

THE

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PARALYMPIAN

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Neymar Jr.
Brazilian National Team
FC Barcelona
Panasonic global ambassador

For
All Dream
Challengers

“With Rio 2016 set to be broadcast to more countries than ever before, I am fully confident that we will break through the four billion cumulative TV viewers for the first time.”

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this special edition which celebrates one year to go until the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. It does not seem too long ago that I passed the Paralympic flag from London Mayor Boris Johnson to his Rio counterpart Eduardo Paes in London's Olympic Stadium, but time has moved on and Rio is gearing up to stage the biggest Paralympic Games to date.

Featuring 22 sports, including debuts for canoe and triathlon, Rio 2016 has an aspiration to sell 3.3 million tickets, half a million more than London 2012. Should this target be achieved, then in terms of tickets sales alone, the Paralympic Games will overtake the FIFA World Cup as the world's second biggest sporting event.

With Rio 2016 set to be broadcast to more countries than ever before, I am fully confident that we will break through the four billion cumulative TV viewers for the first time, showcasing the best of what the Paralympic Movement has to offer to millions of new fans.

This September, Rio will stage a special one year to go event, as well as the Chef de Mission seminar and World Broadcasters Briefing. Together with the ongoing test event programme, these landmarks will help ensure everything is ready for the Opening Ceremony on 7 September 2016 at the iconic Maracana Stadium.

Consolidating the growth of the Paralympic Games as a premier event is one of six strategic goals in

the newly launched IPC Strategic Plan 2015-2018 which is featured in this edition.

Published in June, the plan also aims to increase global participation in para-sport and improve the recognition and value of the Paralympic brand.

A lot of work and input went into the document from the whole IPC membership and I would like to thank everyone who contributed. I hope the final product can act as a roadmap for the IPC's future and a source of inspiration to the whole Paralympic Movement.

Staying with the theme of growth, I would like to share with you my absolute delight at the long-term and monumental agreement we announced with Japanese broadcaster NHK in June. NHK are huge advocates of the Movement and I am extremely excited at what can be achieved with them over the coming years in the lead-up to, during and after Tokyo 2020.

Finally, I look forward to seeing many of you at November's IPC General Assembly in Mexico City.

Sir Philip Craven, MBE
IPC President





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THE PARALYMPIAN

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IMAGES

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++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

IRAN: A new building was dedicated as National Paralympic Day Headquarters in Tehran, Iran, by NPC Iran. National Paralympic Day will also be included in the Iranian annual calendar on 16 October.

GERMANY: Three-time Paralympian Kirsten Bruhn was elected as the new chairman of the board of trustees of the German Disabled Sports Association.

EGYPT: Powerlifter Fatma Omar's suspension for an anti-doping violation was reduced from two years to one after presenting new evidence at an appeal hearing to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

RUSSIA: More than 200 participants from the 17 regions gathered in Moscow for the 2015 Para-Fest from 15-17 May, an annual celebration of para-sport in Russia.

AUSTRIA: Swimmers Andreas Onea and Sabine Weber-Treiber met Austrian Minister of Sport Gerald Klug as part of "Project Rio 2016" which will support 15 para-athletes on their way to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

USA: US Paralympics' Road to Rio Tour began 4 July. The nine-stop tour is circling the country and wraps up on 10 September 2016.

JAPAN: Japan's WOWOW Inc. has become the first broadcaster in the world to screen all four wheelchair tennis Grand Slam events.

SWITZERLAND: Allianz Suisse and the Swiss National Paralympic Committee extended their partnership agreement for two more years.

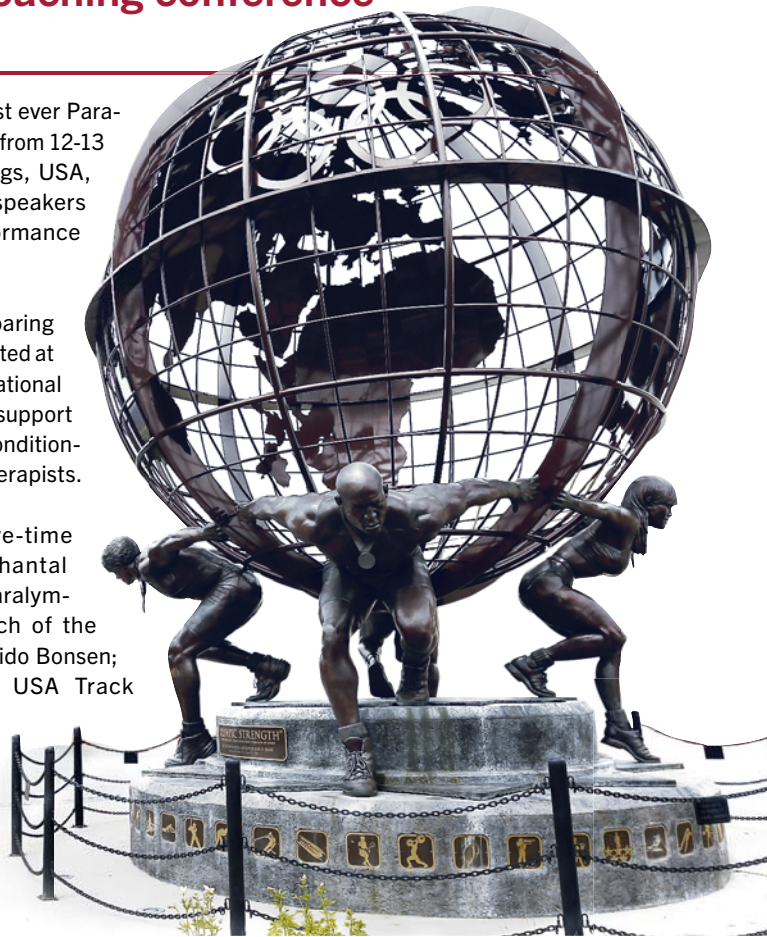
IOC: The IOC announced in July that it is to increase payments to the IPC from the Host City of the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, Beijing, China, to USD 7.5 million, an increase of USD 1.5 million.

IPC Athletics coaching conference comes to USA

IPC Athletics will stage the first ever Parathletics Coaching Conference from 12-13 December in Colorado Springs, USA, featuring a stellar lineup of speakers from the world of high performance para-athletics.

"Destination Rio 2016 – preparing for prime performance" is targeted at high performance directors, national coaches, classifiers and team support staff including strength and conditioners, nutritionists and physiotherapists.

Speakers will include five-time Canadian Paralympian Chantal Petitclerc, a winner of 14 Paralympic gold medals; head coach of the Dutch para-athletics team Guido Bosen; National Chairman of the USA Track and Field for Coaches Education Lawrence W. Judge; and professor of physical education at the Federal University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Ciro Winkler.



NHK secures Paralympic Games broadcasting, exhibition rights



In June, the IPC awarded NHK the exclusive broadcast and exhibition rights in Japan for the Paralympic Games through to 2024, in an agreement that is the biggest in Paralympic broadcasting history.

NHK, Japan's only public broadcaster, acquired the rights for television, radio, internet, mobile and all other media platforms for the PyeongChang 2018, Tokyo 2020, Beijing 2022 and 2024 Paralympic Games.

During Tokyo 2020, NHK plans to show dedicated live coverage across their networks, including television, radio, digital services and 8K Super Hi-Vision. In addition to the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, NHK will broadcast competition from Tokyo 2020 on terrestrial and satellite television channels every day.

The IPC has also announced two separate five year agreements with premium pay broadcaster WOWOW and Dentsu Inc.

In the leadup to Tokyo 2020, WOWOW will produce a series of documentaries on para-athletes, whilst Dentsu Inc., will lead marketing efforts in Japan.

Dentsu will have the exclusive rights to sell partnership and sponsorship packages to Japanese companies for all 10 summer and winter sports (athletics, swimming, powerlifting, shooting, alpine skiing, snowboard, ice sledge hockey, cross-country skiing, biathlon and wheelchair dance sport) the IPC acts as the International Federation for.

In addition to these package sales, Dentsu will provide support for promotional activities in Japan as well as for communications between the IPC and its Japanese sponsors.

Mactavish earns Paralympic Scientific Award



Canadian Professor Jennifer Mactavish will receive the IPC's 2015 Paralympic Scientific Award in October at VISTA 2015 in recognition of the role she played in the re-inclusion of

athletes with an intellectual impairment into the Paralympic programme.

The award is given biennially to an academic researcher for his or her contributions to research in the field of sports for persons with an impairment, and it serves to promote and encourage further study in this area.

"I am delighted and humbled to be the recipient of the 2015 Paralympic Scientific award," Mactavish said. "This tribute right-

fully belongs to a dedicated community of academics, graduate students, coaches and sport federations from around the world, who have worked together over the years to address a complex question that unanswered would continue to exclude athletes with intellectual impairment from showcasing their talents at the highest level of sport.

Mactavish's work in the international sporting community for athletes with an intellectual impairment provided the framework for the "Eligibility Classification Research" project, directed by the joint IPC – International Sports Federation for Persons with an Intellectual Disability (INAS) Taskforce. This successful project eventually led to 120 intellectually impaired athletes competing at London 2012 after a 12 year absence in athletics, swimming and table tennis.

McFadden wins Laureus Sport Award

US Paralympian Tatyana McFadden won the 2015 Laureus World Sportsperson with a Disability award at a glittering ceremony in Shanghai, China, for her achievements in 2014 in both athletics and cross-country skiing.

In her first full season in snow sports, McFadden won silver in the 1km cross-country sprint at the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games and 32 days later won the London Marathon.

With further wins in Boston, Chicago and New York, she repeated her feat of 2013, when she became the first athlete ever to win all four major world marathons in a calendar year. On the track, she also set new world records over 1,500m and 5,000m T54 to cap a memorable year.

