

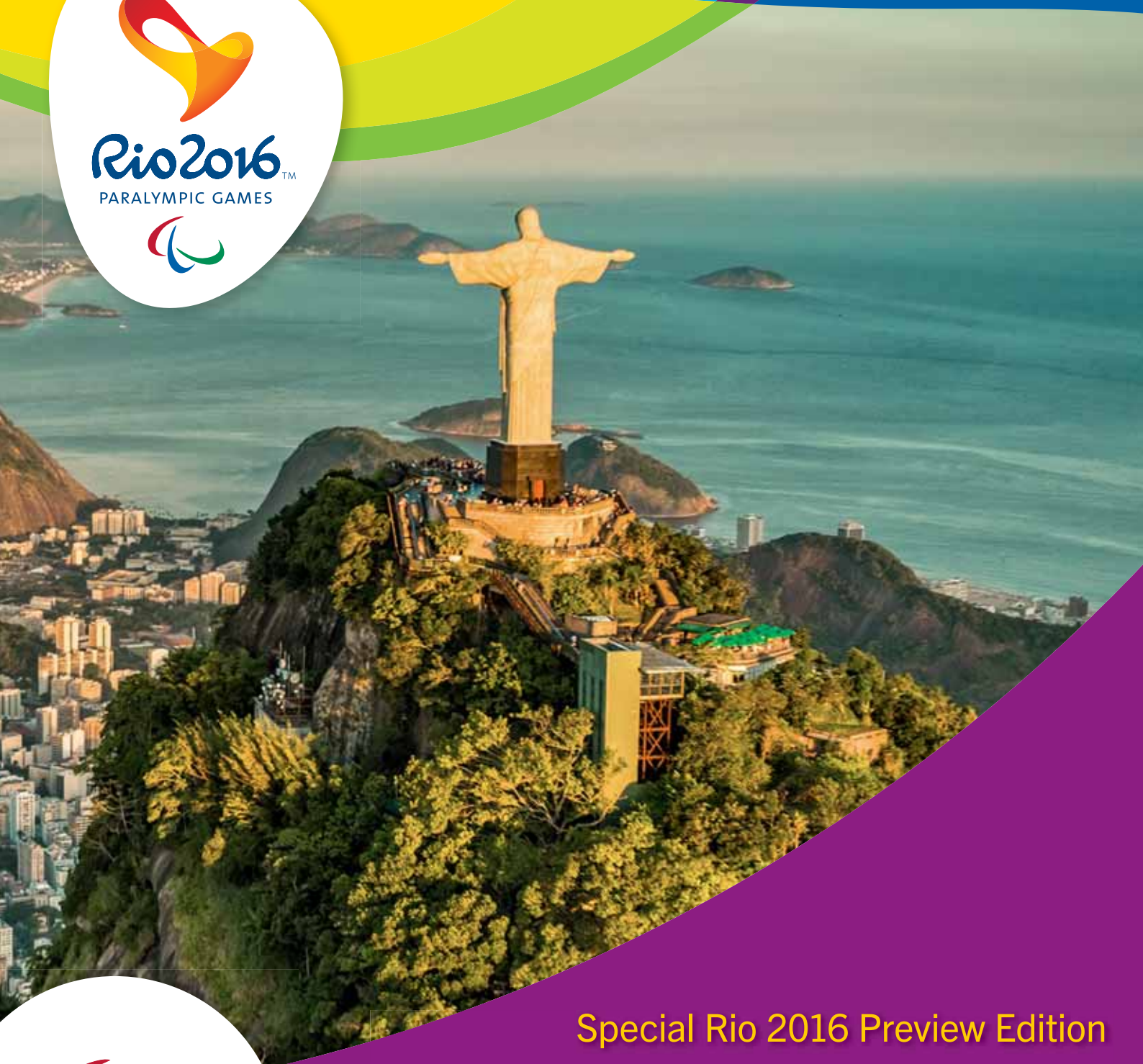
THE

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT

ISSUE NO. 2 | 2016

PARALYMPIAN

www.paralympic.org



Special Rio 2016 Preview Edition

THE EYES OF THE WORLD ON RIO
Latin America's first Paralympics

Ilham Zakiyev
Judoka

The fights.
The throws.
The pain.
The gain.
The best of luck Ilham.

It's time to harness
the energy within



From being blinded on the battlefield to becoming European and Paralympic judo champion, Ilham Zakiyev has done what most people would never have the inner strength to do – he harnessed the energy within and strove through a long rehabilitation to win two golds as a Paralympian. We are proud to have supported Ilham for the last five years and, along with the rest of Azerbaijan, we wish him the best of luck in Rio. After all what else do you say to a 6th Dan black belt? bp.com/IPC



“During Rio 2016 the world is going to witness incredible feats of skill, endurance and speed from athletes that many thought was unimaginable years ago.”

Dear Readers,

After more than seven years in the planning, Latin America's first Paralympic Games are almost upon us.

Before you know it, September will be here and the eyes of the world will be on Rio de Janeiro as billions tune in to watch Para athletes once again inspire and excite the world.

It is fair to say that in the lead-up to these Games, Rio 2016 has faced more challenging circumstances than any other Organising Committee previously. Despite this, I am fully confident the Games will be a tremendous success and, without doubt, the best ever in terms of athletic performance.

Over the last four-year cycle we have seen multiple world records broken and huge improvements across all sports. This is testament to the outstanding work of National Paralympic Committees and the International Federations and I cannot wait for the sporting action to begin.

It is amazing to see what the human body can achieve when tested to its absolute limits and I think that during Rio 2016 the world is going to witness incredible feats of skill, endurance and speed from athletes that many thought was unimaginable years ago.

It is these mind-blowing acts that will trigger those watching the Games on TV around the world to

change their views about what a person with an impairment can achieve in life.

Four years ago, one in three British adults – equivalent to 20 million people – changed their attitudes toward people with an impairment as a result of London 2012. With more countries than ever before set to broadcast the action from Brazil, I expect Rio 2016 to further cement the Paralympic Games' position as the world's number one sporting event for driving social inclusion.

In the coming weeks, in addition to concluding our preparations for Rio 2016, the IPC will be working hard with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to finalise our latest agreement, the principles of which we agreed in June.

This new long-term agreement, which will take us through to 2032 and extend our co-operation to a fourth decade, is hugely important for the whole Paralympic Movement. It will increase the visibility of the Paralympic brand and ensure the financial stability and long-term viability of the IPC, the Paralympic Games and the Paralympic Movement.

I hope to bring you more news about the agreement soon.

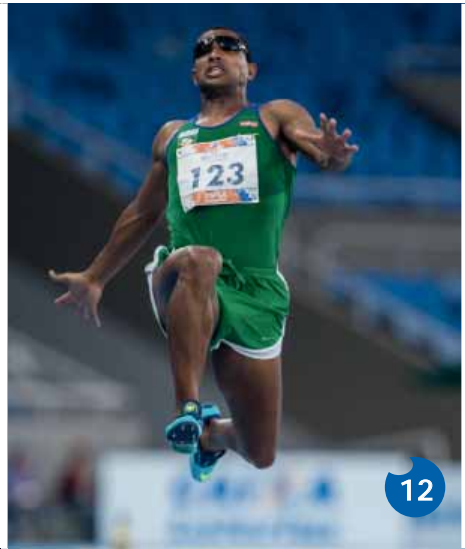
Enjoy the magazine and I hope to see you in Rio.

Sir Philip Craven MBE

Philip Craven

Sir Philip Craven, MBE
IPC President





06 PARALYMPIC NEWS

Find out about a new agreement between the IPC and IOC, as well as the latest on Rio 2016 broadcast coverage from around the world.

12 RIO 2016: ONE GIANT LEAP FOR THE AMERICAS

After 20 years of gradual growth, what impact will Latin America's first Paralympic Games have on the region?

38 FUTURE GAMES

Rio 2016 revealed the medals for the Games, and PyeongChang 2018's mascot and Tokyo 2020 emblems were unveiled.

44 FINAL WORD

Yiannis Exarchos, CEO of Olympic Broadcast Services, shares his perspective on the evolution of Paralympic broadcasting.

10 #ASKANATHLETE

Amanda Reynolds and Anne Dickins are set to face off in canoe's Paralympic debut.

20 ATHLETE PROFILES

Get to know the athletes going for gold at Rio 2016.

40 UPCOMING EVENTS

A handy schedule planner of the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, and regional Championships in the newest Paralympic sports of badminton and taekwondo.

11 DIGITAL BONUS

Athletes took over the @Paralympics Instagram account to share their behind-the-scenes training pictures for Rio 2016.

32 WORLD SPORT ROUND-UP

A look back at the World Championships in boccia and sailing, plus a rundown on regional competitions.

42 ISSUE OF THE SEASON

Following the disqualification of an athlete for showing his Olympic rings tattoo, Scott Reardon and Alexis Schaefer give their views on why it is important to promote the Paralympic brand.

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
Contributor: Hernan Goldzycher
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:
marchello74@123rf.com (p. 1/46), IPC (p. 3/24/43), Getty Images (p.4/5/7/10/12/13/14/16/17/19/21/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/33/34/35/42), NPC Ecuador (p.5), 123rf.com (p. 6/7/8/9/11/15/17/36/37/42/43), Göran Strand (p. 6), Australian Paralympic Committee (p. 10), instagram (p. 11), Zee Que (p. 11), youtube (p. 13), Luc Percival (p.17), Francois Nel (p. 21), Detlev Seyb (p. 22), Rowing Australia (p. 22), Peter SpurrierIntersport Images (p.22), Jacques Vapillon (p. 23), Peter Karreman (p. 25), NPC Iran (p. 25), Caifeng Yang (ITTF) (p. 26), Morten Olsen (p. 26), Matthew Stockman (p. 27), Adam Pretty (p. 28), Augusto Bizzi (p. 29), NPC Poland (p. 29), Canadian Paralympic Committee (p. 30), Laura Godenzi (p. 31), BISFed (p. 32), ICF (p. 33), Delta Lloyd (p. 34/35), Tennis Foundation (p. 35), istockphoto.com (p. 36/37/42/43); Bill Wippert (p. 36), Pedro Vasconcelos (p. 36), DTU Jo Kleindl (p. 37), Alex Ferro (p. 38/40), Divulgação Porto Maravilha (p. 38), PyeongChang 2018 (p. 39), Rio 2016 (p. 40), Badminton England (p. 41), BWF (p. 41), Alan Spink (p. 41), WTF (p. 41), Olympic Broadcasting Services (p. 44)

IOC, IPC outline principles for new agreement

The IOC and the IPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the principles for a new long-term agreement between the organisations on 14 June.

The new agreement will run through to 2032 and build on the current partnership and co-operation agreements that were signed prior to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games was the first time the IOC and IPC outlined the principles to further relationships between the two organisations.

In 2001, a co-operation agreement was signed to protect the organisation of the Paralympic Games and secure the practice of “one bid, one city.” It re-affirmed that the Paralympic Games from 2008 would always take place shortly after the Olympic Games, using the same sports venues and facilities. From the 2012 bid process onwards, the host city chosen to stage the Olympic Games would also be obliged to host the Paralympics.

Since then several agreements were signed to strengthen the relationship between the IOC and the IPC.

‘Ostersund Declaration’ to strengthen winter Para sports



It is hoped April's meeting will act as a catalyst to growing winter Para sports.

Representatives of 34 National Paralympic Committees (NPCs), as well as National and International Federations made a historic pledge to strengthen winter Para sports around the world following a three-day workshop in Ostersund, Sweden, held 22-24 April.

The ‘Ostersund Declaration’ outlines a number of measures needed to improve athlete development, talent identification and recruitment which all organisations agreed to take forward.

