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BASKIN AS A NEW POSSIBILITY IN ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EXERCISE

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Summary

Sports activities occupy an extremely high ranking position in the daily functioning of individuals with disabilities. The expansion of adaptive forms of physical exercise influenced the formation of a larger number of sports sections for people with disabilities in the territory of the Mačva district. Therefore, at the end of 2019, a Baskin section was created in Šabac Municipality. This presentation was created as a result of the need to present the model of the inclusive Baskin game to the general public in the Republic of Serbia and to analyze the existing capacities and opportunities for its further development. The goal is to present and analyze the inclusive Baskin game, as a new possibility in adaptive physical exercise. Baskin is determined by authentic rules for greater actual participation of disabled individuals through "reverse integration".

Keywords: ADAPTIVE GAME/ ŠABAC/ SERBIA

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INTRODUCTION

A 2022 World Health Organization report states that there are over one billion people worldwide with some form of disability, of which nearly 200 million have significant limitations in independent functioning. The risk for an increase in the number of disabled people is represented by the increasing average age of the population and the increase in chronic non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and mental disorders (WHO, 2022). The estimates of most scientific studies are that individuals with disabilities represent 10-15% of the entire world population. This prevalence varies through different levels of socio-economic development, as well as data collection methodologies (WHO, 2022). Physical activities should not only be the privilege of the standard population, but should be accessible to all categories of the population. Therefore, at the UN Assembly from 2006, the United Nations stipulated that individuals with disabilities must have an equal position within the social community.

Since the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Individuals with Disabilities, there have been significant changes in the approach to the integration of individuals with disabilities into society. It is particularly emphasized in Article 26 of this Convention that it is important to enable individuals with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and full inclusion, which includes peer support (UN Assembly, 2006). Although the Convention clearly advocates inclusion, it also supports sports competitions for people with disabilities, such as the Paralympic Games and the Special Olympics. This leads to the question of how to establish criteria for participation that corresponds to the principles of the Convention, while at the same time rejecting the medical approach to disability. These discussions highlight the interaction between medical aspects and sport, providing deeper insights into disability inclusion, assessment and evaluation (Beekman, et. al., 2023).

The legal system of the Republic of Serbia, through the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination against People with Disabilities (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 33/2006), also regulates the position of these individuals in sports, which stipulates that "local self-government units are obliged to take measures to ensure the equal participation of people with disabilities in cultural, sporting and religious life of the community".

The subject of this paper is the Baskin game, as a new opportunity in adaptive physical exercise, with an emphasis on existing capacities and opportunities for its further development in the Republic of Serbia. Baskin has been developing in Šabac since November 2019, when the first Baskin match was played. Until September 2024, when the "Baskin Šabac" Sports Association was formed, this activity functioned in Šabac as part of the activities of the Šabac Sports Association of People with Disabilities. Good results on the international stage, the 3rd place at the Second European Basque Cup in the Italian city of Skio, the third place at the memorial tournament in Udine in December 2023, and the first place at the international tournament in Tortona in September 2024, give the potential to, in the near future, overcome the existing shortcomings, in the form of human resources and awareness of the importance of inclusion in sports.

SPORTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Despite that there is scientific and practical evidence that points to the benefits of regular physical activity and exercise as a tool for improving the psycho-physical health of the general population, there is much less research that deals with the same topic among people with disabilities (Rimmer, et al. 2010). Despite the benefits of physical activity, there is a high percentage of people with disabilities who are inactive (Martin, 2013). The participation of people with disabilities in organized sports activities is less than that of the standard population. To illustrate, in the Netherlands only 32% of people with disabilities engage in sports activities on a weekly basis, compared to 59% of

people without disabilities (Hoekstra, et al., 2019). Previous research emphasizes the importance of an active lifestyle for people with disabilities (Van der Ploeg, et al., 2004), e.g. with spinal cord injury (Ginnis, et al., 2012). Most people with disabilities lead a sedentary lifestyle (Crnkovic, & Rukavina, 2013; Lui, & Hui, 2009, Rimmer, & Rowland, 2008; Diaz, Miller, Kraus, & Fredericson, 2019).