To win the award, McFadden beat five other finalists, including Russian Nordic skier Roman Petushkov and German alpine skier Anna Schafelhuber, who between them won 11 gold medals at Sochi 2014. Great Britain's para-cyclist Sarah Storey, Hong Kong's boccia world champion Yuk Wing Leung and Canada's para-cycling world champion Shelly Gauthier were also nominated.



++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

ALPINE SKIING: Vincent Gauthier-Manuel, France's six-time Paralympic medallist and five-time world champion in the men's standing class, announced his retirement.

TAEKWONDO: The World Taekwondo Federation was introduced as a full IPC member in June and published a full list of world rankings in para-taekwondo kyorugi which consists of four classifications.

SAILING: ISAF announced a new Paralympic Development Programme, aimed to increase participation and attendance of nations competing at major events, amongst other goals. ISAF also named Betsy Alison as the new chair of the Disabled Sailing Committee.

SWIMMING: Funchal, on the island of Madeira, Portugal, will host the 2016 IPC Swimming European Open Championships from 30 April – 7 May. It will run as an Open Championships to ensure swimmers have opportunities to qualify for Rio 2016.

TRIATHLON: The Gold Coast, Australia, will host the 2018 ITU World Triathlon Grand Final, which will also include the Para-Triathlon World Championships.

ROWING: Para-rowers tested the IPC's Proud Paralympian education programme – a project designed to support athlete development on and off the field – from 8-10 May, at a workshop in Gavirate, Italy.

POWERLIFTING: Mexico City will host the 2017 World Championships, alongside Cartagena, Colombia, which will stage the 2018 Americas Championships.

ICE SLEDGE HOCKEY: A search has started for hosts for the 2016 European Championships, which will feature a maximum of 180 athletes from up to 10 teams.

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

LEBANON: The Lebanese Paralympic Committee hosted their first National Paralympic Day on 11 June in Beirut. It was attended by dignitaries and sports clubs from across the country.

BOTSWANA: Equipped with training from the Agitos Foundation's Organisational Capacity Programme in 2014, the Paralympic Sports Association of Botswana held their National Paralympic Day on 27 May. About 400 athletes competed, and 58 officials oversaw the competitions.

CANADA: The Canadian Paralympic Committee launched a multiplatform campaign "The Games are Tough; the Athletes are Tougher" to generate excitement for their athletes ahead of August's Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games.

SPAIN: Long-distance athlete Javi Conde became the first Spanish Paralympian appointed as ambassador for the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation. He will collaborate on projects to support young people and children living in challenging environments around the world.

FRANCE: Emmanuelle Assmann, the President of NPC France and Secretary General of the French Federation of Disabled Sports, received the prestigious Legion d'honneur. The award is the highest decoration in France.

MALAYSIA: The Malaysian Wheelchair Rugby Federation hosted the inaugural South East Asia Wheelchair Rugby Workshop. The event, held 24-26 April, drew representatives from Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia, and focused on teaching basic game skills and growing the sport in the region.

OBS: The inaugural Paralympic Sport Technical Meeting took place 11-13 May in Madrid, Spain, with sports broadcasting as the main focus of the three-day meeting. It saw 25 delegates from 19 International Federations.



IPC President speaks at UN Headquarters

IPC President Sir Philip Craven told an audience at United Nations headquarters in New York, USA, on 15 April that he believes the Paralympic Games are the world's leading sporting event for driving social inclusion.

Sir Philip, together with three-time Paralympian Dr. Cheri Blauwet, was speaking at "United action towards sustainable development for all through sport," a special event hosted by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to commemorate the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

During a short address to an audience which included Member States, athletes, high-level representatives of the sport sector and UN officials, Sir Philip shared his own experiences

of practicing sport as a five-time Paralympian in wheelchair basketball and described sport as "life's great educator."

"In my opinion, no other sporting event in the world can deliver such seismic shifts in attitudes or drive social inclusion as well as the Paralympic Games," said Sir Philip, who highlighted that around 20 million people in Great Britain, one third of the population, changed their view of people with an impairment as a result of the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

"Together we need to embark on a long-term programme of education where sport and activity play a key role in encouraging people to maximise their development of what they possess, not worrying about what they don't."

Beijing wins 2022 Winter Games bid

Beijing, China, was awarded the right to stage the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games at the 128th IOC Session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 31 July.

Beijing received 44 votes from IOC members, whilst rival city Almaty, Kazakhstan, polled 40 votes.

"I would like to send my heartfelt congratulations from the whole Paralympic Movement to the bid committee of Beijing on winning the right to stage the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games," Sir Philip Craven, IPC President, said.

"In 2008 Beijing raised the bar for all future summer Paralympic Games, delivering an event that acted as a catalyst for a more inclusive Chinese society and increased participation in summer sport. I am confident the

2022 Paralympic Winter Games can have a similar impact and China could emerge as a Paralympic superpower in winter sports, just as they are now in summer sports.

"Although China made their debut at the Salt Lake City 2002 Paralympic Winter Games they have yet to win a medal and participation in winter sport remains relatively low.

"Therefore I am excited that these Games are a real opportunity for China's 85 million people with an impairment to engage in winter sport and become more active, not just in sport but most importantly in society.

At Sochi 2014, China sent a team of 10 athletes and finished fourth in wheelchair curling. Earlier this year the team won the silver medal at the 2015 World Wheelchair Curling Championships in Finland.

IPC personnel appointed to Olympic Education Commission

IPC President Sir Philip Craven was appointed as Chair of the Olympic Education Commission following a review by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) of scope and composition of their commissions for 2015. Sir Philip will also serve on the Olympic Channel Commission, as well as the Board of Directors of the Olympic Channel Services S.L. Spain.

A number of IPC representatives have been re-appointed to IOC commissions: IPC Vice President Andrew Parsons, who is also President of the Brazilian National Paralympic Committee to the Tokyo 2020 Co-ordination Commission; IPC Governing Board member Jose Luis Campo to the Rio 2016 Co-ordination Commission; Rita van Driel, also IPC Governing Board member, to the 2022 Evaluation Commission; IPC Athletes' Council chair Todd Nicholson to the IOC Athletes Commission as well as the PyeongChang 2018 Co-ordination Commission; and Tine Rindum Teilmann to the Women in Sport Commission.

Parsons will also represent the IPC on the new Olympic Channel Commission, which is meant to ensure all relevant stakeholders and experts are consulted throughout the

growth and development of the Olympic Channel.

Jane Jones, former Director of Communications and Marketing at the British Paralympic Association, will serve as IPC representative on the newly formed Communications Commission, which will help develop strategies to support the promotion of the Olympic values, and the IOC's vision and mission, to a global audience.

Johnson Jasson, President of NPC Tanzania, has been appointed as IPC representative to the new Sustainability and Legacy Commissions, the former Sport and Environment Commission.

Xavier Gonzalez, the IPC's Chief Executive Officer, will represent the IPC on the Sport and Active Society Commission (former Sport for All Commission). The IOC has also appointed IPC Governing Board Member Kyung-Won Na to this commission.

The Commissions will support the IOC Session, the IOC Executive Board and the IOC President in the implementation of the roadmap designed to shape the future of the Olympic Movement.



++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

APC: The Asian Paralympic Committee organised the first APC Gathering held 9- 11 May in Abu Dhabi, UAE, where the APC, the IPC and sport institution members discussed the APC's future direction and informed of their first strategic plan drafting.

FIMS: The IPC and the International Federation of Sport Medicine (FIMS) extended their Partnership Agreement for five and a half years, taking it beyond the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS: The All England Club announced that from 2016, Wimbledon will feature singles as well as doubles events.

ATHLETICS: The Abbott World Marathon Majors is expanding its series to include elite wheelchair athletes. For the first time, a male and female winner will be determined over a 12-month period based on scoring earned via results from six iconic global races; each will be awarded USD 50,000 for the championships.

SNOWBOARD: Giant slalom will be added to the Regional Cup programme in 2015-16 to make the sport more accessible for new athletes. It comes after the conclusion of the 2014-15 season, which saw a World Championships take place under IPC Snowboard for the first time.

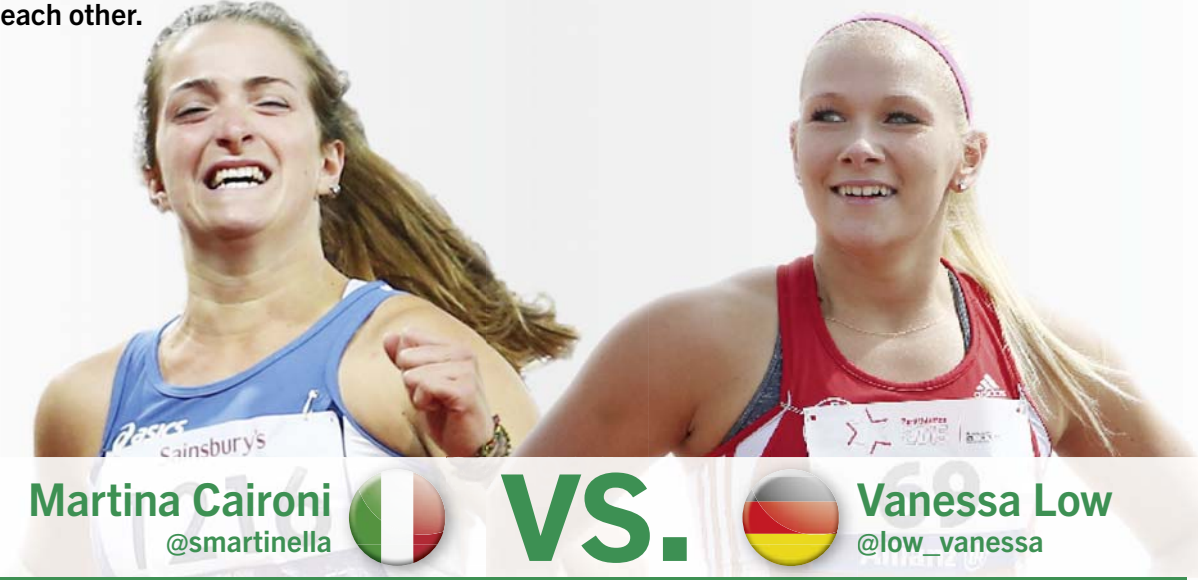
BRAZIL: The Brazilian Paralympic Committee and the Kinoplex Group, Brazil's largest chain of cinemas, announced a partnership that will bring videos of para-sport heroes to cinemas across the country.