The NPCs and National Federations (NFs) present agreed to develop athlete pathways by building partnerships with governments, Olympic Federations and competition organisers, healthcare, education, business and research institutions to provide opportunities for athletes from grassroots to high performance levels.

In support, International Federations (IFs) agreed to expand their competition calendars, seek opportunities to hold multi-sport events and initiate and promote research and development in areas such as classification so that NFs can grow their athlete numbers.

The IPC’s role will be to join all organisations together in regular, active dialogue, develop tools to support IFs and NFs build their organisational capacities and take the lead in building a 10-year plan based on the Ostersund Declaration. This includes organising a multi-sport event where the world’s best competitors can compete alongside young and new Para athletes, and using growing media interest in winter Para sports to leverage commercial opportunities.

In agreeing to the declaration, all parties have committed to putting it to the relevant governing bodies and NPCs and NFs not present for formal endorsement by the end of 2016.

Agitos Foundation launches documentary films

The development arm of the IPC the Agitos Foundation launched a series of video stories documenting eight athletes from Latin America on their journey to Rio 2016. The release of the first film on 21 June also launched the social media hashtag #TeamAgitos; this aims to raise awareness of the Agitos Foundation by encouraging sport fans, athletes and partners to join the team for developing Para sport by showing their support and sharing their own updates on social media.

The athletes featured have all benefitted from training and expertise provided during the Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions, which aim to improve coaching and Para sport standards as part of the legacy of Latin America’s first Paralympic Games.

The short documentary films will be published on the Agitos Foundation’s Facebook and Twitter each week. A final film for each athlete will be revealed before September’s Games.

Athletes being featured:

- Darwin Castro, athletics, Ecuador
- Maria Paula Barrera, swimming, Colombia
- Luis Herazo, athletics, Colombia
- Omara Durand, athletics, Cuba
- Yunidis Castillo, athletics, Cuba
- Cecilia de Araujo, swimming, Brazil
- Eliezer Gabriel, athletics, Mexico
- Washington Do Nascimento, athletics, Brazil

➤ www.agitosfoundation.com

➤ www.facebook.com/AgitosFoundation

➤ www.twitter.com/Agitos



Record candidates up for IPC Athletes’ Council elections

A record 22 athletes will run for election for the IPC Athletes’ Council at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

Elections for the six summer sport representatives on the Athletes’ Council will take place between 5 and 16 September, in the Proud Paralympian area of the Athletes’ Dining Hall in the Paralympic Village.

The Athletes’ Council acts as the liaison between athletes and decision-makers and influences how Paralympic sport and the Movement grow and develop. Accredited athletes are encouraged to vote in the elections to ensure their voices are heard and their sport and regions are represented.

➤ A candidate brochure is available on www.paralympic.org



++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

ANTI-DOPING: The IPC clarified that the IAAF’s decision on 17 June does not affect the participation of the Russian Para athletics team at the Rio 2016 Paralympics.

The Russian Para athletics team train as part of the Russian Paralympic Committee and have no association with the All-Russia Athletics Federation (ARAF).

Since the allegations were first made regarding ARAF, the IPC has been in dialogue with the Russian Paralympic Committee to establish what relationship and interactions, if any, they have with ARAF.

Currently there is no evidence that the anti-doping issues within ARAF extend to the Russian Paralympic Committee or Russian Para athletics team.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Abu Dhabi, UAE, will stage the 18th IPC General Assembly between 7 and 8 September 2017, when the elections for the IPC Governing Board, including a new President, will take place.

TABLE TENNIS: History will be made at the Rio 2016 Olympics, as two Paralympians – Poland’s Natalia Partyka and Australia’s Melissa Tapper – will also be playing in the Olympic table tennis event.

BROADCASTING: WOWOW, Japan’s leading premium pay TV broadcaster, will start airing its first series of documentaries “Who I Am” this October. They will feature Brazilian swimmer Daniel Dias, Australian swimmer Ellie Cole, Dutch sprinter Marlou van Rhijn, Brazilian football 5-a-side player Ricardo Alves, Bosnia and Herzegovina sitting volleyball player Safet Alibasic, Japanese wheelchair tennis player Shingo Kunieda, Iranian archer Zahra Nemati and US wheelchair racer Tatyana McFadden.

LAUREUS WORLD SPORTS AWARD: Daniel Dias garnered the honour for Sports-person of the Year with a Disability.

PARTNERSHIPS: World-wide Paralympic Partner Visa, the payments technology company, extended its portfolio of global Paralympic rights to include Paralympics New Zealand.

ALPINE SKIING: The 2017 IPC Alpine Skiing World Championships, the biggest Para alpine skiing event outside of the Paralympic Winter Games, will take place in Tarvisio, Italy, from 22-31 January.

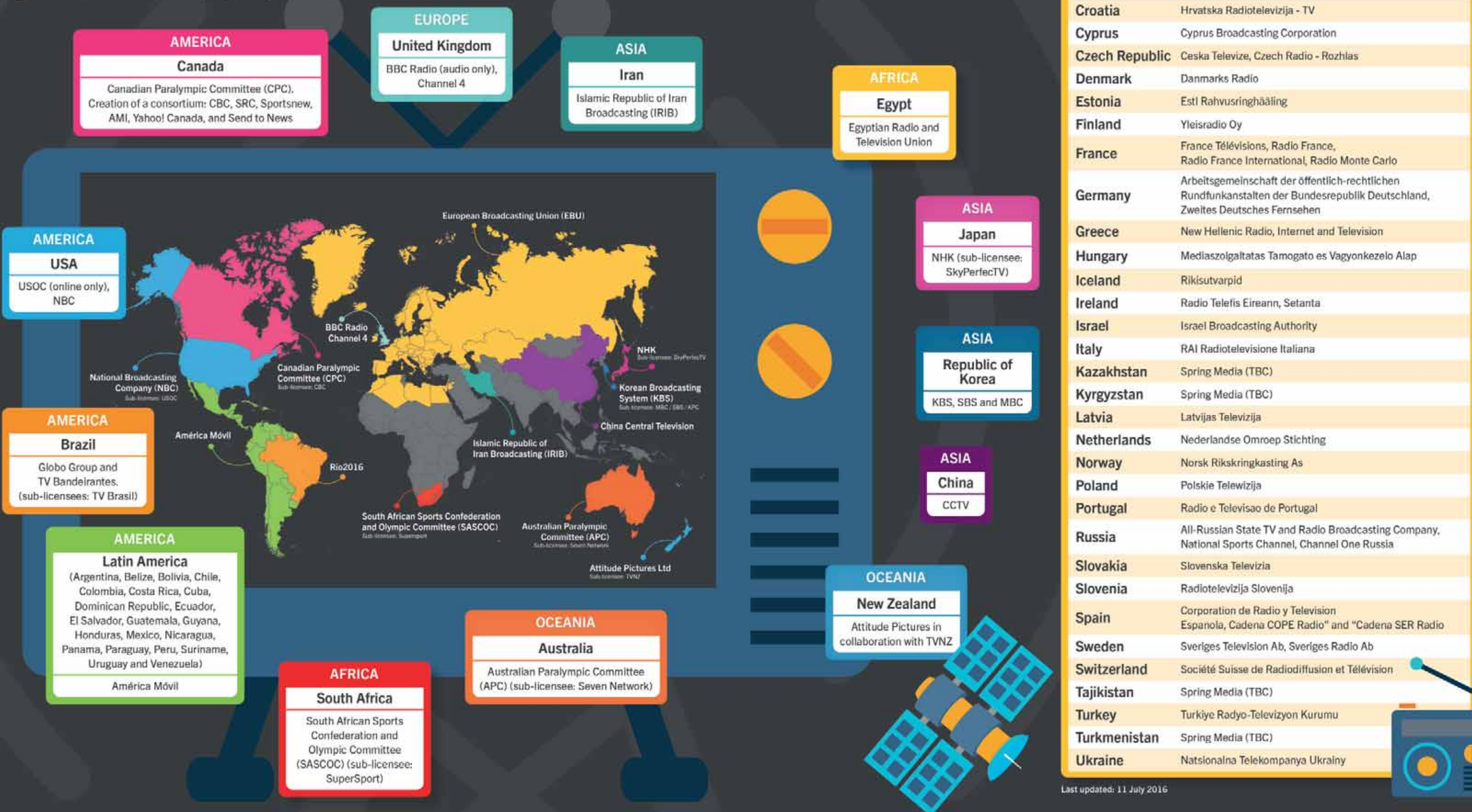
POWERLIFTING, SWIMMING: Mexico City will jointly host the 2017 World Championships for powerlifting and swimming. The event will take place between 30 September and 7 October.



Where to watch the Rio 2016 Paralympics in your country

Here's a list of TV and radio stations who have the rights to show the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games on their channels. In addition, paralympic.org will be live streaming more than 800 hours of coverage from 13 sports.

► For the latest information visit www.paralympic.org/watch-rio-2016



#AskAnAthlete

With canoe making its Paralympic debut in Rio, find out what the top two athletes in the women's KL3 have to say about their sport, their rivalry and more.

Anne Dickins
@Anne200solo



VS.



Amanda Reynolds
@AUSParalympics

Simply believing I could do it. Was it possible to change an injured, ex-endurance mountain biker into a sprint paddler in four years? There were many "self-imposed barriers" that I subconsciously put up, which I then had to remove.

What was the biggest challenge when taking up the sport?

My biggest challenge at the start was keeping my stump under control. It took a while to get my brain wired as to how to control it, as it wavered around all over the place when I was paddling, which affected my balance and drive. I think I have tamed it now though.

Honestly, to come away with a massive smile on my face. The journey has been much tougher than I could have imagined, and I have got so much out of it because of that. Clearly we are all hoping that I podium, and if that happens it will be the icing and the cherry on the cake.

What are your expectations for Rio?

I want to say gold, as that is where my focus lies but, in reality, I want to have a good solid race... as in get a good start, be strong and consistent through the middle and finish off well.

Relieved and happy that against all odds I had actually performed through the seasickness and qualified the boat. Glad that the season was over and that I still had areas to improve on. And yes, pleased that I no longer had a target on my back but also disappointed that I was no longer world champion.

You left the 2015 World Championships feeling ...?

Amazed and ecstatic (after winning gold).

She inspires me with her determination and is on a very steep improvement curve which makes her one to watch in Rio. One thing however that I'll never be able to beat her on is hair colour. Rumour has it that she's going green and gold for Rio.

What makes your opponent tough to beat?

Anne and I are very similar in times, so it just depends who gets it all right on the day as to who comes out on top.

Nationally I think we could benefit from developing more entry-level Para canoe programmes in our regional clubs.

How can the sport continue developing after Rio?

I think the key to the sports development is the up-and-comers. It's a relatively young sport in Australia compared to Europe but is slowly getting recognised.

Internationally it would be great if more nations participated in Para canoe. Maybe I'm a dreamer, but I would love to see the top nations and even individual athletes set up mentor and buddy systems for nations without Para canoe.

I would like to see a pool of paddlers develop at a national level with cooperation from all the states with a uniform international path as the goal.

Rio 2016
Paralympic Games
Canoe events
14-15 September
Lagoa Stadium
www.canoeicf.com



How to be a super-fan at the Rio 2016 #Paralympics

Watch the live stream on **Paralympic.org** or the rightsholding broadcaster in your territory.

The IPC will be live-streaming 13 sports and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies for almost 800 hours.



Share our stories — all the action will be covered by a team of journalists on **Paralympic.org/news**

#Paralympics



Use **#Paralympics** on all your social media posts.

Help us get it trending globally!



Insta-takeovers

In May, we offered some athletes the opportunity to take over @Paralympics on Instagram.

