

# Interview



Photo: Facebook

## Anders Berenth

If you are talking about Danish Electric Wheelchair Hockey, you have to focus on this man. Anders Berenth is the central player of Danish Team and top goal scorer in one person for more than 10 years. In an interview with [EWH2014.com](http://EWH2014.com) he talks about his expectations for the upcoming World Championships, his role in the Danish side and the changes of play culture in EHWs future.

**EWH2014.com:** Less than a week to go. Mr. Berenth, are you looking forward to WC 2014 and what is your expectation concerning the organization?

*Anders Berenth: Yes, I'm really looking forward to the tournament. It can't get any bigger than a world cup, and the fact that we have Australia in the tournament just gives it that kind of x-factor to the tournament. Expanding on that x-factor and the world cup, I really hope that the future will bring on countries like USA or Canada. That way I think we can expand the sport and maybe get a chance to get to the Paralympics in future.*

*About the organization and the tournament I really don't have any concerns. The Germans are known for their organizing talent and the times I have played in big tournaments in Germany everything has been very good. So I expect that the guys behind the tournament keep on the good work there have done already and have organized a very professional tournament that has laid the groundwork for some intense and great games.*

**EWH2014.com:** Denmark has been drawn to group B together with European Champions Netherlands, Switzerland and Australia. Tell us about your feelings to that drawing?

*Anders Berenth: There are no bad teams at a world cup, but I would be lying if I said that we in group B really have dodged some great teams. With number 2-5 in group A there is no way of predicting*

who will advance in that group. In group B I would say that the Netherlands is the favorite and then I would say that the battle for second place is rather open between the last three teams.

[EWH2014.com](#): Denmark finished 6nd in Italy 2010, also in Finland 2012. Why are you optimistic that your team will be able to play a better role this time? What is the goal of the Danish squad?

*Anders Berenth: First I would say that the group drawing really have made the possibility for advancing from the group a lot easier. As said before the Netherlands are the favorite in the group, and then I would say that the Danish team would have to go for the second place in the group as minimum. We are always going into a tournament with the notion that we at least has have to get the same raking when we are leaving as we had when we started the tournament, and of cause trying to improve on it. So if we are to follow that notion then I would say that the goal is to advance to the semi-finals and from there anything can happen.*

*Second, I would say that we are seeing a lot of new players and properly also some new play styles because of the new classification system. But with new players and old player retiring is difficult to predict what the outcome would be. But I do believe that our team would have a chance to do something in this tournament and hopefully we can play some great games and show of some good hockey on the way.*

[EWH2014.com](#): You are the central player in the Danish team and the scorer of almost every goal. Do you feel a high pressure on your person?

*Anders Berenth: Surely I feel the pressure. But then again this year actually marks the 10th year for me on the Danish national team. I started back in Finland 2004 and from the start have been giving a central role on the team which has increased throughout the years as I got older. So the pressure is nothing new to me, and it just makes me want do anything possible to play the best I can and help the team. And even though the score sheet tells a story about me being the central player, I could not play the way I do without a great team around me.*

[EWH2014.com](#): Everyone is talking about the new classification system. Do you think it's introduction has a deep impact to the game and which nations could benefit from this? Will it help Denmark to move forward?

*Anders Berenth: Yes the new classification will have a deep impact on the game and the sport in general. First and foremost, we now have a lot of hand-held players, around 50 % from the European championship in 2012, who have played in many years who is now becoming almost too strong to play the sport and can't play together in same way as before. If you continue this trend I would say that you are pulling out that flair, speed and excitement that makes the sport standout and makes it funny to both play and watch. I predict that the games would end up being a lot more driving with ball and less passing the ball around, and therefore taking a lot of the speed out of the games.*

*I'm not saying that we would have to make the sport eligible to everyone. But instead I would like to see what kind of sport that Electric Wheelchair Hockey (EWH) is trying to be. Personally I see EWH as team sport lying between Wheelchair Football on one end of the spectrum and team sports like Wheelchair Rugby/Basket on the other end of the spectrum.*

*About the question about which nations who will benefit, I think that you would see the teams with great t-stick players or have great use of them like Switzerland and Denmark have a big advantage. Both team have strong t-sticks players and especially our team have some really good ones because we already have another kind of electric wheelchair hockey called, el-hockey. It is a sport where there are only t-sticks players on the field, and most of our players have played the sport for many years, including myself.*

[EWH2014.com](http://EWH2014.com): Letzte Frage: Wer wird das Turnier gewinnen?

*Anders Berenth*: The easy answer would be to say either Germany or the Netherlands, but as said before there is a lot of new players this time so difficult to say. But I would say that Germany maybe has a slight advantage in winning the tournament because they are playing in front of a home audience.



Anders Berenth converts a penalty shot at the World Championships 2010 (Photo: Flickr/FIWH)