AUSTRALIA: Kate McLoughlin was appointed as the Australian Paralympic Committee's Chef de Mission of the Australian Paralympic team that will compete in Rio 2016.

SWEDEN: Margareta Israelsson was re-elected as chairman of the Swedish Para Sports Federation and Swedish Paralympic Committee.

#AskAnAthlete

At October’s IPC Athletics World Championships, one of the biggest rivalries will be in the T42 class between Martina Caironi and Vanessa Low. Here’s what the two had to say about each other.



Martina Caironi @smartinella **VS.** **Vanessa Low** @low_vanessa

My ambitions are to improve my level, both in running and jumping. I want to go below 15 seconds in the 100m. My previous aim in the long jump was to jump more than 4.5m and now that I am at 4.6m I'm just curious about how long could I "fly."

What are your ambitions for Doha 2015?

Doha is an important step on my way to Rio. In the last years I worked very hard and I really hope I can execute all that and deliver a perfect race. I want to give an exciting race for the people watching, so getting as close as possible to my main competitor is the goal.

Vanessa is a very determined athlete and a nice person.

How would you describe your rival?

As an experience, London 2012 was the greatest. But the greatest run was this summer in my home city where I ran 15.05 seconds for the 100m.

What are your greatest achievements to date?

They are really important for promoting the para-athletics movement; at the stadiums I met people who saw para-athletics for the first time. They told me about how athletes are a great inspiration and role models for everyone.

How has the Grand Prix series helped develop para-athletics?

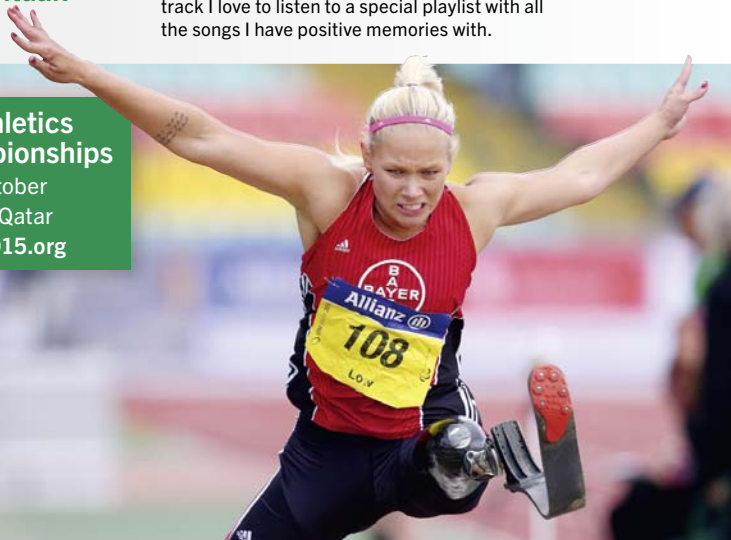
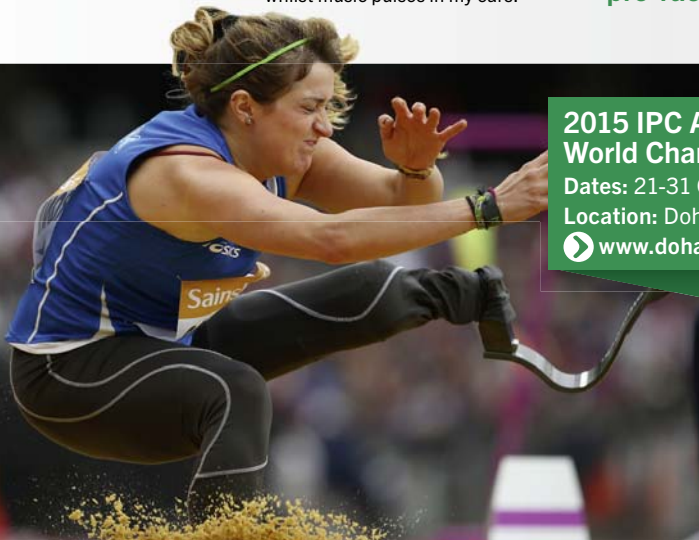
I just keep calm and try not to forget the stretching movements whilst music pulses in my ears.

What’s your pre-race ritual?

Building the IPC Athletics Grand Prix series was an important step. In the past athletes disappeared after the Games and the next time you saw them was a year before the next Games. The Grand Prix events finally offer more occasions for para-athletes to compete on a big stage against other athletes in their class.

I do not have a special ritual but I am very strict about what I eat the days before and on competition. I try to focus on the positive and get myself in a good mood. When I get to the track I love to listen to a special playlist with all the songs I have positive memories with.

2015 IPC Athletics World Championships
Dates: 21-31 October
Location: Doha, Qatar
www.doha2015.org

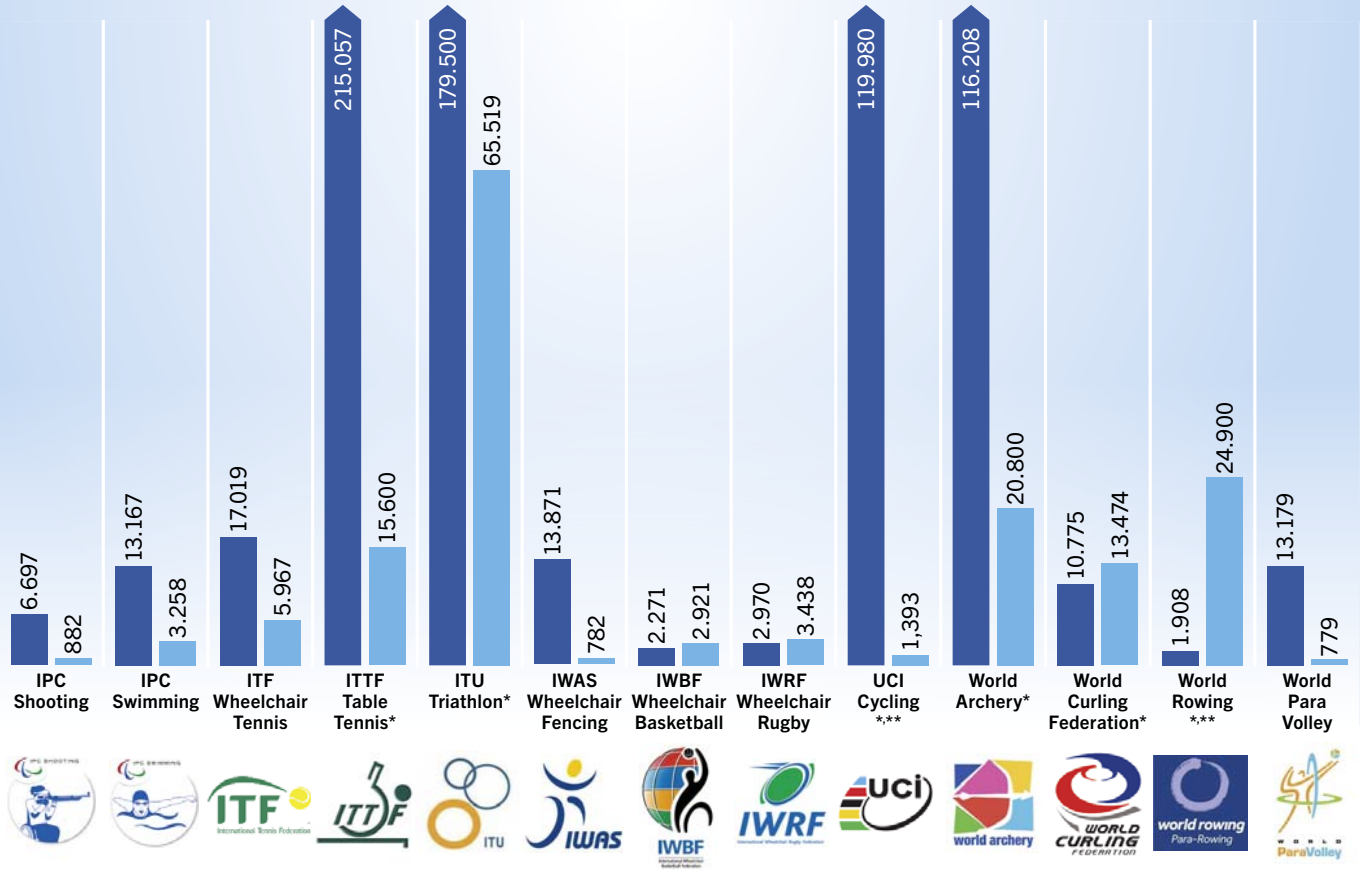
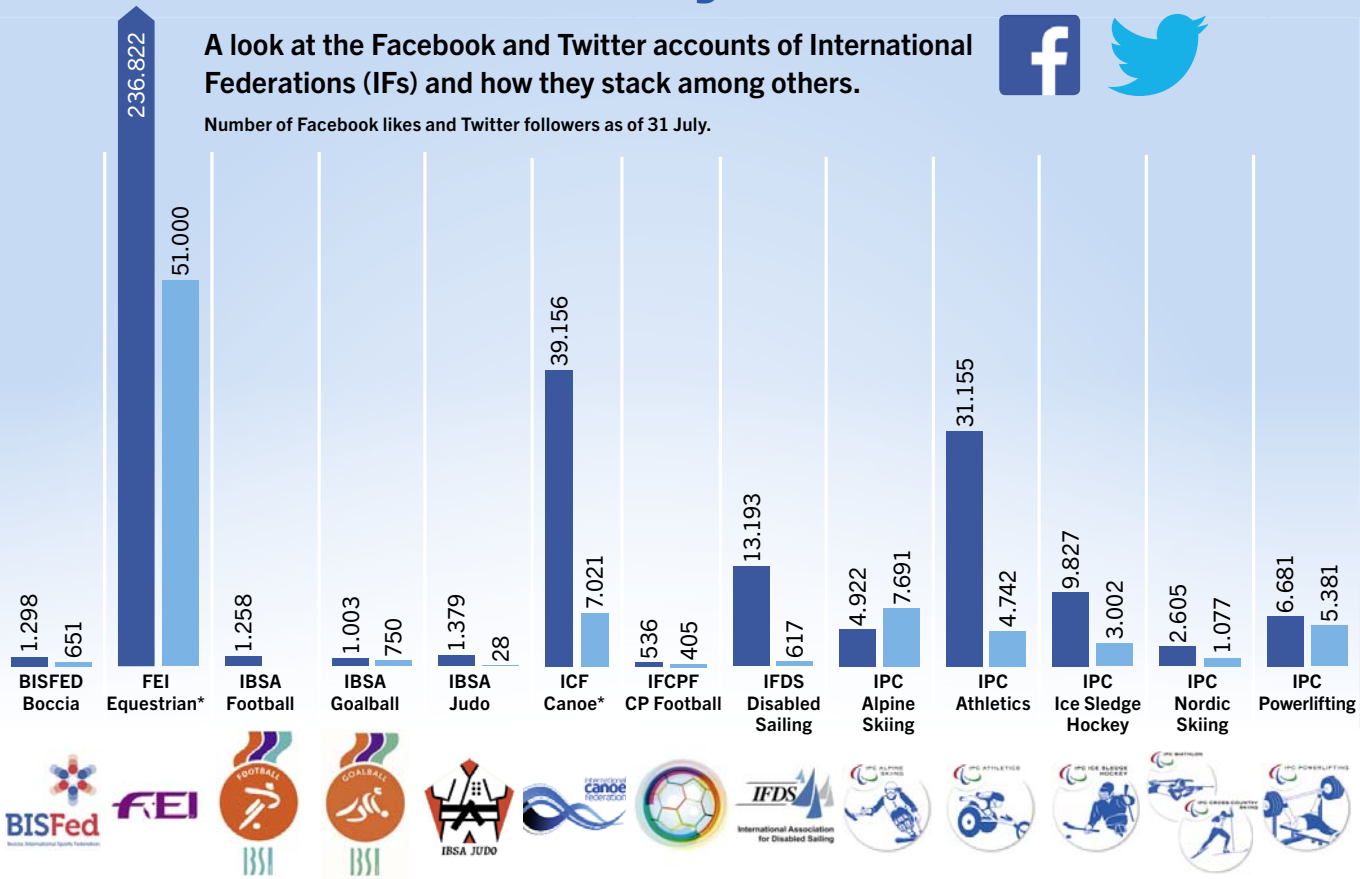


