

# Equipment

## Sledge

The frame is made of aluminum or steel attached to a plastic bucket, which can be modified depending on the player's disability. The frame is set on two standard hockey skate blades. Players often start playing with the blades farther apart and move them closer together as their ability level increases. The height of the main frame must allow for the puck to pass underneath the sledge. Straps secure a player's feet, ankles, knees and hips to the sledge.



## Sticks

Sticks have a blade for puck handling and shooting at one end and metal picks for propulsion at the other. As in able-bodied hockey, there are both one-piece and two-piece sticks. Goaltenders sticks have an additional pick on the heel of the blade to provide goaltenders with increased mobility, as well as extra picks on the back of their catching gloves.



# Sledge Hockey & Hockey Canada

At Hockey Canada's Annual General Meeting in May 2004, the Board of Directors approved the full integration of sledge hockey within Hockey Canada. Sledge hockey had been an associate member of Hockey Canada since 1993. All levels of sledge hockey now fall under the supervision and direction of Hockey Canada.



# Get Involved In Sledge Hockey

Sledge hockey is open to anyone. To find out about clubs and teams in your area, or to follow the national team, visit [www.hockeycanada.ca/sledgehockey](http://www.hockeycanada.ca/sledgehockey)



# SLEDGE HOCKEY

[WWW.HOCKEYCANADA.CA/SLEDGEHOCKEY](http://WWW.HOCKEYCANADA.CA/SLEDGEHOCKEY)



## Origins

**Sledge hockey was invented at a rehabilitation centre in Stockholm, Sweden in the early 1960's,**

by a group of people who wanted to continue playing hockey despite their physical disabilities. They modified a metal frame sled (sledge) with two regular-sized hockey skate blades that allowed the puck to pass underneath. Using round poles with bike handles for sticks, the men played without any goaltenders. The sport caught on – by 1969, Stockholm had a five-team league that included athletes with a disability as well as able-bodied athletes.

At the recreational level, anyone can play sledge hockey, disabled and able-bodied. At the international level, however, only athletes with a disability in the lower part of their body can be classified by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) to participate.

## Rules

**Sledge hockey follows the rules of the IPC**, which are very similar to those of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), with a few sport-specific modifications. The ice surface and markings, nets and pucks are all the same as able-bodied hockey. Each team consists of six players on the ice, including a goalie. Among the sledge hockey rule modifications are the following:

- There is an additional infraction called teeing, assessed when a player charges and makes contact with an opponent using any part of the front radius of his or her sled.
- Players sit in specially designed sleds (sledges) instead of using skates.
- Players carry two sticks instead of one. These sticks are approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  the length of a regular hockey stick and have a different lie. In addition, the sticks have metal picks on the butt end which are used to propel the players on the ice.
- Player benches and penalty boxes are modified so that there is a low entrance to the bench as well as clear plexiglass so that players can see the play while they are not on the ice. If the arena has not been modified in this manner, players sit on the ice between the blue line and the red line while not in the play. Consult [www.hockeycanada.ca/sledgehockey](http://www.hockeycanada.ca/sledgehockey) for further information.

## International Competition

**The first international sledge hockey game** took place in the 1960's between one of the club teams in Stockholm and a club team from Oslo, Norway. Throughout the 1970's, Sweden and Norway continued to play each other a few times a year, and the sport really began to grow in the 1980's and 1990's. There are now over 15 countries regularly playing sledge hockey and the sport continues to grow quickly across the globe.

Sledge hockey made its Paralympic Winter Games debut in 1994 in Lillehammer, Norway, where team Sweden won the gold medal. The Norwegians won gold in Nagano, Japan in 1998, followed by the Americans in Salt Lake City, USA in 2002. Team Canada won their first gold medal in 2006 at the Games in Torino, Italy and followed that victory up with a victory at the 2008 World Championship.

Sledge hockey has become one of the biggest spectator attractions at the Paralympics as it is a fast-paced, highly physical game which often features intense action.