Take a look at how they are progressing on the **#RoadtoRio**



RIO 2016

One giant leap for the Americas

The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games will not just be a stepping stone for the development of Para sport in the Americas but a measure of how far the Paralympic Movement has come in the region over the last 20 years.

Atlanta 1996 was the last time the Paralympics were held in the Americas. Back then, 654 athletes representing 18 National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) from the

region took part in the Games, with just two countries – hosts USA and neighbours Canada – making the top 20 of the medals table.

This September, more countries and athletes than ever before will compete in Latin America's first Paralympic Games with the likes of hosts Brazil and Cuba expected to join Canada and the USA amongst the world's elite Para sport nations.

Brazil's Mateus Evangelista Cardoso will be aiming to win gold at Latin America's first Paralympic Games





Camila Haase Quiros of Costa Rica trains in the warm up pool during the Paralympic Swimming Tournament

Starting point

Much of the Paralympic Movement’s growth in the Americas in the last 20 years can be put down to the formation of the Americas Paralympic Committee (APC) in 1997 and the creation of the Parapan American Games two years later.

Formed with the intention of developing Para sport in the region after the Atlanta Games, one of the APC’s first objectives was to establish more NPCs.

“When I was first appointed APC President in 1997, there were not many NPCs. Most of the members of the regions were federations for visually impaired or wheelchair athletes, or in some cases the government,” explained Jose Luis Campo, who is currently serving his second spell as APC President after re-election in 2013.

“By creating and developing NPCs, our aim was to form organisations that could manage and develop Para sport in their respective countries. From there it took many years of hard work to raise aware-

ness and to train professional staff in each country.”

In 1999, the first Parapan American Games were held in Mexico City, attracting 1,000 athletes from 18 countries. Since then, the event has taken place every four years, developing a strong track record for bleeding young talent who have gone on to compete at the Paralympic Games and win medals.

One athlete who followed this path is Cuba’s most successful Paralympian Yunidis Castillo. In 2003 as a talented 16-year-old sprinter, she won two gold medals in the second edition of the Parapans in Mar del Plata, Argentina.

“The Parapans were very important for my career because they gave me an energy boost to later reach the Paralympics,” said Castillo, who has won five Paralympic and nine world titles.

“Back then, I had to run only one race because there were few athletes competing, whilst in the following Parapans there were many more. The infrastructure and organ-

isation has improved a lot too,” added the 29-year-old who will compete in her third Paralympics this September.

Rio 2007 marked the first time the Parapans were held in the same city as the Pan American Games, a format that was formalised in January 2015 when the APC signed a collaboration agreement with the Pan American Sports Organisation (PASO).

The most recent edition was held in Toronto, Canada, in 2015 and featured 1,600 athletes from 28 countries. They raised the bar in many areas.

“In the earlier editions of the Games, NPCs had to pay a registration fee of around USD 300-700 to cover the costs of the hotel, transportation and food, whilst in Toronto they got everything paid by the Organising Committee,” said Campo.

“The growing strength in depth of the competing countries was also highlighted with 18 of the 28 competing countries winning a medal. The Games showed great progress.”

PARTICIPATION OF COUNTRIES IN THE AMERICAS AT EACH PARALYMPIC GAMES



Developing NPCs and events

Since the Atlanta 1996 Paralympics, 11 new NPCs have been founded in the Americas, with St. Vincent and the Grenadines the most recent IPC members in 2015.

In total there are now 30 NPCs in the region and 29 of them – 11 more than 20 years ago in Atlanta – are set to compete at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

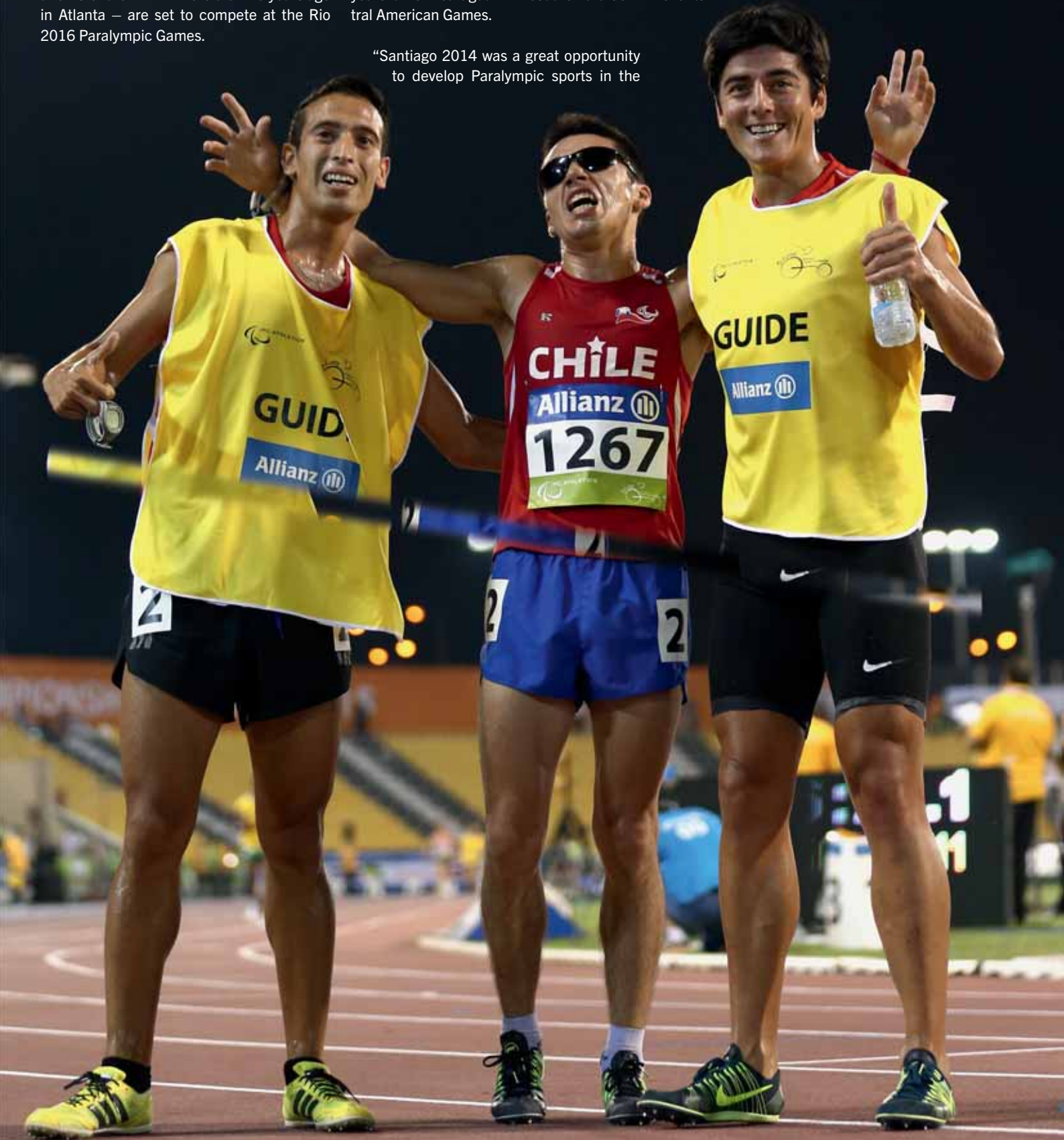
With many NPCs still at an early stage of development, greater international competition opportunities are required for those countries whose athletes are not ready to compete in major world or regional events.

To help, Santiago, Chile, staged the first Para South American Games in 2014, and in two years' time Nicaragua will host the Para Central American Games.

“Santiago 2014 was a great opportunity to develop Paralympic sports in the

region and to get more people into sports,” said Chile’s athletics London 2012 gold medallist Cristian Valenzuela.

Ricardo Elizalde, President of NPC Chile, agreed: “The Para South American Games created an infrastructure legacy and a positive incentive to organise more sporting events.”



ATHLETES FROM THE AMERICAS WHO GOT THEIR STARTS AT THE PARAPAN AMS AND ARE EXPECTED TO SHINE IN SEPTEMBER’S PARALYMPIC GAMES

Yunidis Castillo

Age: 29
Sport: Athletics
2 x world titles



Gustavo Fernandez

Age: 22
Sport: Wheelchair tennis
1 x Grand Slam singles
1 x Grand Slam doubles



Carlos Serrano

Age: 17
Sport: Swimming
1 x world title



Jarryd Wallace

Age: 26
Sport: Athletics
2 x world titles



361°

Exclusive Official Apparel Provider of the IPC

Supporting Your Passion With Passion

Developing a new generation

In addition to greater competition opportunities, a platform was needed to get more youngsters with an impairment involved in Para sports in the region.

This prompted the first Youth Parapan American Games in Barquisimeto, Venezuela, in 2005, an event that has taken place every four years since.

Colombia's world champion swimmer Carlos Serrano was 14-years-old when he won four golds in the most recent edition in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2013.

"The Youth Parapans was my first international competition and gave my career a huge boost," said Serrano, who will make his Paralympic debut this September.

"My first contact with Para sports was at 13-years-old, when I took part in a course to learn how to swim and met coach Luis Carlos Calderon Fuentes.

"He had been working in Para swimming for some time and saw potential in me."

The Agitos Foundation, the IPC's development arm, has also supported several programmes and workshops in Latin America, first in the lead-up to Toronto 2015 and most recently for Rio 2016.

The programmes have helped to raise awareness of Para sports, train coaches and identify promising athletes. In June, the Agitos Foundation launched a series of videos showcasing the incredible stories of eight athletes who have benefitted from the Agitos Foundation's work on their journey to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

"We have trained more than 20 regional leaders who later multiplied their knowledge in their countries," said Georg Schlachtenberger, Director of the Agitos Foundation.

"A significant number of NPCs from the Americas have applied for our Grant Support Programme and we have delivered programmes in different countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, Chile, Peru and Ecuador.

"Brazil has played a leading role, offering its support in terms of funding and experts. They know that if they want to improve, they need competitive neighbouring countries.

"Cuba has been helping the Agitos Foundation a lot to develop the Caribbean. We

can expect many more countries from that region competing at Sao Paulo 2017 and, further ahead, Tokyo 2020."

