

THE PARALYMPIAN

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2006

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Images of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. Wheelchair Curling: Prezioso, Alpine Skiing: Lieven Coudenys, Nordic Skiing: Getty Images, Ice Sledge Hockey: Getty Images.

GRAZIE ITALIA

Under the theme of 'Breaking All Limits, Breaking All Barriers', the Opening Ceremony of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games saw wheelchairs symbolically smash down a wall, a young blind girl light the Paralympic cauldron and performers both with and without a disability dance the night away. The Ceremony provided an energetic and emotional opening to the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games and also set the stage for the dramatic competitions that followed.

The sporting competitions took place from 11 to 19 March and included four sports. Alpine Skiing was held on the slopes of Sestriere Borgata, Ice Sledge Hockey in the central Torino Esposizioni, the Nordic Skiing events in both Biathlon and Cross Country were held in Pragelato. Wheelchair Curling also made its Paralympic debut in front of packed crowds in Pinerolo.

The support of the people of the Piemonte region was tremendous. A total of 162,974 tickets were sold during the Games. Several competitions, including the finals of Ice Sledge Hockey and Wheelchair Curling as well as the Opening Ceremony, were sold out. The crowds were boisterous and energetic and while the Italian athletes were, of course, the crowd favourites, spectators cheered for every athlete regardless of their country.

Two Paralympic Villages, in Sestriere and Torino, hosted a total of 477 athletes, including 99 women (21% of the total number competing). Mexico and Mongolia, were welcomed to their first Winter Paralympics, bringing the total number of participating countries to 39.

The medal tally was topped by Russia with 13 gold medals, followed by Germany with eight golds and Ukraine, France and USA jointly with seven gold medals each. Ukraine saw an exciting development, moving from 18th place at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics to third in Torino.

Ukrainian athlete Olena lurkovska led the medal tally taking four gold, one silver and a bronze medal. The Russians secured their golden glory thanks to the performance of several standout athletes in the Nordic Skiing competition; Liubov Vasilieva won three gold medals and one bronze, Taras Kryjanovski took two gold and two silver and Rustam Garifoullin won two gold and a silver.

For the German team, the veterans shined as Martin Braxenthaler (sitting) took home three golds for his country and Gerd Schoenfelder (standing) won two golds, a silver and a bronze, making him the most decorated male athlete in Paralympic Alpine Skiing.

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SPIRIT IN MOTION



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Passion Lived in Torino



I am again awe struck by the talent of Paralympic athletes. At the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, I was privileged to witness some of the most elite athletes in the world, who gave outstanding demonstrations of their abilities on snow and ice.

Alpine Skiing saw an event with the top 15 competitors finishing within a two second margin. Spectators at the Nordic Skiing competition witnessed sprints to the finish line. The Wheelchair Curling final came down to the last delivery and the clashes in the Ice Sledge Hockey rink were felt throughout the stadium.

The magic of Paralympic sport touched the hearts and minds of an entire country. I was impressed by the enthusiasm and support which the people of Torino and Piemonte showed towards the Paralympics.

This enthusiasm was best exemplified by the hundreds of volunteers who offered their time and their smiles to make the Games such a success. People from all over Italy left their families and their jobs to assist with the running of the Games and their commitment and passion was exceptional.

It was also encouraging to see the enormous interest that the Winter Paralympics received in the media. We had 1,037 media representatives present at the Games, whose words and images were spread all over the globe. We rely heavily on the media to spread awareness about the Paralympic Movement. One cannot comprehend the skill and ability of the athletes until you have seen them in action.

Also encouraging is the fact that there were no anti-doping rule violations at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. This illustrates the value that Paralympic athletes place on 'clean' sport and I hope this continues at future Paralympic events. All athletes and NPCs should be congratulated on their contribution to the IPC's anti-doping programme.

I would like to express my thanks to all those involved in the organization of the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics, both from the Organizing Committee and within the Paralympic Movement. The Games would not have been possible without the support of the governmental and local authorities of Italy, the Piemonte region, the Province of Torino and the City of Torino. A special word of thanks goes to Tiziana Nasi, President of the Organizing Committee for the Winter Paralympics of Torino 2006 (ComParTo) who was both an excellent host and a strong leader for the ComParTo team.

These Games certainly took the Winter Paralympics to a new and higher level. If you were not in Torino, I hope this issue of The Paralympian gives you an idea of the excitement of this event. If you were, I hope it helps you remember the passion that you lived in Torino.

Philip Craven

Sir Philip Craven, MBE
IPC President

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In the Ice Sledge Hockey competition, gold medal winners at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics, USA went home with the bronze medal while Canada defeated world champions Norway 3:0 to take the gold. Despite only scoring three goals in the entire competition, the Italian Ice Sledge Hockey Team had full venues for each game.

A new record was set in the area of media representatives covering the Games; 1,037 written press, photographers, rights holding broadcasters and non-rights holding broadcasters were present. The Host Broadcaster, International Sports Broadcasting (ISB) provided more than 130 hours of live coverage and had 303 staff on site. A number of European broadcasters extended their coverage with Internet broadband streaming and mobile technology.

For the Opening Ceremony on 10 March, Japanese broadcaster NHK reported a viewing audience of 2.4%. By comparison, a popular Japanese Soccer match on the same day was watched by 3.4%. In Germany, ARD's highlights show on 11 March was watched by 1,770,000 viewers and coverage screened from 11 to 14

March saw an average of 1,320,000 viewers. In Norway, Paralympic coverage had an average of 350,000 viewers daily. Coverage on France's FR3 channel peaked with 1,265,000 viewers on 19 March and in Poland, a highlights programme screened on 15 March attracted 1,103,170 viewers.

At the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics, the IPC launched its Internet television channel www.paralympicsport.tv. The channel saw over 70,000 cumulated viewers from 105 countries, watching an average of four and a half hours. Most viewers came from the USA, Italy, Canada, Germany and Japan but the channel drew a 5% increase in new viewers every day. ParalympicSport.TV will continue to run archived footage of the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics and other Paralympic Games and will expand its coverage throughout 2006, with the support of its main sponsors, Visa and Samsung.

Another highlight of the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics was that of 242 doping tests conducted (103 out-of-competition and 139 in-competition tests) there were no anti-doping rule violations. This demonstrates the strong commitment of the IPC and its athletes to clean sport.



Photo ©: Getty Images

PARALYMPIC GAMES: BEIJING 2008

Beijing Advances Towards Accessibility

The Beijing Municipality and organizers of the Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games are giving special attention to the construction of barrier-free facilities for persons with a disability - not just for the athletes, but also for support staff, media representatives and spectators.

In its guidelines for the planning of construction and renovation of barrier-free facilities, the municipal government requests that priority be given to providing many facilities within buildings to be used by persons with a disability. These facilities will also be used by many other constituents including the elderly, women with prams and children.

At the same time, daily-life facilities, cultural institutions and public media have been advised to provide additional consideration

to facilitate communication for persons with a visual or hearing impairment.

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games (BOCOG) last year set up the Department of Paralympic Games in an effort to better prepare for the event. According to BOCOG, the competition venues and adjacent areas, major scenic spots and transport hubs are among the key projects where the construction and renovation of barrier-free facilities is planned.