How ‘social’ are they?

A look at the Facebook and Twitter accounts of International Federations (IFs) and how they stack among others.



Number of Facebook likes and Twitter followers as of 31 July.



*Accounts for both able-bodied and para-sports.

**IF has separate Facebook/Twitter accounts for para-sport.

RIO 1 YEAR TO GO

Reaching a 'new frontier'

"We want to be the best Paralympic Games ever, and hope the Brazilian population can engage in that."

Never before has Latin America hosted a Paralympic Games.

That will change one year from now, when the Paralympic flame will be lit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

As the Games prepare to enter uncharted territory, Chair of the Rio 2016 Paralympic Integration Committee Andrew Parsons envisions the impact the country can play in growing the Paralympic Movement in the Americas region.

"I think it's perfect for the Paralympic Movement," said Parsons, who is also President of the Brazilian Paralympic Committee. "We are reaching a new frontier. This is not the first Paralympic Games in South America – this is the first Paralympic Games in Latin America. So it's all the opportunities that come with it in terms of development."

The only time an Olympic or Paralympic Games came to Latin America was in the 1968 Olympics, which were held in Mexico City, Mexico. The Paralympic Games have been held in the Americas five times, but all were in North American host cities.

Rio 2016 will open new doors to para-athletes, and Parsons said they can expect a city and country that are "eager to welcoming" them and serving a new "Latin flavour."

But there is much to be done to ensure a lasting taste.

"In terms of preparations, I think we are pretty much on schedule and on track with constructions of the Olympic Park and Athletes Village," Parsons said. "I don't see any major issues with that. Our focus has been on the test events to see if we are missing any part of the whole competition."

Also on the to-do list is promoting the Games and both Brazilian and international athletes. That in turn could help with another priority: selling tickets, Parsons said. The Rio 2016 Organising Committee hopes to build off marks set at London 2012, which sold a record 2.7 million tickets.

In addition to ticket sales records, venues in London were packed, and more broadcasters covered the Games than ever before, reaching 3.8 billion people worldwide.

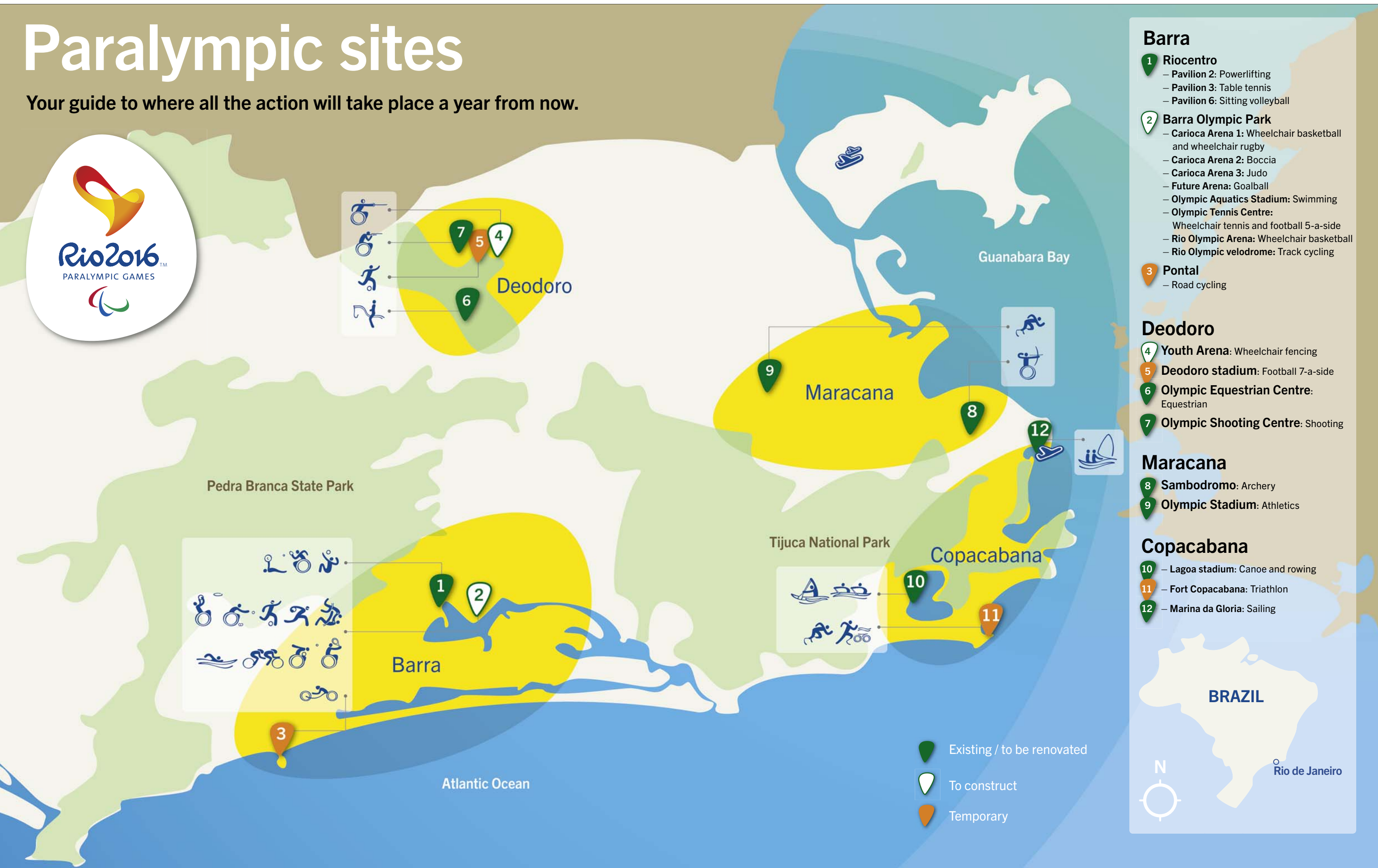
"We are very close to sportscasters of the Games," Parsons said. "We have had a meeting with all the TV channels, and they want to take advantage of the fact that they have the rights of the Games."

"I think we will provide a fantastic platform for the Paralympic athletes to succeed," Parsons said. "We want to be the best Paralympic Games ever, and hope the Brazilian population can engage in that."

www.rio2016.com

Paralympic sites

Your guide to where all the action will take place a year from now.



Just soaking it in

“I am feeling kind of a good anxiety of being able to swim in Rio and have my country and family watch me.”

When asked if the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games would be his last, Daniel Dias could only laugh.

The 27-year-old Brazilian was a hot commodity during July's IPC Swimming World Championships, winning an incredible seven gold medals. It is hard to imagine that his last hurrah could be one year from now.

He carried on at the World Championships, posing for pictures and speaking with media, all while lugging the weight of all that bling around his neck – the most of any of the 500-plus swimmers at the event. Dias' performance that week in Glasgow, Great Britain, seemed like an appetiser for what was to come next September.