Platform for growth

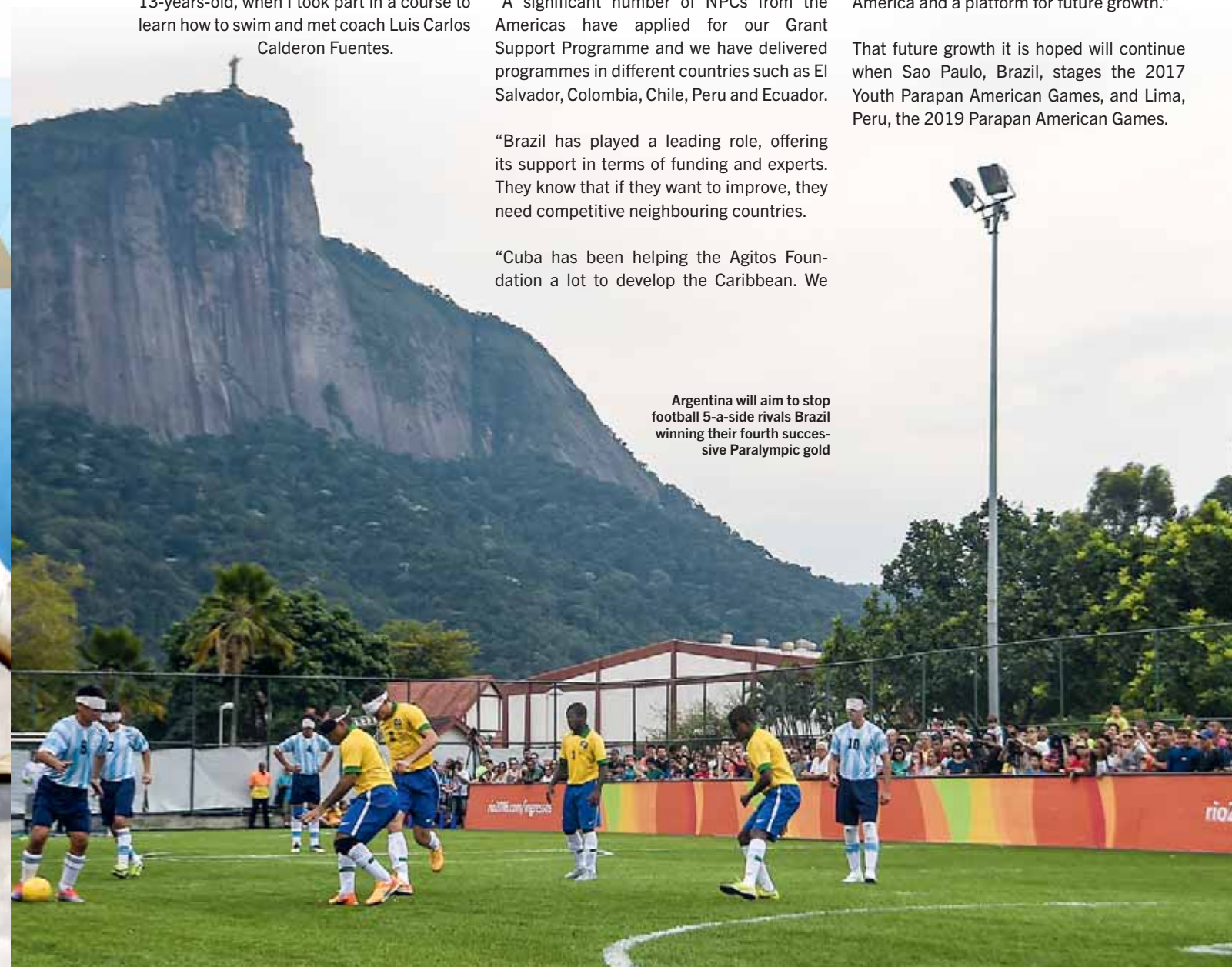
Close to 1,000 athletes from the Americas will compete in the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, with the majority having benefitted from the structures and pathways that were developed post Atlanta 1996.

With the Games set to receive more broadcast and media coverage than ever before in the Americas thanks to likes of American Movil, NBC, CBC and Globo, there are high hopes about what the Games will achieve.

"Rio 2016 will help boost Para sports in the region as never before and get more sponsors thanks to the Games broadcasting," Campo said. "Rio 2016 will be the stepping stone to a more inclusive future in Latin America and a platform for future growth."

That future growth it is hoped will continue when Sao Paulo, Brazil, stages the 2017 Youth Parapan American Games, and Lima, Peru, the 2019 Parapan American Games.

Argentina will aim to stop football 5-a-side rivals Brazil winning their fourth successive Paralympic gold





Athlete Profiles

Following on from the last edition of The Paralympian, we profile the 11 remaining sports that will be contested at Rio 2016.



Athletics

| | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|
| | | | |
| China | 33 | 29 | 24 |
| Russia | 19 | 12 | 5 |
| Great Britain | 11 | 7 | 11 |



Yohansson Nascimento (BRA)

He is the reigning world and Paralympic champion in the 200m T46, but the 100m has eluded Nascimento since his nightmare race four years ago.

> You pulled your hamstring in the middle of the 100m final at London 2012 but still limped to the finish line. How did you do that?

I knew I had a good mark and chances of winning the race. However, after getting injured everything changed. It was a bit frustrating, but I wanted to overcome myself and make it to the end of those 100m.

> When did you decide you wanted to propose to your girlfriend Talita during the London 2012 Paralympics?

I decided it one day before running the 200m T46. I wanted to give her that nice surprise, which motivated me even more to win that race.

> What are your aims for Rio 2016?

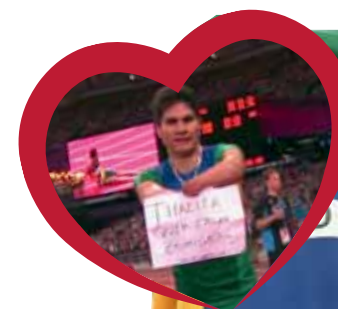
I want to achieve the best results of my life and win even more medals to add to the gold, the two silvers (4x100m and 400m) and the bronze (100m) Paralympic medals I already have.

> What does it mean for Brazil to host the first Paralympic Games in Latin America?

There is much happiness for the Brazilian people to be able to organise one of the biggest sporting events in the world. Brazil will receive the whole world with open arms.

> What do you think about having been named after former car racer Stefan Johansson?

I like my name very much. Besides, I think that having been named after a Formula 1 car racer is pretty cool. We both share something: the speed. He is a speed driver and I am a sprinter.



QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Olympic Stadium & Fort Copacabana
- Dates:** 8-18 September
- Medal events:** 177
- Athletes:** 1,100
- Games debut:** Rome 1960
- Classification**
Athletes are grouped into classes according to how much their impairment impacts their event-specific performance.

In each class, the first digit indicates the nature of an athlete's impairment, and the second indicates the amount of functional ability the athlete has. The lower the second number, the greater the impact the impairment has on the athlete's ability to compete. A T or an F before each two-digit number shows whether the athlete is competing in a track or a field event.

Classes 11-13: athletes with a visual impairment
Class 20: athletes with an intellectual impairment
Classes 31-38: athletes with co-ordination impairments, e.g. due to cerebral palsy, with classes 31 to 34 using a wheelchair to compete
Classes 40-46: athletes with loss of limb or limb deficiency, who compete standing
Classes 51-54: wheelchair racers
Classes 51-58: field athletes who throw from a seated position

ipc-athletics.com

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 to learn about each sport's history, read athlete stories and even watch video clips about each sport.

ONES TO WATCH



OMARA DURAND (CUB)
Clocked the fastest 100m time ever by a female Para athlete in 2015 in her first major event back since the birth of her daughter.



MARKUS REHM (GER)
Became the only athlete to break eight metres with a world record leap of 8.40m at the 2015 World Championships.



MARLOU VAN RHIJN (NED)
Sprinted to a 100m world record 12.79 in May and now targets the much coveted Paralympic gold in that event.

Rowing



Moran Samuel (ISR)

Samuel showed vast improvement since finishing fifth at London 2012. After winning her first world title, the ASW1x rower now targets her first Paralympic gold.

> You had a very successful 2015 season. What has changed since London 2012?

After 2013, I felt I was not fulfilling my own potential and felt we needed to get more knowledge and change something. Together with the Israeli Paralympic Committee and the Daniel Rowing Centre, we decided to hire a new coach in rowing for us. We hired Paola Grizzetti who had 10 years of Para rowing experience.

She changed my technique, she changed the way I sat in my boat, really fitted it to my needs, my physical body, and furthermore the training programme was adjusted to our needs as Para athletes.

I also got sponsors. It was rare that I was able to get sponsors here in Israel. That helped me work less (as a physical therapist) and train more.

> What was your first Paralympics like?

I tried to stay focused and said to myself, 'Listen this is like any other competition.' But that is not true. You feel it. It is something in the air. I really felt like I was in the biggest event in sports.

Also, being able to go and watch other sports was inspiring. It helped me because it was six years after my injury. Watching all the other athletes with their disabilities and feeling normal was something that was very important for me mentally.

> You and your partner had your first child in February. How is it being a mother and an athlete?

I have been working for Rio the last three-and-a-half years, and my partner has been working on having a baby for three-and-a-half years. We did not know when to expect it to happen. Once she got pregnant, we knew it was going to be a challenge,

but we were very committed to both journeys. ...The first month was harder. But he sleeps better (now).

> What are your goals in Rio?

First of all, I hope to have fun. This is one of the reasons why I am an athlete. And also, it is important for me to cross the finish line in Rio and ask myself 'Did you do your best?' ... If that answer is yes, it does not matter if I get gold, silver or bronze. But I am aiming for gold, of course.

QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Lagoa Stadium



Dates:
9-11 September



Medal events:
4



Athletes:
96




Games debut:
Beijing 2008



Classification
Paralympic rowing has three sport classes for athletes with different functional abilities, depending on what they primarily use to accelerate the boat.
AS: arms and shoulders
TA: trunks, arms and shoulders
LTA: legs, trunks, arms and shoulders

worldrowing.com



| | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| China | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Ukraine | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Great Britain | 1 | 0 | 0 |



Sailing



Heiko Kroeger (GER)

The 50-year-old won May's 2.4 Norlin OD world title, proving to be a threat to French favourite Damien Seguin for Paralympic gold.

> What did it mean to you to win gold at Sydney 2000?

It was very special because it was my first Paralympic title. The event in general was outstanding. We received a warm welcome and people in the streets talked to us the athletes, and asked where we came from. I won the regatta one race before the last one. It was hard and I was nervous in the beginning, but it worked well in the end and I was very happy.

barrier for me to remain among the top competitors.

> Please explain what your sailing project is about.

It is called 'Sailing Team Germany Inclusive Academy.' We work with different sailing clubs from the country, helping them run a proper sporting programme, to find sponsors and promote themselves. We want every disabled sailor to have the same opportunities as an able-bodied one.

Schuemann. Have you ever had the chance to meet him?

Yes, and I know him very well by now. He is not just a two-time Olympic champion but an amazing person. That is actually what I admire in him the most, how he acts. He is an example of sportsmanship, which might not be so easy to find these days.

> How important was it for you to win the World Championships ahead of Rio 2016?

It was really good to be able to win this regatta, my eighth world title in total. I had won the last one in 2014, while last year I finished second. It is great for my self-confidence. The other sailors now know that age is no

> You once said you look up to Germany's Olympic sailor Jochen

QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Marina da Gloria



Dates:
12-17 September



Medal events:
3



Athletes:
80



Games debut:
Atlanta 1996



Classification
Sailors with a physical or visual impairment compete in sports classes 1-7, with 1 point being the least functionally able.
2.4 Norlin OD is open to all athletes meeting the minimum eligibility criteria.
SKUD: In the two-person team, one athlete has to be female and one must be a 1 or 2 pointer.
Sonar: the total classification points have to add up to 14 or less

sailing.org



| | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| Great Britain | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Netherlands | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Australia | 1 | 0 | 0 |

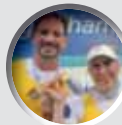
ONES TO WATCH



ERIK HORRIE (AUS)
Since taking silver in London 2012, Horrie has dominated the AS men's class, winning the world titles from 2013-2015.



GREAT BRITAIN'S LTA MIXED COXED FOUR TEAM
The world champion crew hold a world best time of 3:13.76.



AUSTRALIA'S TA MIXED DOUBLE SCULLS TEAM
Finished fifth at London 2012, but Gavin Bellis and Kathryn Ross have since won every major race.

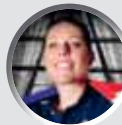
ONES TO WATCH



DAMIEN SEGUIN (FRA)
The 2015 world champion failed to reach the podium in London 2012 in the 2.4 Norlin OD (formerly 2.4mR).



DAN FITZGIBBON AND LIESL TESCH (AUS)
The two-time SKUD18 world champions are aiming for their second consecutive Paralympic gold.



HELENA LUCAS (GBR)
The defending Paralympic champion in the 2.4 Norlin OD will be determined to retain her title in Rio.



Shooting



Cuiping Zhang (CHN)

After taking two silvers in Beijing 2008, Zhang came back to win golds in London 2012 in R2 (women's 10m air rifle standing SH1) and R8 (women's 50m rifle three positions SH1).

