



PARACHEER INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

Due to recent changes within the structure of ParaCheer International CIO we thought it helpful to release this statement about the charities continued work and development within the ParaCheer divisions worldwide.

First and foremost, ParaCheer International CIO's vision and mission remains the same.

'To promote and support those with physical and sensory disabilities to participate in the sport of Cheerleading'

We have established ParaCheer as a recognised division within Cheerleading and achieved our goal of seeing ParaCheer divisions at the ICU World Championships and now at local and national competitions for Allstar Cheerleading around the world.

As ParaCheer continues to develop over time, our roles and purpose will change, but at the current time our focus is on the following activities:

- Run cheerleading workshops and classes for integrated groups of disabled and non-disabled people.
- Create rules and best practice guidelines for cheerleading event organisers to manage and judge ParaCheer divisions (competitive divisions for integrated teams) in cheerleading competitions.
- Create and run coaches training events to help cheerleading coaches feel confident teaching disabled people.
- Promote to the cheerleading community the benefits of integration and disabled people's participation in the sport.
- Assist disabled people who wish to become cheerleaders, or disabled people already participating in cheerleading, in finding suitable teams and coaches that will meet their needs.

NEW WEBSITE

We are pleased to announce the release of our new website with updated information about the division, team pages and coaching resources (to be coming soon).

If you'd like to stay updated on the developments of resources, please sign up to our Newsletter [here](#)

We welcome your feedback so please send us your comments to info@paracheer.org

ParaCheer international

NEW TRUSTEES

It is with sadness, but also great optimism for the future, that we announce a change to the ParaCheer International Board of Trustees. Having been part of the charity in its first 2.5 years and seeing the charities goal of the introduction of ParaCheer divisions at competitions worldwide met, Joanna Gamper, Jayme Rodgers and Andrea Kulberg have stepped down from their trustee roles. All three are still very keen to see the continued growth and development of the ParaCheer divisions and are open to pursuing opportunities to continue the charities goals where possible, but from within their own individual fields.

ParaCheer International CIO will continue under the guidance of the Chair, Rick Rodgers, and is excited to immediately welcome two new trustees to the board, Chantal Epp and Levi Martin.

We want to extend our appreciation to our departing trustees for all of their hard work in bringing ParaCheer International CIO to its current point, we wish them well in their future endeavours and we are excited to welcome our new trustees to the board to pursue our vision going forward.

We are still looking to fill further board positions and encourage interested parties to apply, especially if you have fundraising, social media or accountancy experience. We are also seeking someone to take on the role of Treasurer for the charity. If you are interested and would like to be apart of the future of ParaCheer, please contact us at info@paracheer.org.

THE PARACHEER DIVISION

ParaCheer is a new division within Cheerleading that made it's competition debut at the 2017 Cheerleading world championships, with the assistance of the [International Cheerleading Union](#) (ICU). ParaCheer involves mixed teams of disabled and non-disabled athletes, working together to create a routine that incorporates most of the elements of a current cheerleading routine – jumps, dance, stunts and tumbling (ParaCheer currently excludes Basket and Sponge Tosses). The rules and scoring guidelines for ParaCheer divisions take into account the technique adaptations required for people with many different impairments to perform the sport safely. ParaCheer divisions require a minimum of 25% of the team to have some form of physical or sensory impairment. A classification system is currently in development to enable a more even playing field for teams to compete against each other regardless of the amount of disabled athletes on the team or the severity of each athlete's impairment.

There are currently 3 ParaCheer divisions at competitions, these are:

Unified Cheer
Freestyle Pom
Hip-hop



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEN AND PARACHEER

There is currently a lot of confusion between the differences between SEN and ParaCheer.

SEN has a focus on those with learning disabilities whilst ParaCheer has a focus on those with physical and sensory disabilities. Whilst these disabilities can sometimes come hand in hand, when deciding in which division to start a team in, as a coach or to participate in as an athlete, you should think about how best that team or division can provide for your specific needs or those of your athletes.

There are currently already SEN divisions within most cheerleading competitions, for athletes with learning disabilities, often referred to as Special Needs athletes. These divisions are generally non-competitive and many of the athletes in these teams will have multiple and/or complex learning disabilities, as well as possibly having physical disabilities. Special Needs cheerleading teams usually have helpers or assistants who are on the mat with the participants during their routine, to aid them in executing the skills or to guide them through the routine.

ParaCheer is a **separate** division to SEN and focuses on creating an opportunity for athletes who have physical limitations, but who have the capacity to learn and memorise a full complex cheerleading routine, to compete at a high level alongside their peers, utilising the assistance of their team-mates in order to provide adaptations/support that make it possible for them to participate in all elements of the routine. The intention is not for ParaCheer to replace Special Needs cheerleading, but rather to offer another division alongside it. With the help of Special Olympics representatives the ICU have included competitive Special Athletes divisions in the upcoming 2018 world championships as well as the separate ParaCheer divisions which made its debut in 2017.

JOIN A PARACHEER TEAM NEAR YOU

There are now competing ParaCheer teams in multiple countries. Please visit [our teams page](#) for more information on how you can join or set up your own team.

If you already have a ParaCheer team set up and are not currently on our list, please get in touch with us on info@paracheer.org so we can put your information on the website.

WORKSHOPS

We are excited to share our upcoming workshops. The next one is on Feb 24th in Stoke-on-trent in association with Momentum Cheer UK. For more information on this workshop, please visit <https://www.paracheer.org/single-post/2018/01/21/ParaCheer-visits-Momentum>

To book onto the workshop visit <https://form.jotformeu.com/80207102780345>

If you are a Cheerleading Gym and interested in running a ParaCheer workshop with us, please get in touch with info@paracheer.org. We are happy to offer workshops anywhere in the world.