

THE

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT

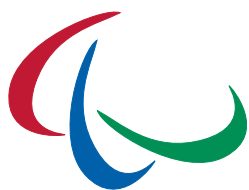
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PARALYMPIAN

www.paralympic.org



RIO 2016'S LEGACY The People's Games



Just flesh,
bone and carbon
fibre without
The Energy Within

Marlou van Rhijn
Sprinter

At BP, we believe human spirit is the most powerful energy of all. It's the desire to overcome all challenges in your path and become the very best you can be. It's the fire that burns deep inside world class athletes like Marlou van Rhijn, which has driven her on to become Paralympic, World and European Champion. And it's what drives BP to keep searching for newer, better and safer ways to produce the energy the world needs. bp.com/EnergyWithin



“The noise was incredible and the atmosphere like nothing I have ever experienced before at a Paralympics.”

Dear Readers,

The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games surprised us all and surpassed all expectations, despite the unique circumstances in which they were staged.

Never before has a Paralympics been held in the face of such economic and political turmoil, but the Games delivered against all odds.

Paralympians are no strangers to overcoming challenges and I was overjoyed at how the Paralympic Movement came together to ensure the Games were a success.

To go from 200,000 ticket sales two weeks prior to the Opening Ceremony to 2.15 million by the time of the Closing was a huge achievement and testament to the outstanding support of the Cariocas.

The Rio 2016 Paralympics will be remembered as the People's Games and the memory of the first Saturday, when more than 170,000 people filled the Barra Olympic Park, will live long into the memory. The noise was incredible and the atmosphere like nothing I have ever experienced before at a Paralympics.

The one thing that did not surprise was the level of athletic performance; Rio 2016 was the best ever in this regard with athletes pushing their bodies to the absolute limits. A record 83 NPCs won a medal and one of the stand-out performances came from Iranian powerlifter Siamand Rahman. To lift 310kg – the equivalent of a large Siberian tiger – was one of the most remarkable performances ever seen in sport.

Another highlight for me was the appearances of Ibrahim Al-Hussein and Sharad Nasajpour as part of the first Independent Paralympic Athletes team. Their performances delivered a message of hope and inclusion to the whole world.

The Games were the most broadcast in history with over 154 countries showing the action, whilst more than 1.5 billion people engaged in Rio 2016 via the IPC's online channels.

I am confident Rio 2016 will leave a lasting legacy for Latin America and March's Youth Parapan American Games at the Brazilian Paralympic Committee's Sao Paulo training centre is a fine example of that legacy in action.

Sadly Rio 2016 was not without tragedy; the passing of Iranian cyclist Bahman Goldbarnezhad on the penultimate day was a tremendous loss for the whole Paralympic Movement. Our thoughts remain with his family and friends and I encourage you all to read the fitting tribute to him in this magazine.

Finally, next year The Paralympian will have a new look and will be published twice a year.

I wish you all the best for 2017.

Philip Craven

Sir Philip Craven, MBE
IPC President





PRINT



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THE PARALYMPIAN

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A press conference was held in Rio de Janeiro regarding the suspension of the RPC, with (from left) IPC Governing Board member Todd Nicholson, NPC Brazil President Andrew Parsons, IPC President Sir Philip and IPC Media and Communications Director Craig Spence addressing the media

Russian Paralympic Committee suspended

On 7 August the IPC suspended the Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) due to its inability to fulfil its IPC membership responsibilities and obligations, in particular its obligation to comply with the IPC Anti-Doping Code and the World Anti-Doping Code (to which it is also a signatory).

The IPC's decision, which resulted in Russian athletes not being allowed to compete at the Rio 2016 Paralympics, was taken following the publication in mid-July of the McLaren report – an investigation led by Professor Richard McLaren commissioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) – and after allowing the RPC to present its case in both writing and in person.

McLaren's report and subsequent investigations found that at least 11 positive drugs tests from Russian athletes involved in Paralympic sports were covered up by the Moscow anti-doping laboratory on orders

from Russia's ministry of sport between 2012 and 2015. Evidence that 18 samples from Russian athletes competing at the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games had been tampered with was also found.

"Tragically this situation is not about athletes cheating a system, but about a State-run system that is cheating the athletes," said Sir Philip Craven in announcing the RPC's suspension.

An appeal to overturn the suspension by the RPC was dismissed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) who said the RPC did not provide any evidence contradicting the facts put forward by the IPC.

In November, the IPC informed the RPC of the reinstatement criteria it must meet in order to have its IPC membership suspension lifted.

Developed in consultation with WADA, the reinstatement criteria identify the core, high-level requirements the RPC must meet in order to be reinstated as an IPC member.

Supporting the reinstatement criteria are the underlying verification criteria, which set out certain specific matters that need to be rectified by the RPC.

To assist with the reinstatement process, the IPC will be appointing a taskforce that will work with the RPC and assist the IPC in determining whether the reinstatement criteria and underlying verification criteria have been met.