The thought of bringing that performance to Rio de Janeiro stirred anticipation for Dias.

“I am feeling kind of a good anxiety of being able to swim in Rio and have my country and family watch me,” Dias said. “I had a pre-experience back in 2007, when the Parapan Am Games were hosted there. I think it will be a good opportunity for all my country men to look at me, and even maybe getting a gold medal with them looking at me it will be nice.”

It would be Dias' third Games, one where he can add to his collection of 10 Paralympic gold medals.

It would also be one where Brazilians can watch, in person – many for the first time –

what makes the native from Sao Paulo so dominant in the international pool.

Maybe that will change the perception of people with impairments, exponentially, in his home country.

“I hope we can show our people that people with disabilities are not poor people,” Dias said. “They don't have to feel sorry about us. I expect the Games to create more opportunities to show our faces and what we can do.”

“We as people with disabilities, we want more opportunities [to do sports], and we hope our government can provide more of these opportunities for us. With the Games, we can show them how good we really are and how

much better we can actually be with more resources.”

He said there has already been action, especially in his hometown, where a sports centre was built for people with impairments.

In July, Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff signed off on the Inclusion of People with Disabilities Act, which eliminates accessibility barriers in transport, housing, services, education, sport and the exercise of citizenship.

The new law also states that 2.7 per cent of the gross revenues of the federal lotteries should be invested in sport, up from the current level of 2 per cent.

Perhaps, the Games could even encourage others to try swimming after seeing another one of their own in Andre Brasil – a seven-time Paralympic champion – go for gold.

“I am excited that Brazil will host the next Paralympic Games,” Dias said. “I want to see swimming as a sport to do in our country instead of Brazil being soccer oriented.”

For Dias, Rio 2016 is his focus, and there are the competitions and training in between. He won four gold medals in Beijing 2008 and added six from London 2012. He followed that up with six titles at the 2013 World Championships. Dias seems to be defying age and getting faster. Maybe Rio 2016 will not be his peak.

He is also enjoying the time with his son, who is a little more than a year old.

With all that, it is difficult to look beyond a year but rather soak it all in.

“It is a hard time because you are training so much for big events and leaving your family,” Dias said. “Sometimes I need some rest.”

“And I still have a baby and I want to take two to three months to enjoy my family after the Paralympic Games.”

Not wishing to be drawn on whether he will carry on after Rio and after another laugh in between, he added, “I will think about it.”

16 to look out for at Rio 2016

Eight Brazilian stars

Jefinho (Football 5-a-side)

The "Paralympic Pele" first starred for Brazil at the 2007 Parapan American Games and was part of their gold medal winning side in 2008 and 2012.

Fernando Fernandes (Canoe)

Fernandes is not just a multi-world champion but a world famous model so is certainly one to watch!

Daniel Dias (Swimming)

Brazil's most successful ever Paralympian gets better with age and recently won seven world titles at Glasgow 2015.

Romario Diego Marques (Goalball)

Part of the Brazilian team that won silver at London 2012 and the world title in 2014 with a sensational 9-1 win over Paralympic champions Finland.

Terezinha Guilhermina (Athletics)

The star of women's visually impaired sprinting for nearly a decade, the 34-year-old has won three Paralympic and eight world titles.

Jan Francisco Brito da Costa (Football 7-a-side)

Arguably the world's best player, who at June's World Championships staged his own goal of the tournament competition.

Petrucio Ferreira (Athletics)

In his first full year competing, the 18-year-old has smashed the seven-year-old 200m T46/47 world record.

Dirceu Jose Pinto (Boccia)

Pinto is aiming to win the triple double at Rio 2016 having won individual BC4 and pairs BC4 gold at Beijing 2008 and London 2012.

Eight international stars

Marlou van Rhijn (Athletics)

Since winning a gold and silver medal at London 2012, the Dutch blade runner has gone on to win two world and two European titles and break multiple world records.

Alyda Norbruis (Cycling)

Excelled at the 2015 UCI Para-Cycling Track World Championships winning three world titles and breaking one of her own world records.

Sandra Paovic (Table tennis)

Having competed at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, Paovic has battled back from a life threatening car accident to become the world No. 1 in the women's class 6.

Martin Schulz (Triathlon)

The PT4 athlete currently tops the world rankings and in 2014 won his second consecutive world crown. He is unbeaten since October 2012.

Shingo Kunieda (Wheelchair tennis)

The world No. 1 last tasted a competitive loss in January 2014 and few would bet against him winning his third successive Paralympic singles gold at Rio 2016.

Zak Madell (Wheelchair rugby)

Madell was part of Canada's silver medal winning side at London 2012 and was voted the Most Valuable Player at the 2014 IWRF World Championships as Canada again won silver.

Zahra Nematy (Archery)

Nematy made history at London 2012 by becoming the first Iranian woman to win Olympic or Paralympic gold. In the years since, she has won world titles and broken world records.

Sherif Othman (Powerlifting)

After winning gold at the last two Paralympic Games, as well as multiple other titles, Othman moved up to 59kg class where he is already the world record holder.

Planning for the future

“We cannot be complacent.”

This was the clear message from IPC President Sir Philip Craven to the Paralympic Movement in June as the IPC launched its Strategic Plan 2015-2018.

Developed during 2014 and early 2015, the new Strategic Plan aims to build on the success of the IPC's last strategic planning cycle, a four year period which delivered many impressive results.

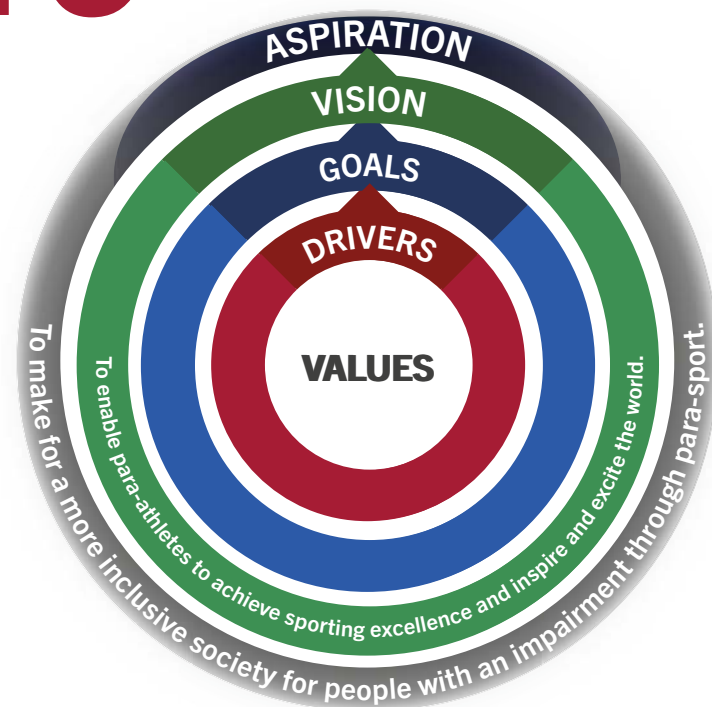
“Looking back, it's hard to believe just how much has been delivered over the last four years,” Sir Philip said. “Soldout Games with record TV audiences in London and Sochi, the launch of the Agitos Foundation and the improvement in athletic performances are just a few of the highlights since 2011.

“Although we should be delighted with what we've achieved, I don't want us to waste time patting ourselves on the back. Instead, we have to continue making progress. The IPC and the Paralympic Movement have never been in a stronger position and it is vital that we continue to stay ahead of the game, taking advantage of the many opportunities out there.”

The new strategic plan focuses on three core goals – consolidating the growth of the Paralympic Games, increasing global participation in para-sport and improving the recognition and value of the Paralympic brand. These are supported by three drivers which are essential in everything the IPC does on a daily basis.

In developing the plan, the IPC also updated its aspiration, vision and values in order to reflect changes to the sporting and social landscape. Along the way, Sir Philip said it was critical that athletes and the IPC membership were consulted.

“We want the athletes of today, to become the leaders of tomorrow, so it was important that everything in the plan was looked at from an athlete viewpoint,” he said.



“Gathering input at last year's IPC Membership Gathering was also an essential step; we want this plan to be a source of inspiration for the whole Paralympic Movement and reflective of what our members want to achieve.”

Sir Philip is delighted with the plan and cannot hide his optimism for what he believes can be achieved in the coming years.

“I think the final plan is a great document and I am extremely excited about the IPC and the Paralympic Movement's future.

“Sometimes I have to pinch myself at how far the Movement has come in such a short space of time, but the best news is that the Paralympic Movement's best days still lie ahead.”



➔ www.paralympic.org/the-ipc

CORE GOALS



Strategic goal

Consolidate the Paralympic Games as a premier sporting event



Strategic goal

Empower para-athletes and support the development of para-sports



Strategic goal

Improve the recognition and value of the Paralympic brand



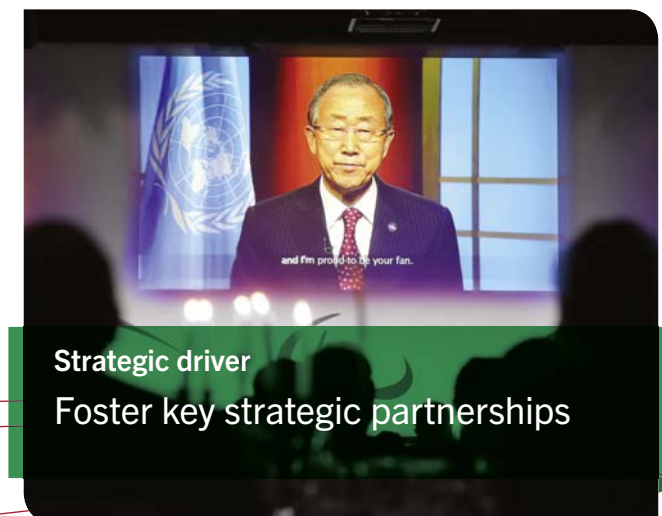
Strategic driver

Build sustainable funding



Strategic driver

Shape organisational capability



Strategic driver

Foster key strategic partnerships



Canadian goalkeeper Corbin Watson conceding a goal during the gold medal game against the USA at the 2015 IPC Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships A-Pool in Buffalo, USA



France's Nicolas Peifer, left, and Argentina's Gustavo Fernandez win the Wimbledon men's doubles title on 12 July

2015 IPC Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships A-Pool

26 April - 3 May

The USA shut out archrivals Canada, 3-0, in the gold-medal game, securing their record-tying third world title.