In Beijing, special passageways for persons with a disability have been built at most of the foot-bridges and shopping centres and many public toilets now also cater to the needs of persons with a disability.



Photo ©: BOCOG

The National Indoor Stadium will host the Paralympic Wheelchair Basketball competition.

PARALYMPIC GAMES: VANCOUVER 2010

Paralympic Flag Raised in Whistler

The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) learned some valuable lessons during the 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. A team including VANOC staff and its partner organizations participated in 14 observation sessions in Torino.

"The observations we've made will enable us to raise the bar higher in support of Paralympism," said Cathy Priestner Allinger, VANOC's Senior Vice President for Sport, Paralympic Games and Venue Management. "The lessons and information we take from the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games will assist us in creating an exceptional experience in 2010 for Paralympic athletes and spectators."

VANOC's key lessons and observations:

- With 12 days to transition from Olympic Games to Paralympic Games mode, planning and precision is critical in all areas. Attention to the conversion of

venues, refreshed and readied athlete villages, changing the Look and transitioning the workforce were all areas of focus for VANOC.

- Strategies are required to ensure that staff and volunteers can sustain the energy needed to stage both Winter Games.
- In order to leave a legacy of greater awareness of sport for persons with a disability and the Paralympic Games, the development of an extensive public awareness campaign well in advance of the Games is key.
- A successful school programme is a great opportunity to expose the Paralympic Movement to youth. In addition, ticket marketing and economical pricing along with general admission seating will allow each venue to be filled effectively.

- Integrated planning for accessibility such as building ramps and accessible routes into the venues prior to the start of the Olympic Games makes for less change over during the transition period.

On their return to Canada, a successful event was held in Whistler on 24 March, at which approximately 500 people witnessed the raising of both the Olympic and Paralympic flags. Participants included the mayors of Whistler and Vancouver, Paralympian Brad Lennea (Whistler resident) and retired Paralympian and coach of BC Disabled Alpine, Phil Chew (also a Whistler resident).

"The flags are a symbol of excitement over the years to come," said sit-skier Brad Lennea, who had just returned from competing at the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics "People can identify with them. I think it is really important to have both flags fly here at the same time."

Said Whistler Mayor Ken Melamed: "I returned from the Paralympic Games in Italy both excited and humbled by what I experienced, indeed changed. The thrill of sport, the inspiration of athletic endeavour, the heartbreak and elation of world class competition, it is all there in the Paralympic Games and more, and it is coming here in four years time."

The Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games will take place from 12 to 21 March 2010. For the latest information, please visit www.vancouver2010.com.



Photo: Canadian Paralympian Brad Lennea and volunteer coach Phil Chew raise the Paralympic flag watched by Whistler Mayor Ken Melamed (at podium) and City of Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan (next to podium). Courtesy of VANOC and Coast Mountain Photo.

PARALYMPIC GAMES: LONDON 2012

London Observes Torino

Paul Deighton, who took up his role as London 2012's new CEO on 3 April, attended his first Paralympic Games in Torino. After the spectacular Opening Ceremony he had only one word: "Brilliant!" He was particularly impressed with the participation of artists with a disability in the cultural programme of the Ceremony. "Torino has set the bar even higher for us: we too are committed to the 'inclusion' of the disabled community in every aspect of our work," said Mr. Deighton.

London 2012 sent 15 delegates to the Games as official representatives or members of the IPC's Observer Programme. London 2012 attended all sessions with key individuals such as the Director of Finance Neil Wood and other senior colleagues as a clear demonstration of London's desire to use every opportunity to learn from other organizing committees.

Sir Keith Mills, Vice Chairman and at that time CEO, presented an update report to the IPC Governing Board on the current planning for the London Games. He emphasized the progress of the London Olympic and Paralympic Bill

through Parliament (now law) which among other aspects guarantees the protection of the Paralympic Symbol and other properties from ambush marketing and vests that responsibility with the British Paralympic Association post-2012.

During the days in Torino, London staff met formally and informally with colleagues from Beijing 2008 and Vancouver 2010. "These

exchanges are invaluable as we progress along this journey together," said Samantha Curling, NPC Relations. "We have much to learn from each other, which should ensure that the legacy of each Paralympic Games over the next six years is guaranteed. We look forward to welcoming the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games host to our family in due course."

The London 2012 Paralympic Games will take place from 29 August to 9 September 2012. For more information, please visit www.london2010.org.



Photo ©: LOGOC. London 2012. Paul Deighton (centre red jacket) with Zhang Qiuping, Director of the BOCOG Paralympic Games Department (on his right) prior to the Torino 2006 Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony.

Eleven Receive the Paralympic Order



The IPC has honoured a number of members of the Paralympic Family with the 2006 Paralympic Order.

During the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, Juan Palau (ESP), Dr. Björn Hedman (SWE), Francois Terranova (FRA) and Fred Jansen (NED) were awarded the Paralympic Order by IPC President Sir Philip Craven on 12 March (photo top left). On 17 March Sir Philip also awarded Dr. York Chow, MBE (HKG) and Dr. Bob Price, OBE (GBR) with the Paralympic Order, alongside Jack Benedick (USA) and Sir Albert Tricot of Belgium (photo middle left).



During the Closing Ceremony of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, Sir Philip presented Taziana Nasi, President of the Committee for the Torino 2006 Paralympic Games (ComParTo) with the Paralympic Order (photo bottom left). At a later ceremony, Guiseppe Ferrari, Secretary General of ComParTo and Cesare Vaciago, Chief Executive Officer of the Organizing Committee of the XX Olympic Winter Games (TOROC), were also recognized with the honour for their contributions to the success of the Winter Paralympics.

At a special ceremony in Wald-Michelbad, Germany, Chief Classifier Birgitta Blomqvist was also presented with the Paralympic Order which she was awarded in 2005.

The Paralympic Order is the highest tribute a person connected with the Paralympic Movement may achieve. It honours persons who have made important contributions to the Paralympic Movement, have illustrated the Paralympic ideal through their actions, have achieved remarkable merit in the Paralympic sporting world or have rendered outstanding services to the Paralympic cause.



Photos ©: Lieven Coudenys

2010 Emblem on Agenda for Governing Board

The 43rd Meeting of the IPC Governing Board (GB) was held from 7 to 8 March in Torino, Italy.

Among other business, Dena Coward, Director of Paralympic Games for the Organizing Committee of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, presented the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Games emblem to the GB. The emblem, which will be unveiled to the general public later in the year, was unanimously approved by all 15 GB members.

Fred Jansen was co-opted member of the GB. The appointment of Mr. Jansen, who is also the Chairperson of the IPC Sports Council, was made to ensure a strong link between the GB and the sports involved in the Paralympic Movement.

Among other matters on the agenda, the application for

membership of Zambia (under the National Paralympic Committee of Zambia) was approved pending ratification of the IPC General Assembly in 2007. Helios Partners gave the GB an overview of the Paralympic brand assessment that has been undertaken by the IPC.