Sir Philip added: "The aim of the reinstatement criteria and the IPC taskforce is to assist the RPC as much as we can in bringing about the significant practical and cultural changes that are required in order for it to fulfil its IPC membership obligations in full.

"Tragically this situation is not about athletes cheating the system, but about a State-run system that is cheating the athletes."

"Although there is no timeline for the RPC to implement the changes required, we want to work closely with them in order to bring about the necessary changes sooner, rather than later.

"The RPC is an important part of the Paralympic Movement and its athletes want to be competing against the world's best athletes on the international stage. With the RPC's full co-operation and transparency, we will immediately lift its suspension once we are confident that all reinstatement criteria and verification criteria have been, and will continue to be, met in full."

➔ Visit paralympic.org/russian-paralympic-committee-suspension for complete information on the RPC's suspension.

#ProudParalymians inspire at Rio 2016



Hundreds of athletes from around the world got their first experience of the newly re-launched athlete education programme, Proud Paralympian, at Rio 2016.

A dedicated space in the Athletes' Dining Hall was visited every day by athletes eager to have some fun and find out more about how they could be Proud Paralymians themselves. They had the chance to play games, receive career advice, learn about the Paralympic Movement, and most importantly, engage with and vote in the Athletes' Council elections.

US swimmer Illeana Rodriguez, alpine skiers Piotr Marek of Poland and Arly Velasquez of Mexico, Japanese Nordic skier Miki Matheson and her compatriot Eri Yamamoto were on hand to speak to athletes as Proud Paralymians themselves.

Mexican javelin thrower Eliezer Gabriel and Ecuadorian runner Darwin Castro, who have benefitted from sports training given in the Americas by the development arm of the IPC, the Agitos Foundation, had their photo taken for a giant cover of the IPC's magazine The Paralympian. Independent Paralympic Athletes' Team members Ibrahim Al-Hussein and Shahrar Nasajpour also received some career counselling from Adecco.

The IPC aims to continue the great success of Proud Paralympian through the Agitos Foundation into the future.

The first Proud Paralympian Forum will be held in June 2017. This aims to bring together athletes involved in Para sport administration from all over the world, giving them the tools they need to take the values of Proud Paralympian back to their countries and organisations.

More chances for athletes to get involved through the National Paralympic Committees and International Federations will also be available, and an entirely new set of learning materials will be launched in 2017.

Athletes who registered to receive updates from Proud Paralympian will be kept informed of any exciting new developments and news from the programme.

Proud Paralympian can be followed on social media:

🐦 @ProudPara

📺 ProudParalympian

📺 ProudParalympian

➔ www.paralympic.org/athletes/proud-paralympian



Piotr Marek, Proud Paralympian ambassador

"It helps if you have a plan or if you have mentors around you."

"Through the Proud Paralympian programme, you will have people to talk with about your career after sports."

"Some people do not think about that. They think about their sport career and the daily routines but outside the box it is not easy."

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

POPE: Pope Francis highlighted the importance the Paralympic Movement has for social inclusion at October's 'Sport at the Service of Humanity's First Global Conference on Sport and Faith.'



Members of the Italian team take a selfie with Pope Francis

The Pope said: "The Paralympic Movement and other sporting associations sustaining those with disabilities, such as the Special Olympics, have had a decisive role in helping the public recognise and admire the extraordinary performances of athletes with different abilities and capacities."

BADMINTON: The Badminton World Federation (BWF) awarded Para Badminton World Championships 2017 to Ulsan, South Korea, to be held 21-26 November.

SHOOTING PARA SPORT: World Shooting Para Sport extended its partnership with SIUS, the world's leading producer of electronic scoring systems, as the Official Results and Target Systems Provider for the sport at regional, world and World Cup events until 2024.

