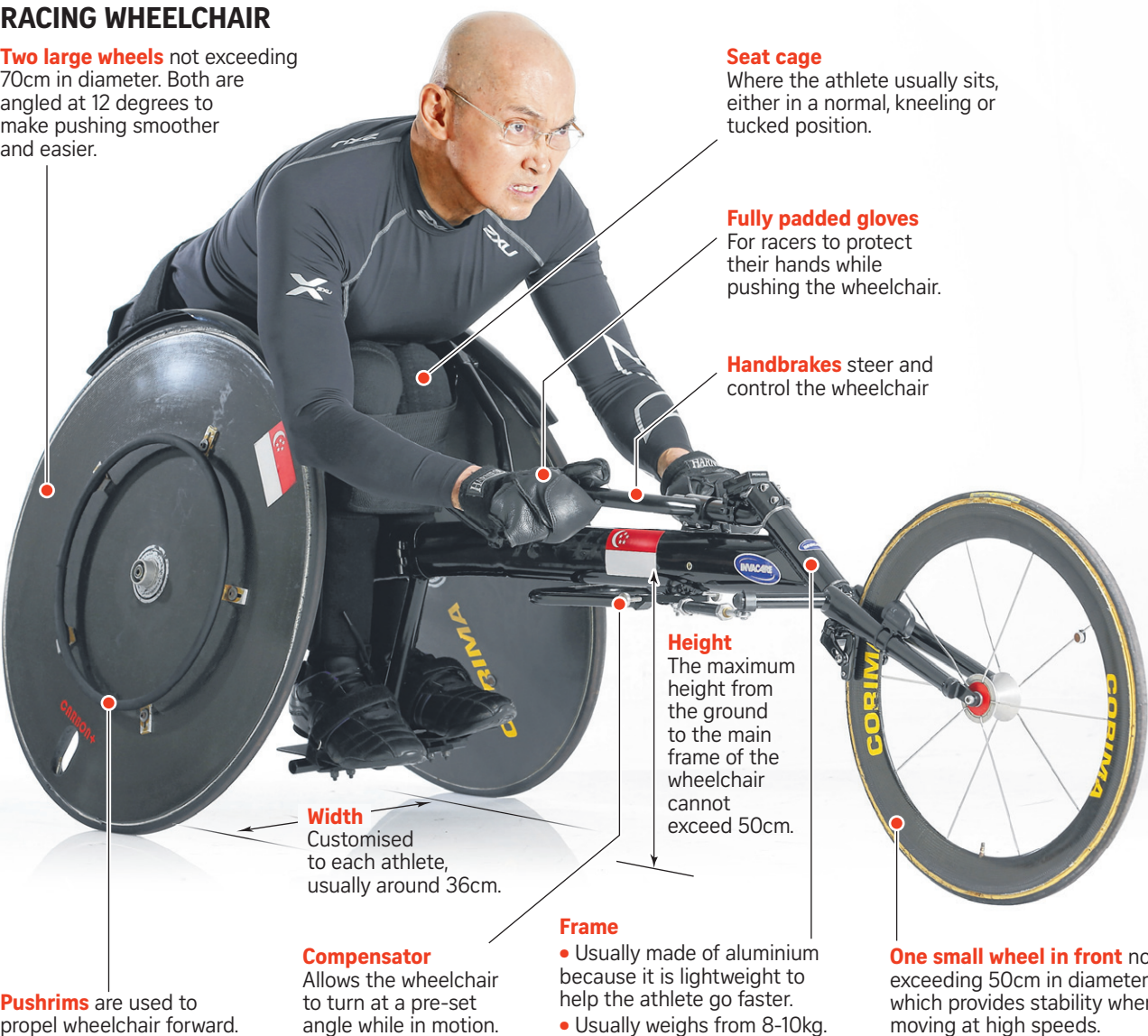


Wheelchairs: A comparison

When it comes to disability sports, a wheelchair is quite often not just a wheelchair, especially when the sport it is used for requires speed and stability. **Vanessa Kang** compares the three kinds of wheelchairs that will be seen at the Asean Para Games and what makes them suitable for their respective sports.

RACING WHEELCHAIR

Two large wheels not exceeding 70cm in diameter. Both are angled at 12 degrees to make pushing smoother and easier.



It takes time to learn how to use a racing wheelchair because of the technique. You don't push the wheelchair to propel yourself – you punch the rims to propel, so you wear thick padded gloves to protect your hands.

WILLIAM TAN,
wheelchair racer

BOCCIA

Boccia athletes often use normal wheelchairs, as their sport does not require special modifications. The wheelchair is normally also used for daily activities such as commuting.

Width	25cm-56cm
Height	50cm-52cm
Weight	About 16kg

Two large wheels of 60cm in diameter by each side.



Two small wheels known as castor wheels of 20cm in diameter at the front for stability.



Retractable footrests which use a swing-away mechanism for greater convenience when folding the wheelchair.

The wheelchair is easy to use because I don't have to worry about it breaking down, unlike a motorised wheelchair. It is also more stable, that is why I use it for boccia.

MUHD SHAHRIZAN,
Boccia player

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Protective horizontal bar makes it impossible to fold the wheelchair, and must be 11cm above the ground.



Height
• 58cm to 63cm, depending on the classification of the athlete's disability.
• The greater the impairment, the higher the chair.

Width
Usually customised to suit each athlete. Ranges from 33cm to 40cm.

Weight
About 10kg. Usually made from aluminium and titanium for their lightweight nature.

• Tilted at 15-20 degrees, depending on what is most comfortable for the player, for more natural pushing.
• Creates a wider base area and increases stability for the player and greater agility in turning. Moving the wheelchair is also easier as the handrims are closer to the body.

The additional castor wheels at the back give me more stability when I take a shot so that I don't fall over.

CHOO POH CHOON,
wheelchair basketballer

PHOTOS: YEO KAI WEN
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