Photo ©: Lieven Coudenys

Nordic Skiing on Track for the Future

IPC Nordic Skiing recently held the 3rd IPC Nordic Skiing Development Camp from 26 March to 2 April in Beitostolen, Norway. Young athletes from five different countries received specialist training in Cross Country and Biathlon techniques, which they were able to put into practice in competition. Additional courses were also given to learn about topics such as training, nutrition, ski waxing, muscle care and anti-doping.

The Camp was organized by IPC Nordic Skiing with support from Ridderrennets Venner, the International Ski Federation (FIS) and the Norwegian Ski Federation. The committee is planning to continue the Camps in Beitostolen and to start new camp series in Bulgaria in November 2006. The International Paralympic Committee supported both this and last year's training camps, through its Development Grants.

The success of the previous Nordic Skiing Training Camps was proven recently, as a total of ten former camp attendees qualified for the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. Two athletes crowned their performances with Paralympic medals; in the Nordic Skiing Biathlon competition, Japanese athlete Shoko Ota (LW 8) won a gold, silver and bronze medal and teammate Miuki Kobayashi (B1) won a gold and a silver medal.



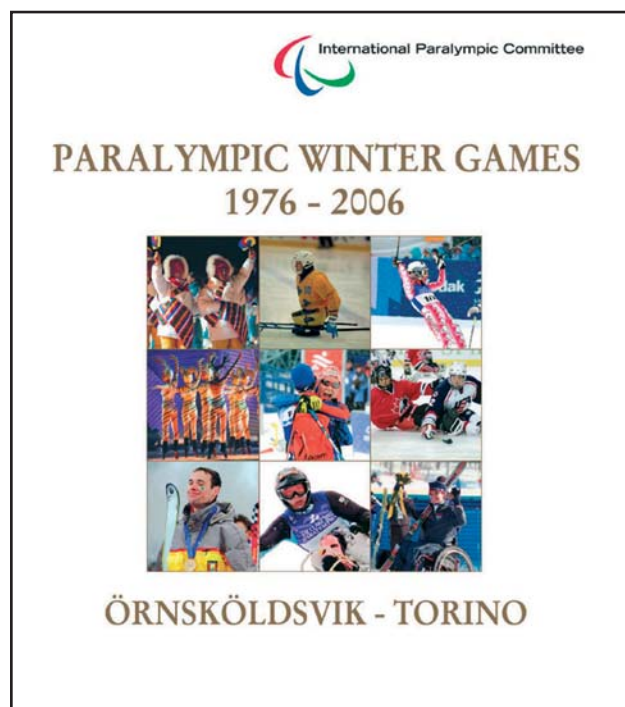
Fifteen-year-old Mark Arendz (Canada) practising shooting at the IPC Nordic Skiing Development Camp. Photo ©: IPC.

Presentations were given to members of the Governing Board by representatives from the Beijing 2008 (BOCOG), Vancouver 2010 (VANOC) and London 2012 (LOCOG) Organizing Committees. Said the Director of the BOCOG Paralympic Games Department Zhang Quiping: "The Marketing Plan for the 2008 Paralympic Games runs successfully.

To date, 11 Chinese and international enterprises have become Beijing 2008 Partners."

Sir Keith Mills, Deputy Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, said that plans to make all facilities and venues widely accessible to athletes with diverse skills, backgrounds and requirements would be a feature of the London Games. "London's principal objective and that of the Paralympic Movement are one and the same - to be inspirational," he said in his address.

IPC Publishes History of Winter Paralympics



The IPC has recently published, in collaboration with Richard Lellouche's RLC, a comprehensive book on the history of the Paralympic Winter Games.

The beautiful 143-page book is co-authored by Britta Jahnke and Klaus Schüle with assistance from a number of experts within the Paralympic Movement. The book commemorates 30 years of Paralympic Winter Games, spanning from Örnsköldsvik 1976 to Torino 2006.

The chapters in the book cover the evolution of the Paralympic Winter Games including the sports, athlete and country participation and the presence of the media. The book also examines the organization of the Games and the development of its symbols (emblem, mascot, name). The Classification chapter provides an excellent explanation of the classification system used in winter sport. Other chapters discuss the fight against

doping at the Paralympic Winter Games, the advances made in sporting equipment and the development of IOC-IPC co-operation. The final chapter looks towards the 2010 and 2014 Winter Paralympics.

Said IPC President Sir Philip Craven: "This book is a compelling narrative and expansive photographic tribute to the history of the Paralympic Winter Games and the athletes who have made them great."

A number of people have contributed forewords including royalty, Paralympic and Olympic athletes. The book also features a collection of historical images, including many donated by official IPC Photographer Lieven Coudenys.

A copy of the book will be received for a donation of over EUR 30 in the Official Products Section of the IPC website, www.paralympic.org.

Honorary Board Welcomes First Members

A number of high profile and well respected figures are now contributing to the Paralympic Movement as members of the IPC Honorary Board.

Over past months, the following persons have confirmed their membership of the Board (in order of acceptance): HRH Princess Margriet of the Netherlands, HRH Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxemburg, HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and HSH Prince Albert of Monaco.

Said IPC President Sir Philip Craven: "We are delighted to have such high-profile names on board with the Paralympic Movement. Their enthusiasm and commitment to the Movement is contagious and we hope that with their help we can continue to spread the excitement of Paralympic sport around the world."

The main purpose of the IPC Honorary Board is to allow leaders of society an opportunity to support the vision of the Paralympic Movement and to strive to maintain the issue of sport for persons with a disability high on the agenda of the global community. Honorary Board Members assist the IPC in creating opportunities for raising awareness and funding, through the Member's network of contacts and sphere of influence. Through their efforts to help the IPC to achieve the above goals, Honorary Board Members will allow the mission and vision of the IPC to be fulfilled, thus improving the quality of life for persons with a disability around the world.

HSH Prince Albert of Monaco congratulates the medallists in the men's Slalom (sitting) at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. Photo ©: Lieven Coudenys.



NPC NEWS

International Paralympic Sport Film Festival

The National Paralympic Committee of Hungary hosted the first International Paralympic Sport Film Festival from 30 March to 1 April in Budapest. The festival, entitled 'Budapest Bridge', presented 35 films (one feature film, 14 documentaries, seven portraits, five music videos, three reports and five commercials).

In the Report category, the BBC (Great Britain, Director: Tony Garrett) won for their coverage of the 2005 Visa Paralympic World Cup. Two clips were selected in the Commercial category: 'Winning Spike Shoes' (Slovakia, Director: Borivoj Horinek) which tracks the performances of the Slovakian athletes at the ATHENS 2004 Paralympic Games and 'Guide' (Portugal, Director: Albano Melo) which shows Paralympic sport from the perspective of the guide.

A highlights package from the 2004 World Wheelchair Curling Championships (Switzerland, Director: Ingeborg Wyss-Hurni) won the category of Best Music Video. The Portrait category was won by the Hungarian film 'ATHENS 2004 - Paralympics from the View of a Champion' (Director: Eva Tamas).

Best Picture went to 'Waves of the Aegean' (Greece, Director: Antonios Rellas) and Best

Documentary to 'Three Hundredths of a Second' (Israel, Director: Pascale Noa Berkovitch). A special prize given by the European Parliament was awarded to 'ATHENS 2004' (Hungary, Director: Laszlo Ponyiczky).

