

THE

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT

ISSUE NO. 1 | 2016

# PARALYMPIAN

[www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org)



PARALYMPIC GAMES Special Preview Edition



**RIO 2016**

A once-in-a-lifetime experience to witness  
unimaginable athletic performances



The energy within  
inspired him to run  
before he could walk

**David Behre**  
German Sprinter  
2015 World Champion

David's unbreakable spirit was ignited nine years ago when, in the days following his accident, he decided how he was going to live the rest of his life. He never thought about what he'd lost, only what he had gained: the energy within. This propelled him to become World Champion in 2015, and the stage is set for this spirit to shine once more in Rio this summer. At BP, we are also working tirelessly to unlock our potential and find newer, better and safer ways to produce the energy the world needs. [bp.com/IPC](http://bp.com/IPC)



“For me, the Rio 2016 Paralympics are the best opportunity for a generation to make for a more inclusive America.”

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first edition of The Paralympian of 2016, a landmark year that will climax with Latin America's first Paralympic Games.

Preparations for Rio 2016 are progressing well and our aim is to build on the success of London 2012 and Beijing 2008. I am confident that National Paralympic Committees will send their best prepared athletes ever to Rio ensuring that the sporting competition reaches new performance levels. Many of the athletes who could star in September's Games are featured in this edition as we profile 11 of the 22 Paralympic sports.

Rio 2016 will be the most widely broadcast Paralympics to date and we expect a record cumulative TV audience of more than four billion to watch the Games.

NBC will show the Games live for the first time in the USA, and to coincide with this, earlier this year the IPC and US Paralympics undertook research on US attitudes towards people with an impairment, details of which can be found in this edition. The research revealed some slightly negative attitudes in the USA and highlighted there is still much work to be done.

For me, the Rio 2016 Paralympics are the best opportunity for a generation to make for a more inclusive America. This is why in March, together with US Paralympics, we embarked on a six-month

PR campaign to raise awareness of the Games and leading athletes amongst the US public.

As with all Games, there are always issues of concern that crop up in the months leading up to them. The biggest issue we face this time is Zika, a virus that many people associate with Brazil, but is in fact an international problem. The IPC's priority is the health and well-being of athletes, officials, staff, spectators and all those involved in the Games and therefore we remain in close contact with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and will follow their recommendations on this matter.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the IPC's partnership with Allianz, an organisation which, over the years, has grown its support of the Paralympic Movement to cover not just the IPC, but also a number of NPCs, as well as IPC Athletics. On behalf of the whole Paralympic Movement I would like to thank them for their continued support.

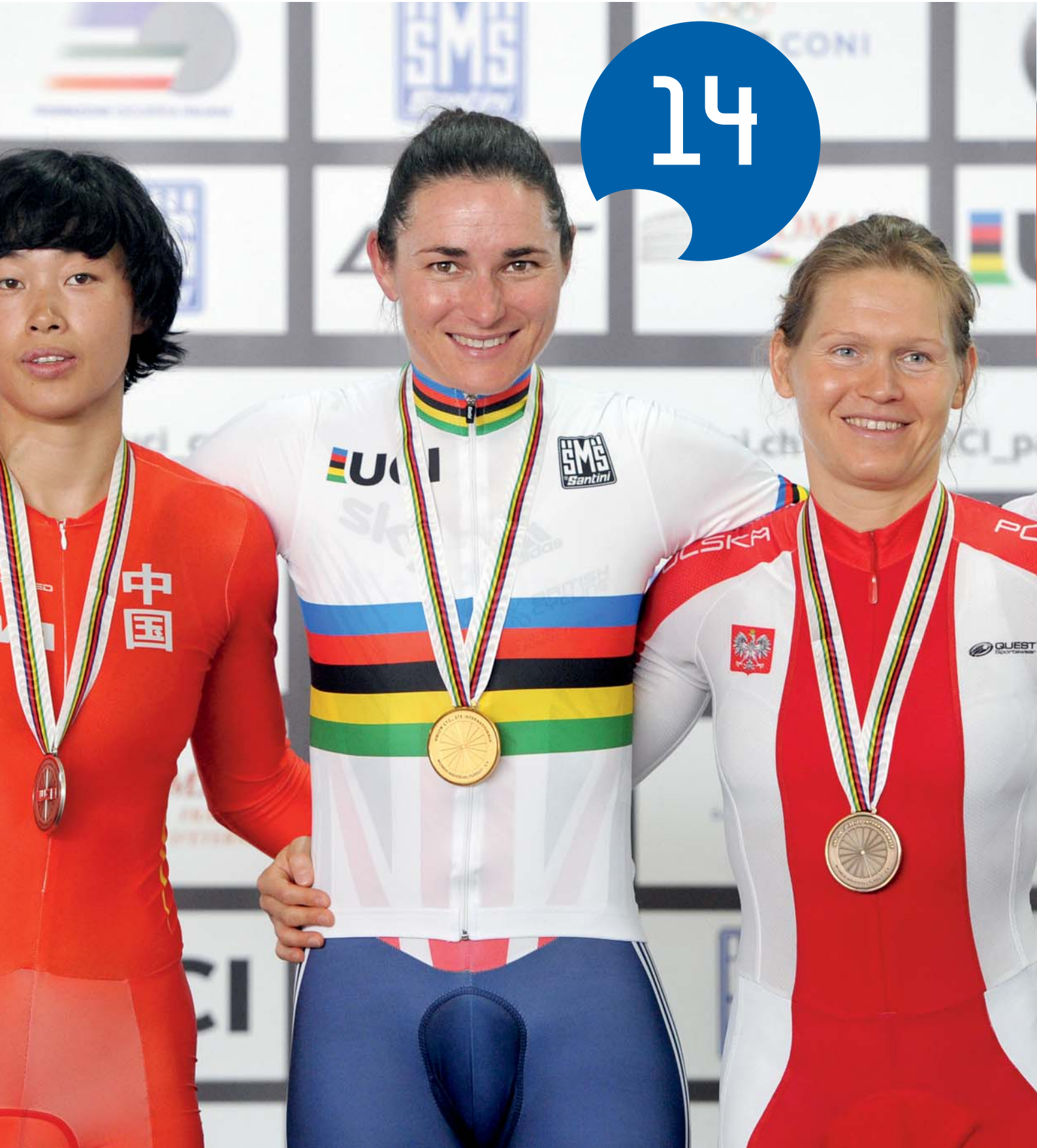
I hope you enjoy this edition of The Paralympian.

Philip Craven

**Sir Philip Craven, MBE**  
IPC President







06 PARALYMPIC NEWS

Stories that have recently made headlines in the Paralympic Movement.

12 CHANGING ATTITUDES IN THE USA

How the IPC and US Paralympics are engaging audiences ahead of NBC’s coverage of Rio 2016.

32 FUTURE GAMES

Rio 2016 celebrates six months to go, PyeongChang 2018 marks two years to go, whilst the IPC stages meetings with Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022.

38 FINAL WORD

Great Britain’s Kelly Gallagher shares her thoughts on how to increase the number of women with a visual impairment competing in alpine skiing.

10 #ASKANATHLETE

Stefan Daniel and Yannick Bourseaux are set to face off in triathlon’s Paralympic debut.

14 ATHLETE PROFILES

Get to know the athletes going for gold in 11 of the 22 sports at Rio 2016.

34 UPCOMING EVENTS

Do not miss World Championships in triathlon and canoe, both held before September’s Paralympic Games.

11 DIGITAL BONUS

The IPC rebrands its social media accounts.

26 WORLD SPORT ROUND-UP

While athletes embark on last-minute competition ahead of Rio 2016, the winter sports season has been in full swing.

36 ISSUE OF THE SEASON

What can be done to improve the swimming classification system? Hear from British swimmer Liz Johnson and IPC Medical & Scientific Director Dr. Peter Van de Vliet.

PRINT



The views expressed in The Paralympian are not necessarily those of the IPC. In case of republication of any part of The Paralympian, please send a copy to the IPC. The publisher reserves the right to edit submitted articles. The International Paralympic Committee endeavours to be as current and accurate as possible with this publication, aiming to treat all readers with courtesy and respect. We cannot guarantee however, that the information contained in this publication is complete and accurate in all respects and readers are taken to understand and agree to this disclaimer upon reading any part of The Paralympian. No infringements upon any law, including sport regulations, from people within the photographs and/or featured in the magazine’s content were known at the time of publication. Articles, pictures and other written or graphic devices published in The Paralympian may not be reproduced without the prior written permission of the International Paralympic Committee.

THE PARALYMPIAN

Editor Craig Spence  
Assistant Editor Ros Dumlao  
Graphic Design designfee Bianca Werninghaus  
Art Editors Yosof Rohesh, Mariel Avalos, Annika Zeyen  
Printing welzel + hardt GmbH  
All rights reserved  
© 2016 International Paralympic Committee  
ISSN 1609-1329



CONTACT

International Paralympic Committee  
Adenauerallee 212-214  
D-53113 Bonn, Germany  
Tel. +49 228 2097-200  
Fax +49 228 2097-209  
info@paralympic.org  
www.paralympic.org

IMAGES

© Photo Credits:  
Getty Images (p.1/5/6/7/10/12/15/16/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/40), Jean Baptiste Benavent (p. 4/6/18/29), United Nations (p.5/12), NPC Russia (p.6), Banff Roger Witney/ Peak Photography (p.7), Joern Wolter (p.8/9), IPC (p.8/33/37), Fédération Française de Triathlon (p.10), Jordan Bryden (p.10), 123rf.com (p. 12/13/36), Alberga (p.15), World Archery (p.15), NPC Iran (p. 15), NPC Hong Kong (p.16), Mathilde Dusol (p.16), Korean Boccia Federation (p.16), Balint Vekassy / ICF photographer (p.17/34), Zsuzsanna Vekassy / ICF photographer (p.17), Arnd Bronkhorst (p.19), Marcio Rodrigues/CPB/ MPIX (p.20), Fernando Maia/CPB/MPIX (p.20), Daniel Zappe/CPB/MPIX (p.21), Cerebral Palsy Football World Championships 2015 (p.21), Royal National College for the Blind (p.20), MacMillan Photography (p.22), Wander Roberto (p.22), CBDV (p.22), Inovafoto (p.22), NPC Uzbekistan (p.23), Luc Percival (p.25), Celine Stucki/WCF (p.27), Dragan Jablanov (p.28/33), istockphoto.com (p. 36/37)



## Laureus World Sports Awards



Daniel Dias



Marie Bochet



Liu Cuiqing



Omara Durand



Pieter Du Preez



Leung Yuk Wing

Six athletes have been nominated for the prestigious 2016 Laureus World Sports Awards for the category Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability.

Two are former winners: Brazilian swimmer Daniel Dias, who won in 2009 and 2013; and French alpine skier Marie Bochet, winner in 2014.

“I’m flattered for being nominated once again to the Laureus, an award so important and renowned,” Dias said. “When I say I’m flattered, that’s because I know how important it is to get an award like this. I’ll

be cheering so that I can bring another one home. To begin 2016, the Paralympic year, winning the Laureus would be spectacular.”

Joining Dias and Bochet are Chinese sprinter Liu Cuiqing, who won four titles in the women’s T11 at her first IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar; Cuba’s Omara Durand, who broke the 100m world record to become fastest female Paralympian; South Africa’s Pieter Du Preez, who won world titles and achieved No. 1 status in both athletics and cycling; and Hong Kong’s Leung Yuk Wing, who won medals in all four World Open boccia competitions.

The winner will be revealed at the Laureus Awards Ceremony in Berlin, Germany, on 18 April.

The 17th Laureus World Sports Awards, which recognises sporting achievement during the calendar year 2015, is the premier honours event on the international sporting calendar.

Allianz, a world-wide partner of the IPC, has been named an official partner of the 2016 Laureus World Sports Awards.