The host nation's teenage duo of Declan Farmer, 17, and Brody Roybal, 16, stole the show at the HARBORCENTER in Buffalo, New York, in the USA, along with speedster Josh Pauls and goaltender Steve Cash, who made eight saves that day.

Despite neither team scoring in the first two periods, both sides had several opportunities, including Canadian defenceman Adam Dixon's rocket shot that was blocked by Cash.

But the US offense eventually came alive when Roybal fed Farmer the puck for a goal. The score was followed by ones from Dan McCoy and Pauls, who was awarded Best Defenceman.

Canada struggled to convert any of their eight shots on goal.

In the bronze-medal match, Ilia Volkov scored the game-winning goal in overtime to give Russia the 2-1 victory over Norway for their second straight Worlds bronze.

Sergei Panfilov scored first to give Russia the 1-0 edge late in the first period. But Norway's Jan Roger Klakegg tied the game, scoring off

a pass from teammate Thomas Jacobsen. Then in overtime, Vasilii Varlakov fed Volkov the puck, and Volkov scored to seal the deal for Russia. Russia's Dmitry Lisov was bestowed with the Best Forward, whilst Canada's Corbin Watson was named Best Goaltender.

► www.buffalo2015.com



Roland Garros

3-5 June

The Netherlands' Jiske Griffioen and Japan's Shingo Kunieda each hoisted a pair of titles at Roland Garros.

Griffioen won her second consecutive – and second ever – singles Grand Slam title with a 6-0 6-2 win over doubles partner and compatriot Aniek van Koot.

Kunieda has become a regular in the Grand Slam winner's circle and now holds 38 Grand Slam titles – 19 singles and 19 doubles. The top-seed defended his Roland Garros singles title, with a 6-1 6-0 win over France's second-seed Stephane Houdet.

Griffioen and Kunieda also saw success in the doubles. Griffioen's double partner Van Koot took Japan's Yui Kamiji and Great Britain's Jordanne Whiley to three sets for the 7-6 (1) 3-6 10-8 victory. Kunieda and Great Britain's Gordon Reid defeated the duo of Argentina's Gustavo Fernandez and France's Nicolas Peifer 6-1 7-6(1) for the doubles title.

► www.rolandgarros.com

Wimbledon

10-12 July

With an exquisite forehand return, Gustavo Fernandez hit the final point in the Wimbledon men's wheelchair doubles championship to land his first career Grand Slam title.

The Argentinean, who teamed with France's Nicolas Peifer, upset the second-seed tandem of France's Michael Jeremiasz and Great Britain's Gordon Reid 7-5 5-7 6-2. They also upset top seeds Stephane Houdet of France and Shingo Kunieda of Japan in the semi-finals to reach the final match.

In the women's doubles competition, the top seeds and defending champions of Japan's Yui Kamiji and Great Britain's Jordanne Whiley defeated Dutch second seeds Jiske Griffioen and Aniek van Koot, 6-2 5-7 6-3, to capture the title.

At the tournament, it was announced that Wimbledon from 2016 will also feature singles events for the first time.

► www.wimbledon.com



Russian forward Dimitrii Pestretsov gets tangled with a Ukrainian player during the 2015 CP Football World Championships on 28 June in Burton upon Trent, Great Britain

2015 CP Football World Championships

13-28 June

Russia secured back-to-back Cerebral Palsy Football world titles with a 1-0 final win over European champions Ukraine at St. Georges Park in Great Britain.

Going into the final of the 15 team tournament, there was not much to choose between the sides. Between them, the two had scored 50 goals, and conceded just one each on their way to the gold medal game.

Despite losing to Ukraine in the semi-finals of last year's European Championships, Russia were the better team in the final and scored the winning goal through Alexander Kuligin.

In finishing third, Brazil showed they will be strong contenders for gold on home turf at Rio 2016. Jan Francisco Brito da Costa underlined why many consider him the sport's best ever player with a number of sensational goals.

www.cp2015.com

FINAL RANKINGS

1. Russia
2. Ukraine
3. Brazil
4. The Netherlands
5. England
6. Republic of Ireland
7. USA
8. Argentina
9. Scotland
10. Canada
11. Portugal
12. Australia
13. Venezuela
14. Northern Ireland
15. Japan

* Iran could not participate after failing to secure visas into Great Britain.



Russia

FAIR
PLAY
AWARD



Eduard Ramonov
(Russia)

MOST
VALUABLE
PLAYER



Vladislav Raretskii
(Russia)

GOLDEN
GLOVE AWARD



China's Xu Qing takes off in the men's 50m Freestyle S6 at the 2015 IPC Swimming World Championships in Glasgow, Great Britain

2015 IPC Swimming World Championships

13-19 July

Brazil's Daniel Dias left Glasgow, Great Britain, as the most decorated swimmer, collecting seven gold medals and looking ripe for Rio 2016. The multiple world and Paralympic champion captured the 100m and 200m freestyle S5; 50m backstroke, butterfly and freestyle S5; 100m breaststroke SB4; and mixed 4x50m freestyle relay.

Belarus' Ihar Boki was not far from matching Dias' performance and also set himself up as one to watch at the Paralympics next year. The 21-year-old world and Paralympic champion was one gold medal short, winning six of his seven events – five were world records.

A new rivalry emerged from Glasgow 2015, with Ukraine's Yelyzaveta Mereshko and Great Britain's two-time Paralympic champion Ellie Simmonds making waves in the women's S6 class.

USA's multi-Paralympic and world champion Jessica Long came away as the most decorated female swimmer with seven medals (four golds), looking in top shape for Rio 2016.

In total, 38 world records were set in Glasgow 2015.

About 580 athletes across 70 countries competed, seeking to set themselves up for the Paralympic Games.

www.glasgow2015.com

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Russia	32	19	20	71
Ukraine	21	27	15	63
USA	11	11	8	30
Brazil	11	8	4	23
Great Britain	10	12	10	32

TOP 5 PERFORMERS



Daniel Dias
(Brazil)



Ihar Boki
(Belarus)



Jessica Long
(USA)



Tully Kearney
(Great Britain)



Yelyzaveta Mereshko
(Ukraine)

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

GOALBALL: Turkey enjoyed double success at the 2015 IBSA Goalball European Championships A on 12 July in Kaunas, Lithuania. Turkey edged Finland 9-8 in the men's finals; Lithuania won the bronze. The Turkish women downed Russia 5-0 for gold, and Ukraine captured bronze.

CYCLING: Italy rode away with the most gold medals (nine) at the UCI Para-Cycling Road World Championship, which concluded on 2 August in Nottwil, Switzerland. Italians Alex Zanardi (H5), Luca Mazzone (H2) and Francesca Porcellato (H3) each won their class's road races and time trials, and also teamed up to retain the handcycling relay crown.

TRIATHLON: Athletes tested the course for para-triathlon's Paralympic debut on 1 August during the test event for Rio 2016. Germany's Martin Schulz continued his PT4 dominance, winning his race in 59:11. Great Britain's Lauren Steadman highlighted the women's side, winning the PT4 class in 1:08:46.

POWERLIFTING: Iran's Siamand Rahman lifted a world-record 295kg to take gold in the men's over 107kg at the 2015 IPC Powerlifting Asian Open Championships on 30 July in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

SHOOTING: Ukraine's Andrii Doroshenko won the R6 (mixed 50m rifle prone SH1) to wrap up the IPC Shooting World Cup on 14 July in Osijek, Croatia. Iran's Samira Eram was victorious in an all-Iranian showdown in the P2 (women's 10m air pistol SH1).

SITTING VOLLEYBALL: Rwanda defeated Egypt 3-2 for the women's ParaVolley Africa Sitting Volleyball Championship title on 29 July in Kigali, Rwanda. This was the first time the Championships included a women's tournament. The Egyptian men beat Rwanda 3-0 for gold.



Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games

7-15 August

At the Closing Ceremony, Grammy award winner Wyclef Jean brought the curtain down on the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games, an event Americas Paralympic Committee (APC) President Jose Luis Campo described as the "best ever."

The Games featured a record 1,607 athletes from 28 countries, including participants from Aruba, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, who competed for the first time. During eight days of competition across 15 sports, 10 world, 70 Americas and 239 Games records were set. Campo was full of praise for the athletes.

"Your record breaking performances speak for themselves. You are getting faster, stronger and

more agile by the day. Your future is extremely bright and all roads now lead to Rio 2016 and South America's first Paralympic Games," he said.

The Games ended with 18 of the 28 participating countries winning at least one medal. Bermuda won their first Parapan medal, a gold courtesy of T53 wheelchair racer Jessica Lewis, and Trinidad and Tobago won their first Parapan titles thanks to F43 thrower Akeem Stewart in the discus and javelin events. Nicaragua also medalled for the first time with athletes from the country winning four bronze medals.

Campo said: "Here in Toronto, we

have seen a growing depth of talent across all sports and athletes from the (Buenos Aires) Youth Games come of age.

"I would like to thank all 28 competing nations, as well as the international federations, for developing these super-human athletes. They have inspired and excited us all and I am certain athletes of the Americas will enjoy more medal success than ever before at Rio 2016."