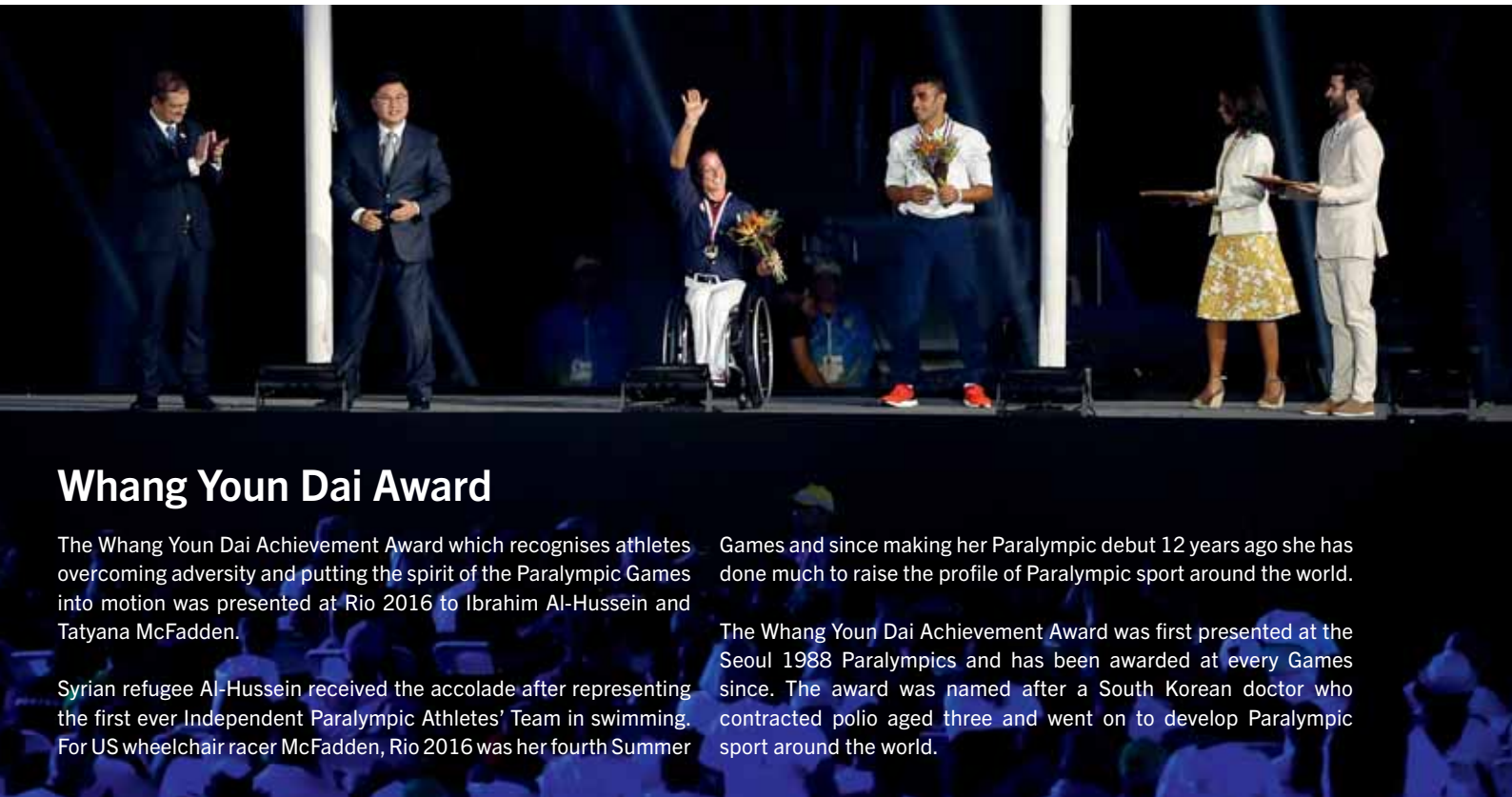
CYCLING: Ireland's Colin Lynch established the first ever officially sanctioned UCI Hour Record for Para cycling, since its regulations were extended to the discipline in 2016. The mark of 43.133 km was achieved on 1 October at the National Cycling Centre in Manchester, Great Britain.

WADA: The World Anti-Doping Agency published the 2017 List of Prohibited Substances and Methods; along with the 2017 Summary of Major Modifications and Explanatory Notes. The List can be found at www.wada-ama.org.

WORLD PARA ATHLETICS: World Para Athletics reached a five-year agreement with ASICS, the true sport performance brand as an Official Partner through to 2020. ASICS will provide apparel for all international officials and World Para Athletics staff and focus on the development and promotion of the sport and the Paralympic Movement.

WORLD PARA POWERLIFTING: Berck-sur-Mer, France, will host the 2018 World Para Powerlifting European Open Championships between 25-30 May.

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL: Tenerife, Spain, will host the European Championships for Men and Women Division A 2017, to be held 19 June – 1 July. The International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) also launched a new website www.iwbf.org.



Whang Youn Dai Award

The Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award which recognises athletes overcoming adversity and putting the spirit of the Paralympic Games into motion was presented at Rio 2016 to Ibrahim Al-Hussein and Tatyana McFadden.

Syrian refugee Al-Hussein received the accolade after representing the first ever Independent Paralympic Athletes' Team in swimming. For US wheelchair racer McFadden, Rio 2016 was her fourth Summer

Games and since making her Paralympic debut 12 years ago she has done much to raise the profile of Paralympic sport around the world.

The Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award was first presented at the Seoul 1988 Paralympics and has been awarded at every Games since. The award was named after a South Korean doctor who contracted polio aged three and went on to develop Paralympic sport around the world.

The IPC extends partnerships

The IPC extended its partnerships with a number of organisations in the days during and after Rio 2016.