Two Chinese films took the top honours with 'Colours of the Blind' (Director: Guoxin Chen) winning the title of Best Feature Film and 'Against the Stream' (Director: Mai Liang) taking the Main Prize.

Among other activities, IPC President Sir Philip Craven gave a presentation on 'The Media Strategy of the IPC' during a conference entitled 'The Media and the Paralympic Movement'. Other speakers included Tony Garrett from BBC Sport, Sun Weijia from the Organizing Committee of the Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games (BOCOG), Andreas Schneider from brand stage (IPC's partner for ParalympicSport.TV) and Dana Adam Shapiro, Jeffrey Mandel and Henry-Alex Rubin, the producers of the Oscar-nominated film, Murderball.

A number of additional activities were scheduled around the event, including a photography exhibition, interactive sessions for school children and a jazz concert. The

Festival took place under the patronage of the IPC and was assisted by an IPC Development Grant.



Liu Rong from NPC China receives a prize from IPC President Sir Philip Craven and President of the Jury Mikros Jancso. Photo ©: NPC Hungary.

Winter Sport at its Best

ALPINE SKIING



Photo ©: Lieven Coudenys

The slopes of Sestriere Borgata were a buzz of excitement each time a racer left the starting gate. The crowds cheered every athlete regardless of their country and were in return treated to some spectacular skiing. A number of athletes stood out in the competition including French teenager, Solène Jambaque, who took two gold, a silver and a bronze in the women's standing events. Germany's Martin Braxenthaler won gold in the men's Super G, Giant Slalom and Slalom sitting events and his compatriot, Gerd Schoenfelder took two gold, a silver and a bronze in the men's standing events, making him the most decorated male Alpine skier in Paralympic history. The gold medallists were:

Men's Downhill Standing: Gerd Schönfelder (GER), Sitting: Kevin Bramble (USA), Visually impaired (VI): Gerd Gradwohl (GER).

Men's Super-G Standing: Walter Lackner (AUT), VI: Martin Braxenthaler (GER), Sitting: Gianmaria Dal Maistro (ITA).

Men's Giant Slalom Standing, Gerd Schoenfelder (GER), VI: Nicolas Berejny (FRA), Sitting: Martin Braxenthaler (GER).

Men's Slalom Standing: Robert Meusburger (AUT), VI: Nicolas Berejny (FRA), Sitting: Martin Braxenthaler (GER).

Women's Downhill Standing: Solène Jambaque (FRA), Sitting: Laurie Stephens (USA), VI: Pascale Casanova (FRA).

Women's Super-G Standing: Solène Jambaque (FRA), VI: Sabine Gasteiger (AUT), Sitting: Laurie Stephens (USA)

Women's Giant Slalom Standing: Lauren Woolstencroft (CAN), VI: Silvia Parente (ITA), Sitting: Kuniko Obinata (JPN).

Women's Slalom Standing: Alison Jones (USA), VI: Pascale Casanova (FRA), Sitting: Daila Dameno (ITA)

ICE SLEDGE HOCKEY

In a convincing final of the Ice Sledge Hockey competition, Canada took the gold with a score of 3:0, leaving the World Champs Norway mystified on the ice. Strong play from both teams saw hard hits and powerful drives.

Norway's goalkeeper Roger Johansen saved six from eight shots but goals from Bradley Bowden and Greg Westlake gave Canada the lead in the first half. With less than a minute to go in the final period, the last goal was scored by Bowden as Johansen was off the ice.

USA, gold medallists at the Salt Lake 2002 Paralympic Winter Games won the bronze medal after defeating newcomers Germany

4:3 in a nail biting finish in which the deciding goal was scored just three minutes before the whistle.

Outstanding athletes included Canadian goalie Paul Rosen who saved 51 of 55 shots at goal. Canadian Billy Bridges was named best forward of the competition. Bridges shot the winning goal in the final and assisted in the first two goals. He was also the top goal scorer of the competition, after scoring a total of 11 goals and seven assists. Norwegian captain Rolf Einar Pedersen was named Best Defenseman and Most Valuable Player of the Games for his work on defence, five goals and five assists.



Photo ©: Getty Images

NORDIC SKIING



Photo ©: Prezioso

The Nordic Skiing events were dominated by the Eastern European athletes, who took 23 of 32 medals. There was an ongoing battle in the women's sitting category between Liudmila Vauchok of Belarus and Ukrainian Olena lurkovska. lurkovska triumphed overall taking an incredible four gold medals, a silver and a bronze. The Russians clearly dominated the men's events, but faced a strong challenge from American Steven Cook who won two gold medals in the Cross Country standing category and Canadian Brian McKeever who took two golds in the Cross Country Visually Impaired category. The gold medallists were:

Men's Biathlon

12.5km Sitting: Vladimir Kiselev (RUS)
12km Standing: Rustam Garifoullin (RUS), Visually impaired (VI): Vitaliy Lukyanenko (UKR)
7.5km Sitting: Vladimir Kiselev (RUS)

Men's Cross Country

20km Standing: Kirill Mikhaylov (RUS), VI: Oleh Munts (UKR)
15km Sitting: Iurri Kostiuik (UKR)
10km Standing: Steven Cook (USA), Sitting:

Taras Kryjanovski (RUS), VI: Brian McKeever (CAN)

7.5km Standing: Rustan Garifoullin (RUS), VI: Irek Mannonov (RUS)

5km Standing: Steven Cook (USA), Sitting: Taras Kryjanovski (RUS), VI: Brian McKeever (CAN)

1 x 3.75km + 2 x 5km relay: Norway

Women's Biathlon

12km Standing: Anne Floriet (FRA), VI: Miyuki Kobayashi (JPN)

10km Sitting: Olena lurkovska (UKR)

7.5km Standing: Alena Gorbunova (RUS), Sitting: Olena lurkovska (UKR), VI: Verena Bentele (GER)

Women's Cross Country

15km Standing: Katarzyna Rogowiec (POL), VI: Liubov Vasilieva (RUS)

10km Standing: Anna Burmistrova (RUS), itting: Liudmila Vauchok (BLR), VI: Liubov Vasilieva (RUS)

5km Standing: Katarzyna Rogowiec (POL), itting: Olena lurkovska (URK), VI: Verena Bentele (GER)

2.5km Sitting: Olena lurkovska (URK)

3 x 2.5km relay: Russia

WHEELCHAIR CURLING



Photo ©: Getty Images

Wheelchair Curling ended in a spectacular match which saw Canada defeat Great Britain 7:4 in front of a sold-out stadium. Both teams made some brilliant tactical shots throughout the game but the match came down to one delivery by British Skip Frank Duffy, who missed the final shot to take out the sole Canadian stone. The game, which lasted just over two hours and 20 minutes, was a tribute to the concentration and accuracy of the athletes.

The form of the Canadian team was outstanding throughout the tournament, winning six of eight matches. All players maintained good averages, with Lead Sonja Gaudet who had an average of 66% (the best

in the competition). Interestingly the British team with 57% was slightly more accurate than the Canadian team with 56%.

On the other end of the table, last place finishers Italy managed to attract packed crowds to each of their games, proving that a medal is not the only glory to be achieved at the Paralympic Games.