Host nation Canada enjoyed their best ever Games, winning 168 medals, including 50 golds, to finish second in the medals table behind Brazil.

www.toronto2015.org

MEDALS TABLE

			
Brazil Total: 257	Gold 109	Silver 74	Bronze 74
			
Canada Total: 168	Gold 50	Silver 63	Bronze 55
			
USA Total: 135	Gold 40	Silver 51	Bronze 44

TOP THREE STANDOUTS



OMARA DURAND (CUBA)
The T12 sprinter was in electric form in Toronto, winning all three sprint titles and breaking three world records. In running 11.65 seconds for the 100m, she became the world's fastest female para-athlete.



AURELIE RIVARD (CANADA)
The 19-year-old won more medals than any other female athlete at the Games, taking home six gold medals and one silver. She also set a sensational world record in the women's 100m freestyle S10 final.



TEAM BRAZIL
What more can be said about a team that won 257 medals, including 109 golds, and dominated sports such as athletics, boccia, football 5, football 7, goalball, swimming and table tennis? A top five finish at Rio 2016 looks very likely.



Rio 2016

Rio staged a festival alongside the iconic Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas on 7 September to mark one year to go until the Paralympic Games and officially launched ticket sales.

With the launch coinciding with Brazil's Independence Day, thousands of people attended the fun-packed day-long event, which attracted star para-athletes from around the world.

One of the highlights was a 100m race to decide the world's fastest male and female para-athletes, with Ireland's Jason Smyth and Cuba's Omara Durand earning the crowns, respectively.

The race brought together the fastest sprinters from various classes – including Australia's Evan O'Hanlon and the USA's Richard Browne – for the first time to race against each other.

Away from the running track, Brazil's 5-a-side football team, gold medallists at the last three Paralympic Games, faced off against arch-rivals Argentina. Brazil were unable to repeat their 2-1 Parapan American Games victory in August, as the match came to a 0-0 draw.

There were also demonstrations in wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball and other activities.

Rio 2016 aim to sell 3.3 million tickets for next year's Paralympics, a figure that would surpass the record 2.7 million tickets that were sold for London 2012.

With around 300 sessions, ticket costs range between BRL 10 and BRL 130. Prices for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies vary from BRL 100 to BRL 1,200.

Ticket requests for Brazilians began on 7 September, with the launch of the draws in October and online sales in December. Tickets will be delivered in May 2016, and ticket office sales will begin the following month.

The sales to fans from abroad will go through the official National Paralympic Committees and Authorised Ticket Resellers. Each ATR can choose the date to begin sales as long as it is after 7 September.

www.rio2016.com

Alongside his teammate, Andre Brasil, right, won three gold medals at the 2015 World Championships held 13-19 July in Great Britain



PyeongChang 2018[™]
PARALYMPIC GAMES



PyeongChang 2018

The PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games will feature more athletes and more medal events than ever before after the athlete and medal event quotas for the Games were approved in June.

A maximum of 670 athletes will compete in the Games, contesting 80 medal events. There is also expected to be a 44 per cent increase in the number of female athletes competing in the Games compared to Sochi 2014.

Snowboard, which made its Paralympic debut in 2014, is the biggest beneficiary of this latest announcement. In 2018 it will feature 10 medal events, eight more than in Sochi, and will involve a maximum of 106 athletes.

The medals programme for alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing and ice sledge hockey will remain unchanged, whilst in wheelchair curling the size of the competition will be increased from 10 to 12 mixed-sex teams.

In June, the Organising Committee also announced that the slogan for the Games will be "Passion. Connected."

www.pyeongchang2018.com



Tokyo 2020

Athletes and citizens of Tokyo joined together in a mass demonstration event on 25 August to celebrate the five-year countdown until the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

A temporary basketball court was installed on Odaiba, an island in the Tokyo Bay where the competitions will be hosted. Thousands of fans came to watch the wheelchair basketball experience at an event, which was jointly organised by Tokyo 2020 and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. One-hundred spectators were selected to try the sport themselves with experienced wheelchair basketball athletes.

"It was great fun trying out the wheelchair basketball experience with everyone," said Japanese wheelchair basketball player Kiyoshi Fujisawa, who was joined by teammates Hiroaki Kozai, Shinji Negi, Hiroyuki Nagata and Shohei Harada at the event. "I really hope that everyone who came will become more interested in wheelchair basketball and help the sport to get an even larger fan base."

The celebration was a glimpse of how the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games will be five years from now, as it fostered a welcoming environment and strengthened the "Unity in Diversity" concept among citizens.

"I hope that the 2020 Paralympics will change general perceptions of sports for persons with impairment and that the sports will continue to develop way beyond the 2020 Games," Kozai said.

In June, Tokyo 2020 announced that it will be the fourth Organising Committee to benefit from the IPC Academy Excellence Programme.

The IPC Academy will deliver a range of knowledge workshops over the next five years geared toward enhancing the planning and delivery of the 2020 Paralympic Games.

www.tokyo2020.com

21-31 October

IPC Athletics World Championships

Following the conclusion of this year’s hugely successful Grand Prix series, around 1,300 athletes from 100 countries will head to Doha, Qatar, to battle it out for 214 world titles.

Taking place less than 12 months before Rio 2016, competition in Doha is likely to be

fierce with athletes not just competing for medals but also qualification slots for next year’s Paralympic Games.

Two years ago in Lyon, France, Russia topped the medals table. With the likes of Margarita Goncharova, Evgenii Shvetcov and Vladimir Sviridov all in superb form already this year, they will be strong contenders to repeat the feat this October.

Many world records have fallen already this year, and with Italy’s Martina Caironi and Cuba’s Omara Durand both in action, the history books are likely to be rewritten.

Each day, live coverage of both sessions, together with live results, will be available at the event website.

www.doha2015.org



FIVE DOHA RIVALRIES


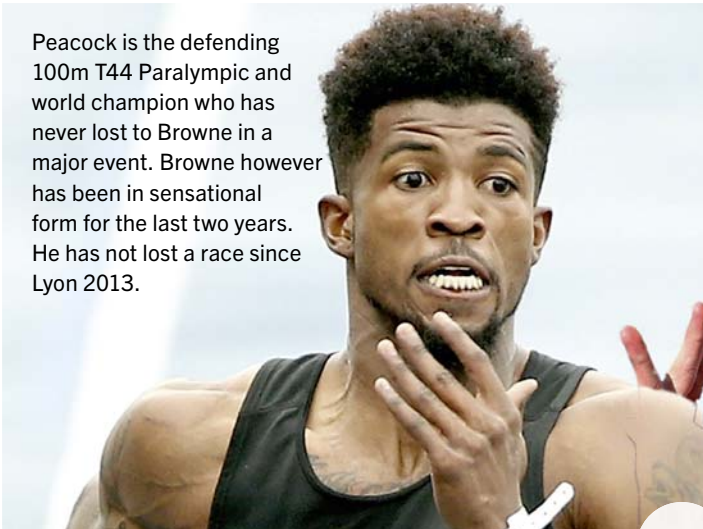


MARCEL HUG (SUI)

VS

DAVID WEIR (GBR)

In Weir’s absence, Hug won five world and four European titles in 2013 and 2014. Hug has never beaten Weir, who won four golds at London 2012, in a major event.



RICHARD BROWNE (USA)

VS

JONNIE PEACOCK (GBR)

Peacock is the defending 100m T44 Paralympic and world champion who has never lost to Browne in a major event. Browne however has been in sensational form for the last two years. He has not lost a race since Lyon 2013.



DAVID BROWN (USA)

VS

LUCAS PRADO (BRA)

Brazilians have dominated the T11 class for the last decade partly due to Prado winning all three sprints golds at the Beijing 2008 Paralympics and 100m and 200m gold at the 2011 and 2013 World Championships. But Brown, who is coached by Brazilian Olympic champion Joaquim Cruz, is the form athlete having set new 100m and 200m world records in 2014.



SOPHIE HAHN (GBR)

VS

MARGARITA GONCHAROVA (RUS)

The T38 rivalry between these two could be spectacular. Hahn won the 100m world title in 2013, but Goncharova got the better of her at the 2014 Europeans.



JEREMY CAMPBELL (USA)

VS

DAN GREAVES (GBR)

Since winning the discus F44 world title in 2011, Greaves played second fiddle to Campbell as his American rival won gold at London 2012 and Lyon 2013, and took the world record. But in 2014 Greaves hit back, topping the world rankings and picking up European and Commonwealth crowns.

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

13-20 September IWRF European Championships Pajulahti, Finland	15-20 September ITU World Triathlon Grand Final Chicago, USA	17-20 September FEI European Para-Dressage Championships Deauville, France	7-10 October VISTA conference Girona, Spain	7-18 October IWBF Asia-Oceania Championships Chiba, Japan	17-22 October ITTF Asian Championships Amman, Jordan
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8-13 September

BWF Para-Badminton World Championships



Ireland's Niall McVeigh, left, and Hong Kong's Wong Chun Yim in action in SS 6 men's doubles at the 2013 BWF Para-Badminton World Championships in Dortmund, Germany

The first Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Championships to be held since the sport was included in the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games will take place at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Great Britain.

Around 253 athletes from 42 countries will compete in 21 medal events in the championships at the birthplace of the Paralympic Movement. Since the sport was included in the Paralympic programme for Tokyo, BWF has reported a significant increase in global participation and many new talents are expected to emerge at this event. The BWF Para-Badminton World Championships have been staged three times previously in Europe – Spain in 2001, Great Britain in 2003 and Germany in 2013.

www.bwfbadminton.org

ONES TO WATCH



HELLE SOFIE SAGOY NORWAY
BARTŁOMIEJ MROZ POLAND
JUNG-JUN KIM SOUTH KOREA

17-24 September

IWAS Wheelchair Fencing World Championships



Hungary's Richard Osvath, right, faces France's Damien Tokatlian during the men's foil semi-final at the London 2012 Paralympic Games

The world's best wheelchair fencers will gather in Eger, Hungary, for the World Championships with a number of home favourites looking for titles.

