



# Showdown

Informational resource for coaches



# Contents

## Section One: Sight classifications

- 1.1 What are the sight classification categories?
- 1.2 Breakdown of categories

## Case study: Croysutt Warriors Showdown Club

## Section Two: Showdown

- 2.1 What is showdown?
- 2.2 History of showdown
- 2.3 Equipment used to play
- 2.4 How to get involved

## Section Three: Competitive showdown

- 3.1 National UK Showdown League
- 3.2 European Showdown competitions
- 3.3 IBSA World Games

## Section Four: Further information

- 4.1 Resources and guidance
- 4.2 Useful contacts
- 4.3 Best practices



## Section One: Sight classifications

Sight classifications are used to ensure fair competition and gives individuals the reassurance that they are competing against others on an even playing field.

Sight classifications are based on an individual's level of vision. Individuals will undertake a sight test which is then reviewed by a qualified classifier at British Blind Sport. They will assess:

- Visual acuity, which is how far you see directly in front
- Visual field, which is your peripheral/side vision.

An individual is then issued with a sight classification certificate that can be used when taking part in competitions.

### 1.1 What are the sight classification categories?

Classification categories are B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5, with B1 being the greatest level of sight loss.

B1, B2 and B3 sight categories are recognised by most sports for UK recreational competitions, as well as for International or Paralympic training pathways.

Sight classification categories are based on an individual's best corrected vision. Best vision means that if an individual's sight is different on each side, it will be based on the side where they have better vision. Corrected vision means what an individual can see with the use of glasses or lenses, even if this is something that they would not use when taking part in sport.

### 1.2 Breakdown of categories

**B1:** Athletes will have no light perception, or some light perception and the ability to perceive some movement, but an inability to recognise shapes.

**B2:** Athletes will have significantly limited vision, either in how far or how wide can be seen. This category includes being able to count fingers or being able to recognise/read something at a very short distance. It also includes athletes whose visual field is significantly reduced, even if visual acuity is higher.

**B3:** Athletes will have greatly limited visual acuity and/or limited visual field. B3 is the highest category used for most international and Paralympic sports.

To ensure fairness and consistency, British Blind Sport follows the sight classification guidelines set by the International Blind Sports Federation. For more information on sight classifications, please visit: [www.britishblindsport.org.uk/sightclassifications](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk/sightclassifications)

# Case Study: Croysutt Warriors Showdown Club

**Club name:** Croysutt Warriors Showdown

**Area:** Croydon, London

**How long has the club been running?**

3 years

**How many members does the club currently have?**

21 members in total

**Age range:** 14-65 years old

**How did the club get started?**

Croysutt Warriors Goalball Club has been running for 10 years and we wanted to widen our sports offering for those with a visual impairment. As showdown is a less physically demanding sport specifically designed for those with a visual impairment, their family and friends it was a good fit for us and so we have developed the club from there.

**How can people get involved in your club?**

We are open to all who want to play either socially or competitively, regardless of age or ability. Just come along to a session and give it a try.

**What has been the most memorable occasion for the club?**

Being part of the IBSA World Games in Birmingham 2023.

**Has there been any challenges or barriers that the club has had to face?**

Only taking delivery of the tables and equipment just before Covid and then having to wait until restrictions had been eased to start playing and those of getting a new club up and running.

**Has British Blind Sport helped your club or members in any way?**

BBS through the Together Fund have provided funding along with help with player classification and a lot of support and partnering to get a national network of clubs set up as part of the legacy of the IBSA World Games in Birmingham.

**What are the plans for the club for 2024?**

We want to continue to grow our membership along with the profile of showdown in the UK and give our members the opportunity to play in as many tournaments both domestic and international as possible to enable them to enjoy all of the benefits that they can derive from the physical, mental and social support the club provides.



## Section Two: Showdown

### 2.1 What is showdown?

Showdown is a fast-paced sport that is specifically designed for people with a visual impairment to enjoy playing. Showdown is a non-contact sport played with a specially designed table either by two players or in a team of three.

Showdown has been described as a combination of air hockey and table tennis. The aim of the game is to hit the ball off the side wall, along the table, under the centre screen, and into the opponent's goal.

The first player to reach 11 points, leading by two or more points, wins the set. Matches can be one, three or five sets, with the winner being the one who wins the most sets. Each player serves twice in a row. Players score two points for a goal and one point if their opponent commits various fouls such as; hitting the ball into the screen, hitting the ball off the table, or touching the ball with anything but the bat or batting hand.

The sport can be played in a room the size of a classroom or meeting room.



### 2.2 History of showdown

Joe Lewis, a Canadian who is registered blind, had an idea in 1977 to create a game or a sport which could be played recreationally and/or competitively without sighted assistance.

Patrick York, a Canadian athlete who is also blind, collaborated with Lewis on refinements to the rules and equipment. York was a major influence in creating the design of the table that is used to play showdown today.

After many years spent designing the first table, the first showdown game was played in 1980.

Showdown made its successful international debut as a demonstration sport during the 1980 Paralympic Games in Arnhem, The Netherlands.