First Inductees to Paralympic Hall of Fame

On 9 March, just prior to the opening of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, the first inductees were welcomed to the Paralympic Hall of Fame, presented by Visa. The three inductees were elected by the IPC Governing Board for their athletic performance, history of fair play and participation in community service.

ANNEMIE SCHNEIDER: Germany, Alpine Skiing (Giant Slalom, Slalom and Downhill)

Schneider has excelled in four previous Paralympic Winter Games. An above-the-knee amputee, she won four gold medals in Örnköldsvik (1976) and Geilo (1980) and earned additional silver and bronze medals in Innsbruck (1988) and Lillehammer (1994). In addition, Schneider captured gold in all four Alpine Skiing events at the 1974 World Championships. Beyond her skiing accomplishments, Schneider teaches skiing to children with an amputation. Schneider was honoured in 1980 with the Highest German National Award for Sporting Achievement.

JOUKO GRIP: Finland, Nordic Skiing (Cross Country and Biathlon)

Grip has competed in seven Paralympic Games since 1980, winning 14 medals in Nordic Skiing, a feat that makes his name practically synonymous with this event. He is also an accomplished middle distance runner, competing at the Paralympic Games in New York (1984) and Seoul (1988). Grip, who had polio in his left hand, has been on the medals podium 16 times in both the Paralympic Winter and Summer Games, earning gold on 12 occasions. Additionally, as a ten-time world

champion in Nordic Skiing and due to his efforts in actively promoting the Paralympic ideals to young children and youths in schools, Grip exemplifies the spirit of the Paralympic Movement.

ULLA RENVALL: Sweden, Coach, Trainer and Nordic Skiing Guide

Renvall's coaching has led to some of the most memorable athletic achievements of the Paralympic Games over the last 30 years. A specialist trainer of Paralympians with a visual impairment in both Nordic Skiing and Athletics, she has coached four athletes to gold medal victories, with a combined total of 17 Paralympic medals overall. By teaching physical education to young people with a disability and voluntarily coaching athletes with a disability, Renvall has helped to create role models for future generations of Paralympians.

The Paralympic Hall of Fame exists as a virtual Hall of Fame on the IPC website and on a special plaque to be installed at the IPC Headquarters in Bonn, Germany. Visa's sponsorship will continue for the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games.

"It is a great feeling, 30 years after the first Winter Paralympics, to be standing here and to see the developments that have taken place. I feel both moved and honoured to be part of the Paralympic Hall of Fame. I want to thank all the excellent athletes for giving me the opportunity to train them. Without them I would not be standing here today." - Ulla Renvall.

Whang Youn Dai Prize Encourages Athletes



Photos ©: Lieven Coudenys

At the Closing Ceremony of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, held on 19 March, Lonnie Hannah II (Ice Sledge Hockey, USA) and Olena Iurkovska (Nordic Skiing, Ukraine) were honoured with the Whang Youn Dai Overcome Prize. The medals, featuring the Paralympic Symbol, were awarded by Dr. Whang and IPC President Sir Philip Craven.

The Prize recognizes elite athletes with a disability that have demonstrated an exceptional level of determination to overcome their adversities through sport and the Paralympic Games. The Whang Youn Dai Overcome Prize is a pure gold medal weighing 75 grams.

During the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics, nominations were received from National Paralympic Committees (NPCs). The athletes were nominated by the Chef de Missions of the delegations competing at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. Six nominees (three male and three female) went through to the final round. The male finalists were Lonnie Hannah II (USA), Todd Nicholson (Canada) and Armando Ruiz (Mexico) and the female finalists were Colette Bourgonje (Canada), Lacey Heward (USA) and Olena Iurkovska (Ukraine).

The prize has been awarded at each Paralympic Games since the Seoul 1988 Paralympic Games.



From Left to Right: Annemie Schneider, Sir Philip Craven, Ulla Renvall, Jouko Grip and Tom Shepard, Executive Vice President, Global Marketing Partnerships and Sponsorship, Visa International.

Stars of Torino 2006

Photo ©: Getty Images



Olena Iurkovska, Ukraine Nordic Skiing

One Paralympic medal is an achievement, but four gold, one silver and one bronze medal is phenomenal. That is what Ukrainian athlete Olena Iurkovska achieved in Torino in the Nordic Skiing Cross Country and Biathlon disciplines. At only 22 years of age, Iurkovska clearly dominated the women's Nordic disciplines in the sit ski category. Her Torino medals added to the silver and three bronze medals that she won at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics. Interestingly, Iurkovska was also part of the Ukrainian women's Sitting Volleyball team at the ATHENS 2004 Paralympics.

Photo ©: Getty Images



Solène Jambaque, France Alpine Skiing

Solène Jambaque was the youngest member of the French Paralympic team at only 17. Her victory in the women's Super G and Downhill standing events in Torino followed her success in the 2004 IPC Alpine Skiing World Cup. Jambaque, who has cerebral palsy and skis in the standing class, also took a silver medal in the Slalom and bronze in the Giant Slalom. Her success put the young high school student at the centre of attention of the French President and her homeland. Her most memorable moment of the Torino Paralympics was when she was awarded a gold medal by Italian Olympic skier Alberto Tomba.



Photo ©: Getty Images

Taras Kryjanovski, Russia Nordic Skiing

One Russian athlete who saw a lot of the medals podium was Taras Kryjanovski. Kryjanovski had an outstanding competition in Torino, where he took home two gold medals in the men's 10km and 5km Cross Country sitting and two silvers in the 12.5km and 15km. Kryjanovski competed in his first Paralympic Games and won his first gold medal in Salt Lake in 2002. One of Kryjanovski's top performances in Torino was in the 10km race where he overtook his compatriot Sergei Shilov in the final stretch to win the gold medal.

Canada Ice Sledge Hockey

Canada placed fourth in the 2004 IPC Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships, but defeated the defending world champions, Norway, in convincing style to take the Torino gold. While a young team, eight members of the gold medal winning team were also part of the Canadian team to win bronze in Lillehammer in 1994 and silver in Nagano in 1998. Forward Billy Bridges was the Canadian's top goal scorer with a total of 11 goals and seven assists. Goaltender Paul Rosen also made a huge contribution to the team making 51 saves from 55 shots at goal, meaning the team only conceded four goals in the entire tournament.



Photo ©: Getty Images

Gerd Schoenfelder, Germany Alpine Skiing

Gerd Schoenfelder was a ski racer before the train accident that took his right arm in 1989. Since his Paralympic debut at the Tignes Albertville 1992 Winter Paralympics, Schoenfelder has consistently appeared on the medal podium. The two gold (Giant Slalom and Downhill), one silver (Super-G) and one bronze (Slalom) medals that he won in Torino made him the most successful male Paralympian in Alpine Skiing. The 35 year old collected his seventeenth Paralympic medal, bringing his total to 12 gold medals from five Winter Paralympics. Schoenfelder also took a clean sweep of the standing class at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics.



