



Cricket Federation for People  
with Disabilities

[www.cfpd.org.uk](http://www.cfpd.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number 1046858

## Wheelchairs on the Wicket



*The Wildgoose Way*

Altering people's lives through sport  
Members of the ECB Disability Management Committee

**Q1.****Will wheelchairs damage the wicket?*****Definitely not.***

A 12 stone fast bowler jumping into his delivery stride will do far more damage than if he was bowling in a wheelchair. Out fields will also suffer far less damage from the wheelchair player than from any other fielder, even when very soft.

**Point to note.**

Players with a disability (including wheelchair players) have been playing on cricket pitches for over 18 years and these include- Lords, Trent Bridge, Edgbaston, Somerset, Rosebowl, Headingley, Dorset, Gresford, Shifnal, Luctonians, Newport, Oswestry, Marchweil, Whittington, St.Georges, Newport in Gwent, and many other grounds, there has not been one single complaint made to the CFPD and in fact the opposite has been true.

**Q2.****Although I am a qualified ECB Coach,  
I am nervous about coaching Players with Disabilities.*****What is it like?***

We all have experienced these feelings when coaching a group for the first time. Feel assured that those feelings very quickly disappear the moment you make contact with the group. Why? Because you very soon realise that they are just players that happen to have a disability.

They are fun to work with and keen to do well.

We suggest that you may prefer to take a cricketing friend along to assist you for the first session.

**Points to note 1.**

Coach with enthusiasm – make it fun and you will be amazed at the way they play the game.

John Barclay the past Chairman of ECBCA is a good supporter of the CFPD and Disability Cricket, he is an excellent example of a coach who coaches with enthusiasm. His enthusiasm and inspiration, rubs off onto everyone he coaches.

The first session in 1989 was undertaken with a junior coaching kit and tennis balls. Kwik Cricket Sets with wind and tennis balls are used in the early coaching sessions with new groups. The Easton Incrediball is used for matches.

ECBCA Coaches can order the following through 'The Association' or maybe through their Cricket Development Officer.

- First Aid Kit No581;
- Kwik Cricket Kit K001;
- Kinder Set K007; For Juniors and players with very weak upper body strength.
- Windballs C014;
- One Set of Training Cones W511;

### Points to note 2,

- Tennis balls may be purchased very cheaply and a seam may be drawn on them to keep costs down The ECB inform coaches that tennis balls can cause eye damage when struck very hard, **so use for catching and fielding purposes only.**
- Players like to purchase their own bats so stress the need to check on its balance and weight etc., and encourage them to have their names put on the back of the bat.
- Bats are often left behind or finish up in a club kit.

### **Q3.**

#### **Is it best to hold the first few coaching sessions indoors or outdoors?**

Generally, we coach indoors in the winter and outdoors in the cricket season, but it is up to the organiser of the session in consultation with the coach.

#### Point to note.

If your group has players with severe learning disabilities, one or two may wander off occasionally and even though this is rare, it can cause real problems if you are on your own.

A coaching colleague working on his own outdoors in his first session in Hertfordshire wore himself out chasing after players in an open environment.

Generally, groups will have carers and parents on hand to help.

The advice would be to hold your first sessions indoors if you feel it is safer to do so. Safety is paramount.

### **Q4.**

#### **Would you recommend that I involve some of the carers and parents to assist in the sessions?**

Yes we certainly do, in fact, it is vital to recruit them and give them a role in the running of the team.

They will be needed for fundraising, assisting with transport and helping in the coaching sessions.

They can help from a safety angle, retrieve balls and learn enough basics to allow them to carry on practicing at home. They can also take the group or team forward by arranging matches, setting up leagues, sitting on committees and future development.

### **Q5.**

#### **We are not interested in disability cricket, what good will it do us?**

A simple reply is that funding for **your club** is instantly made much easier. Many cricket clubs are looking to get involved because of the funding issues and we have received many invitations to run matches at cricket clubs. All new club-building developments must be disabled friendly. The new players with a disability will swell your membership, support club functions and bring friends along. They will sell raffle tickets and support the club as ordinary members do. They will also raise the clubs profile and its standing in the community.

**Q6.****Are you able to give us assistance and advice on development and coaching?**

Yes, we are able to give advice on coaching and development. We are generally able to assist in at least your first coaching session and provide coaching and development books upon request. The books have been designed for easy reading. We also provide equipment for new teams.

**Q7.****Is it dangerous for disabled people to play cricket?**

Our safety record to date is excellent for several reasons;

- We always strongly recommend that where possible, ECB Qualified Coaches, run the coaching sessions.
- We play with a much softer ball than the standard cricket ball.
- We coach with soft balls and the Incrediball.
- We have introduced categories to prevent players with high levels of disability from playing against players with low levels of disability.
- CC3 players (low levels of disability) may be able to play with a standard cricket ball.

Points to note.

Safety is paramount in all aspects of the sport.

**If vulnerable players are drafted into a match then the Incrediball must be used.**

***Do not take risks.***

## **Q8. What about insurance?**

We always recommend that individual cricketer's take out personal injury insurance. ECBCA Coaches are automatically insured and are now CRB tested. Volunteers can obtain forms from Social Services for CRB testing and it is free, anyone wishing to work with young or vulnerable people will need to be tested. If requested we will advise and assist in this process.