There are various modifications of sports for people with disabilities, such as wheelchair basketball (Saltan, et al., 2017), adapted karate (Perić, et al., 2018), adapted football (Perić et al., 2022), para-badminton (Janiaczyk, 2015), surfing (Schmid, et al., 2019), sitting volleyball (Leung, et al., 2021) and similar. Research also indicates the benefits that water activities bring to the bio-psycho-social functioning of people with disabilities (Stan, 2012). People who play basketball in wheelchairs show lower symptoms of depression, sleep disorders and anxiety, compared to those people with disabilities who do not play sports (Fiorilli, et al., 2013). Playing sports positively affects the quality of life of people with disabilities (Yazicioglu, et al., 2012), as well as the degree of satisfaction with one's own life (Nemček, 2016). Research also indicates an increase in the quality of life of people with disabilities who played sitting volleyball (Bagarić et al., 2016).

An improvement in the aerobic capacity of individuals who played basketball in a wheelchair was found in experimental studies (Skucas, & Pokvytyte, 2017). Research indicates an increase in strength parameters in people with disabilities after an eight-week treatment that included the repeated effort method through the use of bench press exercise (Turbanski, & Schmidtbleicher, 2010). In addition to the positive effect on the psycho-physical abilities and independence of people with disabilities, sports activities are also a factor of social integration and a possibility of economic and professional satisfaction. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage the inclusion, at all levels, of as many people with disabilities as possible in sporting events (Kljajić, et al., 2013).

Statistical data indicate that in 2009, about 17,000 athletes with disabilities were registered in the Association for Sport and Recreation of the Disabled Individuals of Serbia, which represented just over 2% of the total number of disabled people in Serbia (Kasum, 2019). Research shows that sports activities contribute to a better quality of life for people with disabilities through easier performance of daily tasks, better communication with people, a lower degree of loneliness, a stronger sense of happiness, improved physical and mental health, and a greater degree of satisfaction with one's own life (Lazić, & Barić, 2013). If it is strictly dosed, controlled and is in accordance with the individual limitations of each individual, applied physical activity can positively affect the parameters of cardiorespiratory endurance, muscle strength and flexibility of people with disabilities (Seaman, et al., 1999). Positive changes have been identified after practicing sporting activities, such as better mood and stress regulation, improvement in quality of life, easier and faster integration of the individual into the social community (Vanderstraeten, & Oomen, 2010). Therefore, recreational or competitive sport for people with disabilities is recommended as a type of therapy, as well as a lifestyle (Kasum, 2019).

INCLUSIVE GAME OF BASKIN

The Baskin game allows the participation of people with different groups of disabilities, whether physical or intellectual, to play together with people without disabilities in the same team. The game is designed to be inclusive, and to take place with small adaptations of existing basketball courts, with the use of modified equipment, predefined roles of players in the game, as well as the very principles of training and teaching (Kiuppis, 2021).

The playing field is adapted to the specific activities and roles in the team (Picture 1). Baskin is played on a court of standard basketball dimensions, on which, in addition to two regular ones, there are also two side baskets on the perimeter of half court, with a height of 2m to 2.2m. Two semicircular areas with a radius of three meters, divided into three sectors, are drawn on the field. Under the side basket, it is possible to add another lower basket for players with role 1, with a minimum height of 1m

and a maximum height of 1.20m. Two semi-circular areas can be marked with adhesive tape. The game uses a ball for minibasket that can be replaced (only for players with role 1, with other balls of different dimensions and weights – e.g. tennis ball).



Picture 1. – Baskin court (<https://internationalbaskin.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/baskins-presentation-en-compressed.pdf>)

Baskin represents physical exercise that brings together people with the most diverse sporting skills, from beginners to categorized players, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, cultural affiliation, and polyvalent forms of disability – such as: motor, sensory, intellectual (Enrico, et al., 2019). Baskin represents a form of reverse integration, because people with and without disabilities enter the field at the same time. People without disabilities are in the minority, which is a very interesting situation in relation to everyday life and the general population, where people with disabilities are a minority. Therefore, one of the tasks of Baskin is integration and inclusion through sports, while providing all participants with the opportunity to equally contribute and participate in the game (Garel, 2018).

Baskin is a form of a game which belongs to the "family" of basketball. Basketball is an inspiring discipline and the main rules and basics of Baskin are extrapolated from it (Anzivino, 2015). In terms of meaning, it is inclusive, in essence a competitive activity, in terms of values, it is a game of equal opportunities for all participants, taking into account their physical impairments and valorizing their potential impact on the final result (Bodini, et al., 2010). In Baskin, one of the basic postulates of basketball is retained, which is to score a basket by throwing the ball. Nevertheless, the meaning of basketball was supplemented by the introduction of additional hoops, new zones and new rules adapted to the roles of players from the standard and disabled population. The basic differences between traditional basketball and Baskin are shown in **Table 1** (Lolli, Vescovi, Iaia, & Chiarugi, 2024).