In recent years, showdown has gained popularity around the world for its unique blend of skill, precision, speed, and adrenaline and it is played in 22 countries with the UK being one of the latest additions.

## 2.3 Equipment used to play

The table used to play showdown is made of wood. It is 1.2m wide and 3.7m long with radiused corners. There is a goal at each end with a screen at the halfway point set 10cm above the table's surface to allow sufficient space for the ball to pass under.

The hard plastic ball is 6cm diameter and has ball bearings within to indicate the location of the ball during play.

Bats are 30cm long overall and 7.5cm wide, shaped like a small cricket bat with curved ends.

All players wear eyeshades so that players of any sight classification can play together on the same level playing field.

Protective gloves are worn on the batting hand to prevent possible injury from being hit by the ball.

Score sheets for sets and matches comes in various formats. These are in the IBSA Showdown rules appendices. If you need support with this, UK Showdown can send you samples that can be easily printed out.



## 2.4 How to get involved

UK Showdown is the sport's governing body supported by British Blind Sport and can be contacted by email at [ukshowdown@gmail.com](mailto:ukshowdown@gmail.com), or by phone 07889648925.

The current clubs across the UK are:

- Croysutt Warriors (Croydon)
- Sheffield Strikers (Sheffield)
- Galloways Society for the Blind (Preston)
- Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind (Coventry)
- Sight Support Worthing (Worthing)
- The Albion Foundation + Sandwell (Oldbury)



## Section Three: Competitive Showdown

### 3.1 National UK Showdown League

A National Showdown League began in June 2024 which is a competitive club league for teams and individuals. Players play as part of a team to gain points for the team and also collect points as an individual.

There is a National Annual Showdown Cup competition which has team and individual competitions.

Details of this year's competition will be advertised in due course on the [BBS website](#).

### 3.2 European Showdown Championship

Each year, the IBSA European Showdown Championship is held in Europe with the chosen country differing each year.

A new country quota system has been developed by the IBSA Showdown Committee. As of publication in February 2024, the criteria is as follows:

- Each IBSA member country from Europe may enter two women and two men
- Players ranked in the top 12 of the international rankings in each category on February 28th, 2024, will automatically qualify, subject to the following restrictions:
  - The host country is entitled to enter one additional woman and one additional man
  - All the above criteria apply until a country reaches a total of three women and three men
- A wild card system will be implemented under the following conditions and used if necessary (if the category has not yet reached 32 participants):
  - If a country chooses to send fewer participants than its allowed quota, spots will be filled by offering wild cards in the respective categories considering:
    - The next position in the international ranking starts in 13th place
    - The player in question is not already registered
    - The player's country of origin has not already filled the maximum quota in the respective category

For more details and for the latest information, please visit:

[www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown](http://www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown)

There are several other competitions held throughout Europe each year. For the latest calendar of events, please visit: [www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown/calendar](http://www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown/calendar). Entry to some of these competitions is through the National Governing Body. Be sure to check the entry requirements for each competition.

### 3.3 IBSA World Games

Every four years, at the IBSA World Games, a showdown tournament is held. Entry for the competition is through UK Showdown and British Blind Sport.

The next IBSA World Games is due to be held in 2027 with the country and dates yet to be confirmed.



## Section Four: Further information

### 4.1 Resources and guidance

The full IBSA showdown rules can be downloaded from the IBSA website and these contain specifications for the equipment and a full calendar of events:

[www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown/overview/](http://www.ibsasport.org/sports/showdown/overview/)

Any questions or clarification on rules can be directed through UK Showdown for the referees to provide further information.

There is a Showdown Coaching Manual on the IBSA website which is a tab on

[www.bsasport.org/sports/showdown/overview/](http://www.bsasport.org/sports/showdown/overview/)

There are an increasing number of videos on YouTube of past national and international matches which provide a useful way of sharing information on showdown and the various playing techniques.



## 4.2 Useful contacts

### UK Showdown

Robin Faulkner

Email: [ukshowdown@gmail.com](mailto:ukshowdown@gmail.com)

Phone: 07889648925

### British Blind Sport

Vicky Cook, Participation Officer

Email: [vicky@britishblindsport.org.uk](mailto:vicky@britishblindsport.org.uk)

Phone: 07983498120

## 4.3 Best practices

### Communication

- Good and clear communication is vital
- Don't assume all people with a visual impairment cannot see anything
- Remember everyone is individual and every eye condition is different
- Ask the participant what support they need
- Identify and introduce yourself verbally so that the participant can become familiar with your voice
- Don't be afraid to use everyday language such as "see" or "look"

### Venue

- Help familiarise a visually impaired participant with the playing area and venue
- Provide time for your visually impaired participants to orientate themselves within the activity area
- Ensure the activity area is well-lit
- Have sighted guides to support the participants around the venue
- Describe venue hazards where necessary

### Demonstrations

- Use clear instructions and explanations
- Verbalise your actions when describing techniques
- Don't rely on visual demonstrations
- Use tactile demonstrations where appropriate
- Ask the participant questions to check they have understood the request