



IWAS **World Championships 2014**  
**Electric Wheelchair Hockey**  
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# Interview



Foto: Privat

## Fabio Rodo

He was mainly responsible for the good organization of the last World Championships 2010 in Italy - in the WC 2014 is going to participate as the Italian team manager. In an exclusive interview with [EWH2014.com](http://EWH2014.com) he is telling about the preparation and the constitution of the “Squadra Azzurra” and is contradicting those who believe classification made EWH less attractive.

[EWH2014.com](http://EWH2014.com): Not quite a week left until the WC 2014 in Munich. About four years ago, it was you who led the organizing committee of the world championships in Lignano, Italy. What is your advice for next week host and what do you expect from the German OC concerning the organization?

*Fabio Rodo*: IWAS WC 2014 are finally coming! I can just guess how hard all the members of the OC have been working on such a big event. The OC of WC2010 in Italy was an amazing group... We worked really hard but we also had a lot of fun and we enjoy every single moment we spent together. Over all that's the only thing that is clear in my mind: the happiness to work with all the friends of EWH on a project that deserve maximum efforts and concentration. My advice is just this: take it with a smile! You will keep great memories!

[EWH2014.com](http://EWH2014.com): Certainly, the “Squadra Azzurra” prepared itself thoroughly for the WC. How does your timetable until now looked like (training camps, prep tournaments, selection procedure)?

*Fabio Rodo*: We have done as much training camps as possible. As every new cycle of work we started with a 15 players group, than 12 to select, at the end, the 10 athletes of the delegation. The Federation invested a lot of resources on the National Team that represent the Top level of our hockey movement. Unfortunately Italy is not a friendly country for traveling. The athletes come from all over the country, from north to the islands, and so they need to travel thousands of kilometers for

a single training camp. We have to thank their passion toward this sport and their strong will to be part of the National Team!

**EWH2014.com:** In the past big tournaments, Italy was always an insider tip for the title. However, it could never live up to expectations. Which reasons can you give for this underachievement and why is Italy going to have an important say in this WC?

*Fabio Rodo:* In 2011, just before the EC in Finland, we won the 4 Nation tournament in Bern, Switzerland thanks to a solid group made up of great players. One of those players had to be replaced, because of a regulation change in the eligibility criteria. Anyway I don't think this was the main reason of our bad positioning in EC 2012, since we also had problem in WC 2010. We expressed a good game but it revealed itself as ineffective. In my personal opinion, to improve our final result we need two things: to be less "beautiful to see" and more effective in the game and to learn facing those big events with the appropriate state of mind. Before and during every competition we feel the pressure to win and we are not able to manage it. Now we can count on a group of experienced players that knows how to face it, we will see how the new ones will respond to WC atmosphere!

**EWH2014.com:** For years you have been an inherent part of the Italian national team. How did you become team manager and what are your specific tasks and responsibilities?

*Fabio Rodo:* I started in EC 2008. That was my first experience with the role of Team Manager after 3 years of practice in the national level. For those I have to thank our President Antonio Spinelli that always had trust in me and in my skills. I growth with this discipline (next years I will celebrate my tenth year in EWH) and this sport gave me a lot.

Right now, as team manager, my tasks and responsibilities are more or less those of taking care of the organization aspects of the training camps, the logistical solutions, the documents management for anti-doping controls, trying to be a junction point between all the stake-holders of the movement and obviously to enjoy the friendship of this elite group of athletes.

**EWH2014.com:** What makes EWH so fascinating, from your point of view?

*Fabio Rodo:* I saw it for the first time in 2004... A friend of mine was an athlete and introduced me to this sport. I was immediately impressed of the technical skills needed to be a good player. From the beginning the wheelchair was just an element of the match not a limit. I found it amazing. The sport over all kind of limitations.

**EWH2014.com:** We heard that you currently work on the speed measuring device for the ICEWH. How important is according to you the limitation of the maximum speed in EWH?

*Fabio Rodo:* As long as the wheelchair is just an element of the game we must provide as much as possible a fair access to it. An equal level of maximum speed is part of this view. Is not easy because we will have a perfect system only when we will have a real-time measurement. Right now we have a solid starting point thanks to the SEC and SA representatives.

EWH2014.com: The implementation of the classification could conspicuously change the relative strength of the teams. Who will benefit the most and how will the classification specifically affect your team?

*Fabio Rodo:* We will see a completely different game. The class-point system will change our perspective of this sport. Obviously the ones that are already used to this will benefit the experience they had in the own countries.

Someone says that this might affect the level of the game, but personally, I am convinced, this will ensure more fair matches making the tactical aspect reaching its best.

EWH2014.com: Last question concerning the EWH world champion 2014: Who are you betting on?

*Fabio Rodo:* I talked a lot in this interview... so leave me this little secret! (smiles)