Ottobock underlined its “Passion for Paralympics” by extending its worldwide partnership until the end of 2020. A worldwide partner since 2005, Ottobock is the longest serving partner to the Paralympic Games having provided technical services for equipment used by Paralympians since the Seoul 1988 Paralympic Games.

Over the next four years the two organisations are committed to growing participation at every level and using sport to improve the quality of life and socio-economic opportunities for people living with an impairment.

Building on 10 years of successful partnership to increase awareness of Paralympic sports, Allianz expressed its intent to continue supporting the IPC as an international partner for a further four years.

The partnership is a strong signal for growing mutual understanding and an increasing awareness of the special

strengths of people with an impairment. Apart from the global co-operation, 14 Allianz subsidiaries support National Paralympic Committees in Australia, Argentina, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, Slovakia, Sri Lanka and Switzerland.

BP has renewed its international partnership through to the end of 2020, having first joined forces with the IPC in 2013. In addition to its support for the IPC, BP currently supports 10 NPCs – Angola, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Netherlands, Turkey, Trinidad and Tobago, Great Britain, USA, Germany and Singapore.

Away from sponsorship, the IPC announced it had signed a letter of intent with Channel 4 for the broadcaster to remain as Great Britain’s Paralympic rights holder until 2020.

In line with the broadcaster’s unique public service remit, it is anticipated that Channel 4 will cover the PyeongChang 2018 and Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, as well as the London 2017 World Para Athletics Championships.

Inclusion Summit

More than 200 people attended the 2016 IPC Academy Inclusion Summit which took place during two days of the Rio Paralympics.

Opened by a video address from Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary General spoke about how sport is a catalyst for inclusion and how the Paralympic Movement has been a close ally in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The summit was divided into three themes – understanding inclusion, inclusive leadership and delivering inclusion – and attracted delegates from Organising Committees, Candidate Cities, government bodies and suppliers to major events and educational institutions.

Speakers at the Inclusion Summit, which formed part of the 2016 IPC Academy Campus, included Sir Philip Craven; Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Disability Advisor of the World Bank; and Shanthi Flynn, Chief HR Officer, Adecco, one of the Inclusion Summit’s partners. The event was hosted by Paralympians Lord Chris Holmes MBE, Helene Raynsford and Katrina Webb.

IPC Athletes’ Council members elected



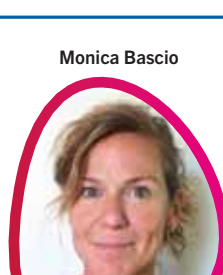
Gizem Girismen



Chelsey Gotell



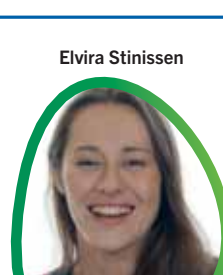
Dame Sarah Storey



Monica Bascio



Kurt Fearnley



Elvira Stinissen

Six members were elected to the IPC Athletes’ Council during the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

Four new members – swimmer Chelsey Gotell (Canada), cyclists Dame Sarah Storey (Great Britain) and Monica Bascio (USA) and wheelchair racer Kurt Fearnley (Australia) – will join two re-elected members: sitting volleyball player Elvira Stinissen (Netherlands) and archer Gizem Girismen (Turkey).

The elections took place from 5-16 September with 2,355 athletes placing their votes,

representing a 54 per cent overall turnout, 8 percentage points more than London 2012.

The IPC Athletes’ Council is made up of nine athletes in total, which includes the aforementioned six summer athletes and three winter athletes, as well as chairperson Todd Nicholson.

It works to provide effective input into decision-making at all levels of the organisation. To this end, the Council’s aim is to ensure effective athlete representation on all IPC

committees and commissions as well as to create other opportunities for athlete representation both within and outside the IPC.

The three winter sport council members will be elected at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/councils
[f groups/ParaAthleteClub](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParaAthleteClub)

Visa Paralympic Hall of Fame



Four Paralympians, with 66 Paralympic medals between them, and a leading coach were inducted into the Visa Paralympic Hall of Fame during Rio 2016.

Having competed at six Paralympics between 1992 and 2012, Junichi Kawai is Japan’s most successful male Para swimmer

who, during his athletic career, founded the Paralympians Association of Japan in 2003.

Wheelchair racer Chantal Petitclerc is the most-decorated female track Paralympian having won 14 Paralympic titles between 1992 and 2008. In Rio, she was the Chef de Mission of the Canadian team.

Switzerland’s multi-talented Franz Nietlis-pach competed in nine Paralympics between 1976 and 2008, across athletics, handcycling and table tennis collecting 23 medals, including 14 golds.

New Zealand’s four-time Paralympian Neroli Susan Fairhall passed away in 2006 aged 61 and was inducted posthumously in Rio. An archery gold medallist at the Arnhem 1980 Paralympics, Fairhall made history by competing at the Los Angeles 1984 Olympics.