Photo ©: Getty Images

Canada Wheelchair Curling

The Canadian team dominated throughout the Torino 2006 Wheelchair Curling competition, winning five of their seven games, including an unexpected defeat of the favourites Great Britain in the pool play. They managed it again in the final, beating Great Britain 7:4. The team - Chris Daw (Skip), Gerry Austgarten (Third), Gary Cormack (Second), Sonja Gaudet (Lead) and Karen Blachford (Alternate) - developed a strong bond which held them together right until the final moments. Daw, was a crowd favourite with his tattoo-covered arms and trademark matchstick which he chewed to help him focus.



Photo ©: Getty Images



Photo ©: Getty Images

Gianmaria Dal Maistro, Italy Alpine Skiing

Gianmaria Dal Maistro became a national hero when he won Italy's first medal in the Torino 2006 Winter Paralympics. The Italian skier originally came in second place in the men's Super-G visually impaired event, however his silver medal turned into gold after a disqualification. Dal Maistro also grabbed a silver in the Giant Slalom event, adding to his Giant Slalom silver from the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics and three medals in 1998 in Nagano. Dal Maistro had put his studies aside to commit himself fully to his preparation with his guide Tommaso Balasso and the pair became known in the Italian media as 'Tom and Jerry' after the famous cartoon duo.



Photo ©: Getty Images

Brian McKeever, Canada Nordic Skiing

Brian McKeever took home a large medal collection from Torino. McKeever won two gold medals (5km and 10km), one silver (20km) and one bronze (7.5km) in the men's Cross Country visually impaired. With his brother Robin, a former Olympic athlete, as his guide, McKeever managed some incredible times, winning one of his events 46 seconds ahead of the silver medalist. McKeever, an active skier since childhood with macular degeneration or loss of central vision known as Stargard's Disease, now has a total of seven Paralympic medals in his collection, including the two gold and one silver that he won at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics.



Photo ©: Getty Images

Martin Braxenthaler, Germany Alpine Skiing

A classic 'hat trick' made German Alpine Skier Martin Braxenthaler one of the star athletes of the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games. Braxenthaler was the fastest down the slope in the men's Super G, Giant Slalom and Slalom sitting events. His performance followed his clean sweep during the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics where Braxenthaler won all four Alpine events.

“My Torino Paralympic Experience”

The best way to understand and enjoy the Paralympic Winter Games is, of course, to be there. But it can be tough to describe to others the atmosphere in Torino, how you felt as you came down the mountain, went onto the ice for the first time, as you sat in the stands or as you walked around the Paralympic Village. In this issue of 'The Paralympian', four people from very different backgrounds share their experiences at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games.

THE REFEREE

As an Ice Hockey referee I have had the pleasure of working eight international tournaments in the past 10 years, peaking with the under-20 World Championship Pool A in Sweden in 2000. Even though that is a big tournament, it is not even close to what I experienced during the two weeks in Torino.

Coming on to the ice for my first game, ITA - GBR, was just tremendous. Over 4,000 spectators and most of them Italians, screaming and cheering with blow horns etc, gave me goose bumps from head to toe. Then, when Italy scored their first goal ever, the spectators went bananas, and so did the team. Even the team officials came on to the ice. Even though this actually is a violation of the rules, we gave some slack, considering this being a historical moment on "home arena and home country".

Talking to the British coach, who agreed on the slack, I felt something for the first time as a referee: the spirit of Paralympics. Friendship, passion and unselfish sharing of joy and emotions. Passion definitely lived there!

By Owe Lüthcke (Ice Sledge Hockey Referee, Norway)

THE JOURNALIST

There's a reason I stay after the Olympics. Because the more intimate and impassioned version of international competition comes during the Paralympic Games, the truest demonstration of athleticism I know.

In Torino, I watched a 26-year-old compete in four events of the Alpine Skiing months away from a kidney transplant. There in Torino, I read about a 19-year-old who stood in goal on two prosthetics until his legs swelled. Then, when he could no longer, he found Ice Sledge Hockey and led his nation to its first gold medal in the event.

At every venue every day, I saw bleachers full of children whose fairness in their innocence treated Paralympians as they should be, as athletes.

The Paralympic Games are a spectacle because the sport is the spectacle and the athletes prove this in as much as they bear credence to a triumph in every struggle.

That's the reason I stay.

By Nick Bruce (Freelance journalist, USA)

THE VOLUNTEER

Patti Smith was still rocking on stage. Her hoarse, yet gentle, voice roared those few words through the air putting a seal to the entire experience, synthesizing the intense feelings I had absorbed during the Torino 2006 adventure: People have the power.

It was the perfect soundtrack to the memories of those ten incredibly energetic and inspirational days. Days made of snow and ice, of sweat and blood, of tough competition and saving grace. Days of thin air and infinite skies, of deep breaths and fast turns, of heart-filling pride and eye-opening witness. Days of cheerful laughter and desperate tears, of sharp awareness and stimulating thrill. Days of diversity and strength.

All this has left a unique and enlightened consciousness: the clear invitation to take back our life and our dreams. Because people have the power...

By Valeria D'Amico (Torino 2006 Volunteer, Italy)

THE PARENT

My son, Adam Hall, was one of two members of the New Zealand Paralympic ski team and competed in all four disciplines in Alpine Skiing. I came all the way from New Zealand to support Adam with my husband, my Dad (Adam's Grandad) and my daughter. As Adam is only 18 and one of the youngest competitors, I was totally unprepared for the emotion of being there and watching my teenager represent our country.

It was a fantastically amazing experience and one my family and I will never forget. The Opening and Closing Ceremonies were spectacular and being in the stand in Sestriere Borgata was fabulous...The organizers did a great job. I can't explain the feeling of watching Adam ski down that mountain and can hardly imagine how it felt to him!

It has been Adam's dream since he was a little boy to represent New Zealand at the Paralympics and Torino was certainly a dream come true for him....and watching him live his dream was a special time for all of us.The atmosphere everywhere we went in Torino was great, the people were helpful and friendly. We are a very proud family and look forward to sharing similar experiences with Adam in the future.

By Gayle Hall (Parent of Paralympian Adam Hall, New Zealand)



Torino Paralympics Host Sport and Development

Photos @: Ruth Fletcher

On 10 March, the IPC co-hosted the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP-IWG) in Torino, Italy. The objective of the meeting was to present the draft preliminary report of the initiative 'Sport for Development: From Practice to Policy' and to showcase the importance of inclusion in sport. The report is a useful resource for governments, United Nations (UN) agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and needs to be widely disseminated. The final version of the report will be made available in June 2006 in English, Swahili, Spanish and Portuguese.

The meeting promoted several important outcomes. The group challenged Sport Federations, International NGOs and governments to integrate Sport for Development and Peace programmes. It was clearly stated that to be effective, sport and physical activity need to be inclusive, and universal access should be promoted on a wider scale. Finally, outreach efforts need to be expanded through continuing advocacy in regional and international forums.

The goal for 2008 is the development of clear policy recommendations and an international scorecard to guide and monitor the future expansion of international Sport

for Development and Peace efforts at the national governmental level. The IPC wants to ensure that its members, particularly National Paralympic Committees, are included throughout the process.