➤ You are the holder of both the R2 and R8 world records. Do you think you can break those world records again in Rio?

To break the records I think luck is also needed. I would be satisfied if I performed to the level of my daily training.

➤ At Beijing 2008 you missed out on a gold medal. What did you change between then and London to win gold?

The Beijing Paralympic Games was my debut. I was a very young athlete and had fantasised about the podium. It was a pity that I lost the gold, but I knew then about my shortcomings and trained harder afterwards. It is time that makes me a different woman than a girl. I grew more mature and became a good shooter.

➤ Have you changed anything since London that you think will help you perform even better in Rio?

The training programme was changed, mainly targeted at improving skills. I also told myself to "reset," starting from zero and forgetting about the past Games and achievements, and get myself mentally mature and steady. My coach and I will adopt a competition strategy according to the atmosphere in Rio.

➤ How do you think your Paralympic success has impacted China?

In 2012 in London, I won the first gold medal for China. Before the

final round my coach was afraid that I would be nervous, he reassured me that it was not my first gold medal match. So I had less pressure. After winning the gold everybody came to congratulate me, including our chairwoman Ms. Haidi Zhang. I felt so proud of myself and I think it might be encouraging to the other athletes from China.

QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Olympic Shooting Centre
- Dates:** 8-14 September
- Medal events:** 12
- Athletes:** 150
- Games debut:** Toronto 1976
- Classification**
Athletes with different impairments compete together in three classes:
SH1 pistol: athletes with lower limb impairment and/or upper limb impairment in the non-shooting arm
SH1 rifle: athletes with lower limb impairment
SH2 rifle: athletes with an upper limb impairment, who require the use of a spring mounted stand to support the weight of the rifle.
- ipc-shooting.org

| | | | |
|--------|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| China | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Korea | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| France | 1 | 1 | 0 |



Sitting volleyball



Liliane Mukobwankabo (RWA)

Africa is sending a women's sitting volleyball team to the Paralympics for the first time ever. Team captain Mukobwankabo played a key role in helping Rwanda make history, as they qualified by winning the 2015 African Championships.



➤ How has Rwanda's sitting volleyball success helped heal the wounds from the country's civil war?

It helped so much. People started to play together without thinking about the previous differences that had kept us divided for so many years. We might be coming from different regions, but we are one big team who share the same goals. We are all Rwandan. It also helped integrate injured people from the war in to society. People with an impairment are happier now and accept their disability.

➤ The Rwandan team took part in a training camp in China earlier this year. Have you ever imagined you would travel there?

Certainly not! It was such a wonderful experience which we enjoyed a lot. We learned as well. The tall buildings and the long roads caught

my attention the most about China. And now I want to visit the US. I think it is a developed country with many nice places to visit. I have friends and family who live in New York.

➤ What is your goal for Rio?

I want to make sure that we are not going to Rio just to visit the city but to perform well at the Paralympic Games. The team feels confident even though we have been training for just four years compared to other teams. We know it is not going to be easy, but we aim for winning at least three matches. We truly believe we can defeat Iran and Canada, for example. Anything can happen.

➤ What do you like to do during your free time?

When I am not competing, I like going shopping and trying on new shoes and clothes, and taking a look at bags.

QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Riocentro – Pavilion 6
- Dates:** 9-18 September
- Medal events:** 2
- Athletes:** 192
- Games debut:** Arnhem 1980 (men); Athens 2004 (women)
- Qualified teams:**
Women's Pool A: Brazil, Ukraine, Russia, Canada
Women's Pool B: China, USA, Iran, Rwanda
Men's Pool A: Brazil, Germany, Egypt, USA
Men's Pool B: Iran, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, China
- Classification**
All players have a physical impairment and are either allocated sport class "D" for disability or "MD" for minimal disability. MD indicates a higher functional ability than D. A team may only field one MD player at a time.
- worldparavolley.org

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|------|---------|
| | | | |
| MEN | Bosnia-Herzegovina | Iran | Germany |
| WOMEN | China | USA | Ukraine |

ONES TO WATCH



OLEKSII DENYSIUK (UKR)
Set a new P1 (men's 10m air pistol SH1) finals world record in 2015 and medalled in all but one World Cup.



VERONIKA VADOVICOVA (SVK)
The world and European champion has recently been in world record breaking form.



MICHAEL JOHNSON (NZL)
The Athens 2004 Paralympic champion set his 14th career world record in 2015.

ONES TO WATCH



KATIE HOLLOWAY (USA)
Described as an "all-round player", Holloway will lead the USA's efforts to topple Paralympic champions China.



RAMEZAN SALEHI HAJIKOLAEI (IRI)
One of the sport's best liberos aims to help his team bounce back from their runner-up finish from London 2012.



SAFET ALIBASIC (BIH)
Tapped the Most Valuable Player from the 2014 World Championships, Alibasic aims to help his country retain their Paralympic gold.



Table tennis



Sandra Paovic (CRO)

The Olympian bounced back from a life-threatening car accident in 2009 to dominate the women's class 6.

► **Rio 2016 will be your first ever Paralympics. What are your expectations?**

Before my Para athletic career, I competed as an able-bodied athlete during the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Besides that, I had plenty of experiences from other major events. So although Rio will be my first Paralympics, competing at a high level is routine for me.

I expect to continue performing on a high level and to do my best.

► **You have won gold in every major event you have competed. What has been the key to your success?**

Eighteen years of experience is key. I was a member of the Croatian national team with high level results, had participated in high level competitions and spent most of my life training and at competitions. Sport is my life.

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

Three Ukrainians in Maryna Lytovchenko, Yuliya Klymenko and Antonina Khodzyanskaya are great athletes, as well as Russia's London 2012 champion Raisa Chebanika.

Each has their strengths and weaknesses, and for me it is very important to prepare good tactics.

The main challenge for me is that my opponents are much more mobile than me. I am the only one in the category with a spinal injury, so movements during matches and training are challenging.

► **What do you enjoy doing in your downtime?**

I like to spend much of my time with my husband who is also a Croatian Para table tennis player. We like to go to the cinema, relax at dinners and travel when we find time. On evenings we like to watch a movie or TV series. I also enjoy reading a lot.

| | | | |
|---------|----|---|---|
| China | 14 | 5 | 2 |
| Poland | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Germany | 2 | 1 | 1 |

QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Riocentro – Pavilion 3
- Dates:** 8-17 September
- Medal events:** 29
- Athletes:** 276
- Games debut:** Rome 1960
- Classification**
Athletes are grouped into 11 different classes. '1-5 are devoted to wheelchair athletes, 6-10 to athletes with a physical impairment competing in a standing position. Athletes in class 11 have an intellectual impairment.
- ipttc.org



Triathlon



Hailey Danisewicz (USA)

Three of the world's best PT2 racers from the USA will compete in Rio. World No.1 Danisewicz will start as favourite.

► **Describe your breakthrough moment.**

I think I really started to come into my own in (early) 2014. That was when I really started to win some races.

Me winning, it was not a fluke. That (season) was when I started to believe that I belonged there. The World Championships in 2013 in London, that was the first race I ever won, and it was really the first time where I thought "yeah this might actually be something."

► **You qualified for Rio really early. What has your mindset been since the start of 2016?**

I'm in an interesting spot because I did qualify early and it was a big weight off my shoulders. The Continental Championships in (March) was the second qualifying race and so pretty much everyone else racing there peaked at that race (while I finished fourth). So that was a little challenging for me mentally because I didn't have to peak. It was hard to go into this race and to see the fitness levels of all my competitors and just not being able to match that (was hard). ... In the long run, I know I have the advantage because I only have to peak once. So right now I am kind of just in the early stages building toward Rio.

► **Ally Seely and Melissa Stockwell are both your teammates and opponents. What is the relationship like?**

We're neck-in-neck with each other (during races) but also off the race course we are the closest of friends and have a lot of respect for each other. ... Even when I'm in a race with the two of them and I might not finish a

race the way I want to be, it's cool knowing that ... the other podium spots are being occupied by people I love and respect.

► **Living in Chicago where the winters are cold, how do you train for the open water segment?**

In the summer I swim a lot in Lake Michigan usually a couple of times a week. ... But I also train in Austin, Texas, (during the winters) where I have access to open water which is great. Very few people are able to swim open water in the winter so that is definitely a plus.

QUICK FACTS

- Venue:** Fort Copacabana
- Dates:** 10-11 September
- Medal events:** 6
- Athletes:** 60
- Games debut:** Rio 2016
- Classification**
In Para triathlon there are four different sport classes for athletes with physical impairments, numbered 1-4. There is a fifth sport class for athletes with vision impairment named PT5.
- triathlon.org

ONES TO WATCH



NATALIA PARTYKA (POL)
The most popular Para table tennis player is going for a third-straight Paralympic title in class 10.



ALVARO VALERA (ESP)
The defending World and European class 6 champion looks poised for his first Paralympic gold since Sydney 2000.



ANNA CARIN-AHLQUIST (SWE)
The World bronze medalist will rely on her strong tactics and backhand to retain her Paralympic gold in class 3.

ONES TO WATCH



MARTIN SCHULZ (GER)
Has won every single triathlon race since June 2013 in the PT4, that is, until the 2015 World Championships.



STEFAN DANIEL (CAN)
The Canadian teenager took down top rival Schulz at the 2015 Worlds for the gold and looks to repeat that in Rio.



LAUREN STEADMAN (GBR)
The swimmer-turned-triathlete has been unbeaten in major Para triathlon events since September 2014 in the women's PT4.



Wheelchair basketball

| | | | |
|-------|---------|-----------|-------------|
| | | | |
| MEN | Canada | Australia | USA |
| WOMEN | Germany | Australia | Netherlands |



Shaun Norris (AUS)

The veteran is an integral part of the Australian world champion team looking to improve on their silver medal at London 2012.

QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Carioca Arena 1 & Rio Olympic Arena



Dates:
8-17 September



Medal events:
2



Athletes:
264



Games debut:
Rome 1960



Qualified teams:
Women Group A:
Brazil, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Argentina
Women Group B:
USA, Netherlands, France, China, Algeria
Men Group A:
Spain, Australia, Canada, Turkey, Netherlands, Japan
Men Group B:
Brazil, Iran, USA, Great Britain, Germany, Algeria



Classification
Each athlete is assigned to a classification between 1-4.5 points, and could be classified as a 1.5, 2.5, etc. The more functional ability an athlete has, the higher the number of points he or she is awarded. For instance, a 1-point player could be a high-level paraplegic and a 4.5-point player typically has an impairment of a lower limb. A team may not play with more than 14 points on the floor at one time.

iwbf.org

> Have preparations for Rio 2016 been different to the other three Paralympic Games you have experienced?

It is a little bit different for me personally because as the years have gone by we have gotten more and more support. We have always had the personnel, the people there to support us, but now to be actually training directly out of the facilities as well, (that) sort of brings that home-base somewhere central for all of us and gives us more opportunities to train hard.

> What are your thoughts on the evolution of wheelchair basketball?

There is definitely a lot more support of disabled athletes, which is fantastic. I remember when I first started with the Australian team and had to go away for tournaments, I had to try and find money to afford to fly. There was money there for the basketball team to subsidise the cost, but you would (still) have to raise some form of money to be able to go away and play.

It has changed heaps. I can now focus more on basketball than to think about how I am going to live from day-to-day.

> What is your role on the team?

It is an interesting question because over the years, and even now, it still changes. I have always thought of myself as a player (and) always wanted to fill the role that is just needed. Some have me as a bit more of a scoring threat, so it just depends. With the personnel we have and what we need at the end of the day, I am not really looking out there to drop 30 (points) on every team. I am just looking out there to do what is needed to win games.

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

Relax, watch TV. Play some games, chill out. I like motorsport. Working as well, so trying to keep busy with my work.