Table 1 Some of the descriptors of traditional basketball and baskin

Descriptors	Baskin basketball	Regular basketball
Baskets	4 (6)	2
Attacking areas	2	1
Defending areas	2	1
Type of ball	Size 5 (minibasket) and other smaller, or different balls for role 1 players	Only one size of a ball, size 7 (or 6 for females)
Players on the court	6 heterogenius	5 of the same „category“
Time of gameplay	4 quarters of 8 minutes	4 quarters of 10 minutes each
Game action limit (Shot-clock)	30 seconds (only in the last quarter and possible over time periods)	24 seconds
Ball possession	Jump for the ball on the center of the court at the beggining of each quarter	Initial jump for the ball, after which a rule for alternating possessions is applied
Substitutes	Unlimited (each player form the protocol MUST participate in hte game, otherwise the team loses a game)	Unlimited
Bonus fouls	Number of team fouls is not counted (bonus according to time for role 5 player in the last 2 minutes of the lat quarter and each possible overtime period)	Number of team fouls is counted
Return of the ball in the defending zone	Direction of play is free. The are not 3 scond or 8 second violations.	Once a team moves into the offensive zone, it cannot return to the defensive zone.

As stated by Rosa, & Madonna (2019), the rules had to be changed in order to adapt to the participants, and not the other way around, that is, as well as by adapting the rules, in accordance with the role in the team, everyone must be able to express their real skills and abilities.

Baskin is not just a game, but an authentic form of exercise that excludes paternalism (Magnanini, 2017). Even people with the highest degree of disability can become deserving active subjects in winning the game (Moliterni, & Mastangelo, 2016). In this way, all participants, regardless of the degree of disability, are enabled to participate in the game and contribute to the performance of their team, in accordance with the level of their motor skills.

Baskin is an exceptional example of a *sport for all* that is based on the postulates of pedagogical trust, respect for personality, empathy and cooperation and other desirable bio-psychosocial characteristics of an individual (Magnanini, & Trull, 2015). His basic maxim is that you should think about what a person with a disability can do, not what he can't do «Think about abilities not disabilities».

The institutionalization of sport, including its inclusive side, emphasizes the need for developing strategies to improve the structure and social relevance of sports clubs through the processes of social inclusion of persons with disabilities. Special emphasis is placed on providing support to engaged and competent coaches through adequate social and financial rewards. Not a small amount of adaptation is expected from the infrastructure through the possibilities for its adaptation to the needs of the diversity of user groups, which in the case of baskin is one of the essential prerequisites for the realization of activities (Al Harthy, et al., 2024). The results of monitoring competitive activity, which, among other things, evaluated the contribution to the team's overall result

in relation to the role in the team, during an Italian Baskin season (Sisti, et al., 2019), showed that the points of the players with the most difficult forms of disability were of the most crucial importance.

SPECIFIC ROLES OF PLAYERS AND PLAYING FIELD (COURT)

Each participant is assigned with a role. Therefore, it is based on the principle that the skills and abilities of all players are important in this game. If everyone contributes with the maximum of individual attributes, success depends on individual contribution.

Each role in the team is confronted with the matching role of the opposing team, thus achieving equal confrontations, which are therefore stimulating above all for people with disabilities, who are generally deprived of taking responsibility. So in the game, each role is recognized with a level of difficulty, taking into account the initial situation of each athlete, a shot scored by a pivot is worth 3 points, as well as a shot by a player with role number 5. More detailed rules are explained in document 18. Revisions of the official rules of the Baskin game (Baskin Italy, 2023).

Each participant is assigned with one of five roles that are adapted to his or her abilities and characteristics. Those roles have clearly defined tasks that each team member needs to fulfill in order to contribute to the group. This approach not only helps to improve individual skills, but also fosters a sense of responsibility towards the team. By including all members, regardless of their physical or mental abilities, an environment is created that promotes cooperation and togetherness, thus strengthening team dynamics.