The SDP-IWG was established in 2004 at a roundtable held during the ATHENS 2004 Olympic Games and hosted by Right To Play, as an international four-year initiative that brings together national governments, the UN and civil society leaders with the goal of developing recommendations on incorporating sport in national development and foreign assistance policies.

Wheelchair Fencing World Cup in Asia



Photo ©: Alison Wong

Having organized the inaugural Wheelchair Fencing World Championships in 1994, the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee brought the IWAS Wheelchair Fencing World Cup event to Asia for the first time. The competition, held from 23 to 27 February, attracted 132 fencers and officials from 12 countries, including China, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Poland, South Korea, Ukraine, the United States and hosts Hong Kong.

A total of ten individual events - the Men's and Women's Category A and B Foil and

Epee, Men's Category A and B Sabre - and two team events - the Men's foil team and Women's epee team - were staged. China came in first overall in the medal tally with 19 medals, including six gold, followed by Hong Kong and Poland.

In conjunction with the competition, a Classification Workshop conducted by Dr. Luca Michelini, Chief Classifier and Chairperson of the Classification Subcommittee of the International Wheelchair Fencing Committee (IWFC), was held prior to the competition.

Athletics Goes Indoors

From 22 to 27 March 2006, the World Indoor Games (WIG) in Athletics made its debut as the first international indoor Athletics competition for athletes with a disability. The competition, held in Bollnäs, Sweden, saw athletes from 30 countries compete in ten types of events in all classes.

As the competition was held during the European winter, athletes had an additional opportunity to compete at the international level, equivalent to the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) 'indoor season'.

A total of 15 world records were set in the visually impaired categories (B1-3), including two records by Elena Frolova (RUS, B1) in the women's 60m and 800m.

The competition was supported by the Swedish National Paralympic Committee (SHIF) and organized by the Swedish Development Centre for Disability Sport (SUH).

For a full list of competition results, please visit www.suh.se.



Photo ©: Pontus Lundahl, Scanpix

IPC SPORTS CALENDAR		
2006 VISA Paralympic World Cup	1 - 7 May 2006	
2006 IPC Powerlifting World Championships	3 - 11 May 2006	
2006 IPC Shooting World Championships	13 - 22 July 2006	
2006 IPC Athletics World Championships	2 - 10 September 2006	
2006 IPC Cycling World Championships	10 - 18 September 2006	
2006 IPC Table Tennis World Championships	24 September - 1 October 2006	
2006 IPC Wheelchair Dance Sport WC	13 - 14 October 2006	
2006 IPC Swimming World Championships	1 - 8 December 2006	
		Manchester, Great Britain
		Busan, South Korea
		Sargans, Switzerland
		Assen, Netherlands
		Aigle, Switzerland
		Montreux, Switzerland
		Arnhem, Netherlands
		Durban, South Africa

Athletes Shine at Commonwealth Games

The XVIII Commonwealth Games, held in Melbourne, Australia, from 15 to 26 March, provided another stage to showcase the sporting performances of over 200 elite athletes with a disability (EAD). The EAD programme featured 12 events across four sports: Athletics, Powerlifting, Swimming and Table Tennis.

Australia came in first on the medal tally with 84 gold medals, followed by England and Canada. Host of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, India, took fourth place on the medal tally. The medals won by athletes with a disability contributed equally to their country's total.

In Athletics, the men's 100m (T12) was dominated won by Adekunle Adesoji (NGR) in 11.07sec and Australian Heath Francis

(AUS) won the men's 200m (T46) with 22.96sec.

The women's 100m (T37) was won by Elizabeth McIntosh (AUS) in a time of 14.38sec. Canadian Chantal Petitclerc took the gold in the women's EAD 800m (T54) in 1:48.98sec.

Tanto Campbell (JAM) won the men's EAD Seated Discus and the women's Seated Shot Put was won by Nigerian Niideka Iyazi.

The women's Swimming events were dominated by South African star Natalie du Toit (RSA) who won the women's EAD 50m Freestyle in 29.27sec, breaking the world record. Du Toit also won the women's EAD 100m Freestyle with 1:01.81sec.

A similar trend occurred in the men's events as 17-year-old Matthew Cowdrey (AUS) won the men's EAD 50m Freestyle with a new world record of 26.06sec and the Men's EAD 100m Freestyle in 56.73sec also setting a world record.

The Table Tennis women's EAD singles event was won by Susan Gilroy (ENG) who defeated Faith Obiora (NGR). The Powerlifting gold was awarded to Ruel Ishaku (NGR) with a lift of 190.2kg. The men's EAD Powerlifting was a single open category event encompassing all weight categories.

Medal events for elite athletes with a disability were integrated for the first time at the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games.

Photos ©: Getty Images



IPC and WADA in Fight Against Doping in Torino

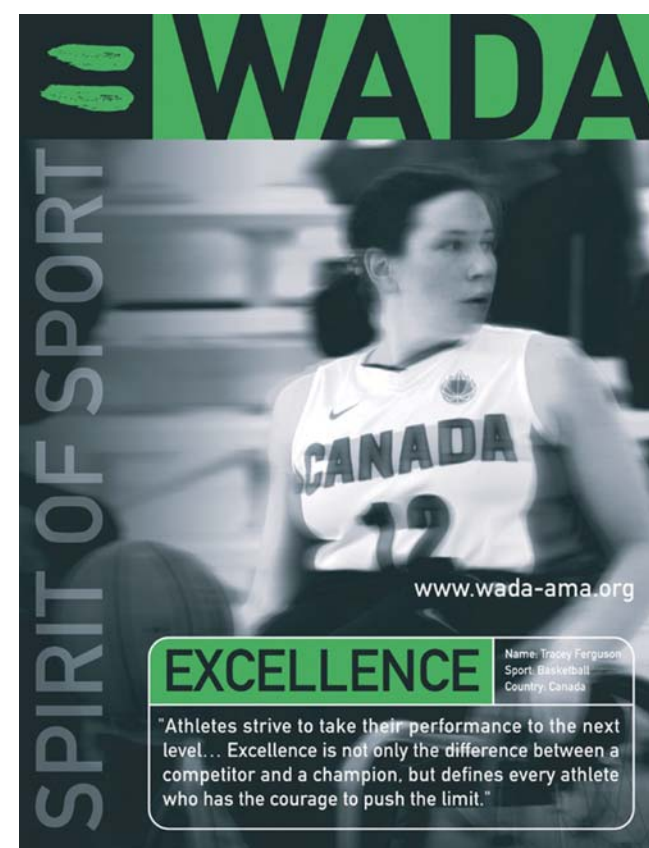
At the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, a total of 242 doping tests were conducted during the testing period, 4 to 22 March, significantly more than at the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Paralympics where 97 samples were collected. No anti-doping rule violations were reported, demonstrating significant success for the IPC and all athletes involved.

The Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games also provided an important trial run for the new Anti-Doping Administration and Management System (ADAMS), managed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

ADAMS is a tool which allows all parties involved in Anti-Doping activities to co-ordinate information within one secure system. The system allows athletes to enter whereabouts information, manages the

doping control process and provides an information clearing house.

