

## **FRAME RUNNING**

Frame Running (previously called Race Running) can be enjoyed recreationally or competitively as an athletics event. UK Athletics is the National Governing Body for Frame Running.

The distances people compete over range from 60m up to marathon distance. It is currently (2023) not an Olympic Para event but is a World Championship Para Athletics event.

It's a form of adaptive running. To allow the athlete to run, the athlete is supported by a three wheeled frame. The frame gives the athlete support and stability. The sport is suitable for people, young and old, from 3 years old and above, who are affected by cerebral palsy or other disability that affects mobility and balance e.g., Muscular dystrophy, Parkinson's disease, or amputations.

### **HISTORY**

The sport started in 1991 in Denmark, and in 2001 became a CPISRA (Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association) development sport. The first CPISRA Race Running World Championships were held in 2005. The classification system started in 2013. There are currently two categories, T71 and T72. The sport was added to the World Para Athletics European Championships in 2018 and WPA World Championships in 2019.

### **POTENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS**

- Increased aerobic capacity and increased cardio-respiratory health.
- Increased muscular strength, improved motor control and coordination.
- Psychosocial benefits

### **FRAME RUNNING COMPETITION PATHWAY**

1. Club
2. National
3. CPISRA major competitions currently include 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m and 1500m for T71 and T72. 5000m may also be included.
4. World Para-Athletics major competitions, such as European (T71 and T72) and World Championships (T72) for 100m. Other distances may eventually be added.

### **TECHNICAL**

Every athlete is unique, with different mobility, movement, and strength. This means there is no standard running frame set up.

The first time on the bike, you will need to adjust the various adjustable parts until a position is comfortable for the athlete in order that they can run as freely as possible. The position of the feet is essential, as they need to be able to be in a position where the athlete can easily propel the frame forward without dragging their feet. The saddle should be at a height to maximise foot plant and knee lift.

Three basic positions on the Frame:

Spine Upright: this means most weight is on the saddle with the chest plate being used for balance support.

Spine Angled: this means the chest support is taking some of the body weight resulting in less weight on the saddle. This can mean its easier to move the legs compared to the upright position. It may be also easier to push off.

Spine Horizontal: This position is distributing the body weight across both the saddle and the chest plate, providing the least weight on the saddle and therefore on the legs.

Connie Hansen suggests the weight can be divided 30-60% on the legs, 20-40% on the saddle and 20-30% on the chest plate and the handle bars. Elbows should be in front of shoulders with half-stretched to almost fully stretched arms.

With children and beginners, you should aim for a position where the upper body is tilted 20-30 degrees forwards.

A more forward leaning position may allow the athlete to run faster, alleviate discomfort in the groin, and increase stability.

Some experienced runners put most of the weight on the chest plate and only a little on the saddle. The upper body is at an angle of about 40-60 degrees over the chest plate. People who run in this way often have better control over their shoulders and arms than their legs and hips. They swing the legs forward and work a lot with the lower back while they pull the handlebar. They have the chest support so low that the upper part of the hip almost touches the support.

The three wheels form a triangle, and the greatest stability is obtained when the body is pulled back towards the rear wheels. Therefore, the chest plate and saddle should be adjusted so the body's centre of gravity is placed 15-20cm in front of the rear axle.

Saddle position- adjust the saddle height, angle, and seat post length so that the athlete can stand on the balls of their feet with heels up. Propel forward by kicking legs back.

Chest plate- the chest plate can move in two ways: up and down or in and out. The angle can also be changed. It should rest between your abdomen and breasts.

## **TRAINING**

A fully qualified Coach needs to be present at all training.

All athletes need to wear a cycle helmet.

Ensure the athlete can control the direction of the frame and has a degree of braking knowledge before using a track with other track users.

Complete beginners: you will need to get potential athletes "fit to train" and offer the athletes regular breaks. With youngsters the sessions need to be fun, diverse and action packed.

With more experienced competitive Frame Runners, training is identical to that of able-bodied athletes, with slight adaptations. To prevent injury, sessions will begin with a warm up and running drills and end with a cool down and stretches. The main element of the session would be a sprint or endurance technical or interval session with recovery periods. Strength and conditioning should be included weekly, with adaptations, in individual training plans.

## **COMPETITIONS**

The judging and timing of Frame Running events are conducted in the same manner as applied to wheelchair races and defined in Rules 19.3 and 20.3 of the World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations. At the start no part of the front wheel is to touch the start line and at the finish the time is taken when the centre of the front wheel axle crosses the finish line.

## **FRAME RUNNING BIKES SAFETY CHECKS**

Remember to:

Always check the wheel nuts are tight, tyres are suitably inflated, and brakes are working correctly.

If the frame has a dropped down link, always check that it is correctly in place.

If the frame has been used by someone else or has been adjusted, check nuts and bolts for chest plate, saddle and steering are tight.

For safety in races for beginners, and those unable to keep the frame in a lane at all times, keep a lane clear between participants and consider having a volunteer close to each athlete where assistance with steering/stopping may be required.

## **FRAME RUNNING BIKE Manufacturers**

There are two manufacturers of Frame Running bikes:

Connie Hansen based in Denmark \*

RAD Innovations based in USA

\*Connie Hansen, was a very successful wheelchair racer in the 1980s. She competed for Denmark many times in the Paralympics and World Championships winning 9 Gold, 4 silver and 1 bronze medals. She designed the "Petra" Frame Running bike, starting her company in 1991. There's now seven Petra sizes. She wanted "to give anyone who is unable to walk or run by themselves be able to say *I may not be able to walk, but I can run.*"