Players are divided into five roles in the team, based on the level of mastery of essential skills and anthropomotoric abilities. It is important to emphasize that the classification of players by role is not based on medical anamnesis but on functional abilities. In Baskin, the importance of correct classification is crucial to create an environment that encourages development and allows all players to give their best, respecting the principle "against my opponent I can do it!". An evaluation done by an inexperienced classifier can lead to a situation where a player with better physical abilities, but less training experience, can be classified in the same class as a more experienced player who has a more severe form of disability. That is why it is important that the classification is based on the functional abilities of the players, and not exclusively on medical criteria. This means that players are classified into a specific role according to motor tests and technico-tactical skills, as well as based on observing their behavior in different game situations. Details related to the role classification system are described in the attachments of the Italian Baskin Federation for classification based on motor skills (Federazione Italiana Pallacanestro, 2014a) and the evaluation system of player roles, based on the observation of players in the situational conditions of the Baskin game (Federazione Italiana Pallacanestro, 2014b).

The team has 6 players on the field. The rules have predefined players with the following roles, namely:

- **Role 1 player**, a disabled person who cannot move independently, even in a wheelchair, depends on the help of others. He or she takes a shot from a wheelchair, without the ability to pivot with it. He or she is positioned in the lateral sector, and his or her teammates in roles 3, 4, and 5 can bring him or her the ball. If the ball is too big, he/she can replace it with a smaller one, which he/she chooses, and that ball is placed on the ground under the side baskets. The role 1 player cannot be hindered by other players when taking a shot. If the player is physically limited in such a way that he/she is unable to bend the wrist or elbow, the shot at the basket can be adjusted by placing the ball on a slide without edges, within the usual time frame of 10 seconds. The length of the slide must be at least six times the diameter of the ball, and its width must not exceed twice the diameter of the ball. The role of those players is 1S.

- **Role 2 player**, a person with a disability, who has partial or complete ability to use the hands to shoot, can score points on side baskets and can walk on the court. Has the ability to move independently within the field. Is positioned in the side sector. If a player within role 2 is in a wheelchair then he/she must independently move the wheelchair and dribble the ball twice before taking a shot at the side high basket. If a player with role 2 can run, he/she is assigned with a subcategory of player role 2R, which means that he shoots outside the non-continuous line 3.70m away from the hoop and has 7 seconds to shoot. If the player with role 2 has such a form of disability that prevents him/her from performing the mentioned actions independently, the player from the field who brought him/her the ball becomes his assistant (tutor), therefore this player receives a subcategory 2T.
- **Role 3 player** is a person with or without a disability. He/she has full or partial ability to use his/her hands and therefore can score on a traditional basket. He/she moves around the court, he/she can shoot at the traditional basket, but also at the high side basket, if he/she is outside the marked area - a continuous line of 3m. He/she can score three shots in one quarter of a Baskin game that lasts 8 minutes. It is important to note that players in roles 4 and 5 may not guard players in role 3 and may not steal the ball from him/her nor enter his "cylinder". The exception to this rule is during an offensive or defensive rebound in the game. The term cylinder in Baskin refers to an imaginary three-dimensional space that covers the player's body and extends above and around it. This term in Baskin is used in the context that if a player of a higher role violates the space of a player of a lower role, he or she will be awarded with a personal foul (Baskin Italy, 2023).
- **Role 4 player**, a person with or without a disability. He/she has full or partial ability to use his/her hands and therefore can score on a traditional basket. What differentiates him/her from the role 3 is his/her speed in performing basic basketball skills. He/she can only shoot at the traditional basket and must dribble the ball. A role 4 player's successful shot can be worth two or three points depending on whether the shot is made inside or outside the three-point area.
- **Role 5 player**, a person without a disability, has mastered all the basic elements of baskin, such as handling the ball, shooting, penetrating, passing, defending and possesses high speed. It is often a person who plays recreational basketball. A player with role 5 shoots at the traditional basket and can only guard other players with role 5. Provides support to one of his teammates with role 1,2 or 3, helping them verbally in the game when they are in possession of the ball. Physical assistance in the positioning of players with roles 1 and 2 can be performed when bringing the ball to these roles in the side sector in terms of assisting in positioning when executing their shot.

