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Master's

Area of Research -
Adapted Physical Activity,
Faculty of Kinesiology,
Sport, and Recreation

Image created at the University of
Alberta Aquatic Centre – West Pool

Where do I fit?

Semi-finalist

Paralympic sport has a celebrated history, creating a place for athletes with impairment to compete at a level "parallel" to the Olympic Games. Athletes compete in a variety of sports that are adaptations of their mainstream counterparts (e.g. paraswimming) or that are specific to an impairment type (e.g. goalball for athletes with visual impairments). Within a number of these sports, athletes undergo some form of classification.

My research focuses on the experience of athletes with impairment as they go through the classification process, in the sport of paraswimming. This image portrays the vulnerability and uncertainty that comes with being classified. The process involves a bench test- where each joint / limb is assessed for range of motion and strength, a water test – where the swimmer is observed performing required strokes, and finally an observation of competition. As these athletes look toward their sporting goals and hopes of pursuing high level competition, a lot is at stake based on the subjective scores of a classifier. These two athletes capture the diversity within a class and depict the community that sport creates. This support system is highly valued as athletes navigate the challenges of classification and competition.