[www.laureus.com](http://www.laureus.com)

## NPCs celebrate anniversaries



The National Paralympic Committees of Azerbaijan, Colombia and Russia recently celebrated landmark anniversaries.

On 28 January in Moscow, Russia’s President Vladimir Putin, IPC President Sir Philip Craven and IPC Vice President Andrew Parsons joined the Russian Paralympic Committee in celebrating 20 years.

Putin said in his welcoming speech: “Through the efforts of many enthusiasts and talented and caring people, the Paralympic Move-

ment has made a huge leap forward. And in our country, it has reached a very significant, serious height. We are proud of the Russian Paralympians, their outstanding victories.”

The Colombian Paralympic Committee celebrated 15 years in February, recognising how far the organisation has come in developing para-sport in the country.

The National Paralympic Committee said: “It has been 15 years promoting the values of the Paralympic Movement: inspiration,

determination, courage, equality and ensuring the human right to sport without discrimination of any kind, and helping to make the dreams of many who at first it seemed unattainable.”

NPC Azerbaijan celebrated 20 years on 7 February. Its President Ilgar Rahimov met with Sir Philip and British Paralympic Association Honorary Vice President Tony Sainsbury to discuss how to continue developing para-sport in the country.



## Allianz 10-year anniversary



### Allianz becomes GOLD PATRON with the IPC

- First International Paralympic Day in Berlin (2007)

### Allianz becomes OFFICIAL PARTNER with the IPC

- First sponsoring contract (2009)
- Partner of IPC Alpine Skiing World Cup Finals
- Serves as presenting partner of Paralympic Awards (2009)
- First media workshop held at Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games

### Allianz becomes first INTERNATIONAL PARTNER with the IPC

- Partnerships and activation also on national level
- Partnering several World and European Championships (e.g. 2011 IPC Athletics World Championships, 2011 IPC Swimming European Championships)
- End of 2012, extension of contract to four-year cycle

### Allianz becomes INTERNATIONAL PARTNER & GLOBAL PARTNER IPC ATHLETICS

- Activation in 13 countries
- Becomes official partner of IPC Athletics
- Partnering IPC Athletics Grand Prix, including European and World Championships
- Strong internal activation of Paralympic partnership for Allianz employees

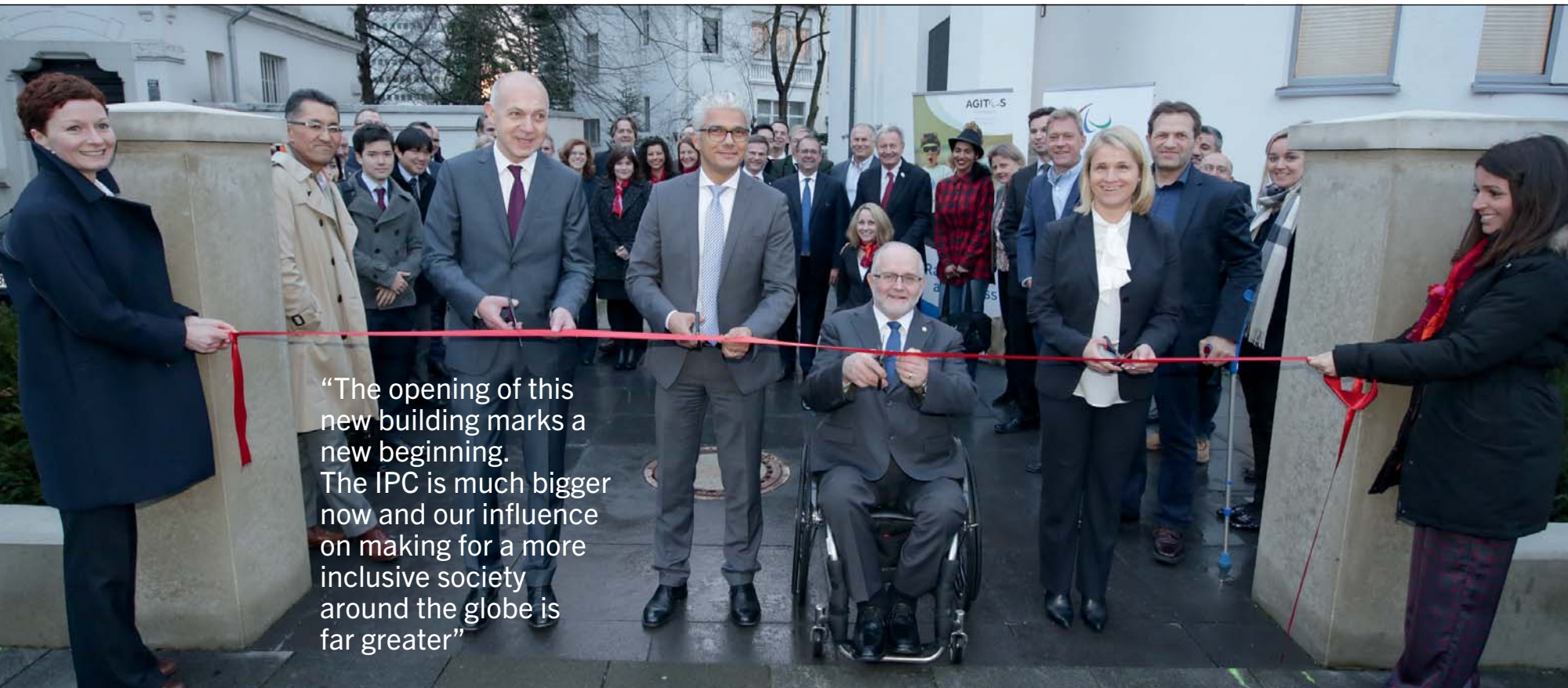
2006-2008

2009-2010

2011-2012

2013-2016





“The opening of this new building marks a new beginning. The IPC is much bigger now and our influence on making for a more inclusive society around the globe is far greater”

## IPC expands its headquarters

The IPC officially opened a new building adjacent to its current headquarters building on 13 January in Bonn, Germany.

IPC President Sir Philip Craven, Lord Mayor of Bonn, Ashok-Alexander Sridharan, Verena Bentele, Commissioner for Matters Relating to Persons with Disabilities of the Federal Government of Germany and 12-time Paralympic champion, and Bernd Neuendorf, State Secretary of North Rhine-Westphalia, cut the red ribbon to open the new building.

“The opening of this new building marks a new beginning. The IPC is much bigger now and our influence on making for a more inclusive society around the globe is far greater,” said Sir Philip.

“We now employ 85 people from more than 20 countries and have doubled in size in the last four years alone.”

The new building accommodates 30 staff from the IPC sports, the Agitos Foundation, Anti-Doping, Medical and Scientific, and Games and Events Technology departments.

The IPC first opened its headquarters in Bonn, Germany, in 1999, with just one full-time member of staff.

## Peru to stage biggest-ever Parapan American Games



The Lima 2019 Parapan American Games is expected to feature a record 1,850 athletes competing in 17 sports, two more than Toronto 2015.

The announcement was made following a three-day meeting (28 February - 1 March) in the Peruvian capital between the Americas Paralympic Committee (APC) and Lima 2019 Organising Committee (COPAL). An agreement confirming that Lima would stage the biggest-ever Parapan American Games was signed by Jose Luis Campo, APC President; Luis Salazar, President of COPAL; Xavier Gonzalez, IPC Chief Executive Officer; Saúl Barrera, President of the Sports

Institute of Peru; José Arista, Executive Director of the Special Project for Lima 2019 and Luisa Villar, President of NPC Peru.

Campo said: “Following the success of the Toronto 2015 Games and this September’s Rio 2016 Paralympic Games it is vital that the Paralympic Movement continues to move forward in the Americas. This agreement will go some way to achieving this.”

The sports in the programme are: athletics, badminton, boccia, cycling, football 5-a-side, football 7-a-side, goalball, judo, powerlifting, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, wheelchair basketball,

wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis. Archery has been removed from the sports programme, whilst badminton, shooting and taekwondo all feature for the first time in the Games which will take place at the end of August 2019.

“Following their inclusion in the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, both badminton and taekwondo will feature for the first time at a Parapan American Games alongside shooting,” Campo said. “We believe the sports programme for Lima 2019 features an exciting mixture of mass participation sports from the Americas.”

## Women celebrate leadership in Paralympic Movement

Representatives from across the Paralympic Movement celebrated the success of the Agitos Foundation’s WoMentoring project on 12-13 February in Bonn, Germany.

Established to contribute towards the Movement’s goal of having 30 per cent of women in leadership positions, WoMentoring involved 16 pairs of mentors and mentees in an 18-month long programme of education and development.

Tine Rindum Teilmann, Chairperson of the IPC’s Women in Sport Committee, said: “At the heart of the Paralympic Movement’s mission is to promote and grow the abilities of underrepresented groups in society, and

the IPC does not forget its responsibilities towards women who all too often fit that criteria within sport.”

The wrap-up event featured testimonials from mentors and mentees on how WoMentoring has helped them develop in their career, including gaining promotions and various positions of influence within NPCs and para-sport organisations.

The following month in March, Carla Qualtrough was awarded the IPC International Women’s Day Recognition for her impact and leadership within sport.

The three-time Paralympic swimming medallist was appointed as Canada’s Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities in November 2015.



“When the Prime Minister offered me my current role ... he challenged me to take two of my life’s true passions and ‘go change the world,’” Qualtrough said. “Every day, I’ll work to live up to that challenge, in ensuring more active and inclusive communities for all Canadians.”

### ++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

**NPC:** The Brazilian Paralympic Committee will reward the athletes who win medals at the 2016 Paralympic Games, expecting to distribute approximately BRL 3 million (about EUR 686,988) in rewards.

**ANTI-DOPING:** The IPC announced that Polish T54 wheelchair racer Tomasz Hamerlak has been suspended for four years for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation. Hamerlak returned an adverse analytical finding for stanozolol metabolites in a urine sample provided on 8 July in Switzerland.

**POWERLIFTING:** Paralympic champion Amalia Perez was presented with her third National Sports Award by Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico. The award from the National Commission for Physical Culture and Sport (CONADE) is given annually to athletes to recognise their sporting achievements.

**ATHLETICS:** IPC Athletics opened the bid process for the 2019 World Championships, the final major international track and field event prior to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The bid documents for the event can be requested from [ipcathletics@paralymic.org](mailto:ipcathletics@paralymic.org) and the deadline to submit bids is 1 September 2016.

**NPC:** The Austrian Ministry of Sports is placing EUR 20 million into “Project RIO” to help Austrian athletes prepare for the upcoming Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Of the 70 Austrian athletes being supported, 15 are para-athletes.

**IPC:** The final version of the 2015 IPC Athlete Classification Code is available at [www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/handbook](http://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/handbook), in section 2, chapter 1.3.2.

**IPC:** Former US swimmer and 14-time Paralympic champion Erin Popovich will serve as the athlete representative on the IPC Classification Committee.

**NPC:** Cadbury will contribute NZD 200,000 (EUR 118,78) to support the New Zealand Paralympic team on the road to Rio 2016. Cadbury also donated AUD 1 million (EUR 671,07) to the Australian Paralympic Committee.



# #AskAnAthlete

Yannick Bourseaux and Stefan Daniel share their thoughts about triathlon's Paralympic debut, the stiff competition in their PT4 class and more.



I was in a camp with the French Nordic ski team. I was surprised and immediately told my coach I will do my best to be at Rio. He told me to focus on Sochi but in my mind I was already focused on Rio.

**What was your reaction when learning triathlon would be in Rio 2016?**

I thought it was something I could do. I was doing swimming beforehand. When the Games came around, that's what kind of motivated me to take triathlon seriously.

My weakness is definitely the swim section. In the PT4 category I'm the only one swimming with one arm so it's difficult for me to be at the front straight after the swim. Last season my favourite was the bike because I train a lot on it and because my disability doesn't affect my performance a lot on the bike.