Wheelchair fencing

| | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| China | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| Hong Kong | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Poland | 2 | 0 | 1 |



Beatrice Vio (ITA)

The 19-year-old burst onto the scene in 2012 and is the defending world and European champion in the women's foil category B.

> How did you get the nickname Bebe?

I got the nickname Bebe from my brother Nicolò (two years older than me) when we were kids. I like it a lot and since I restarted my life after the disease it has become my "official" name.

> You did not compete in London despite your potential. Do you sometimes wish you competed?

In London I was 14 years old and according to the coach of the national team I was too young and inexperienced to attend the Paralympic Games, although technically I could try.

But I wanted to go to London somehow and I was able to be an active part of the Paralympics by being chosen as torchbearer representing Future Paralympic athletes. Then, during the Games, I was a reporter for Sky Italia television.

I know I would not have enjoyed (London 2012) as much if I were an athlete and

I have to thank my previous coach Fabio Giovannini for that choice which was surely the right one. Since then I have made a very nice and stimulating path for growth.

> How do you balance competing and school?

I love the school that I attend and I really like the subjects I study and then, as for fencing, it is a pleasure to dedicate all my time pursuing in parallel the two things: the study and fencing training and then exams and competitions.

> Who are your greatest influences?

Many of them belong to the world of fencing ... especially the girls in the Dream Team (Valentina Vezzali, Elisa Di Francisca and Arianna Errigo) because I have something to learn from each of them. But there are many also in the Paralympic world. ... Francesca Porcellato because she can be so aggressive during competitions but also so sweet in normal life, Alex Zanardi for his strength and determination, and last I mention Martina Caironi, who is a good friend of mine for many years.

> How do you think your success has impacted others?

When someone begins to be known and followed by people it is important to behave in the best way and to always set a good example. During competitions when kids come to me and tell me "I started fencing because I want to be like you," I am the happiest, especially if they are kids with disabilities. Unfortunately in Italy there are very few children with disabilities who play sports and I know that doing sport is very important for them because they will grow stronger and more confident.



QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Youth Arena



Dates:
12-16 September



Medal events:
14



Athletes:
88



Games debut:
Rome 1960



Classification
A and B: athletes in the B category have an impairment with a greater impact on their functional ability.

iwaf.com

ONES TO WATCH



MARINA MOHNEN (GER)

The 4.5-classified player is expected to help the Germans defend their Paralympic gold.



ABDI JAMA (GBR)

Captained his team to back-to-back European titles and looks to help Britain return to the Paralympic podium.



MARISKA BEIJER (NED)

One of the most dangerous scorers in the women's side looks to help her side battle for the gold.

ONES TO WATCH



YU CHI YEE (HKG)

Looking to strike Paralympic gold again in the epee and foil category A but will be challenged by rising fencers.



JOVANE SILVA GUISSONE (BRA)

Brazil's lone fencer at London 2012 won gold in the epee category B.



ADRIAN CASTRO (POL)

The dominating fencer in the men's sabre category B is seeking his first Paralympic medal.



Wheelchair rugby

| | | | |
|-----------|--------|-----|--|
| | | | |
| Australia | Canada | USA | |



Zak Madell (CAN)

After finishing behind Australia at both London 2012 and the 2014 World Championships, Canada's key scorer and playmaker wants gold in Rio.

> What makes Canada one of the world's best teams alongside the USA and Australia?

A huge part is that we are such a tight knit group. A large core of our team has been playing together for two-plus Paralympics. Because of that, our squad has

developed a strong bond with one another both on and off the court.

> Take us back to the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games final against the USA. Describe the emotions after winning.

The whole team was ecstatic that we qualified for Rio. The fact that we were able to do it on home soil in front of our own fans made the moment much

sweeter. It is also always a bonus when we win match-ups against our long standing US rivals, especially after losing to them earlier in the round-robin.

> Will you play with a mohawk hair-style at Rio?

No way, the mohawk is a thing of the past for me. The reason that happened was because it was my tradition for the last two Canada Winter Games playing

for team Alberta in wheelchair basketball. But now that I am too old to compete in the next games, do not expect to see me with a mohawk on my head again.

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

Since recently moving to Victoria, I have spent a good amount of my free time just exploring the city and discovering what kind of things there are to do here. Also being a "foodie," I love trying out the local cuisine and finding where the good food joints are around town.



QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Carioca Arena 1



Dates:
14-18 September



Medal events:
1



Athletes:
96 (8 teams)



Games debut:
Atlanta 1996



Qualified teams:
Pool A:
Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Brazil
Pool B:
USA, Japan, Sweden, France



Classification
All players have an impairment affecting the upper and lower limbs and are classified from 0.5 to 3.5 (most physical function). The total point value has to be 8 or less with a maximum of four players on the field of play.

iwrf.com



Wheelchair tennis

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Netherlands | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| USA | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Israel | 1 | 0 | 1 |



Gustavo Fernandez (ARG)

Consistently ranked in the world's top 10 players, Fernandez is confident he can end the Paralympic dominance of Japan's Shingo Kunieda and France's Stephane Houdet.

> Your dad and your eldest brother are both professional basketball players. Can we say sport is in your blood?

Yes, definitely. As my dad used to be a basketball player, sports were the first topic we talked about at home. We all

ended-up being sport fans. He did not force us to like sports; we just choose them as well. My dad was an excellent professional and my siblings and I dreamed about becoming athletes one day. It is crazy that when all the kids were looking at their parents wearing suits to go to work, we used to look at our dad wearing his sports clothing to work.

> Kunieda and Houdet seem to be one step ahead of the rest. Is it possible to defeat them?

Shingo and Stephane are definitely one step ahead. But everything is more even. The gap between them and us is getting bridged, which could be seen on the last events we played at. But yes, they are still the best. Anyway, I know I can defeat them. I just have to keep working hard to be closer.

> You won your first Grand Slam in Wimbledon with the doubles. What did that mean to you?

It was the most intense emotion I have ever felt in my life. It was the prize for the sacrifice I had made for so many years. I hope to win many more, and I am really aiming for the Grand Slam singles title (Fernandez won his first singles Grand Slam in June at Roland Garros). But still, if my career would end right now, that moment when I was lifting the trophy was worth all the hours of training.



QUICK FACTS



Venue:
Olympic Tennis Centre



Dates:
8-16 September



Medal events:
6



Athletes:
104



Games debut:
Barcelona 1992



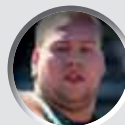
Classification
Open class:
athletes with an impairment of one or both legs but does not affect their arms or hands
Quad class: athletes with an impairment that affects their arms and legs, which limits their ability to handle the racket and to move their wheelchair compared with open class athletes.

itftennis.com

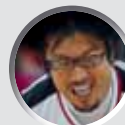
ONES TO WATCH



CHUCK AOKI (USA)
Tabbed the best 3.0 player at the 2014 World Championships, Aoki is one of the most consistent and skilled players on the court.



RYLEY BATT (AUS)
Part of the team that took golds in London 2012 and the 2014 Worlds. The veteran shows no signs of slowing.



DAISUKE IKEZAKI (JPN)
Ikezaki helped his side upset Australia to win the Asia-Oceania zonal Championships and has been a regular in the Japanese line-up.

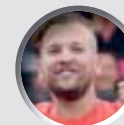
ONES TO WATCH



SHINGO KUNIEDA (JPN)
Has struggled in 2016 due to injury but the Paralympic and Grand Slam champion remains a favourite in the men's singles.



JISKE GRIFFIOEN (NED)
Ranked No. 1 in the women's singles, Griffioen looks like the next big thing to follow Dutch legend Esther Vergeer.



DYLAN ALCOTT (AUS)
The former wheelchair basketball player targets another gold in tennis, and is the new favourite in the quad division.



Portugal's Antonio Marques in action at the World Championships in Beijing, China



Great Britain's Emma Wiggs in action at the 2016 ICF Para Canoe World Championships in Duisburg, Germany

MEDALS TABLE

| Country | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
|---------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Great Britain | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| Australia | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Germany | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Russia | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |

Medals table only includes kayak events, not va'as.

BISFed Individual World Championships

19-26 March

Pattaya Tadtong reinforced his push for back-to-back Paralympic golds after winning the BC1 individual world title in Beijing, China, in an all-Thai final with Witsanu Haudpradit 4-3.

SPOTLIGHT ON:
Pattaya Tadtong
(THA)

After winning the world title, will now be aiming for successive Paralympic golds.

The Thai dominance continued in the BC2, with Worawut Saengampa taking the gold medal over China's Zhiqiang Yan. In the BC3 category, South Korea's London 2012 silver medallist Ho Won Jeong did not drop a point to Japan's Kazuki Takahashi as he claimed the world title.

The BC4 encounter between China's Yuansen Zheng and Great Britain's Stephen McGuire was the game that drew the biggest crowd. Zheng, who upset No. 1 ranked and defending world champion

Yuk Wing Leung in an earlier round, could not overcome McGuire who captured the title with a 4-3 win.

www.bisfed.com

MEDALS TABLE

| Country | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
|---------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Thailand | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Great Britain | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| South Korea | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

Para Canoe World Championships

17-19 May

Interest levels in the men's KL2 200m further increased ahead of the Rio 2016 Paralympics after Australia's Curtis McGrath handed Austria's Markus Swoboda his first World Championship final defeat since 2010.

At the event in Duisburg, Germany, the women's KL1 and KL3 also saw a swap of results from the 2015 World Championships. Germany's Edina Muller won the KL1 title, as Britain's defending champion Jeanette Chippington took the silver. British KL3 canoeist Anne Dickens was crowned the new

champion in her class, trading medals with Australia's 2015 world champion Amanda Reynolds.

Germany's Tom Kierey (men's KL3) and Great Britain's Emma Wiggs (women's KL2) retained their titles.

China's Xiaowei Yu showed a vast improvement, winning gold in the men's KL1 after finishing eighth in last year's Worlds.

www.canoeicf.com

SPOTLIGHT ON:
Curtis McGrath
(AUS)

Snapped Markus Swoboda's World Championship winning streak and made the race for gold at Rio 2016 much tighter.





The USA's Tatyana McFadden and Switzerland's Marcel Hug celebrate winning in London with Prince Harry

| MEDALS TABLE | | | | |
|---------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Country | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
| Germany | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Poland | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| USA | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Great Britain | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| France | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Australia | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 |



The 2016 Para World Sailing Championships were held in Medemblik, the Netherlands



The Netherlands Marjolein Buis defeated Germany's Sabine Ellerbrock in the Roland Garros final

Boston and London Marathons

18 April // 24 April

Switzerland's Marcel Hug and the USA's Tatyana McFadden won their respective races in London, Great Britain, just six days after the pair also won in Boston, USA – the first event of the 2016 Abbott World Marathon Majors Wheelchair Series.

SPOTLIGHT ON:
Marcel Hug
(SUI)

Won both marathons in a final three-man sprint to the finish.

In a final sprint in London, Hug won in 1:35:24 after seeing off Australia's Kurt Fearnley (1:35:25) and Great Britain's David Weir (1:35:26).

Hug also had to out-sprint South Africa's Ernst van Dyk and Fearnley in a three-way, wheel-for-wheel dash in Boston. They all clocked 1:24:06, with Hug winning by a chair's length.

McFadden (1:44:14) collected her fourth consecutive London Marathon title as she held off Switzerland's former marathon

world champion Manuela Schaefer in the final sprint. McFadden, who has won the Grand Slam of Boston, London, Chicago and New York for the last three years, took the Boston Marathon victory in 1:42:16.

Fellow US wheelchair racer Ray Martin also made a winning return to London as he took the tape in the T51/52 IPC Athletics Marathon World Cup event for the second consecutive year, clocking 1:59:53.

