

Following the cancellation of the 2020 Australian Athletics Championships, and the postponement of any athletics competition for a period of time, Athletics Australia had an opportunity to assess and amend the delivery of our National Competitions for Para Athletes with a significant amount of time to communicate and socialise any changes we feel appropriate to support the AA Para Athletics Strategy and the Paralympic Athlete Pathway.

This document outlines the changes that will take place to the delivery of National Para Competitions as at the 01/08/2020.

National Competition Age Groups

Core message:

The pre-existing National Championships age groups has been amended from **U16**, U20 and Open to **U15**, **U17**, U20 and Open.

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) The Under 17 and Under 20 age group align with the international body, World Para Athletics (WPA) age groups, allowing us to compare national performances with international benchmarks/competitors.
- 2) Aligning with the WPA U17 and U20 age groups allows us to grow our participation base by incorporating an Under 15 age group which would not otherwise be viable under the previous age group structure.
- 3) Para athletes are often selected for international teams earlier than their Able Body counterparts, the U15 group provides a pathway for younger Para Athletes to compete against similar aged athletes.

Notes/Implementation:

- 1) This amendment applies to the AA National Championships for Para Athletes and AA National Cross-Country Championship.
- 2) All Schools: In order to be consistent in competition delivery across the AA National Championships the All Schools ages offered for para athletes will now be U15 and U17.
- *U15 Viability* – To be considered a National Championships, an event must have 3 or more competitors. Following the closure of event entries at the 2021 Australian National Championships, AA will assess the field sizes to determine National Championships viability. In the circumstance that less than 3 athletes are entered into an age group for an event the following actions will be considered;
 - Combining the age groups to so that national medals can be awarded.
 - Running the event as a non-championship event (no medals awarded)

Implement Weights

Core Message:

The AA Para Implement Weights document has been amended to reflect the following age groups: U13, U15, U17, U20 & Open (Please see attached document).

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) To align with the international body, AA has adopted the WPA U17, U20 and Open official implement weights.
- 2) U13 and U15 implement weights allow for appropriate progression of implement weights throughout the age groups.
- 3) These changes rectify previous inconsistencies in implementation weight documentation.

Notes/Implementation:

- These changes will take effect as at the 01/07/2020.

Race Running

Core message:

Athletics Australia will now provide Race Running at our National Championships in the 100m event for Race Running Classes RR1, RR2, RR3.

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) Only the 100m will be available at this stage as this is a Paralympic pathway event and has comparative international data.
- 2) Race Running has been adopted by AA as the international governing body (WPA) has committed to investing in this classification through both the WPA Classification System, and WPA Championships.
- 3) Race Running provides an opportunity for para athletes who may otherwise have been ineligible under the 2018/2019 WPA classification system to compete.

Notes/Implementation:

- The Baseline Scoring System and AA Qualifying Standards for the 100m have been amended to include the three Race Running classes; RR1, RR2 & RR3.
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Athletes with Down Syndrome

Core message:

Athletics Australia now recognizes T/F20 – II-2 as a separate class for athletes who fit the below criteria (2). This will be a nationally recognized class given the classification T/F21.

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) This change has been made in consultation Sports Inclusion Australia (the Australian member of INAS – International Federation for Athletes with Intellectual Impairment).
- 2) The T/F21 Class includes those athletes with a formal diagnosis of Trisomy 21 or Translocation Down Syndrome.
- 3) Separating from the Intellectual impairment only group of F/T20, allows athletes with the T/F21 classification to compete against an equitable baseline score.

Notes/Implementation:

- Those athletes currently recognised by INAS on their National Classification System as T/F20-II2 will automatically be allocated a T/F21 classification within the Athletics Australia classification system. The implementation of this process will be communicated to all eligible T/F21 athletes and updated on the National Classification Masterlist by Athletics Australia.
 - This class is not recognised by WPA and therefore athletes that compete with this classification will not be eligible for AA selection onto WPA Championship and Paralympic Teams.
 - The Baseline Scoring System and AA Qualifying Standards have been amended to include the T/F21 classification for the following events – 100m, 200m, 400m, Long Jump, Shot Put, Discus, Javelin.
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Baseline Scoring System

Core Message:

An updated 2020/21 Baseline Scoring system will be used for all age groups to score multiclass events at the 2020/21 AA National Championships (Please see attached document)

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) This system has been created to lessen the discrepancies in the scores achieved by athletes in Pathway vs Non-Pathway events.
- 2) Baseline Performances have been established using World Record, World Ranking and Championship Performances where available.
- 3) In circumstances that an event/class has not been competed at the most recent WPA Championships/Paralympic Games, a regression analysis is performed on the available World

Record/Ranking to determine if further weighting needs to be applied to provide consistency in comparison with other classes.

Notes/Implementation:

- Further information regarding the Baseline Scoring system can be found in the attached document.
- The Baseline Scores for High Jump, Triple Jump and distances over 1500 metres have been removed as these events are not offered to para athletes at the national championships and there is insufficient international data to equitably score multiclass athletes across a broad range of classes.
- International data is limited for the classes T42-44 and T61-64 in some events. AA is monitoring these classes/international performances and may amend accordingly during the 2020/2021 athletics season.

Record Keeping

Core message:

The AA Para Records system will be amended to account for the new National Championships age groups (U15, U17, U20, Open) and the old records (U16, U18), will be frozen as at 01/07/2020

WHY (Purpose/Reasoning/Context):

- 1) The revised age groups and implement weights provided at National Competitions require a shift in record keeping age groups.
- 2) The alignment with WPA will allow AA to compare these records to International benchmarks and competitors.

Notes/Implementation:

- *Three-month amnesty period*; If a record was broken or set in any pre-existing age group (U16/U18/U20/Open), over the 2019/2020 Summer Season prior to the 01/07/2020 that have not been recognised in the updated records document (to be circulated – August, 2020), amendments will be accepted up until 1/11/2020.
- Further information regarding the eligible meets for para records and the record submission process to be released by AA shortly.