**Which is your favourite and least favorite segment, and why?**

I did track when I was younger so running is by far my favourite part. My second is biking and next is swimming. So with that order, I kind of get better as the race goes on.

Both (Stefan Daniel and Germany's Martin Schulz) are very talented. They are young and very motivated. ... I'm a veteran compared to them. ... And it's because they are here I'm motivated to train hard.

**What makes your rival(s) tough to beat?**

Just the way (Martin Schulz) races, he's a really aggressive racer. He's a great swimmer. He made the Paralympics in swimming ... You have to really keep close to him. Yannick is a phenomenal cyclist. I have a ton of respect for him.

Relieved, (as I finished third). I was injured before the race and I wasn't confident about being able to cross the finish line when I was on the start. And it was very important for me to finish the race for the Paralympic ranking.

**You left the 2015 World Championships in Chicago, USA, feeling ...**

It was a pretty cool feeling, going down that finishing chute realising I won the World Championships and qualified for Rio. It was a really close race and I expect another one at Rio.

Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024. But for myself, before trying to be at Tokyo, I will try to achieve a goal almost all triathletes have inside of him — being an Ironman while being Hawaii Ironman finisher.

**Where do you hope to see triathlon in the future?**

Since it was announced, you see a lot of athletes coming from other sports, whether it'd be swimming like I did or cycling. Having it debut is going to be huge, and every year it's going to get more competitive.



2016 Rotterdam  
ITU Para-Triathlon  
World Championships  
23-24 July  
Rotterdam, the Netherlands  
[www.triathlon.org](http://www.triathlon.org)

## IPC social media rebrands

All of the IPC's social media platforms have been rebranded to @Paralympics to make it easier for fans to find them. Simply add "Paralympics" to the end of any URL on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and G+. Or search "Paralympics" on Snapchat. The move aligns with #Paralympics, the main hashtag to be used during the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.



**/Paralympics**

[www.facebook.com/paralympics](http://www.facebook.com/paralympics)



**@Paralympics**

[www.twitter.com/paralympics](http://www.twitter.com/paralympics)



**/Paralympics**

[www.youtube.com/paralympics](http://www.youtube.com/paralympics)



**@Paralympics**

[www.instagram.com/paralympics](http://www.instagram.com/paralympics)



**+Paralympics**

[www.google.com/+paralympics](http://www.google.com/+paralympics)



**Paralympics**

Search "Paralympics" in the mobile app



# Breaking into America!

**“The Rio 2016 Paralympics will be a catalyst to grow disability awareness in the United States.”**

This was the message from IPC President Sir Philip Craven to around 250 US media in Los Angeles on 7 March as he marked six months to go until Latin America's first Paralympic Games.

Sir Philip was in the United States for one week as part of a joint offensive between the IPC and US Paralympics to raise awareness of NBC's coverage of Rio 2016. The US broadcaster will be screening an unprecedented 66 hours of coverage of the Rio 2016 Paralympics and the IPC President believes it will have a significant impact.

“Over the years, the Paralympic Games have developed a strong track record for changing and challenging deep-rooted views in society regarding disability,” said Sir Philip. “Thanks to widespread media coverage of Beijing 2008 and London 2012, the Paralympics have established themselves as the world's

number one sporting event for driving social inclusion.

“The United States has always been a global leader in social change, including in regards to disabilities; however, research indicates that there is still room for the US to grow, and Rio 2016 can be the catalyst for another level of education and inclusion. I am confident that with more TV coverage than ever before in the US, the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games are the best opportunity for a generation to further transform US attitudes.”

In addition to speaking at the USOC Media Summit, Sir Philip was also part of a roundtable discussion in Washington DC discussing how to improve employment opportunities for people with a disability in the United States.



IPC President Sir Philip Craven meets United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on 11 March at the UN's headquarters in New York, USA

Hosted by IPC International Partner BP, panel members of the roundtable discussion included Judith Heumann, Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, US Department of State; Jennifer Sheehy, Deputy Assistant Secretary Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labour; Cheri Blauwet, Chair of the IPC Medical Committee and Instructor in Physical Medicine Rehabilitation/Sports Medicine, Harvard Medical School; and Dan Brooke, Chief Marketing Officer of Channel 4.

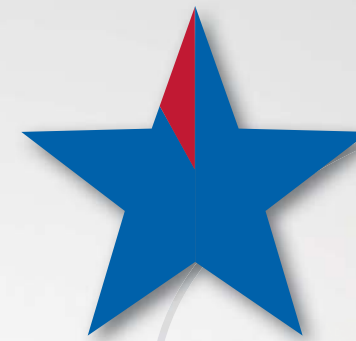
Topics covered during the two hour session included US employment rates, barriers and interventions for people with a disability and how para-sport can act as a catalyst to improving employment opportunities. Brooke highlighted how, as a result of its coverage of London 2012, Channel 4 had become a more inclusive employer and in 2016 is celebrating its year of disability.

Sir Philip's trip to the USA concluded with a personal meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in New York. The two discussed the impact the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games can have in changing global attitudes towards disability and the work of the Agitos Foundation (the IPC's development arm) in increasing para-sport participation around the world.

Track and field stars Jarryd Wallace (left) and Richard Browne in action during the 2016 Team USA Media Summit held 8 March in California

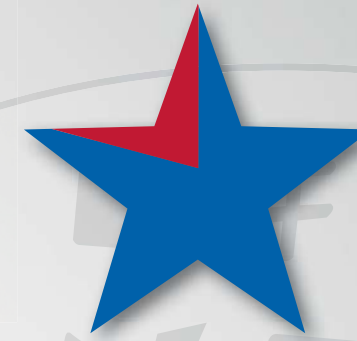


## IPC/US Paralympics research findings



**92%**

of Americans think there are problems with the way people with disabilities are treated in the US



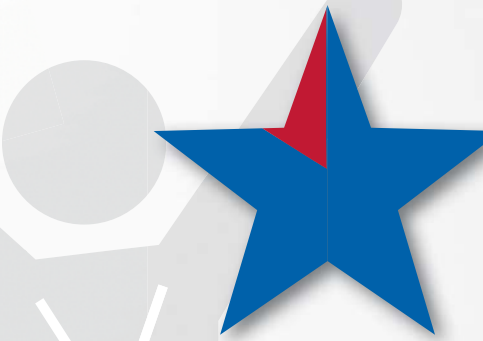
**71%**

of Americans think people with disabilities are often ignored or forgotten about



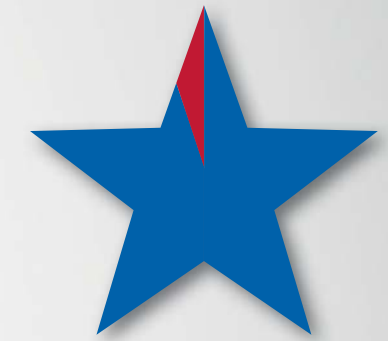
**50%**

of Americans have witnessed someone being discriminated because of a disability



**84%**

of Americans believe attitudes toward people with disabilities would change if people saw them competing in sports at a high level



**95%**

of Americans say Paralympians are good role models for both disabled and non-disabled Americans

Source: Incorporated London Ltd





# Athlete Profiles

Get to know some of the stars in each of the 22 sports in the Rio 2016 Paralympic programme. The first 11 sports will be covered in this issue, and the other half in the next edition.



## Archery



### Zahra Nemati (IRI)

Nemati made history by claiming Iran's first-ever Paralympic and Olympic gold. She is not only looking to defend her W1 recurve Paralympic title in Rio, but also compete in the Olympics.

#### > How has your life changed since making history at London 2012?

During these four years my activity and my practice have gone to a very high level. They have gotten very intensive. ... I'm doing all this because I want to defend my Paralympic gold medal at Rio 2016.

I've been practicing with the able-bodied players. But I am also practicing with para-athletes.

#### > What was your reaction to being named Iran's Rio 2016 Olympic flag bearer?

I was very, very happy and excited. I think being a flag bearer is the hope and wish of many able-bodied and disabled people in the world. There is no difference actually; many athletes would love such an honour to be the flag bearer of their country at the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

But for a para-athlete to be a flag bearer at an Olympic Games, I think it sends a very good message for the Paralympians that they can also compete in the Olympic Games.

#### > In what ways has your success impacted Iran?

My success after London impacted me personally. I have more hopes and opportunities for my future in all fields, especially archery. The societal impact, I think there are more hope and goals for women in Iran. After London we saw an increase

in female athletes, especially in archery. For Rio 2016, there could be more medallists from Iran, especially women.

#### > Who has been influential in your life?

My parents and my husband. He is an archer and we understand what it is like to compete in this

sport. My parents call me on the phone many times while I am at camps and encourage me, or when I get a medal they are the first to call and congratulate me.

Russia	2	1	2
Korea	1	2	0
China	1	1	2



#### QUICK FACTS

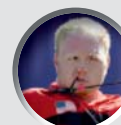
- Venue:** Sambódromo
- Dates:** 10-17 September
- Medal events:** 9
- Athletes:** 140
- Games debut:** 1960
- Classification**  
Open: standing and/or resting on a stool.

**W1:** Athletes have impairment in the legs and make use of a wheelchair. Limited function may also be seen in the upper limbs and trunk.

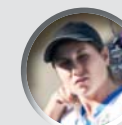
[www.archery.org](http://www.archery.org)

**MORE ONLINE:** Each sport on the Rio 2016 Paralympic programme is having a dedicated week of featured content published on the IPC's website. Visit [paralympic.org/rio-2016/sports](http://paralympic.org/rio-2016/sports) to learn about each sport's history, read athlete stories and even watch video clips overviewing each sport.

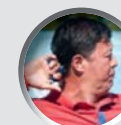
#### ONES TO WATCH



**MATT STUTZMAN (USA)**  
The "Armless Archer" is a world record holder and London 2012 silver medallist.



**ELEONORA SARTI (Italy)**  
The 2015 world champion and world No.1 in women's compound open.



**OUK SOO LEE (South Korea)**  
The 2015 world champion in men's compound open has not won a Paralympic medal since 2000.





## Yuk Wing Leung (HKG)

Ranked No. 1 in the BC4, the Laureus nominee is aiming to avenge himself from London 2012, where he left without a medal.

► **Canada's Marco Dispaltra and Brazil's Eliseu Santos are ranked behind you and have medals from London 2012. What type of competitions do you expect from them in Rio?**

Marco and Eliseu are very good athletes and formidable opponents. They have unique skills respectively that are worth learning. As we have similar standards, I need to cope with competitive pressure and relax in the upcoming competitions in order to perform better.

► **You left London 2012 without a medal. How did you feel about that?**

I feel depressed about my results of London 2012. My goal was getting a medal in the BC4 pair event but failed. I could not exert my skills due to too much stress and the pressure of wanting to win. I had evaluated my performance with my coach and team members, and learned not to focus on winning or losing.

► **Rio will be your fourth Games. What do you attribute your success to?**

I would say my passion about the sport leads to the success. I started playing

boccia when I was small and developed my skills in Special School. Then I had more opportunities to build up my techniques after being admitted on the Hong Kong national boccia team.

► **You will also compete in BC4 pairs in Rio, how different is your approach to that versus individual events?**

I will spend more time on the pairs event with my boccia partner as it requires more training to improve co-operation. We have had the goal for winning a medal of pair events since nine years ago, but we failed in Beijing 2008 and London 2012. Now I hope to get a gold in the BC4 pairs event and a medal in the individual event at Rio 2016.

► **How has the perception of disability changed in Hong Kong?**

I think nowadays the public understand more about people with disabilities. There are sufficient accessible facilities and transport modes which improve convenience in daily life.