In her London Marathon debut, China's Jin Zheng smashed the world record, knocking 13 minutes off the T11 mark set by Germany's Regina Vollbrecht 12 months ago. Zheng crossed the line in 3:13:15 in the women's T11/12 event.

➔ www.baa.org

➔ virginmoneylondonmarathon.com

Para World Sailing Championships

24-28 May

The sonar class had a stunning finale in Medemblik, the Netherlands, with the USA's Alphonsus Doerr, Bradley Kendell and Hugh Freund taking the gold with 26 points. They finished ahead of Great Britain's John Robertson, Hannah Stodel and Steve Thomas; and Australia's Colin Harrison, Jonathan Harris and Russell Boaden in silver and bronze respectively.

Despite crashing in the final 2.4 Norlin OD race, Germany's Heiko Kroeger managed to take gold with 32 points. France's Athens 2004 gold medallist Damien Seguin claimed silver, and Australia's Matthew Bugg collected bronze.

Poland's Monika Gibes and Piotr Cichocki showed great form and won the SKUD18 world title with 18 points after having stayed in front of the leaderboard for most of the regatta. Great Britain's Alexandra Rickham and Niki Birrell



SPOTLIGHT ON:
US Sonar team
Sealed the world title just one point ahead of Great Britain and two over Australia following a thrilling final race.

took silver following a protest hearing that involved Australia's reigning Paralympic champions Daniel Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch.

It seemed the Australians were going to finish as runners-up, but after the protest, their ninth race was wiped off, promoting the British crew to the second place and relegating Fitzgibbon and Tesch to the third position.

➔ www.sailing.org

Roland Garros and Wimbledon

2-4 June // 7-10 July

Great Britain's Gordon Reid and the Netherlands' Jiske Griffioen became the first wheelchair tennis players to win the Wimbledon men and women's singles titles, respectively.

This was the first time wheelchair singles events were featured in Wimbledon, which before only held doubles competitions.

Reid topped Sweden's Stefan Olsson 6-1, 6-4 for his second career Slam title. The 24-year-old also picked up his first Wimbledon doubles crown with fellow Briton Alfie Hewett.

SPOTLIGHT ON:
Gordon Reid
(GBR)

Won the inaugural Wimbledon singles title, taking two of the three Grand Slams this year and the last before Rio.

Griffioen claimed her fourth Slam title, beating compatriot Aniek van Koot 4-6, 6-0, 6-4. Japan's Yui Kamiji and Britain's Jordanne Whiley took the women's doubles title, adding to their Roland Garros crown from June.

The Roland Garros saw new Grand Slam singles champions.

Argentina's Gustavo Fernandez defeated Reid, and the Netherlands' Marjolein Buis had a confident win over Germany's Sabine Ellerbrock.

Japan's Shingo Kunieda and Reid secured the men's doubles title on the clay.


➔ www.rolandgarros.com

➔ www.wimbledon.com




Regional rundown

AFRICA


 **WTF African Para Taekwondo Championships**
22 May
Port Said, Egypt

Africa held its first Para taekwondo regionals attracting 29 athletes from 11 countries to an event open to athletes from around the world. Iran topped the overall medals table with five golds; Morocco came in second with three gold medals and Spain third with two golds. Nigeria was the second-highest ranking African country coming in fourth with one gold and a bronze medal.


AMERICAS

 **IPC Ice Sledge Hockey Pan Pacific Championships**
29 March – 2 April
Buffalo, New York, USA

The USA won the first-ever Pan Pacific title, defeating Canada, 4-1. South Korea, who was promoted to the A-Pool last season, escaped a late rally from Team Pan Pacific (featuring players from Japan and other participating countries) in the final minutes to capture the bronze with a 3-2 victory.

 **IWAS Wheelchair Fencing Americas Championships**
26-29 May
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Brazilian fencers topped the medals standings at the final major competition before the Paralympics. In addition to the seven titles, Brazil also collected five silvers and three bronzes. Brazil's Paralympic champion Jovane Silva Guissone took the gold in the men's foil category B and silver in the epee.

 **Para Archery Parapan American Championships**
23-29 May
San Jose, Costa Rica

The USA topped the medal standings, capturing nine individual medals, three of which were gold. They swept the men's open re-curve, with Michael Lukow defeating teammate and defending world champion Eric Bennett for gold. In the women's equivalent, Brazil's Toronto 2015 silver medallist Thais Silva Carvalho took the top prize.

EUROPE


 **IPC Swimming European Open Championships**
30 April – 7 May
Funchal, Portugal

In the last major competition before Rio 2016, Belarusian world and Paralympic champion Ihar Boki left as the most decorated swimmer with six gold medals and a bronze. Twenty-eight world records were broken in Funchal, where 450 swimmers from 51 countries participated. Ukraine topped the medals tables with 37 gold, 36 silver and 25 bronze. Russia were second with 30 golds, 31 silver and 25 bronze.




 **IPC Ice Sledge Hockey European Championships**
15-10 April
Ostersund, Sweden

Paralympic silver medallist Russia claimed their first European title, with Italy and Norway securing silver and bronze respectively.

 **IWAS Wheelchair Fencing European Championships**
17-22 May
Casale Monferrato, Italy

Italy's Beatrice Vio successfully defended her women's foil category B title and extended her run of consecutive gold medals in major competitions to 11. Ukraine's world No.1 Anton Datsko also defended his European title in the men's sabre event category A

 **ETU Para Triathlon European Championships**
27 May
Lisbon, Portugal

Germany's Martin Schulz and Great Britain's Lauren Steadman showed strong form ahead of Rio 2016, winning the men and women's PT4 races, respectively.

 **IPC Athletics European Championships**
10-16 June
Grosseto, Italy

Twenty five world records were broken at the biggest European Championships to date. More than 600 athletes from 36 countries took part and Russia topped the medals table claiming 51 titles.




Germany's Martin Schulz was one of the winners at May's Para Triathlon European Championships

ASIA

 **2nd Asian Para Taekwondo Open Championships**
18 April
Manila, Philippines

Iran's Mahdi Pourrahnamaahmad remained No. 1 in the male K44 under 75kg world rankings after maintaining his undefeated run since the introduction of the world rankings in January 2015. Iranian reigning world champion Bolor-Erdene Ganbat won gold in the men's K44 up to 61kg. Mongolian Khurelbaatar Enkhtuya was untouchable in her finals to win the women's K44 up to 49kg.

 **IWAS Asian Wheelchair Fencing Championships**
7-10 April
Hong Kong

China topped the medal tally with 11 golds, six silvers and eight bronzes. Jing Bian was among the highlights for China, winning gold after defeating compatriot Xufeng Zou in a tight final. China's Jianquan Tian left the Championships with two gold medals (men's sabre and epee category A).



Rio 2016

The medals which athletes will compete for this September have been revealed by the Rio 2016 Organising Committee and Brazilian Mint.

In addition to featuring braille, the Paralympic Games medals include a special innovation; they have a tiny device inside which makes a noise when the medal is shaken, allowing visually impaired athletes to know if they are gold, silver or bronze (gold has the loudest noise, bronze the quietest).

Athletes who top the podium in Rio will receive medals made from gold that has been extracted without the use of mercury and which was produced according to strict sustainability criteria, from the initial mining all the way through to the design of the end product.

The silver and bronze medals have been produced using 30 per cent recycled materials. Half of the plastic in the ribbons which will be used to hang the medals around athletes' necks comes from recycled plastic bottles.

To coincide with the medals launch the official slogan of the Games "A New World" was unveiled. The core values of the slogan and the manifesto are unity, respect for diversity and the will for change.

Mobility for all

From 5 June a new light rail system began operating in central Rio de Janeiro, dramatically reducing journey times and making it easier for people with a physical impairment to get around the city.

"It is an option for urban mobility with 100 per cent accessibility," Rio's transport secretary Rafael Picciani said at a press conference to mark 100 days until the Paralympic Games.

A new light railway in Rio will make it easier for people to get around the city

The city has invested in ramps at the stations and has installed tactile paving, guiding blocks and spaces for wheelchair users in the trams.

Picciani said that during the Paralympic Games there will be a free shuttle service that will take people with an impairment between venues and public transport stations. The city has also expanded its fleet of special taxis for people with limited mobility from 30 last September to 92 now. The target is 100 by Games time.

Opening Ceremony additions

The Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony will include the live creation of a work of art by ceremony director and renowned Brazilian artist Vik Muniz.

Taking place during the athletes' parade, the piece of art will use 500 plates, which

will be carried by the different delegations to form a gigantic mosaic, whose design remains a secret.

Other renowned names who will participate in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies include stylist Ronaldo Fraga and artist Guto Lacaz. Star musicians Teresa Cristina, Diogo Nogueira, Moncarco, Xande de Pilares, Hamilton Holanda and Pretinho da Serrinha will come together to form a samba super group, ensuring that the festivities have an unmistakable Brazilian flavour.

"We want people to get here and encounter a new, fresh party, and not anything that feels like the end of a party," said Marcos Lima, a Paralympic integration specialist at Rio 2016.

PyeongChang 2018

The official mascots for the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (POCOG) were revealed on 2 June. An Asiatic black bear named "Bandabi" and a white tiger named "Soohorang" will each represent the Paralympic and Olympic Winter Games. Both animals appear in South Korea's foundation mythology and are closely associated with Korean culture and folklore.

Bandabi is symbolic of strong will and courage, and also the symbol animal of Gangwon Province. In the name "Bandabi," "banda" comes from "bandal" meaning "half-moon," indicating the white crescent on the chest of the Asiatic Black Bear, and "bi" has the meaning of celebrating the Games.

Both mascots are designed to express a wide spectrum of emotions such as passion, joy, enthusiasm and love to actively engage the public.



POCOG President Hee-beom Lee said: "The mascots will now spearhead our communication activities and marketing initiatives. With (this) meaningful step forward, POCOG will use the momentum to gain more public support and excitement for the Games."

Sir Philip Craven, IPC President, said: "Paralympic mascots are iconic and essential parts of any Games. Like the Paralympians who will compete at PyeongChang 2018, bears are strong, courageous and determined creatures who make the most of their surroundings. Bears are also seen as friendly and cuddly, and I am excited to see how 'Bandabi' interacts with the public between now and the Games."

New POCOG President

Hee-beom Lee was appointed as the new President of the POCOG in early May to succeed Yang-ho Cho, who stepped down.

Lee began his career as a government official in 1972 and served as Minister of Trade, Industry and Energy from 2003 to 2006. He then took on executive positions at various institutions and companies including the Korea International Trade Association, the Korea Employers Federation, STX Energy and STX Heavy Industries.

"We (have less than) 19 months left until the Games, and I understand the constraints we face in terms of time and resources," Lee said. "I have faith in the capacity and vitality of the Organising Committee, displayed by the successful hosting of the Test Events this past February."

Tokyo 2020

Tokyo 2020 unveiled the official emblems of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, "Harmonized Chequered Emblems," during a ceremony held in Tokyo on 25 April.

After having shortlisted four designs out of 14,599 received from all over the world, the Tokyo 2020 Emblems Selection Committee selected the entry submitted by designer Asao Tokolo prior to obtaining the final approval of the Tokyo 2020 Executive Board.



This chequered design in the traditional Japanese colour of indigo blue expresses a refined elegance and sophistication, and it was highly acclaimed by the public for exemplifying the country and the city of Tokyo.

Composed of three varieties of rectangular shapes, the design represents different countries, cultures and ways of thinking. It incorporates the message of "Unity in Diversity." It also conveys the fact that the Olympic and Paralympic Games seek to promote diversity as a platform to connect the world.