On home territory, the likes of Richard Osvath, Zsuzsanna Krajnyak and Eva Hajmasi will be difficult to beat. With the Paralympics fast approaching however, Hong Kong's Yu Chui Yee, Italy's teenage sensation Beatrice Vio and France's Romain Noble will also be keen to make their marks.

The highest ranked male and female in each individual event will qualify directly for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

www.iwasf.com

ONES TO WATCH



BEATRICE VIO ITALY
RICHARD OSVATH HUNGARY
YULIYA EFIMOVA RUSSIA

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

3-7 November IPC Shooting World Cup Fort Benning, USA	6-8 November IPC Wheelchair Dance Sport World Championships Rome, Italy	14-15 November IPC General Assembly Mexico City, Mexico	24-28 November IPC Powerlifting European Open Championships Eger, Hungary	25-30 November IBSA Judo European Championships Odivelas, Portugal
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25-29 November

NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters



South Africa's Kgothatso Montjane hits a backhand during the 2014 Wheelchair Tennis Masters in London, Great Britain

The 2015 wheelchair tennis season will come to a close this November at London's Queen Elizabeth Park, Great Britain, with Japan's Shingo Kunieda, the Netherlands' Aniek van Koot and the USA's David Wagner all looking to retain the titles they won at last year's event.

Before London however, the world's best players will convene in September for the US Open in New York.

Having won the Australian and French Open singles titles, victory at Flushing Meadows will result in Kunieda completing his fifth career Grand Slam.

Dutch player Jiske Griffioen could also become the first to complete the women's singles Grand Slam since the retirement of compatriot Esther Vergeer in 2013.

In the quads division, Australia's Dylan Alcott is the player to beat.

www.itftennis.com/wheelchair

ONES TO WATCH



DYLAN ALCOTT AUSTRALIA
SHINGO KUNIEDA JAPAN
JISKE GRIFFIOEN NETHERLANDS

26 November - 3 December

IFDS Combined World Championships



Team Norway's Aleksander Wang-Hansen, Marie Solberg and Per Eugen Kristiansen are contenders for gold in the SONAR at the 2015 World Championships

The Royal Yacht Club of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, will stage the biggest sailing event of 2015.

With world titles up for grabs in the 2.4mR, SKUD18 and Sonar classes, around 175 athletes are expected to compete. World Cups in Miami, USA; Hyeres, France and Weymouth & Portland, Great Britain, have already given a glimpse of form this year. However with Rio 2016 spots up for grabs all that could change.

www.ifdsworlds2015.com

ONES TO WATCH



HELENA LUCAS GREAT BRITAIN
DAN FITZGIBBON AND LIESL TESCH AUSTRALIA

In 2005, I attended the United States of America Snowboard and Freeski Association (USASA) Nationals which featured a special category for “adaptive snowboarders” for the first time.

After an amazing week, I had an idea to show the rest of the world that anyone with a physical disability could snowboard, and even better, actually compete.

Convinced adaptive snowboarding must be included on the Paralympic programme, I started out on an eight-year journey to make it a proper sport.

We started with nothing: no competitions, no rules, no World Championships, just a handful of competitors. But the sport grew quickly, and before we knew it, we had our first World Cup series. Each competition, the number of athletes competing grew.

Together with Snowboard Canada’s Danny Buntain and several enthusiastic individuals, we started a small working group that developed the adaptive snowboard programme. Although the International Ski Federation (FIS) was not interested in hosting our competitions, the World Snowboard Federation (WSF) was. We organised the first WSF World Championships Adaptive Snowboarding in New Zealand in 2009 and had aspirations that we could make the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games.



Bibian Mentel-Spee’s view

The evolution of para-snowboard

How the sport made its way into the Paralympic programme

We realised our sport was not ready for this big step and that we needed more time to fine tune the format and rules.

Soon after, our format became clear. We decided athletes would compete in a Slingshot Boardercross (SBX) with each rider completing three runs. The winner would be the rider with the fastest two runs. Different disabilities competed against each other based on our factor system. The format was straight forward, accessible for everyone and a way for each athlete to compete together in the same class.

We got in touch with the IPC, started to put our rules and regulations in place and learned the criteria we had to meet to join the Paralympic programme.

Bibian Mentel-Spee

Country: The Netherlands

Latest athletic achievements:
2015 world champion in snowboard cross and banked slalom;
Sochi 2014 Paralympic gold
Medallist in snowboard cross;
Salt Lake 2002 Olympic qualifier

In August 2011, we were informed that Sochi 2014 had not accepted us for the Games. Devastated, we immediately started to focus on PyeongChang 2018.

Nine months later, with our minds already set on 2018, we got very exciting news: the IPC announced para-snowboarding for athletes with lower-limb impairments would be able to compete at Sochi 2014 after all!

We were ecstatic. I was so happy and proud.

Since then, the sport has professionalised extremely quick.

Coaches from the Olympic SBX circuit got involved, riders started using personal customised boards and wax technicians were at the start of our competitions preparing the boards, bringing more professionalism and speed to our descents.

On 14 March 2014, para-snowboarding was introduced to the whole world at Sochi 2014. A year later, upper-limb disabilities have been added and a new discipline, Banked Slalom, was introduced. The first IPC Snowboard World Championships were held, we have formed our own Sports Technical Committee (STC), and athletes are getting more and more involved in the sport’s growth.

The IPC has announced 10 medal events for PyeongChang 2018, divided between SBX and Banked Slalom. At this point, female athletes with an upper-limb disability are still not on the programme, but I am convinced that they will be added as soon as they realise that they are more than welcome to join us.



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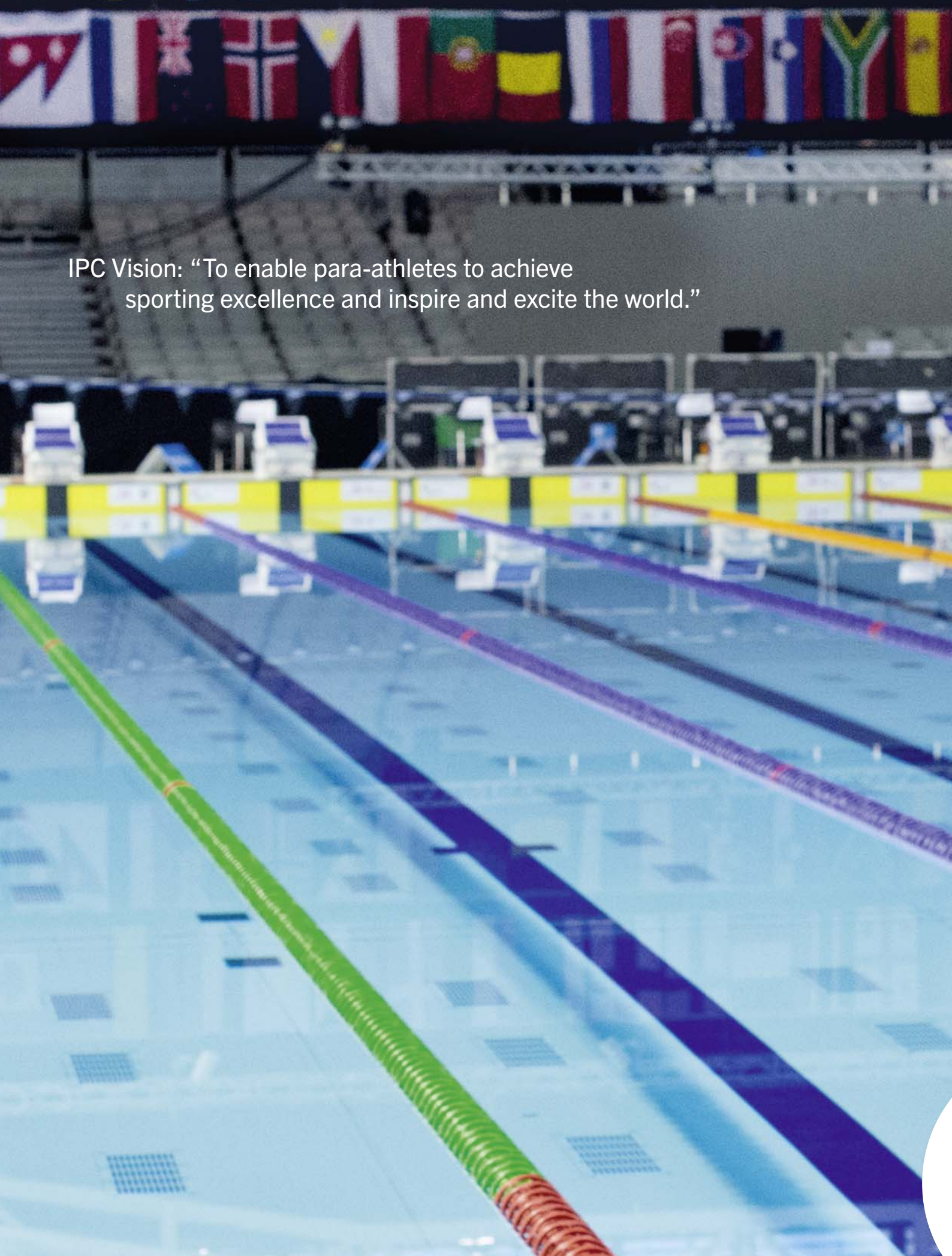
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A photograph of an empty swimming pool, likely at a major international sporting event. The pool is filled with clear blue water, and several lane lines are visible, including a prominent green line in the foreground and purple lines further back. The pool is bordered by a yellow and black striped lane line. In the background, a large stadium seating area is visible, and a row of international flags hangs from the top of the stands. The text "IPC Vision: 'To enable para-athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world.'" is overlaid on the image.

IPC Vision: "To enable para-athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world."