### QUICK FACTS


 **Venue:**  
Carioca Arena 2

 **Dates:**  
10-16 September


 **Medal events:**  
7

 **Athletes:**  
108

 **Games debut:**  
1984

 **Classification**  
**BC1:** Players have severe activity limitations affecting their legs, arms and trunk due to co-ordination impairments.  
**BC2:** Have better trunk control and arm function than players in the BC1 and BC3 class.  
**BC3:** Players use a ramp to propel the ball into play due to very limited arm and leg function and poor or no trunk control.  
**BC4:** Includes players who do not have coordination impairment. Many throw with a pendulum swing using one or two arms or hands.

 [www.bisfed.com](http://www.bisfed.com)



Brazil	3	0	1
Thailand	2	0	0
Korea	1	1	1



## Markus Swoboda (AUT)

With five European and six world titles, the KL2 canoeist is only missing Paralympic gold. He can change that in Rio, where the sport will debut.

► **How does it feel to finally get to compete in the Paralympics?**

I honestly can't say since it is the first time. It will definitely be different because until now there have always been para-athletes and able-bodied athletes competing at the same events, and

I'm really happy about that because para-athletes profit from the attention the able-bodied get. The Paralympics are just para-athletes, so that's a first for me.

► **You have dominated your class for years. What has been key?**

I have been paddling since 2000 when I was 10-years-old, and there was no para-canoe. So I had to compete with the able-bodied canoeists from early on and did a lot of national and international races in K1, K2 and K4. I was lucky that I had a lot of support from my club and my family.

► **Who will be your toughest opponent?**

I think the Australian Curt McGrath and the Brazilian Fernando Rufino de Paulo. Curt switched last year from the outrigger [va'a] to the kayak and was second at the World Championships... Fernando is big and strong like a bull but a really nice guy. He always tries to talk to me but he doesn't speak English and

I don't speak Portuguese, unfortunately.

► **What do you like to do outside canoeing?**

All the spare time I have I'll try to spend with my girlfriend, family and friends.


► **What can be done to continue developing para-canoe?**


I think we should drop the special requirements for the para-canoe boats, at least for the KL2 and KL3 categories. It was a good idea at the beginning of para-canoe because there were many beginners, and it was easier for people to get into the sport. Now after six years, a lot of nations have programmes

for scouting and pretty good structures with more experienced athletes.

Most of these athletes can already use the normal racing boats. I believe that normal boats are fairer because there are different sizes for athletes with different weights. With current regulations, I think heavier athletes have an advantage. Additionally para-athletes could train with able-bodied athletes because they wouldn't be slowed by their boats anymore.

### QUICK FACTS


 **Venue:**  
Lagoa Stadium

 **Dates:**  
14-15 September

 **Medal events:**  
6

 **Athletes:**  
60

 **Games debut:**  
2016

 **Classification**  
In Paralympic kayak competition (K1), there are three classes for both men and women:

**KL1:** Athletes with no or very limited trunk function and no leg function; typically need a special seat with high backrest

**KL2:** Athletes with partial trunk and leg function, able to sit upright in the kayak but might need a special backrest, limited leg movement during paddling

**KL3:** Athletes with trunk function and partial leg function, able to sit with trunk in forward flexed position in the kayak; able to use at least one leg/prosthesis

 [www.canoeicf.com](http://www.canoeicf.com)



### ONES TO WATCH



**DIRECU JOSE PINTO**  
(Brazil)  
Won individual and pairs BC4 gold at Beijing 2008 and London 2012.



**DANIEL PEREZ**  
(Netherlands)  
World No. 1 in the BC1 class who is targeting his first major title.



**HAN SOO KIM**  
(South Korea)  
The 2014 BC3 world champion is aiming for gold in his second Paralympics.

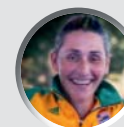
### ONES TO WATCH



**JEANETTE CHIPPINGTON**  
(Great Britain)  
Twelve-time Paralympic swimming medallist is the favourite in KL1.



**CURTIS MCGRATH**  
(Australia)  
World silver medallist seeks to upset Austria's Markus Swoboda in KL2.



**AMANDA REYNOLDS**  
(Australia)  
KL3 world champion who just edged out Britain's Anne Dickinson.





# Cycling

Road and track combined

Great Britain	8	9	5
USA	6	5	6
China	6	4	5



## Carol Cooke (AUS)

The 2015 world title in the road race slipped from her hands but the veteran will aim to make it up in Rio.

➤ **Take us back to the home stretch of the 2015 World Champs. You missed the gold by a few seconds.**

Six seconds to be exact.

In the past I've never really had to use tactics a lot. With (the USA's) Jill (Walsh) I couldn't get away from her. I did the wrong thing in that I worked my absolute gut off to get away from

her. We had a right-hand turn to come into the stadium and leading into that turn she had been sitting on me and had a lot of energy left (and then) she overtook me at the corner.

It taught me a lot about racing.

I'm glad it happened last year and not this year.

➤ **Can we anticipate a similar finish in Rio?**

I see a lot of Jill in me, and she proved it this past year. It's going to be a good race. And I don't discount

anyone else either. (Canada's) Marie-Eve (Croteau) will probably be back this year. And the young Hannah Dines from Great Britain is looking good.

➤ **What is the story behind Hannah Dines?**

She reached out to me via social media and said 'I watched you ride at London and I want to be as good as you.' Three years later she was racing at Worlds. ... She's definitely the future coming up.

To have somebody who has a disability say hey I can probably do that, and

to see them make a team, it's amazing. I hope in the years to come we see more of that.

That makes me feel proud of what I'm doing.

➤ **London 2012 was a mixed T1-T2 race.**

I think the best thing about Rio is that I don't have to race the men this year. That is changing at Rio 2016. It's great to see I can race against women even if we're T1-T2 combined. We have to watch out for (Canada's) Shelley Gautier. She's a T1 rider. So it's not just the T2 racers who I'm usually racing at the World Cup level.



### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:** Pontal (Road); Rio Olympic Velodrome (Track)



**Dates:** 8-11 September (Track)  
14-17 September (Road)



**Medal events:** 33 (Road); 17 (Track)



**Athletes:** 230



**Games debut:** 1984 (Road); 1996 (Track)



**Classification**

Athletes are classed based on their ability to cycle using: tandem, handcycle, tricycle or bicycle. The lower the athlete's number, the greater the impact of their impairment on their ability to cycle.

**B:** Athletes with visual impairments.

**C1-5:** Includes amputations, impaired muscle power or range of motion, and impairments affecting coordination.

**H2-5:** Paraplegic athletes and amputees who use a handbike.

**T1-2:** Athletes with impaired balance will use a tricycle.

➤ [www.uci.ch/para-cycling](http://www.uci.ch/para-cycling)



# Equestrian

Great Britain	5	5	1
Germany	2	3	2
Belgium	2	0	0



## Rixt van der Horst (NED)

The Dutch rider burst onto the scene in 2014 winning two world titles and followed up with two European titles in 2015.

➤ **This will be your first Paralympics. Expectations?**

I don't know what to expect. I will try to enjoy it the most I can and I will train very hard to achieve my 'golden' goal in Rio. For eight years I've dreamed of being part of the Games and I can't believe it's almost going to happen this year.

➤ **What is the chemistry like between you and your horse Uniek N.O.P.?**

I have ridden Uniek since September 2013, and one year later

we became double world champions – unbelievable. Uniek has a sweet character, but at the same time he has the temperament of a good dressage horse.

It's not always easy, but we train very hard, almost every day. We are always working on our relationship, in and out of competition. We trust each other, and Uniek wants to work for you. That's important I think, even more when you have a physical disability like me.

➤ **Where did the name 'Uniek N.O.P.' come from?**

Uniek was named already, so actually I had no choice. But I find it a very special and appropriate name for him. He is really 'Unique.'

N.O.P. means Nederlands Olympiade Paard in Dutch; Dutch Olympic Horse in English.

➤ **What makes opponents like British rider Natasha Baker tough to beat?**

Riders like Natasha are more experienced and most of the riders have experienced a Paralympics already. Also she has to defend a title.

The competition in our grade II is very tight.

➤ **What can be done to grow the sport outside of Europe?**

If we show good achievements in our sport, then more people are going to become aware. It's also important that, in general, the Paralympics are recognised as the highest level of para-sports.

And when people see equestrian

on the Paralympic global stage, than that can help

spread the sport outside Europe. Also

we have the best horses in Europe, so we need to develop horses around the world.

### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:** Olympic Equestrian Centre



**Dates:** 11-16 September



**Medal events:** 11



**Athletes:** 78



**Games debut:** 1984



**Classification**

Based on the riders' ability to ride a horse, they compete in one of five grades (1a, 1b, II, III and IV). Riders in 1a have the greater activity limitations and those in IV have the least. Athletes with a visual impairment compete in grades III and IV.

➤ [www.feij.org](http://www.feij.org)



### ONES TO WATCH



#### ALEX ZANARDI (Italy)

Created the picture-perfect photo from London 2012 by lifting his handcycle after winning the road race H4.



#### ALYDA NORBRUIS (Netherlands)

Swept all three C2 events in the 2015 Track World Championships.



#### ISRAEL HILARIO (Peru)

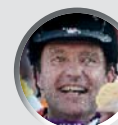
C2 racer burst onto the road scene in 2015; can win Peru's first Paralympic medal in 12 years.

### ONES TO WATCH



#### SOPHIE CHRISTIANSEN (Great Britain)

Five-time Paralympic champion who will be competing in her fourth Paralympics in grade 1a.



#### PEPO PUCH (Austria)

The grade 1b rider is looking to defend his Paralympic freestyle title.

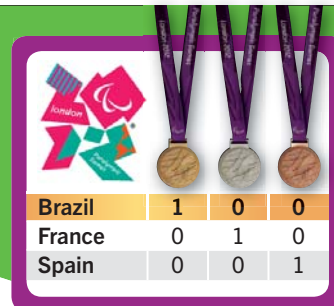


#### LAURENTIA TAN (Singapore)

Won four Paralympic medals in grade 1a and is going for her first gold in Rio.



# Football 5-a-side



Brazil	1	0	0
France	0	1	0
Spain	0	0	1



## Jefferson “Jefinho” da Conceicao Goncalves (BRA)

The “Paralympic Pele” will go for a Paralympic three-peat.

### ► What has contributed to Brazil dominating every major event?

There's a whole organisational structure, with the CBDV (Brazilian Sports Confederation for the Visually Impaired) and clubs, dedicated to help us do our best. There is organisation, capacity and reliability in all the work done by all who make up the football 5, including managers, technical staff and especially athletes; this is why Brazil is such a large force in the sport.

### ► Are there any changes to the national team since London 2012?

A lot has changed in this four-year interval. We have a new coaching staff who brought new and great ideas

and added to our selection. So although our group of players have not changed much, our football has evolved considerably ... Today we play with a different, more dynamic style, both on offence and defence.

### ► Describe the emotions from winning gold at London 2012.

It was my second Paralympic medal, but it felt more meaningful than Beijing 2008. In 2008, I participated in the conquest, but not actively as I was in 2012. London was the hardest race I competed, from the beginning to the final. ... It was only at the final whistle I could celebrate and it was only on the podium, the sound of my national anthem when it hit me that the gold was ours.

### ► How popular is football 5 in Brazil?

There was a great football growth for the blind in Brazil from Athens 2004, not only for investments, but the visibility of our sport. The inclusion of the sport in the Paralympics was a watershed for all these developments. From there, people really began to meet, inform and ask about our football. Today, many people stop me on the street recognise me and know that I am an athlete.

### ► Matches against Argentina have been nail-biters. Describe the rivalry.

Brazil vs. Argentina is the great classic, so every game against them will always be difficult. In addition, we have played with each other for several years, so we know each other's games well.

### QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Olympic Tennis Centre
- Dates:** 9-17 September
- Medal events:** 1
- Athletes:** 64
- Games debut:** 2004
- Qualified teams:** Argentina, Brazil, China, Iran, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, Turkey
- Classification**  
All players have a visual impairment and have no visual acuity and/or light perception. During matches, they must wear eyeshades.
- [www.ibsasport.org](http://www.ibsasport.org)



# Football 7-a-side



Russia	1	0	0
Ukraine	0	1	0
Iran	0	0	1



## Kostyantyn Symashko (UKR)

The Ukrainian is arguably the best goalkeeper in the sport and is seeking his second Paralympic gold in three appearances.

### ► Rio 2016 is only a few months away. What emotions are you feeling about it?

It's very interesting and exciting for me, but at the same time I feel a high sense of responsibility.

### ► How did you get introduced to football 7?

I watched the final of the Paralympic Games in 2004 (when Ukraine won gold) on one of the Ukrainian TV channels, and after that I had a great desire to join the national team.

### ► How would you describe the rivalry with Russia?

Every time, the matches between Ukrainian and Russian teams are tight. But the luck always chooses one winner.

I think Russia's great desire to win makes them a strong opponent.

### ► How did you feel after losing in the finals to Russia in London 2012 and 2015 Worlds?

It is difficult to describe these emotions – they leave scars.

### ► How did the team handle the 2015 World finals loss to Russia?

The team tries not to focus on such moments, and we always set the highest goals.

### ► Besides Russia, what other team will be difficult to beat at Rio 2016?

It's hard to predict, as the level of the teams rises every year.

### ► What are your pre-match rituals?

Before the game I pray to God and sain (to make the sign of the cross) the goal posts.

### ► Who is your idol and why?

(Italy's) Gianluigi Buffon. His cold-bloodedness together with a lightning reaction charms me.

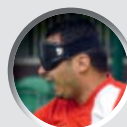
### ► What advice would you pass on to others?

People always should aim bigger and better, and sport is a good tool to temper your will-power and body.

### ONES TO WATCH



**SILVIO VELO**  
(Argentina)  
Captain who was part of the 2004 and 2008 Paralympic silver medal teams.

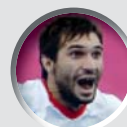


**EMRAH OCAL**  
(Turkey)  
Inspired his side to the European title in 2015.

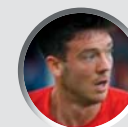


**RICARDO “RICARDINHO” ALVES**  
(Brazil)  
Brazilian captain who has won every major international title.

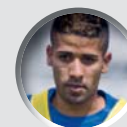
### ONES TO WATCH



**EDUARD RAMONOV**  
(Russia)  
Voted Most Valuable Player at the 2015 World Championships.



**JACK RUTTER**  
(Great Britain)  
All-round midfielder with a good eye for the goal.



**JAN FRANCISCO BRITO DA COSTA**  
(Brazil)  
Arguably the best player in the world and offensive nightmare for defenders.





# Goalball

MEN	Finland	Brazil	Turkey
WOMEN	Japan	China	Sweden



## Akiko Adachi (JPN)

One of the team's key scorers and motivators, Adachi aims to lead Japan back to Paralympic gold.

### > How did you first get into para-sport?

After I became visually impaired, the institution I entered for rehabilitation and job training was providing some club activities that I joined.

### > Japan defeated China for the 2015 Asian title by one point. How intense was that match?

Since it was the match that would allow us to go to Rio or not, we had some pressure, but

we had a strong will to win and played with all our heart.

### > What challenges will Japan face in defending its Paralympic gold?

It is true that we won the gold medal in London, yet, instead of thinking that we have to defend our title, we rather have a challenger's spirit, aiming to be at the world's top level once more. Since there are many powerful world level teams, I think the challenges we will face will be being perseverant and showing a real Japanese-style of play.

### > Who is your toughest opponent?

Turkey, until now we have never been able to win our matches against them.

### > What sort of changes regarding para-sport have you noticed in Japan since London 2012?

Since London 2012, goalball has a bigger media exposure, and a higher level of recognition. However, there are only few infrastructures adapted to this sport, so there isn't significant increase in the player population.

As for myself, there is no dramatic change in my life since the competition, and I am practicing goalball daily to prepare myself for Rio.

### > What are your expectations at Rio 2016?

I, and the goalball team, are receiving a lot of support from plenty of people. Thus, I want to show my gratefulness for their support through my play.

### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:**  
Future Arena



**Dates:**  
8-16 September



**Medal events:**  
2



**Athletes:**  
120



**Games debut:**  
1984



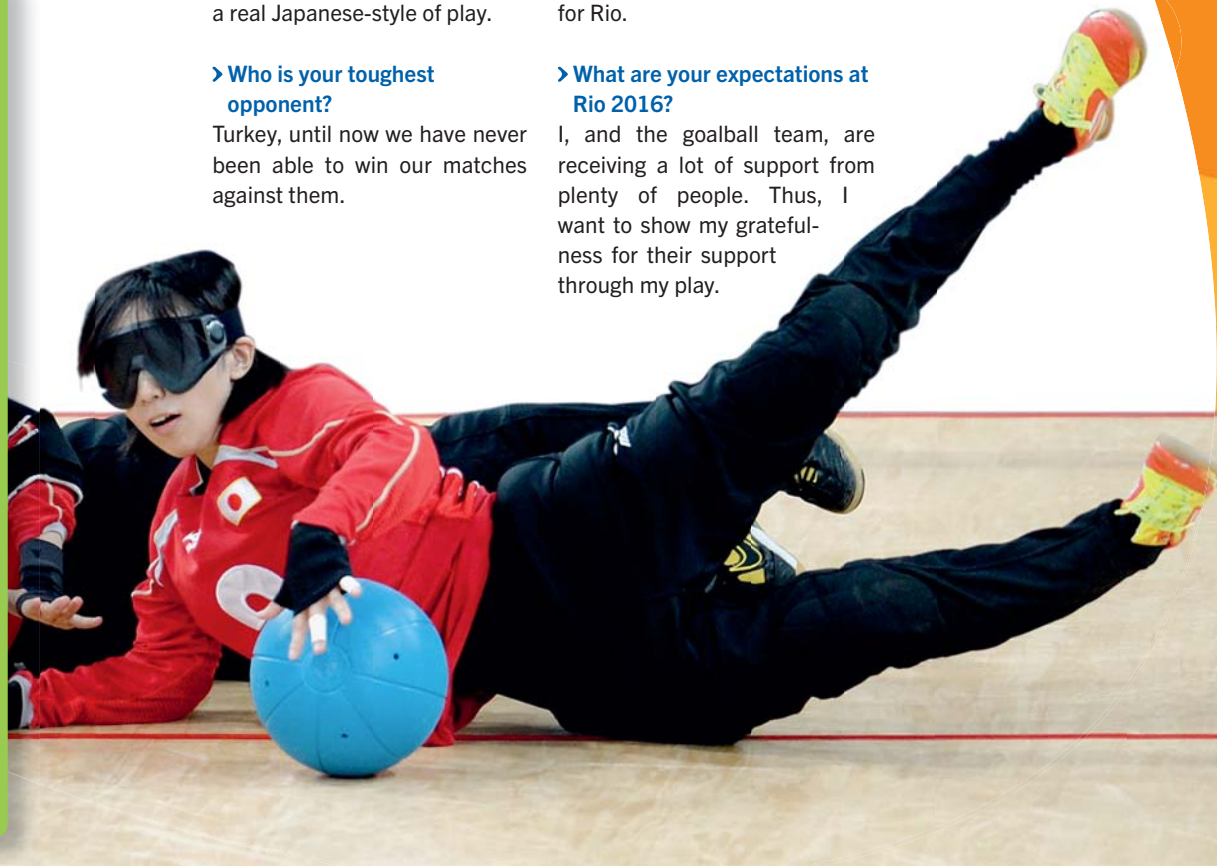
**Qualified teams:**  
**Women:** Algeria, Brazil, China, Israel, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA

**Men:** Algeria, Brazil, China, Finland, Lithuania, Sweden, Turkey, USA



**Classification**  
Athletes have varying degrees of visual impairment. In order to ensure fair competition, all players must wear eyeshades during the game.

[www.ibsasport.org](http://www.ibsasport.org)



# Judo

Ukraine	3	0	2
Cuba	2	0	2
Azerbaijan/ Germany	2	0	1



## Nikolett Szabo (HUN)

After taking bronze at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, Szabo came back strong in 2014 by winning the world title in the women's up to 70kg.

### > How did you get into judo?

It was required once a week in the elementary school to participate in judo. I fell in love with this sport, and my teacher said I had talent. I was about 14 years old when I went to a sport club and started competitively.

### > How did you feel about your bronze from London 2012?

I was sad because I wanted the gold medal; I think I had a chance for it.

### > What are your expectations at Rio 2016?

Of course the gold, but at least a medal.

### > Who is your toughest opponent and why?

I think this year the Russian girl (London 2012 silver medallist Tatiana Savostyanova), is very strong and a potential rival.

### > Who has influenced you the most in your career?

My coach József Keseru.

### > What more can be done to develop para-sports in Hungary?

I think it is a very complex area, but now the situation is much better in para-sports than the previous generations. We have a lot of successful para-athletes, and it helps when society sees our medal results from

the Paralympic Games and other major events. It is very important for them to see how hard we work for this type of success.

### > What do you like to do when you are not competing?

I would like to compete in judo for as long as I can. But after maybe I would be a coach.

### > What sort of adjustments have you made since London 2012 to ensure success at Rio 2016?

I have tried new workouts, such as aqua fitness, especially the Aquawallgym, an elastic equipment used for training in the pool. I love it; it's very useful.

### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:**  
Carioca Arena 3



**Dates:**  
8-10 September



**Medal events:**  
13



**Athletes:**  
132



**Games debut:**  
1988



**Classification**  
Athletes are classed as B1, B2 or B3 based on their visual impairment.

[www.ibsasport.org](http://www.ibsasport.org)



### ONES TO WATCH



**AMANDA DENNIS**  
(USA)  
Strong offensive player who helped USA win gold in 2014 Worlds.



**ERKKI MIINALA**  
(Finland)  
A London 2012 gold medallist who won European silver in 2015.



**ROMARIO DIEGO MARQUES**  
(Brazil)  
Second top scorer as Brazil won the 2014 world title.

### ONES TO WATCH



**DARTANYON CROCKETT**  
(USA)  
A former wrestler who won the world title in 2014 and bronze at London 2012.



**RAMONA BRÜSSIG**  
(Germany)  
The two-time Paralympic champion has also won five European and four world titles.



**SHIRIN SHARIPOV**  
(Uzbekistan)  
The 2015 world champion in the up to 100kg class.





# Powerlifting

Nigeria	6	5	1
Egypt	4	3	4
Iran	4	1	1



## Amalia Perez (MEX)

The Mexican will appear in her fifth Games after winning gold in the women's up to 60kg in London 2012.

### > What was it like growing up with 13 siblings?

My family is my biggest inspiration. My mom was given the option to inject something into my heart when I was born since I would probably not live for more than a year. She told the doctors she did not have the right to take my life. I thank her and God for giving me the chance to live. Now at 44 years old, I am happy, I have a family, and I learned there is so much worth enjoying.

### > How do you think your success has impacted your country and females?

Actually, the Mexican women's powerlifting team is stronger than the men's.

I hope little by little I can continue helping women realise we can be successful at national and international levels. Being a woman should not mean we minimise ourselves or think we do not have the capacity to succeed because it seems we are the apparent 'weak sex.'

### > What impact will Rio 2016 have on Latin America?

At the end of the day, we (Mexicans) are on the same continent, and we will feel closer to home. All Latin Americans will feel proud of being Latin American for hosting such a respectable event. Despite so many

current international issues, the most primordial elements are love and sport, a common activity that everyone can be inspired and excited about.

### > Anti-doping has been an issue in powerlifting. Why is it important to stay clean?

Artificial substances can hurt your body in short and long-term. Doping not only damages the individual, but also the nation you represent. It creates an image of an unhealthy, unclean nation.