### Points to note.

Anyone wishing to claim against an organiser or a coach running a session because of a person being injured will need to prove negligence. The negligence usually takes the form of inadequate supervision and the rule of thumb for any dedicated coach or organiser, is that if a coach feels comfortable when running the session, he probably has adequate supervision. The golden rule is **never take chances that may result in safety being compromised.**

## **Q9. How do we raise funds?**

Here are a few suggestions that have worked for us.  
Apply to your local;

- Sports Council;
- Rotary Clubs;
- Lions;
- Round Table;
- Businesses, Companies and Firms.

### Additional

- Obtain books from a Library (or purchase) books giving details of companies and charities that give grants to disabled organisations.
- Also, pack bags in your local Supermarket (give the manager a ring).
- Run your own draw.
- Coffee mornings.
- Entertainment evenings.
- Celebrity Sportsperson Dinners.
- Joint ventures such as with your local Cricket Club, or other charities.

## **Q10. How do I find a group in my area?**

Speak to the Librarian in your local Library, they are often very helpful. Groups to look for, MENCAP, PHAB, and Special Olympics etc. Your local Youth Officer and Social Services are often good contacts. Press releases in local papers and radio can be very productive.

**Q11.****How can we manage, we do not have Disabled Access to our club?**

- For wheelchair access to external doors, a simple wooden ramp will often solve the problem provided that there are no more than three steps up to the door.
- Make sure the ramp is wide enough and safe.
- Toilets can usually accommodate wheelchair users in an emergency. The problem is often the length of the chair when turning into a toilet from a narrow corridor. For more information visit our web site at [www.CFPD.org.uk](http://www.CFPD.org.uk)

Points to note.

For a special day or event, mobile toilets are available at reasonable costs

**Q12.****Can they run between the wickets?**

Some players are able to run normally. People with high levels of disability run shorter distances.

People who are at a definite disadvantage and isolated in their team due to their disability, would be awarded a runner as long as the umpires agree that the disability severely restricts the player when running, compared to the other players in the match.

**Q13.****What equipment do I need?**

- First Aid Kit No 581.
- Kwik Cricket Kit K001.
- Kinder Set K007; For Juniors and players with very weak upper body strength.
- Windballs C014.
- One Set of Training Cones W511.

**Q14.**  
**Would it not be better to use a larger ball?**

**NO** For the following reasons;

- Even people with very high levels of disability adapt and cope with the right coaching.
- The players want to play proper cricket.
- They take pride in playing a national sport.
- They can all become cricketer's with the right coaching and when given the opportunity.

**Q15.**  
**Would a cricket coach with a disability be a better coach than a coach who is able-bodied?**

Many people with disabilities are very good coaches and any player with a disability should be encouraged to enrol and progress within the coaches disability module. It is worth noting that disability groups that we coach have mixed disabilities and it is important that any coach, coaching disability groups must coach with **fun** and **enthusiasm**. They must be good listeners and watch, learn and understand. Therefore, the answer is that they must be a good coach, (with or without a disability).

**Q16.**  
**I have difficulty understanding what some people with disabilities are saying to me and I do not wish to upset them.**

When working with players with high levels of disability we all experience difficulties understanding some players.

Always remind yourself that these are the players who gain so much from playing a competitive sport. They really do appreciate what you do for them and you will not upset them.

Points to note.

- Ask the player to speak slowly to you.
- Do not hesitate to ask them to repeat what they have just said.
- Often friends or colleagues will explain what they are saying to you.
- Remain cool and patient and you will soon start to understand them.

## **Q17. What are the categories?**

There are three categories, Zodiac, Zenith and Zephyr.

Zodiac for people with high levels of disability.

Zenith for people with medium levels of disability.

Zephyr for people with low levels of disability.

- Zodiac category would find it impossible to score a boundary in front of the wicket on a normal outdoor cricket pitch. They would find it very difficult to bowl a ball that would bounce only once before reaching the batting stumps, on a 22 yd pitch. (They play on a 16-yard pitch). Zodiac players would be at a severe risk of injury from every ball bowled with a hard cricket ball.
- Zenith category can play on a standard cricket pitch of 22 yards and have an obvious and noticeable disability. They would be at a serious risk of injury when playing with a hard cricket ball. They would be able to score fours and the occasional six when playing outdoors. They would be at an obvious disadvantage when playing against able-bodied cricketers.
- Zephyr players have low levels of disability and are able to play alongside and against able-bodied players. They would not be considered as being at undue risk when playing with a standard hard cricket ball.

## **How the profiles fit in with CFPD categories**

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The CFPD has 3 categories: CC1, CC2 and CC3. The profile information listed above should be used in conjunction with the definition we have always referred to for categories. We hope this information will fine tune and improve the categories to standardize the ability of players. For clarification, please contact Geoff Phillips, the Disability Adjudication Officer (see below).

As usual, the manager's ability to access the cricketing talent of the individual players is always important:

- How hard the player hits the ball.
- How fast the player bowls.
- How hard can the player throw the ball when fielding.
- How quickly can a player react to a ball travelling at speed either when batting or when in the field.

Also, remember that we have always encouraged CC1 players who are particularly talented to play CC2 matches if they are able to do so and similarly talented CC2 players can play in CC3 category, providing that they play with an incrediball and not a hard cricket ball.

# *The Wildgoose Way*

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There is a categories leaflet available on request.

If you have any queries, or require other leaflets, books or advice contact:

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**“Never put off until tomorrow**

**what you can do today”**