THE POTENTIAL OF BASKIN AS AN ADAPTIVE GAME

Baskin, similar to wheelchair basketball, involves a multitude of unpredictable situations and a constantly changing environment, thus encouraging abstract thinking and the selection of relevant sensory information. All these processes can indirectly help in everyday situations of dealing with the changing environment of the daily life of disabled people. Application in a prophylactic context opens up new possibilities for therapy, rehabilitation and social integration, which classifies Baskin as a useful motor game (Sisti, et al., 2019). Inequality in players' skills, morphology, locomotion, motor abilities is reduced through the internal nature of the game, which perceives the meaning of competition through appreciation of the motor and cognitive capabilities of all players, including those with the greatest difficulties (Legrand, et al., 2017).

Adaptive motor activities, such as Baskin, can have a positive impact on mental health. Competitive outperforming increases endorphin levels, leading to improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression, anxiety, and better sleep (Malm, et al., 2019; Najafabadi, et al., 2023). In

addition, the team nature of the game and the inclusive environment contribute to a sense of belonging and self-esteem among the participants, which is of great importance for psychological well-being (Fiorilli, et al., 2013). Low activity levels in people with disabilities can reduce their cardiorespiratory endurance, muscle strength and flexibility, all of which leads to limitations of functional independence and an increase in the risk of chronic diseases development and other negative outcomes for the individual's health status (Washburn, et al., 2002).

Participating in exercise helps maintain and improve cardiovascular health, increase muscle strength and endurance, and improve general motor coordination (Blauwet, 2019; Najafabadi, et al., 2023). Regular physical exercise can reduce the risk of chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and obesity, which are more common in people with disabilities due to a sedentary lifestyle (Turbanski, & Schmidtbleicher, 2010). In addition to improving prosocial behavior, learning new skills, and developing motor skills of people with disabilities, competitive basketball can affect performance that can be considered important to the overall health of players in the standard population, such as increasing the aerobic power of role 5 players (Galvani, et al. , 2018). Also, after 4 months in Baskin training participation, the results of experimental studies indicated the potential of Baskin for improving prosocial behavior, creativity and emotional intelligence in young players with and without intellectual disability (Moliterni, & Mastangelo, 2016).

This approach represents a significant step forward in thinking about the capacity of the game to change the individual. It emphasizes the importance of using play as a means to improve health and promote social inclusion at all levels. Baskin is a good example of an inclusive game that is designed to include people with different abilities, promoting team spirit and togetherness (Belfiore, & Tafuri, 2023). The focus on the person and his bio-psycho-social attributes, rather than on the result, emphasizes means of sport as a pedagogical and social activity.

CONCLUSION

Although there is a lack of clear facts about Baskin as a means of substantiation of the philosophy of sport for all, its psychomotor and social effect is evident, as well as its significant potential for its development in Serbia.

The path of development can also be the stimulation of the cognitive process, which would aid as a tool for deeper analysis of baskin and its influences on different areas of the individual's motor skills, prosocial behavior, as well as determining the meaning of baskin as a sport. Attention should also be paid to the practical promotion of the Game through the organization of public promotions and the formation of several legal entities, such as sports associations on the territory of Serbia and the creation of a league system of competition, as well as the development of support programs for participants and their families.

In order to achieve this, a good starting point would be to integrate Baskin in physical education classes within the education system of Republic of Serbia, modeled and based upon the Italian model.

Although people with disabilities can participate in physical exercise in accordance with their health limitations, the inadequacy of the system for their acceptance into regular sports organizations is still observed. Models of inclusive practice such as parallel activities, reverse integration activities and modification activities, proven to be present in the Baskin, could represent examples of good practice in regular sports.

The possibilities of applying Baskin are related to the development of motor skills of players, development of their cognitive abilities (perception, learning, reasoning), reduction of aggressiveness, regulation of anxiety, improvement of social network, tolerance and communication. Contacts with

teammates, coaches, and opposing players encourage communication between participants and teach the individual to manage emotions.

By modifying the rules of the game, primarily through its codification, it is possible to influence respect for social rules, respect for other players in the game, commitment to achieving goals, loyalty to one's team, accuracy and timeliness in completing tasks.

Multiple modifications of the play space can be a stimulating environment for acquiring an increase in spatial-temporal orientation skills and a good level of motor autonomy.

One of the goals of modern educational work is the maximum involvement of all participants in the schooling process. Baskin is suitable for its realization. Promotion of the game, through theoretical and practical foundations, licensing of coaches and referees, seminars for physical education teachers, finding opportunities to implement Baskin as an optional subject in upper grades of elementary school, could be effective strategies for its further development.

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