I have always stayed clean because I know one can reach maximum goals only through discipline and persistence. I appreciate having

a body with the capacity of improving. For example, one day I can lift 50g more, or make one more repetition.

### > You almost broke the up to 55kg world record in February's World Cup in Malaysia. How did you feel about that?

Changing to another class was not easy. However, I wanted to change for two reasons: one, for health. Being in a wheelchair, our bodies tend to deteriorate more. We need to take care of our bodies by watching our weight. Two: for exploring my limits and the records I can achieve in this class.



### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:**  
Riocentro - Pavilion 2



**Dates:**  
8-14 September



**Medal events:**  
20



**Athletes:**  
180



**Games debut:**  
1964



**Classification**  
All athletes have an impairment affecting their legs and hips. Athletes compete in one sport class.

[www.ipc-powerlifting.org](http://www.ipc-powerlifting.org)



# Swimming

China	24	13	21
Australia	18	7	12
Ukraine	17	14	13



## Brad Snyder (USA)

After winning London 2012 gold on the one-year anniversary of losing his sight in Afghanistan, the US Navy veteran is aiming to defend two Paralympic titles at Rio 2016.

### > With Rio 2016 on the horizon, what have these past months been like?

I feel there is more pressure than the previous three years because there's a lot to accomplish in a short amount of time – in and out of the pool. In the pool, I want to make sure I'm where I need to be from a performance standpoint. I also brought on corporate partners, so there's a lot of travel and speaking.

At this particular time it's 'no rest for the weary.' But it will be an immense relief when I'm able to finish those races in Rio and especially end up on the podium again.

### > Who is your toughest competition?

China's Bozun Yang whom I lost to at London in the 50m free. I think he physically has an edge in the 50m.

### > What impact did London 2012 have in the USA?

Social change is slow and I think we haven't necessary felt that growth quite yet. I think it will be another few years until we identify other athletes. I've met a few younger blind athletes who can develop in the next years. But there are many potential world champions who don't know about para-sports.

### > How can Rio help?

Being on TV in a prime time spot is going to help out in the US. There's going to be a lot of direct interest, and also indirect interest. Once we get the

Japan's Keiichi Kimura has gotten just so much better. Brazil's Matheus Souza, in front of a home crowd, is going to have a great Paralympics.

### > You tried goalball once during your rehab. How was that?

It was enlightening because there are so many skills involved with being visually impaired that I had struggled with and I'm still not as good as athletes who are congenitally blind. The things they can hear and the way they orient themselves in an audible environment is so impressive. I was frequently diving the wrong way and had a hard time orienting myself.

### QUICK FACTS



**Venue:**  
Olympic Aquatics Centre



**Dates:**  
8-17 September



**Medal events:**  
152



**Athletes:**  
620



**Games debut:**  
1960



**Classification**  
The prefixes S, SM and SB define the strokes, and are followed by the numbers 1-14 to denote the athlete's impairment; the lower the number, the greater the activity limitation.

**Classes 1-10:**  
swimmers with physical impairments

**Classes 11-13:**  
visually impaired swimmers

**Class 14:**  
intellectually-impaired swimmers.

[www.ipc-swimming.org](http://www.ipc-swimming.org)



### ONES TO WATCH



#### NAZMIYE MURATLI (Turkey)

Aiming to complete a hat-trick of Paralympic golds in the women's up to 41kg class.



#### SHERIF OTHMAN (Egypt)

Two-time Paralympic champion has moved up to the -59kg class, where he is also the current world record holder.



#### SIAMAND RAHMAN (Iran)

The world's strongest Paralympian who may lift a world record 300kg in Rio.

### ONES TO WATCH



#### DANIEL DIAS (Brazil)

Owens 10 Paralympic and 24 world titles in the men's S5 and SB4.



#### YELYZAVETA MERESHKO (Ukraine)

Won three world titles in 2015 and enjoys a great rivalry with Great Britain's Ellie Simmonds in women's S6.



#### AURELIE RIVARD (Canada)

In 2015 the S10 swimmer won two world and six Parapan titles, and claimed the world record in the women's 100m freestyle.





Dutch duo Jiske Griffioen (left) and Aniek van Koot compete in their first round of the women's doubles during the 2016 Australian Open

## Australian Open

27-30 January

Great Britain's Gordon Reid won his first Grand Slam singles title with a 7-6 (7), 6-4 victory over Belgian Joachim Gerard at the Australian Open.

It was both Reid and Gerard's first appearance in a Grand Slam singles final. Reid also defeated Japan's Shingo Kunieda – who had won every Australian Open singles and doubles match he had played – in the quarter-finals.

Australian Dylan Alcott beat US rival David Wagner 6-2, 6-2 to defend his quad singles title.

Jiske Griffioen defended her women's singles title, beating Aniek van Koot 6-3, 7-5, in an all-Dutch final.

The Netherlands' Marjolein Buis and Japan's Yui Kamiji won the women's doubles title. French duo Stephane Houdet and Nicolas Peifer triumphed on the men's side, while Wagner and South Africa's Lucas Sithole left with the quad doubles title.

➤ [www.ausopen.com](http://www.ausopen.com)



SPOTLIGHT ON:

**Gordon Reid**

(GBR)

Had a hot start to the Paralympic year, proving he can contend for gold in Rio.



Russia defeat Norway in the gold medal match of the World Wheelchair Curling Championship 2016

### MEDALS TABLE

	Russia
	Norway
	South Korea

## World Wheelchair Curling Championship

21-28 February

Russia retained their world title after defeating Norway 7-4 in the finals in Lucerne, Switzerland.

Russia widened the match scoring five points in the fifth end and never looked back.

"We are so happy now that I cannot describe it with words," Russian skip Andrey Smirnov said after the win. "I think to become world champions again is also important for Russia and for Russian athletes because it actually helps to attract more new players. If we compare wheelchair curling now and three years ago there's a big difference."

South Korea came back to defeat Switzerland 6-5 for the bronze medal. Down 5-2, South Korea scored three points in the seventh end. In the final end, Switzerland was forced to attempt a difficult runback as South Korea held shot stone. The Swiss's stone would over curl, taking their stone wide and giving South Korea the single point steal for the win.

➤ [www.worldcurling.org/wwhcc2016](http://www.worldcurling.org/wwhcc2016)






SPOTLIGHT ON:

**Team Russia**

Team skip Andrey Smirnov, along with Konstantin Kurokhtin, Svetlana Pakhomova, Marat Romanov, Alexander Shevchenko and coach Anton Batugin helped Russia win their third title in five years.



MEDALS TABLE

-  Austria
-  Finland
-  Belgium/  
Netherlands



Austria shuts out Belgium/Netherlands during the opening game of the 2016 IPC Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships C-Pool

Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships C-Pool

23-25 February

Austria defeated Finland 1-0 on penalties to take the gold medal in Novi Sad, Serbia, and win promotion to the B-Pool to improve their chances for a spot in the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

Austria was on the offense, taking 14 shots on goal – five from Jurgen Haindl – compared to Finland's three. But Finnish goalkeeper Timo Karko managed to keep Austria in check after three periods and overtime, conceding the only goal from Thomas Schilcher in the penalty shootout.

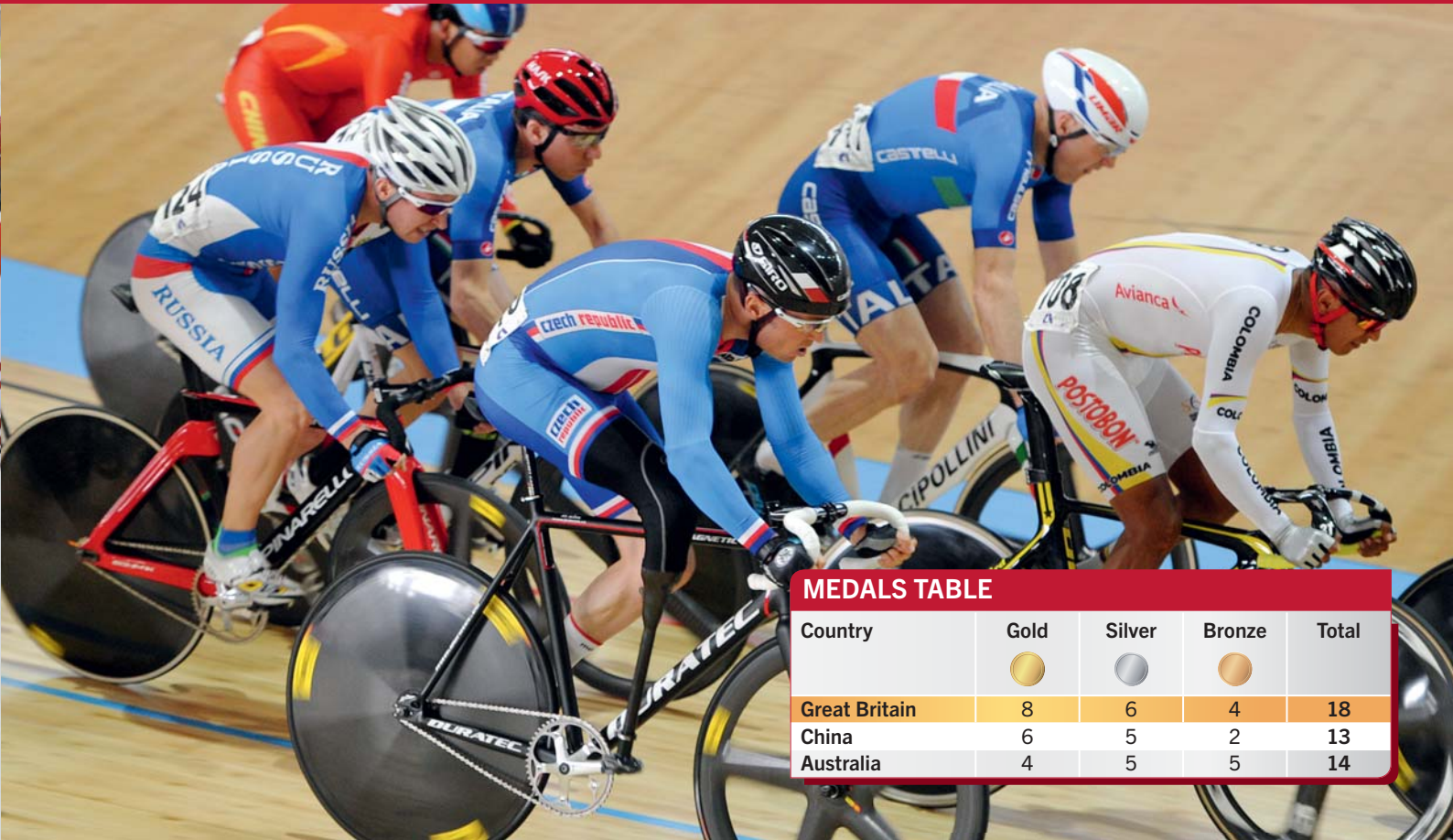
Aside from the action on the ice, a series of educational workshops took place to aid countries, players and coaches in their development as part of PyeongChang 2018's Actualising the Dream project.

 [www.paralympic.org/ice-sledge-hockey](http://www.paralympic.org/ice-sledge-hockey)



SPOTLIGHT ON:

**Thomas Schilcher**  
(AUT)

Scored the lone goal in penalties  
and was named player  
of the Game.



MEDALS TABLE

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
				
Great Britain	8	6	4	18
China	6	5	2	13
Australia	4	5	5	14

Cyclists try to break from the pack during the men's C4-5 scratch race final at the 2016 Para-Cycling Track World Championships in the Montichiari velodrome in Italy

Para-Cycling Track World Championships

17-20 March

Great Britain topped the medals table at the 2016 UCI Para-Cycling Track World Championships at the Montichiari velodrome in Italy. Amongst all their highlights was Megan Giglia, who won two gold medals, both in world-record breaking fashion.