The USA’s Martin Morse served as the head coach for the University of Illinois Wheelchair Track and Road Racing Team from 1981-2004, a time that saw his athletes win 52 Paralympic medals. Away from the track Morse has also developed equipment and techniques to improve the sport of wheelchair racing.

Launched in 2006 by founding partner Visa, the Paralympic Hall of Fame aims to recognise retired athletes and coaches who have a track record of excellent athletic performance, history of fair play and participation in community activities.

OIS provides breathtaking images of Rio 2016 Paralympics

The Rio 2016 Paralympics were the setting for a ground-breaking programme in which images captured by some of the world's best sports photographers were made freely available to news organisations, online and across social media platforms.

For the first time in Paralympic Games history, the Olympic Information Service (OIS) provided this unique, professional sports photography experience to spread the colour, passion and excitement of the Paralympics around the world.

Behind the lenses were four multi-award winning Sports Illustrated photographers: Bob Martin, Simon Bruty, Al Tieleman and Tom Lovelock.

The photos produced by these extraordinary photographers embodied the Paralympic Spirit and displayed the Paralympic values of courage, determination, inspiration and equality.

All photos were made available via a custom website www.OISPhotos.com license-free to NPCs, International and National Para Sport Federations and the media worldwide.

The Associated Press, Reuters, AFP, Getty Images and EPA news agencies each distributed OIS images on their wire services, which gave the Paralympics unprecedented global media reach.

OIS photos reached millions through Facebook, being shared by IPC, NPC, IFs, athletes, their friends and families.



Anthony Edgar, Head of Media Operation and Head of the OIS for the International Olympic Committee said: "OIS is an exciting new way forward delivering a turnkey solution for OCOGs. The OIS in Rio did not replace the importance of the press; it simply supported their reporting of the Paralympics."

"We look forward to furthering the possibilities in PyeongChang for the Winter Games in March 2018," Edgar said.

Bob Martin, OIS Chief Photographer, added: "OIS photos were far more successful than we had expected with publications across the world such as the Japan Times to The Chicago Tribune publishing the photos, culminating in three double pages in Sports Illustrated and four double pages in L'Equipe Magazine. Many news websites also extensively used our Paralympic photos such as BBC, Mail online, Yahoo, CNN, to mention just a few."

Craig Spence, IPC Media and Communications Director, said: "We were excited about the idea of providing images of the highest quality free of charge to media, athletes, NPCs, IFs, and Paralympic fans worldwide. The results in terms of the quality of the images as well as the global reach exceeded our expectations and we are very pleased that OIS photos will come back for the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games."

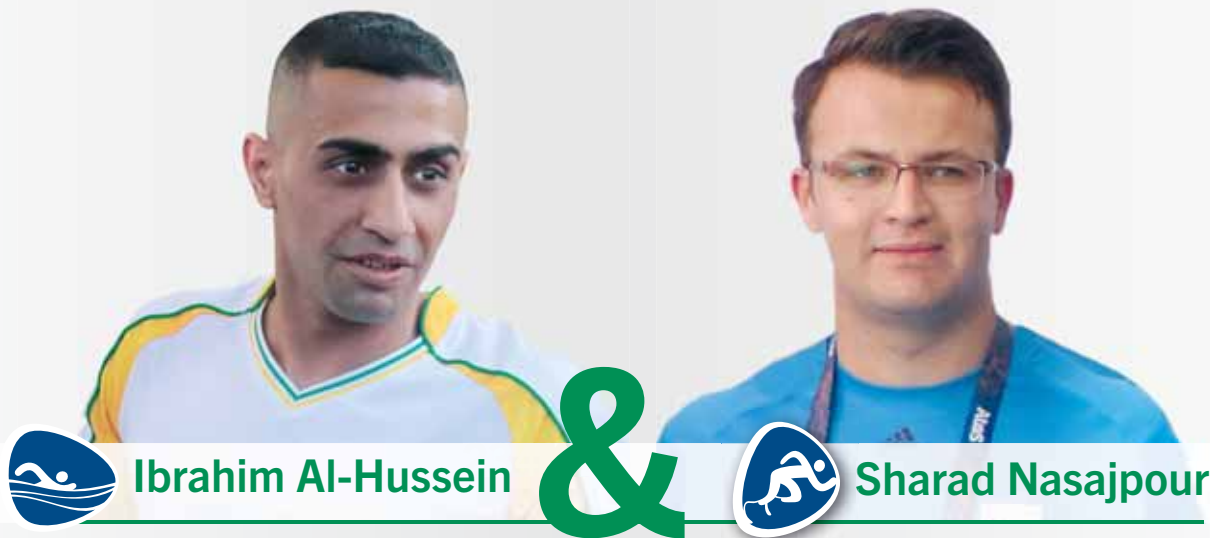
The OIS is a professional sports information service established under Olympic Agenda 2020 to support and cover the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and Youth Olympic Games.

