events being staged at Rio.



“The 2015 Para World Sailing Championships were sailed in late November 2015 in Melbourne, Australia where four New Zealand Paralympic campaign crews were racing across each of the three Paralympic events. The regatta provided nations not yet qualified for the 2016 Rio Paralympics the last opportunity to earn national qualification, and New Zealand successfully secured the right to send a boat to Brazil in all three Paralympic events.”

“National qualification is a key milestone for all sailors aiming to compete at the 2016 Paralympic Games. The next goal for them will be to convince the selectors that they have met the Yachting New Zealand nomination criteria, by demonstrating that they are capable of winning a Paralympic medal in Rio next year.”

David Abercrombie, Chief Executive, Yachting New Zealand

Rio 2016 Para-Sailing

There are three events which take place at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games: the Single-Person Keelboat (2.4mR), the Two-Person Keelboat (SKUD18) and the Three-Person Keelboat (Sonar). The single-person is a mixed competition (open to males and females) and each two-person boat must have one male and one female participant. Meanwhile, Para-Athletes of any gender can compete in the three-person event.

The Para-Sailors are all classified with a sport class from 1 to 7, with 7 indicating the least severe impairment and one the most severe eligible impairment. Each crew in the three-person event cannot exceed 14pts.

During the competition Para-Sailors race over a series of races accruing points for finishing positions, ie, 1pt for first, 2pts for second, etc. The boat at the end of the regatta with the least number of points is declared the winner.

Medal events: Three mixed events.

Where: Marina da Gloria, Copacabana.

When: Thursday 8 September to Tuesday 13 September 2016.

More info: www.rio2016.com/en/paralympics/sailing

The Stars of Para-Sailing

Australia's Daniel Fitzgibbon, the reigning Paralympic and IFDS World Champion in the two-person SKUD18, is one of the most high-profile names in a Para-Sport which is growing in popularity. Other leading names include the experienced Paralympic sonar champion, Udo Hessels, of the Netherlands, Great Britain's current Paralympics 2.4mR title-holder, Helena Lucas and Heiko Kroeger, the German who finished one place behind Lucas at London 2012.

Recent successful New Zealand Para-Sailors include the SKUD18 combination of Tim Dempsey and Gemma Fletcher, 2.4mR sailor Paul Francis and Sonar hopefuls, Richard Dodson, Andrew May and Chris Sharp. They will be vying for selection for Rio.

Did you know?

- The reigning Paralympic 2.4mR champion, Helena Lucas of Great Britain, has also performed in top-level able-bodied competition. Competing alongside Annie Lush and Lucy McGregor, Lucas helmed the boat which won silver in the 2008 Olympic Test Event.
- For the two-person SKUD18 event, the crew must include a minimum of one woman with a disability and at least one Para-Sailor with a 1-2pt classification.
- The most successful nation in the history of Para-Sailing at the Paralympic Games is Germany with two gold and three silver medals in total. A total of ten countries have climbed the medal podium in the history of the Para-Sailing at the Paralympic Games.
- Despite boasting a proud sailing tradition, the best finish a Kiwi has attained in Para-Sailing at a Paralympic Games since it became a full medal event was sixth in the 2.4mR event by Andrew May at Sydney 2000.
- The 2.4mR boat used for the one-person competitions is sailed without a spinnaker, but uses a whisker-pole for the jib.
- Alexander Wang-Hansen of Norway, the London 2012 Paralympic sonar bronze medallist, has sailing in his blood. He is the older brother of Olympic windsurfer Sebastian Wang-Hansen, and his cousin, Mats Wang-Hansen, is a former world champion sailor.



Terminology

Paralympian	A Para-Athlete who has taken part in Paralympic Games.
Sonar	The 7m-long keelboat used for the three-person events.
SKUD18	The lead-assisted skiff boat used for the two-person events.
2.4mR	The 4.16m long sail boat, which is used for the one-person events in Para-Sailing.
Fleet racing	The competition format where entries race against each other around a course, a format used by all Paralympic events.
Tiller	The handle attached to the rudder used to steer a boat.

Timeline

- 1988** The International Handicap Sailing Committee is founded.
- 1990** Para-Sailing debuts as an exhibition sport at the World Games for the Disabled.
- 1996** The sport appears as a demonstration Para-Sport at the Atlanta 1996 Paralympic Games.
- 2000** Para-Sailing makes its debut as a full medal Para-Sport at the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games with the one-person 2.4mR and three-person Sonar events.
- 2008** The two-event SKUD18 is introduced into the programme at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games.
- 2012** A total of 80 competitors took to the water from 23 countries across the three events at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Classification detail

Sport classes:

The Para-Sailors are classified with a sport class from 1 to 7, with 7 indicating the least severe and 1 the most severe eligible impairment. The allocation of sport class is carried out by a panel of classifiers who complete a physical assessment with each Para-Sailor.

The following are the benchmark profiles of Para-Athletes in each sports class:

- Sport class 1** Para-Athletes may have complete quadriplegia, a double through-shoulder amputation or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types.
- Sport class 2** Para-Athletes may have a double above-elbow amputation, single above-elbow amputation and single below-elbow amputation, or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types.
- Sport class 3** Para-Athletes may have a single above-knee amputation and single above-elbow amputation, double below-elbow amputation or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types. These Para-Athletes may also have a visual impairment.
- Sport class 4** Para-Athletes may have a single through-shoulder amputation, double above-knee amputation, double below-knee amputation without prostheses, single above-knee and single below-knee amputation without prostheses, or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types.
- Sport class 5** Para-Athletes may have a single above-elbow amputation, single above-knee amputation and single below-knee amputation with prostheses or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types. These Para-Athletes may also have a visual impairment.
- Sport class 6** Para-Athletes may have a double below-knee amputation with prostheses, single below-elbow amputation or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types.

Sport class 7 Para-Athletes may have a single above-knee amputation, single below-knee amputation without prosthesis (excluding Symes amputation or equivalent) or an equivalent activity limitation in sailing caused by the other eligible impairment types. These Para-Athletes may also have a visual impairment.

Events:

Three-person keelboat – to make sure that no crew has an advantage or disadvantage in competition due to impairment, each crew is only allowed a maximum of 14 pts.

Two-person keelboat

One Para-Sailor has to be allocated the sport class TPA and the other one has to be allocated the sport class TPB. One of the crew members must be female. The sport class TPA includes Para-Athletes with more severe impairments, which are equivalent to sport class 1 or 2. Para-Athletes with complete tetraplegia or a double above-the-elbow amputation could, for example, compete in the TPA sport class. The sport class TPB means that a Para-Athlete only has to meet the minimum impairment criteria for Para-Sailing. Therefore, Para-Athletes of all seven sport classes could compete in the TPB sport class, including those with visual impairment.

Single-person keelboat

To sail on the single-person keelboat Para-Athletes only have to pass the minimum impairment criteria.

For further details please go to www.paralympics.org.nz or to www.hpsnz.org.nz