The British rider took the women's C3 pursuit final, defeating Germany's reigning world champion Denise Schindler. During her qualifying race, Giglia clocked a world record of 4:6.756. Giglia then set another world record, this time in the women's C3 time trial (41.761) for the gold. She surpassed the previous world record of 42.955 held by the USA's Jamie Whitmore Cardenas, who finished third.

The Netherlands' Alyda Norbruis – who won all three of her events in the 2015 World Championships – left Montichiari with two medals: gold in the C2 time trial and silver in the individual pursuit.

The USA's Joseph Berenyi continued to stamp his authority in the men's C3 events, defending both his world titles in the individual pursuit and time trial.

 [www.uci.ch/para-cycling](http://www.uci.ch/para-cycling)

SPOTLIGHT ON:

**Megan Giglia**  
(GBR)

Won the women's C3 time trial  
and individual pursuit,  
breaking the world record  
in both.





## IPC Biathlon and Cross-Country Skiing World Cup

2 December 2015 – 20 March


Russia dominated the season as the World Cup series came to a close in Vuokatti, Finland. Russia topped the overall rankings in every category but the women’s cross-country sitting. The USA’s Oksana Masters closed the series with a triple victory in cross-country skiing races, to take home the women’s cross-country overall World Cup globe.

[www.paralympic.org/Nordic-skiing](http://www.paralympic.org/Nordic-skiing)

### OVERALL FINAL RANKINGS CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

#### WOMEN’S


 **Visually impaired:** Elena Remizova (RUS)


 **Standing:** Anna Milenina (RUS)

 **Sitting:** Oksana Masters (USA)

#### MEN’S

 **Visually impaired:** Stanislav Chokhlaev (RUS)


 **Standing:** Rushan Minnegulov (RUS)

 **Sitting:** Ivan Golubkov (RUS)

### OVERALL FINAL RANKINGS BIATHLON

#### WOMEN’S


 **Visually impaired:** Mikhailina Lysova (RUS)

 **Standing:** Anna Milenina (RUS)

 **Sitting:** Irina Guliaeva (RUS)

#### MEN’S

 **Visually impaired:** Nikolay Polukhin (RUS)

 **Standing:** Vladislav Lekomtsev (RUS)

 **Sitting:** Grigory Murygin (RUS)

Vladislav  
Lekomtsev

## IPC Alpine Skiing World Cup

15 January – 4 March

With her unbeaten run of 13 races, France’s Marie Bochet secured the overall World Cup for women’s standing. The 21-year-old – who also collected globes in slalom, giant slalom, downhill and super-G – was just one of the overall winners as the season wrapped up on 4 March in Aspen, USA.

Great Britain saw the rise of 17-year-old Menna Fitzpatrick, with guide Jen Kehoe, who took the overall globe in the women’s visually impaired, finishing ahead of last year’s winner the USA’s Danelle Umstead and guide husband Rob.


On the men’s side, Russia’s five-time world champion Aleksei Bugaev racked up enough points over the season to win the men’s overall standing ahead of Austria’s Markus Salcher, who was unbeaten in the super-G all season.


[www.paralympic.org/alpine-skiing](http://www.paralympic.org/alpine-skiing)

### OVERALL FINAL RANKINGS IPC ALPINE SKIING WORLD CUP

#### WOMEN’S

 **Visually impaired:** Menna Fitzpatrick (GBR)

 **Standing:** Marie Bochet (FRA)

 **Sitting:** Anna-Lena Forster (GER)

#### MEN’S

 **Visually impaired:** Giacomo Bertagnolli (ITA)

 **Standing:** Aleksei Bugaev (RUS)

 **Sitting:** Taiki Morii (JPN)

Marie Bochet

## IPC Snowboard World Cup

19 November 2015 – 18 March

The Netherlands closed the 2015-16 IPC Snowboard season on a high note, as a duo of Dutch athletes secured banked slalom globes with wins at the World Cup Finals in Trentino, Italy.


World champion Chris Vos (men’s SB-LL1) and Renske van Beek (women’s SB-UL) topped their respective podiums, as well as the overall titles.


Compatriot Bibian Mentel-Spee was stunning since returning to competition in February, as the world and Paralympic champion won the women’s SB-LL2 banked slalom in Trentino, to finish atop the overall rankings in her class.

[www.paralympic.org/snowboard](http://www.paralympic.org/snowboard)

### OVERALL FINAL RANKINGS IPC SNOWBOARD WORLD CUP

#### WOMEN’S


 **SB-UL:** Renske van Beek (NED)

 **SB-LL1:** Cecile Hernandez-Cervellon (FRA)

 **SB-LL2:** Bibian Mentel-Spee (NED)

#### MEN’S

 **SB-UL:** Patrick Mayrhofer (AUT)

 **SB-LL1:** Chris Vos (NED)

 **SB-LL2:** Matti Suur-Hamari (FIN)

Chris Vos

### ++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

**GOALBALL:** Host Algeria took double gold after their men and women’s teams won their respective finals, defeating Egypt on both occasions in the IBSA Goalball Africa Regional Championship finals on 5 March. The victories secured both Algerians teams a spot in September’s Paralympics.

**ATHLETICS:** Iran’s Ahmad Ojaghloou helped his country top the medals table at the IPC Athletics Asia-Oceania Championships (6- 12 March). Ojaghloou completed a hat-trick of wins in Dubai, UAE, with victories in the 100m, 200m and 400m T47. Iran totaled 23 golds, 10 silver and seven bronze. China finished runners up with 16 golds, nine silver and five bronze.

**POWERLIFTING:** Iran’s Paralympic and world champion Siamand Rahman lifted 296kg to set a new world record in the men’s over 107kg at the IPC Powerlifting World Cup in Dubai, UAE, on 19 February. It is the ninth time the Iranian has broken the world record and means he remains on course to reach his ultimate goal of 300kg. Rahman is expected to attempt the feat at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

**CANOE:** Curtis McGrath, Amanda Reynolds and Susan Seipel earned nominations to the Australian Paralympic Committee after winning their respective K1 200m finals at the National Championships in Perth on 3 March.

**SHOOTING:** Abdulla Sultan Alaryani put on a show for his home country, as he won three gold medals: the R7 (men’s 50m rifle three positions SH1), R1 (men’s 10m air rifle standing SH1) and the team event R3 (10m air rifle prone mixed SH1), and the IPC Shooting World Cup in Al Ain, UAE, in January.



**“I can promise you a life-changing experience that will make you re-evaluate what you believe is humanly possible.”**

## Rio 2016

To mark six-months-to-go on 7 March, IPC President Sir Philip Craven stressed the importance of the Rio 2016 Paralympics building on the success of previous Games to continue the Paralympic Movement's growth.

“It has been just over seven years since Rio was historically elected to host Latin America's first Paralympic Games in Copenhagen, Denmark. A lot of hard work has been undertaken since that decision, but now Rio is almost ready to stage what will be an unmissable Games,” said Sir Philip.

“The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all those who attend and a chance for the whole of South America to unite and celebrate a sporting festival that will transform the continent forever. Rio 2016 must show to the world that Beijing 2008 and London 2012 were not exceptions, but the norm.”

To build off the momentum from the previous Games, Sir Philip emphasised that Rio 2016 must aim to set new records in terms of spectator attendance, TV audiences, athletic performance and social legacy.

Four years ago, London 2012 sold a record 2.76 million tickets and attracted a cumulative global TV audience of 3.8 billion people. Sir Philip said he expects to reach a record cumulative TV audience of more than four billion people from Rio 2016. He is also confident the Brazilian public will turn out in force and throw their full support behind the Brazilian team and the other 170 plus competing countries.

“I can promise you a life-changing experience that will make you re-evaluate what you believe is humanly possible,” Sir Philip said. “You will see sport like never before and witness some of the best athletic performances ever delivered.”

“Over the next six months the excitement for the Paralympic Games will continue to build. The Olympic Park which is 95 per cent ready will transition from construction site to a giant theme park for sport. The newly erected venues will transform from empty shells to wonderful theatres where sporting memories that will be cherished forever will be created.”

[www.rio2016.com](http://www.rio2016.com)



## PyeongChang 2018

The PyeongChang 2018 Organising Committee (POCOG) celebrated two years to go until the Paralympic Winter Games with Paralympic Day on 9 March, followed by a week of festivities and promotions to raise awareness of the Games.

The public got a taste of ice sledge hockey, with an exhibition match held at the venue site. During the week, POCOG featured articles, photos and videos of athletes on its

website with the theme “Paralympic Week – Meet the Heroes 2.” A documentary programme was also aired, about Borami Seo, a Korean cross-country skier.

Korean ice sledge hockey player Seung-Hwan Jung was also appointed as PyeongChang 2018 ambassador.

**Agitos Foundation, POCOG partner**

The Agitos Foundation and POCOG will deliver a series of workshops and grants for equipment to develop winter para-sports

around the world as part of POCOG's Actualising the Dream project.

Five workshops for sport managers, coaches and athletes in alpine skiing, snowboard, cross-country skiing, biathlon, ice sledge hockey and wheelchair curling have been organised from January 2016. Funding will also be made available for NPCs to purchase equipment, helping them grow the next generation of athletes.

[www.pyeongchang2018.com](http://www.pyeongchang2018.com)

## Tokyo 2020

IPC CEO Xavier Gonzalez said the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games are on course to be the best ever. His remarks came following January's first ever IOC-IPC Project Review with the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee.

During the two-day meeting, productive discussions took place, covering a range of Games-related topics: competition venues, marketing, people management, the engagement strategy, the new emblems' selection process, sports, sustainability, accessibility and legacies.

“There are just over four years to go until the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games and I have to say they are the best prepared Organising Committee to date,” Gonzalez said.

“The enthusiasm and support we experienced when we first came here in January 2014 has further increased over the last two years ... We had two days of productive meetings in conjunction with the IOC and we are pleased with the outcomes. Tokyo 2020's commitment for the Paralympics is infectious and this is best illustrated by the support from the city and national government, corporate sector, media for the Games.”

Whilst in Tokyo, the IPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Kyodo News to serve as the host national news agency for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

[www.tokyo2020.com](http://www.tokyo2020.com)



## Beijing 2022

Following Beijing's election as host city of the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games in July 2015, the IPC held an Orientation Seminar with the Organising Committee (BOCOG) in January to share in-depth views and discussions regarding the Games.

At the seminar, the IPC delegates walked their BOCOG colleagues through the evolution of the Paralympic Winter Games; the history and governing structure of the IPC; and the IPC's vision, aspiration and values. The two sides also discussed various topics: the sports programme; accessibility; inclusion; branding; broadcasting; communication and promotion; media operations; requirements of different clients; legacy and milestone timings of the Paralympic Winter Games.

Zhang Jiandong, Vice President of BOCOG, said: “A successful 2022 Paralympic Winter Games need joint efforts from BOCOG and the IPC. The seminar marks a good start of the close co-operation between the two sides.”





OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

2-10 April	16-22 April	21-23 April	22-24 April	24 April	30 April - 3 May	30 April - 7 May	4-5 May
European Para Archery Championships	IWRF 2016 Paralympic Qualifier	Paralympic Qualification Regatta (rowing)	Swimming Rio 2016 Test Event	IPC Athletics Marathon World Cup	IPC Shooting World Cup	IPC Swimming European Open Championships	Aquece Rio International Goalball Men's Tournament
Challans, France	Paris, France	Gavirate, Italy	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	London, Great Britain	Szczecin, Poland	Funchal, Portugal	Rio, Brazil

17-19 May

Canoe World Championships



Nations have one last chance to secure qualifying spots ahead of canoe's Paralympic debut in Rio, as the 2016 World Championships take place in Duisburg, Germany

The 2016 World Championships in Duisburg, Germany, will be the last stop for athletes to capture Rio 2016 qualification slots, and also fine tune themselves ahead of their sport's Paralympic debut.