View more OIS photos from the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games at www.oisphotos.com



#AskAnAthlete

The first refugee athletes formed part of the Independent Paralympic Athletes' (IPA) Team at Rio 2016. Syrian born swimmer Ibrahim Al-Hussein and Iranian discus thrower Sharad Nasajpour comprised the team and shared their Rio experience.



Ibrahim Al-Hussein



Sharad Nasajpour

&

It was a great opportunity to participate in Rio and opened my horizons. I was depending only on myself and some local support in order to solve issues concerning my training and participation in sport events before the Games. Thanks to Rio, I now have a bigger support group.

How would you describe your first Paralympics?

Rio was my biggest ever sport event and being part of such a big event was a great experience. You compete with the best in the world, and it made me more determined to keep going and try harder in all I do.

It means sending my message that we are ready to compete and achieve good results, like any team or athlete. Yes we are refugees, but we can also be athletes, poets, professionals in many other areas.

What did it mean for you to be on the IPA Team and share the experience with your teammate?

Both of us have had the same situation as a dislocated person in a new country. We have had many barriers to get over. But we didn't give up and continued our career and fought through all difficulties, then made it to Rio.

You learn a lot when you share the experience with someone. With Sharad, I learned many humanity and sporting lessons.

Everything in my life has changed after Rio. I feel like I have more freedom, more dreams, more desire to complete my sporting experience every day and achieve better results.

How much has changed after Rio?

It caused a big transition again in my life. I moved from the East Coast in USA to the West Coast in Phoenix, Arizona, to train and get better results in upcoming competitions. I have to begin everything again, since I had no family and friends in Phoenix, which made everything harder.

My athletic goal was to perform in my sport at the highest international level, which I achieved at Rio 2016. During the Games, I did not expect to achieve results that would win me a medal. But I am trying to get better and I am training every day.

What did you make of your results from Rio?

I am disappointed with my result because I had better marks in training but couldn't get there in the competition due to my insufficient training over last year. Rio was my second competition in the year after the US Paralympic Trials.

Yes, the next step is Tokyo 2020, and it has been a goal for me since my first day returning from Rio.

Are you looking to compete at Tokyo 2020?

Next for sure is the World Championships in London. I need to get ready for it and also other Grand Prix events, then Tokyo 2020.

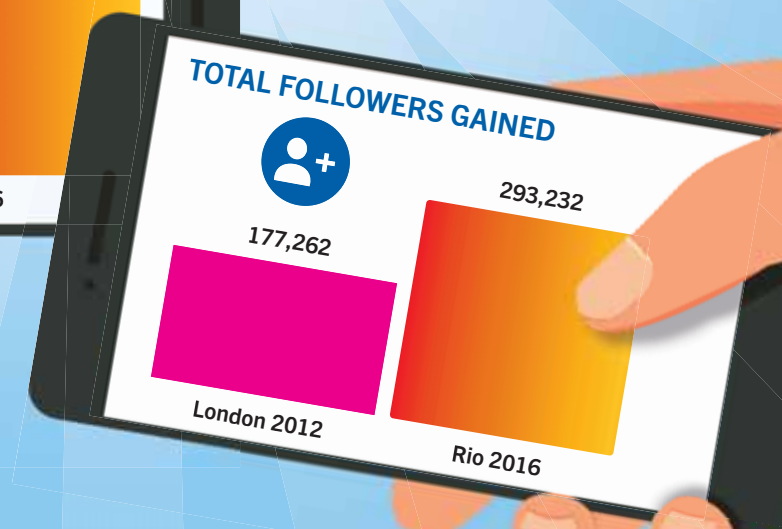
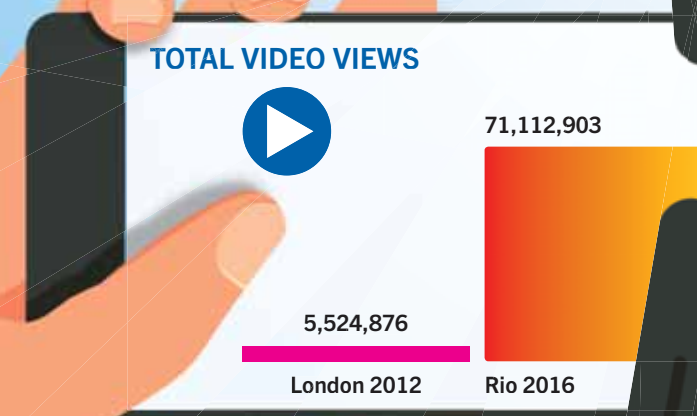
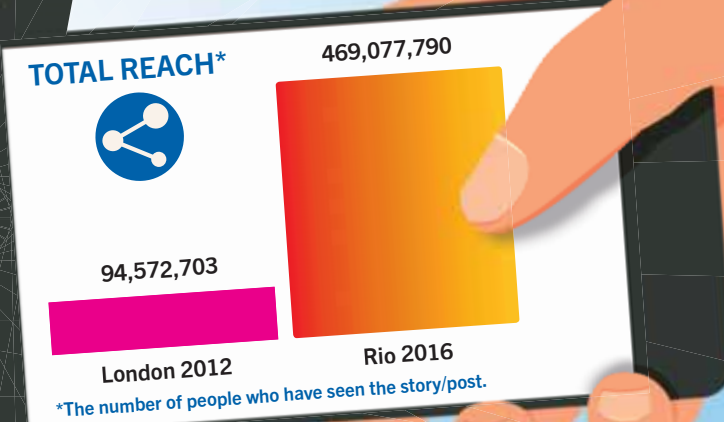
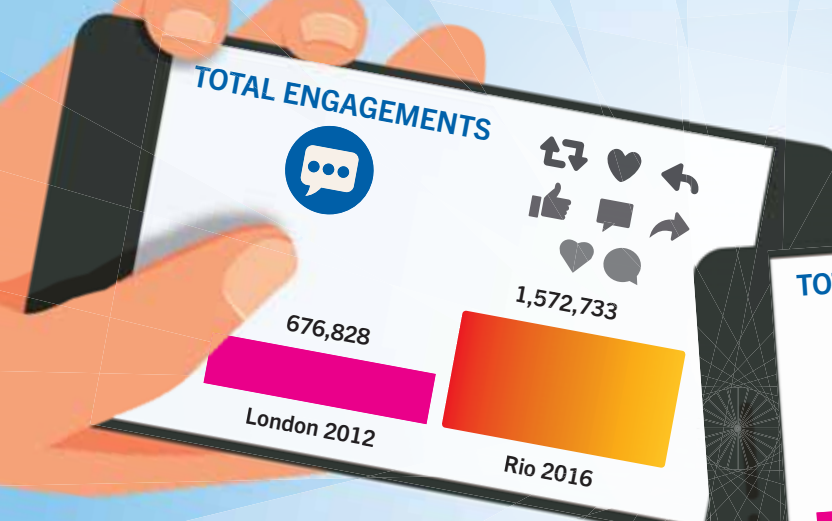
[Facebook.com/IndependentParalympicAthletes](https://www.facebook.com/IndependentParalympicAthletes)