At the Games, WADA personnel were present to assist the IPC in testing the functionality of ADAMS in a real time in-competition situation. The IPC achieved a greater understanding of ADAMS, and suggestions for improvements were made. Onsite in Torino, WADA also promoted its Athlete Outreach Programme. At a booth set up in the Athlete's Village, athletes and delegation members could receive information about the dangers of doping and participate in an interactive quiz. In addition, the WADA Independent Observers Programme Team was present to monitor the doping control process.



DEVELOPMENT NEWS

International Year Comes to a Close



Ceremony to mark the completion of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education at UN Headquarters in New York. Attendees included UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (front, fourth from left), Adolf Ogi, (front, third from right) and Paralympian Katrina Webb, (back, third from left). Photo ©: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe.

At a special event at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York, USA, on 3 April, Adolf Ogi, the UN Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, presented a report on the achievements of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE) 2005 to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Guests at the Closing Ceremony for the IYSPE included sports celebrities from around the world, including Paralympic gold medallist, Katrina Webb (Athletics, AUS). They were joined by representatives from the world of sport, the UN system and multilateral organizations, the private sector and the media.

The IYSPE 2005 Report highlights the worldwide achievements and the significant role that sport can play in accelerating progress towards the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Said Mr. Ogi, "We want healthy, educated citizens on every continent. We want development.

And we want peace. We can achieve these goals through sport. The fundamentals are there, the momentum is there."

In 2005, thousands of activities were initiated worldwide, including sports events, conferences and projects using sport to further health, education, development and peace. The International Year provided a platform for organizations worldwide to demonstrate the power of sport as a tool for peace and development. The 2005 International Paralympic Day, held in Bonn, Germany, was held as part of the IYSPE.

"The fact is, no matter what your physical abilities are every person has the right and should have access to sport and recreation, not only at a participation level but also at an elite level...Sport changes the perceptions and breaks down barriers for people with a disability. It can provide purpose, a goal and something to strive for." - Katrina Webb.

Partnerships Build in Strength

The IPC has recently signed a number of partnership agreements with national and international organizations towards achieving the long-term development goals of the IPC.

The IPC and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have been working together on subjects of common interest. As a result of this collaboration and in order to renew the principles governing this co-operation, the IPC formalized an agreement with the UNESCO in February. Both organizations will collaborate on the IPC Women in Sport Leadership Summits, to be held in each region of the world before the end of 2007. Together they will promote the International Convention against Doping in Sport and promote awareness about persons with a disability in formal education systems through the IPC Paralympic School Day Programme.

On 1 December 2005, IPC Chief Executive Officer Xavier Gonzalez, and the General Director of Handicap International (HI) Jean Baptiste Richardier signed a long-term partnership agreement, formalizing co-operation between both organizations. HI is a non-governmental organization specialized in the area of disability and has field offices and

programmes in over 40 developing countries and Western Europe. The partnership goals are to increase co-operation between the IPC and HI, including their members and national offices, and promote the rights and opportunities for persons with a disability through sport, while adhering to the principles of sustainability.

UK Sport, who began working with the IPC in 2005 with their support for the IPC Women in Sport Leadership Summits in Africa, will continue to work with IPC in collaboration with Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC). The two organizations have committed additional funds in 2006 and beyond to support projects that foster sport and human development through Paralympic sport. Support in 2006 will impact the National Paralympic Committees in Tanzania, Namibia and Zambia. Funds will be used to develop youth programmes, in particular for athlete recruitment and training, needs based assessments and capacity building. These activities fall under UK Sport's Worldwide Impact Strategy (WWI) and CGC's International Development Through Sport Initiative.



Performers entertain at the IPC Women in Sport Leadership Summit held in Tanzania. Photo: Tine Rindum Teilmann.

Athletes Elect Their Voices

From 8 to 17 March, all accredited athletes participating in the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games had the chance to vote for three new athlete representatives for 2006-2010 on the IPC Athletes' Council.

A record number of 381 athletes (79.87%) voted from a choice of five candidates running for the Council. By comparison, at the Salt Lake 2002 Paralympic Winter Games, 51% of all accredited athletes took the opportunity to vote. The election saw an amazing number of 100% participation at the Torino Paralympic Village and 71% participation at the Sestriere Paralympic Village.

The successful candidates were Katarzyna Rogowiec (Nordic Skiing, Poland) with 301 votes, Hans Burn (Alpine Skiing, Switzerland) with 247 votes and Eskil Hagen (Ice Sledge Hockey, Norway) with 206 votes.

Katarzyna Rogowiec said after the election: "I am happy to be elected and I will do my

best to manage all the duties and expectations of the athletes who voted for me."

"It is a fantastic outcome. One that speaks volumes of the greater awareness that the Paralympic athletes are getting in the importance of their voice being heard," said Ljiljana Ljubisic, Chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council.

The IPC Athletes' Council is the collective voice of Paralympic athletes within the IPC and the greater Paralympic Movement. As the liaison between the IPC decision-makers and Paralympic athletes, the IPC AC works to provide effective input into decision-making at all levels of the organization.

The Council is composed of nine Paralympic athlete representatives elected for a four-year term. Six athlete representatives are elected during the Paralympic Summer Games and three during the Paralympic Winter Games.



The IPC Athletes' Council Winter Sport Representatives. From left to right: Katarzyna Rogowiec, Eskil Hagen and Hans Burn. Photo ©: Lieven Coudenys.

MISCELLANEOUS

Eurosport Honours Torino Medallists

The fourth edition of the Eurosport SportStar Awards was held in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 20 April, to honour 28 European Olympic and two Paralympic medallists of the Torino 2006 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

nominated by the seven International Winter Sports Federations and the IPC.

Ukrainian Nordic Skier Olena Lurkovska won the award for Best Female Athlete with a Disability based on her outstanding performance at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games where she took four gold medals in Biathlon (10km and 7.5km sitting) and Cross Country (2.5km and 5km sitting). She also claimed a silver medal in the 10km Cross Country sitting and a bronze in the Cross Country relay.

Martin Braxenthaler of Germany won the honour of Best Male Athlete with a Disability after he took the gold medals in three of the four Alpine Skiing disciplines (Slalom, Giant Slalom and Super G) at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games.

Photos ©: Getty Images



Cody Recognized for Contribution to Sport

Ann Cody, member of the IPC Governing Board and Chairperson of the IPC Women in Sport Committee, was awarded the 'Spirit of Sport Award' from the General Association of International Sport Federations (GAISF) for her services rendered to sport.

The award was presented to Ms. Cody at the opening of the GAISF General Assembly in Seoul, Korea, on 7 April, by GAISF Acting President Hein Verbruggen. Other recipients were Jan Steler from the International Luge Federation (FIL), James L. Easton from the International Archery Federation (FITA) and Yuri Titov from the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG).

Ms. Cody is a multi-Paralympic medalist, who won gold (4x100 Relay) and bronze (10,000 metres) at the Barcelona 1992 Paralympic Games and four silver medals (800 metres, 1,500 metres, 5,000 metres and 10,000 metres) at the Seoul 1988 Paralympic Games. She also competed at the New York 1984 Paralympic Games as a member of the US Paralympic women's Wheelchair Basketball Team.

leadership positions with the International Paralympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee and has held positions with U.S. Paralympics, the NYC 2012 Candidate City Bid and the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation.



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