Host Germany will have plenty to cheer for. While Great Britain's Jeanette Chippington looks to defend the KL1 gold medal she won in Milan, Italy, the 2015 runner-up and home favourite Edina Muller is expected to contend.

Another German in Tom Kierey will also look to take advantage on home waters, as he aims to defend his KL3 world title. Expect Austria's Markus Swoboda to continue ruling the men's KL2.

Meanwhile, the men's KL1 will be an interesting match-up between two Brazilians. Defending world champion Luis Carlos Cardoso da Silva will try to prove why he is the best to represent his nation at Rio 2016 over four-time world champion and 2015 silver medallist Fernando Fernandes de Pádua. Note: a nation can enter only one athlete per medal event.

[www.canoeicf.com](http://www.canoeicf.com)

ONES TO WATCH



TOM KIEREY GERMANY  
EDINA MULLER GERMANY  
LUIS CARLOS CARDOSO BRAZIL

24-28 May

World Sailing Championships



The top sailors from around the world will get to fine tune their skills with three months to go until the Rio 2016 Paralympics

The top sailors hit the waters just six months after last year's World Championships in Melbourne, Australia.

Medal events in the single-person keelboat (2.4mR), two-person keelboat (SKUD18) and three-person keelboat (sonar) will be up for grabs in Medemblik, Netherlands.

In the sonar fleet, the Australian crew of Colin Harrison, Jonathan Harris and Russell Boaden will look to rebound from last year's disappointment when they finished runner-up to Great Britain's John Robertson, Hannah Stodel and Stephen Thomas.

Defending French world champion Damien Seguin will look to continue his strong form in the 2.6mR ahead of Rio 2016. But Germany's Heiko Kroeger, who took the 2015 World silver in the 2.4mR, is expected to contest.

Australia's Dan Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch are the clear favourites in the SKUD18.

[www.sailing.org](http://www.sailing.org)

ONE TO WATCH



DAMIEN SEGUIN FRANCE  
SKUD18 TEAM AUSTRALIA  
SONAR TEAM GREAT BRITAIN

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

3-9 May	17-22 May	24-29 May	26-28 May	10-16 June	11-20 June
2nd IBSA Euro Challenge Cup (football 5)	IWAS Wheelchair Fencing European Championships	Parapan American Championships (archery)	IWAS Americas Wheelchair Fencing Championships	IPC Athletics European Championships	Czech Target (archery, Paralympic qualifier)
Thessaloniki, Greece	Casale Monferrato, Italy	San Jose, Chile	São Paulo, Brazil	Grosseto, Italy	Nove Mesto nad Metuji, Czech Republic

2-4 June

Roland Garros



Japan's defending men's singles Paralympic champion Shingo Kunieda (right) has been in a slump but has time to regain his grip ahead of Rio 2016

Two Grand Slams will take place ahead of Rio 2016, with Wimbledon staging singles competitions for the first time.

Japan's Paralympic champion Shingo Kunieda, who went most of 2015 undefeated, has had a rough start to the 2016 season.

Although he failed to reach the Australian Open final, he will still be the player to beat on the Roland Garros clay in Paris, and the Wimbledon grass in London.

On home soil, Australian Open champion Gordon Reid of Great Britain could fancy his chances of a second Grand Slam title.

But Belgium's Joachim Gerard is a proven contender, having beaten Kunieda in the NEC Masters.

Dutchwoman Jiske Griffioen has the strongest grip in the women's singles, coming off an Australian Open victory. She will look to defend her title in Paris and win the first ever Wimbledon women's singles title.

[www.itftennis.com/wheelchair](http://www.itftennis.com/wheelchair)

ONES TO WATCH



GORDON REID GREAT BRITAIN  
JISKE GRIFFIOEN NETHERLANDS  
JOACHIM GERARD BELGIUM

7-10 July

Wimbledon

23-24 July

Triathlon World Championships



The 2016 ITU Para-Triathlon World Championships will be the last major stop for triathletes before their sport's Paralympic debut

This year, para-triathlon will have its own stand-alone World Championships.

One of the most competitive races in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, will be in the men's PT4 class. Canada's Stefan Daniel and Germany's Martin Schulz are expected to give a taster of what is to come at Rio. The two were neck-in-neck and both faced equipment issues at last year's Worlds in Chicago, USA, with Daniel winning the race by a narrow margin.

While the race does not offer points for Rio 2016, it will serve as a last stop for athletes to shake off any rust before heading to the Paralympics.

Great Britain's swimmer-turned-triathlete Lauren Steadman won every race she competed in 2015 in the women's PT4 class.

The women's PT2 class may feature another USA sweep, with Hailey Danisewicz leading.

[www.triathlon.org](http://www.triathlon.org)

ONES TO WATCH



STEFAN DANIEL CANADA  
HAILEY DANISEWICZ USA  
LAUREN STEADMAN GREAT BRITAIN



# ISSUE OF THE SEASON

What can be done to improve the classification system in swimming?

## Liz Johnson

Three-time British Paralympian who won gold in the 100m breaststroke SB6 at Beijing 2008.



I think the biggest challenge with the current swimming classification system is that it was devised almost 20, 30 years ago, when less complex impairments were involved. So it was very much swimmers with cerebral palsy, missing limbs or visual impairments. Now we have lots more different, intricate impairments that need to be in the system, but the testing procedures do not cover them.

In turn, there has been a lot of going back to the drawing board, and seeing what is it that makes an elite disabled athlete.

It is just now we are seeing people missing out on the system. They do not pass as being 'disabled enough.' It is frustrating for those in that sense. But that does not mean the athlete is not entitled to swim at the Paralympics or they are not 'disabled enough.' It just means the current system has not catered to them.

I think you get two types of athletes. A majority accept the system because you have to trust it; the classifiers know their stuff; they put you where you should be. And then you get some who feel they are in the wrong place, and they have been in the wrong place, and they have been hard-done. For me personally, I am not competitive in the freestyle, backstroke or even medley events. But it is not that the

women are in the wrong class. I am not in the wrong class. They are just more suited for that stroke or that distance than I am.

In able-bodied sports, like swimming, not everyone is as tall as Michael Phelps.

Some have a physical advantage, but the fact is there is just someone better than you.

In the end, I think the frustrations come with the fact that the system is quite old.

Times have changed. You will have an athlete who fits a certain classification bracket. But is he or she in the right bracket? The classification tests done are not specific enough to their impairment.

I think the system needs to be relooked at, and consider movement patterns and other components that affect your ability to be an elite swimmer.

In this day in age, there is more data out there and a lot more opportunity to see how far para-athletes in any sport especially swimming can go.

In the long term, I hope the swimming classification system will be transparent, robust and fit.



## Dr. Peter Van de Vliet

Medical and Scientific Director at the IPC.



Over time, with the actual system being in place since the early 1990s, swimming has evolved and we gained further knowledge of the determining factors of performances.

Every classification system is different because it is sport-specific. For swimming, we have to consider drag and propulsion, which define the optimal movement through the water for athletes with physical impairments. We have to look at orientation in the water for athletes with visual impairments, and athletes with intellectual impairments are challenged by pacing and complex movements such as turning.

We also know that start, clean swim length and turning each have a specific impact. And this must be looked at over four disciplines: freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly. In addition, (competitive) swimming is a sport that is accessible to a diverse range of impairments, and for each of them, the interaction with the determining factors must be properly considered.

With all that said, work is being done to improve the current swimming classification system.

It requires a systematic approach. First, you engage with the athletes and coaches to learn more about the accuracy of the actual system. In parallel, you analyse the existing scientific knowledge of the sport performance. With this information as basis, you then conduct research to

determine the impact of impairment on this performance.

This most likely requires the development of very specific measurement methods (e.g. loss of strength, range of movement, vision or cognition require different measurements). Once you have data on the above, you again engage athletes and coaches in the interpretation of the findings, ultimately resulting in a proposal of revised classification system. In a final stage, you have to re-train classifiers and plan for all athletes to be reclassified.

This is a process that takes time.

We do not know from the onset how a revised system will look like, nor do we start a review from the assumption that there should be a pre-set number of classes. We are aiming for an objective, reliable and transparent system that meets the requirement of the IPC Classification Code. We want people to be able to understand classification in swimming so that they can enjoy the competition.

We learn more about each sport every day, and training programmes are adjusted continuously to implement this knowledge. For that reason we must ensure that the system is based on the right parameters, as discussed above, and therefore the system must be revised from time to time.

However, once a system is in place, an athlete cannot be 'punished' for training very hard. In other words: one cannot train him or herself into another class. In a good classification system, effective training should only increase an athlete's competitive standing within their class.

Objective

Evolve

Classification system

Factors

Transparent

'disabled enough'

'punished'

Reliable

Robust

Physical impairment

Backstroke

Train

Swimming

Change

Classification

Sport-specific

Long term

Intellectual impairment

Butterfly

Old

Freestyle

Breaststroke

Michael Phelps

Revise

Visual impairment

Frustrations



I first skied when I was 17 years old on a family holiday. My mum thought it was a really bad idea because, obviously, I can't see. My dad was encouraging, and after the first lesson, everybody seemed to be happy enough.

I enjoyed how people would spend almost all day on the mountain skiing and taking a break for lunch. People just really enjoyed themselves, skiing with family and friends.

From the moment I started skiing competitively everyone on the circuit was really welcoming, which encouraged me to continue.

But getting more young visually impaired athletes, especially girls, into alpine skiing is a challenge. The barriers, however, can be overcome.

First, it's understandable why alpine skiing isn't a parents' top choice for their children who have disabilities, especially with visual impairments.

Parents are sometimes told such negative things in hospital and educational settings that their child won't be able to do this or that, which can come across as good advice. So, sometimes parents can be anxious about encouraging their children to do very active or physically demanding tasks, like skiing.

Another issue is that young girls tend to drop out of sport in their teens. It's particularly problematic when you add an impairment. Maybe that's why it's hard to find many girls who want to throw themselves down a mountain at high speeds.

To get more girls, and people generally, into skiing, I truly believe the coverage we got of the Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi in Great Britain in particular was crucial. It showed that there's so much more attention and interest in winter para-sports.



Kelly Gallagher's view

## Females in visually impaired skiing ...

### ... and how to increase participation.

A barrier was broken.

Suddenly, the idea that someone 'blind' can't ski at 40 miles per hour down a mountain was smashed.

It became obvious that females have the guts to do that as well.

My advice would be to join a programme and give it a try.

But once a young woman joins and begins skiing on the circuit, it's also so important for them to be supported, not just from family, friends and fellow skiers, but also from National Federations to IPC Alpine Skiing. We desperately need the coverage in order for our sport to be attractive to sponsors and it's in this area where the National Federations and media can help. In addition, we look to IPC Alpine Skiing to lead the way for the athletes to professionalise our sport, supporting us with great competitions and progress in classification.

I was skiing without radio communications to begin with, and my guide was just shouting the voice commands. Danelle Umstead, a visually impaired skier from the USA, then sold me a really cheap pair of radio comms, and I could hear my guides commands better.

It's a glimpse of the camaraderie you develop with other visually impaired skiers on the road.

If everyone works together, from coaches and National Federations to IPC Alpine Skiing and even the athlete community, we can continue to grow the field.

## Kelly Gallagher

Country: Great Britain

Athletic achievement:  
Sochi 2014 gold  
medallist in women's  
super-G visually  
impaired

It's important for people to be aware about what we're doing on the slopes.

It's important for them to understand that yes, females with visual impairments can and do ski.



# International Paralympic Committee

## WORLDWIDE PARALYMPIC PARTNERS

**VISA**  
**ottobock.**

**SAMSUNG**

**TOYOTA**

**Atos**

**Panasonic**

## INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

**Allianz**







## IPC Vision:

“To enable para-athletes  
to achieve sporting excellence and  
inspire and excite the world.”