Then & now

The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games was a digital success! The IPC's various social media channels (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) saw significant growth from four years ago.

Check out how Rio 2016 compared digitally to London 2012.



Loud and clear — Rio 2016 the People's Games

The Cariocas created an atmosphere like no other as the Paralympics left a lasting legacy on Brazil, Latin America and the global Movement.



The sculpture of the Paralympic symbol was made of recycled plastic, consisting of different textures and smells, thus being a source of inclusion and interactivity

Brazil's most popular Para athlete Daniel Dias was nowhere in sight, but fans were already chanting his name minutes ahead of his first race inside the Aquatics Stadium.

When he touched the wall for his first of four gold medals, the noise exceeded any level the Paralympic Games, arguably, had experienced before.

Perhaps the closest would be from London 2012, when an 80,000 capacity crowd at the Olympic Stadium chanted Jonnie Peacock's name before the British sprinter won gold in the 100m T44 final.

But that electric, ear-piercing atmosphere was replicated for nearly every Brazilian athlete during Rio 2016, exemplifying just what made it the People's Games.

People's passion

Infant ear-protectors were a popular sight at the Aquatics Stadium.

At the Riocentro — Pavilion 6, Brazilians stomped on the metal-rattling bleachers to cheer on their men's and women's sitting volleyball teams in their bronze medal matches.

Spectators packed the Olympic Arena from bottom to top, and erupted when their men's wheelchair basketball team won a thrilling one-point game over Australia.

"The crowd was like a sixth player for us — they really helped us," said wheelchair basketball player Leandro de Miranda.

More than 2.15 million tickets were sold at Rio 2016, making it the second biggest in this regard. The ticket sales overtook Beijing 2008 (1.8 million); London 2012 saw the most ticket sales (2.72 million).

On Saturday 10 September, the third day of sporting competition, the Olympic Park was filled with a record 170,000 visitors — 13,000 more than the busiest day during the Olympics.

Rio residents — also known as Cariocas — truly turned up and embraced Latin America's first ever Paralympics, making it extra special for the 278 athletes that were part of Brazil's biggest ever team.

Sprinter Petrucio Ferreira said after his 100m T47 heat race: "I came here today to give my best and go into the final. But at the time I entered the stadium and I saw it was packed, and the supporters shouting, suddenly my legs became so happy and they ran alone — and I went behind them."

Silvania Costa de Oliveira, champion in the women's long jump T11, said after her victory: "Since August I've felt the great support from the Brazilian people and this victory is like a cake where everyone who contributed with an ingredient can join the celebration party."

It was also a special experience for non-Brazilian athletes.