Miguel Sagarra, IPC Governing Board Member, attended the ceremony in which the logos were unveiled and said: "The Paralympic Games are the world's number one sporting event for driving social inclusion and this emblem not only conveys the qualities and traditions of Japan but the excellence of the Para athletes we can expect to see competing in Tokyo in four years' time."



OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| 26 July - 7 August World Championships Qualification Tournament (Football 7-a-side) Vejen, Denmark | 31 August - 4 September International Convention on Science, Education and Medicine in Sport (ICSEMIS) Sao Paulo, Brazil | 10-12 September IPC Wheelchair Dance Sport World Cup (Continents Cup) Saint Petersburg, Russia | 2-10 October European B Goalball Championship Maia, Portugal | 9-12 October Thailand Open (table tennis) Bangkok, Thailand | 30 November - 4 December NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters London, Great Britain |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|

25-30 October

European Para Badminton Championships 2016



Para badminton will make its Paralympic debut at Tokyo 2020

The first European Championships will be held since it was announced that Para badminton will be included in Tokyo 2020. Around 100 athletes from 22 countries are expected to compete over 15 medal events in Beek, the Netherlands. The Championships will be the first of three Continental Championships set to take place this year.

Reigning world champions in Denmark's Julie Thrane and Great Britain's Rachel Choong will look to prove their dominance in the women's singles SU5 and SS6, respectively.

Norway's Helle Sofie Sagoy claimed the world title in the women's SL4, but French runner-up Faustine Noel may look for a rematch.

Germany's Thomas Wandschneider and Poland's Bartlomiej Mroz are coming off silver medals from Worlds and will look to go one higher in Beek in the men's WH1 and SU5, respectively. Also do not forget Switzerland's Karin Suter-Erath in the women's WH 1. Despite bronze at the Worlds, she remains No. 1 in her category.

bwfcorporate.com/para-badminton

ONES TO WATCH



BARTLOMIEJ MROZ POLAND
KARIN SUTER-ERATH SWITZERLAND
HELLE SOFIE SAGOY NORWAY

16 September; 1-2 October

European Open Para Taekwondo Championships; Oceania Open Para Taekwondo Championships



Poland and Fiji will stage Para taekwondo events later this year

The fifth European Championships in Warsaw, Poland, will be the biggest event of 2016. As an open competition, as many as 100 athletes from 30 countries across Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas and Oceania are expected to take part. Croatia's defending world champion Ivan Mikulic is one to watch in the men's K44 over 75 kg. Russia's Ayshat Ramazanova took over the position as world No. 1 in the women's K44 under 58 kg from Denmark's three-time world champion Lisa Gjessing.

The sport looks to continue development in Oceania, with the second regional Championships in Fiji. Athletes mostly from Asia, as well as Europe and the Americas, are expected to compete.

World ranking points will be at stake at both Championships, with the athletes from the host continent earning higher ranking points that will go toward the qualification process for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

www.worldtaekwondofederation.net

ONES TO WATCH



IVAN MIKULIC CROATIA
AYSHAT RAMAZANOVA RUSSIA

ISSUE OF THE SEASON

In May a British swimmer was disqualified from a race because he failed to cover his Olympic rings tattoo at the European Open Championships, breaching the IPC rule on body advertisements. The incident sparked controversy on whether this was fair or not, and its potential implications at Rio 2016. But why is it important to preserve the Paralympic marks?

Scott Reardon

The Australian is a two-time world champion and London 2012 silver medallist in the 100m T42.

If I was walking down the street and you saw the Olympic rings tattooed on me, would you think of the Paralympics?

I do not think so.

I am a proud Paralympian. I am not an Olympian because I do not compete in the Olympic Games. I am part of a select few who have had the opportunity to represent their country at a Paralympic Games. We are not worse as athletes. Our accomplishments are hard earned and well deserved.

So when Paralympians get the Olympic rings tattooed on themselves, it goes against who we are and what we do.

I believe to have the rings on your body, you have to fulfil one prerequisite: compete at an Olympic Games. I hold the

same opinion for getting an Agitos tattoo, which is reserved for years of hard work, dedication and sacrifice one has made to reach the Paralympics.

If you go to the Olympics, you are an Olympian. If you go to the Paralympics, you are a Paralympian. Both are held in high regard. One is no less than the other.

As a Paralympian, we are realistically 60 years behind the progression of the Olympic Games. Because of this, we fight for recognition, sponsors and exposure, all while we battle hard in the competitive arena.

It is up to a number of different people and channels to assist in the progression of the Paralympics. But foremost it is up to us the athletes. We are the face, heart and soul of the Paralympic Games.

Without us, the progress that has been made for athletes and everyday people around the world with an impairment slows.

The Agitos is a sign of positivity, hope, resiliency and equality. The athletes need to stand behind it and be proud of what we have done and will continue to do.

The more people who know the Paralympic logo, the more recognition the athletes get.

When a Paralympian tattoos the Olympic rings, they hurt the Paralympic Movement. They make people think we are something we are not. The simple fact of the matter is that they are aligning themselves with a separate organisation and missing the opportunity to grow the Paralympics and educate the world about how amazing the Paralympics and Paralympians are.

Yes, it was tough to see a Paralympian disqualified from an event in the European Open Championships for not covering his tattoo of the Olympic rings. It breached the IPC's advertising policy. But do you understand why that policy exists and its impact in the great Paralympic Movement?



Alexis Schaefer

The IPC's Marketing and Commercial Director



What would you think of a person that always wants to be called by another person's name, instead of being proud of their own name, achievements and heritage?

I hope Paralympic athletes are Proud Paralympians and do not think that they need the Olympic rings to showcase what they are – fantastic athletes that inspire and excite the world.

A tattoo is an individual decision. However, I would like to make people think about the importance of promoting the Agitos, the Paralympic symbol, and why this is critical for the Paralympic Movement and its athletes.

If you understand the differences between the Paralympics and Olympics, the IPC and the IOC, then you can probably tell the difference between the Olympic rings and the Agitos. And that is the point. Many people do not know the differences – yet!

Following the disqualification of a British swimmer at May's European Open Championships, a number of people appeared to confuse the Paralympics and Olympics, believing they were both the same thing, despite the fact that they are two different Movements with different events. But let's be clear, the Olympic rings identify the Olympic Movement, Games and Olympians. While athletes may associate with the idea, the person on the street will not think about Paralympians when they see the Olympic Rings. However, growing the awareness and understanding of the Agitos will clearly link them to Paralympians and the values of the Paralympic Movement. It will be unique to the Paralympic Movement and promote an idea that we all can feel extremely proud about.

Show someone a logo of Coca Cola and Pepsi, Nike and Adidas, FIFA and FIBA, and they most likely can differentiate between the brands and what they stand for. These organisations needed time, consistency, protection and promotion to fully establish their brand identities.

The Agitos, the Paralympic symbol, was officially introduced 13 years ago and first used during the Paralympics at the Torino 2006 Winter Games. To reach the point where people from all corners of the world understand what the Agitos symbolises, the Paralympic Movement must continue to be consistent in how the brand is presented and what other logos are displayed during our events.

Before London 2012 a high executive from a sponsor claimed to me that people would continue to associate the Paralympics as a sub-event of the Olympics. He said sponsors and stakeholders would not support an "independent" brand. I disagreed with him and data from market research specialists Repucom supports my stance. Their research shows the Paralympics attract fans who like what the Games say about them, who they are and how they engage with sport; and fans who like how the sport brings people together from across the world.

These fan bases are highly attractive for sponsors. People clearly attribute different values to our brand and although the group is smaller than for football or the Olympics, the research shows that it is already stronger from a qualitative point of view.

This shows why the Paralympic Family should continue to work together to promote and protect the Paralympic brand!

When the Olympic Rings are picked up by broadcasters and photographers covering the Paralympics, it is disseminated to millions of people. It dilutes the efforts to create a differentiated understanding of the Paralympic brand and causes confusion. We have seen in the past that such pictures are used and re-used. In such a case the individual decision of one athlete has an impact on the collective interest of the Paralympic Movement to grow and strengthen the Paralympic brand. Should we accept this?

Put it this way, when you open a can of Coca Cola, you don't expect to taste Pepsi; likewise when you see the Olympic rings, you don't expect to see a Paralympian.

I want athletes to be proud of the Agitos and what the Paralympic Movement stands for. I also want TV viewers when they watch the Games and spot an athlete with an Agitos tattoo to see it as the hallmark of a Proud Paralympian, a role model who has sacrificed much of their life through their sporting performances redefines what many believe is humanely possible.

Through supporting the Agitos together we can all make the Paralympic Movement stronger and further the impact we have on making for a more inclusive society through Para sport.

Paralympic Agitos

FIFA

FIBA

Nike

fan base

partners

Adidas

stakeholders

Olympics

Olympian

Paralympics

sponsors

Coca cola

Olympic rings

brand

tattoo

IPC

Paralympian

symbol

logo

Olympian

marketing

I have covered many Paralympic Games, but never before have I seen the level of coverage that took place for London 2012. It was unprecedented.

Consider these figures:

- 17 live feeds of competition and Ceremonies
- 73 Rights Holding Broadcasters (RHBs)
- An estimated viewership of 40 million reached in Great Britain
- A 3.8 billion cumulative viewership worldwide

Here at OBS, our broadcast coverage is dependent on the RHBs' interests, which keeps growing for the Paralympic Games.

I think the reason for the increasing broadcaster interest is this: The Paralympics tell inspiring stories and capture compelling sport action – that is what the broadcasters are after.

Paralympic sports are in a strong position to engage viewers with amazing personal stories and achievements; and enhanced data and analysis that breakdown for the audience the extraordinary efforts behind the athletes' performances.

In Sydney 2000, around 50 hours were broadcast and made available to 40 different broadcast organisations. In Athens 2004, more than 400 hours of live coverage of 14 sports were provided to 43 broadcast organisations. In Beijing 2008, there were 66 RHBs from more than 80 countries from all five continents.

London 2012 transformed the profile and perceptions of Paralympic sport and was in that sense a real game-changer.

Viewers watched sport and listened to stories that they had never seen before on TV.



Evolution of broadcast coverage of the Paralympics, from the perspective of the OBS CEO

“The Paralympics tell inspiring stories and capture compelling sport action – that is what the broadcasters are after.”

Rio 2016 is expected to reach even more countries and territories around the world, especially in the Americas, and OBS is preparing another comprehensive broadcast production this September, taking on the momentum generated by London 2012.

Yiannis Exarchos

Position:
Chief Executive Officer
of Olympic Broadcast-
ing Services (OBS)

Television coverage will consist of 17 live feeds from the venues, supplemented by coverage from the beauty cameras and daily highlights summaries, ultimately making up more than 800 hours of broadcast coverage from the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

Only after the Games will we know how the final figures compare to past Paralympics.

Rio 2016 will be the first collaboration between the IPC and the Olympic Channel, where not only will the Olympic Channel be complementing existing distribution of the Paralympics, but also producing original contents around this major event.

I think the Olympic Channel can benefit the Paralympic Movement, first in enabling the IPC to reach a worldwide audience by complementing their current and future distribution agreements.

It is also a digital platform tailored to engage with the younger generation through social media, since it is the best way to connect with them. Also, because the Olympic Channel is not just a sports channel, but a channel about sport and its greatest stories, it will produce original programming that will carry these stories and the values of the Paralympic Movement. The IPC can only benefit from this additional distribution, exposure and storytelling. And Paralympic sport generates endlessly great stories that will appeal not just to the Olympic Channel audiences, but billions of viewers watching the Paralympics around the world.



International Paralympic Committee

WORLDWIDE PARALYMPIC PARTNERS

VISA



Atos

ottobock.

TOYOTA

Panasonic

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

Allianz



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



Federal Ministry
of the Interior

IPC Vision:

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