"I've never been booed in my lifetime, but Brazil put it on," Australian wheelchair rugby player Ryley Batt said. "They are passionate fans and it was probably the best crowd I've played in front of."

The people's jovial spirit did not stop at sports as thousands packed into the Maracana Stadium for both the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

With the passion the Cariocas brought to their home Games, IPC President Sir Philip Craven awarded them the Paralympic Order, the highest honour a person or group of people connected with the Movement can receive.

"Welcome as members to the Paralympic Movement. Muito Obrigado, Cariocas," Sir Philip said.



Kids interacted with Paralympians and tried out different Para sports at the Olympic Park



More than 15,000 children were able to attend the Paralympic Games after the global crowdfunding #FilltheSeats campaign raised more than USD 450,000 and surpassed all initial goals

Leaving a legacy

As Rio de Janeiro prepared to welcome 4,316 athletes from 159 countries, accessibility was a priority.

The newly built Olympic Tennis Centre, with its shades of yellow, orange and red, stood out at the Park, with ramps spiraling around the venue. Home of wheelchair tennis events, the permanent centre court is one of the Games' biggest sporting legacies. The Future Arena, a temporary venue that hosted goal-ball, will be dismantled and put toward the construction of four public schools in the city.

Paralympic champions Felipe Gomes, Daniel Tavares Martins and Ricardo Costa Oliveira were also honoured by having schools named after them.

A newly built and accessible transportation hub “the Paralympic Terminal” linked the fully accessible Transolimpica BRT with an existing Transoeste BRT passageway that helped fans and athletes get from one cluster to another.

The Games also prompted the building of the Brazilian Paralympic Training Centre in Sao Paulo, something unique in South America, where future Paralympians can benefit from world-class training facilities. The training centre, which provides both indoor and outdoor facilities for 14 Paralympic sports, will host March's Youth Parapan American Games.

Sustainability was another key legacy, and that was evident when the sculpture of the Paralympic symbol was unveiled on Copacabana Beach.

The Agitos were made of recycled plastic with different textures and smells, thus being a source of inclusion and interactivity. It was part of the effort to raise awareness of the impact on the planet caused by the use and improper disposal of plastic.

Media mania

The Paralympic Games generated record levels of media and broadcast coverage. A record 154 countries, 39 more than London 2012, covered the Games by television, radio and online outlets.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) recorded new highs in viewing figures, as 54 EBU members – more than half of the broadcasters on-site – covered the Games thanks to a rights deal negotiated by the EBU with the IPC.

France Télévisions broadcasted more than 100 hours of live programming on France 2 and 4 as well as a series of special programmes and documentaries. The first week-end of the Games reached audiences of 1.3 to 1.8 million viewers.

Once again British broadcaster Channel 4 raised the bar in how to cover Para sport, assembling a talented team of presenters –

almost two-thirds of the on-screen talent had an impairment – to front 700 hours of live and online coverage.

Channel 4's impact in recruiting such a diverse range of presenters for London 2012 rubbed off on those covering Rio 2016, with most broadcasters employing a number of people with an impairment.

Paralympic.org also showed live coverage of 13 sports and live results from all 22 sports; the IPC's digital media activities engaged more than one billion people.

Sombre moment

Amid the joys and thrills of the Games, there was a moment of silence during the Closing Ceremony in tribute to Iranian cyclist Bahman Golbarnezhad, who died while competing in a road cycling event.

The Iranian men's sitting volleyball team paid tribute to their teammate before and after their gold medal match, cradling a picture of him during the national anthems and medal ceremony.

During the Closing Ceremony the IPC President said that Golbarnezhad's death “affected us all and left the whole Paralympic Movement united in grief. Tonight, I would like you to join me in paying our condolences to his family, friends, his teammates and the people of Iran.”

A major milestone was achieved at Rio 2016 with more countries than ever before winning Paralympic medals to underline the growing strength of Para sport around the world.

In total 83 countries finished on the podium at least once. Cape Verde, Mozambique, Qatar and Uganda all won their maiden Paralympic medals while Kazakhstan (one gold), Georgia (one gold), Malaysia (three golds), Uzbekistan (eight golds) and Vietnam (one gold) topped the podium for the first time.

Having won a solitary silver medal at London 2012, Uzbekistan arguably finished Rio as the most improved nation having claimed 37 medals (eight gold, six silver and 17 bronzes).

“London 2012 was the country's third participation at the Paralympic Games so we still had to learn a lot. And we did,” Navruza Yuldasheva, Uzbekistan National Paralympic Association Executive Director, explained.

Uzbekistan, who made its Paralympic debut in 2004 with just one athlete, sent 32 athletes to Rio, 22 more than it did for London 2012.

“We talked with other NPC staff and coaches, and learned what they were doing to win more medals,” said NPC Uzbekistan president Umid Akhmatjanov. “How are they training with athletes, what they are doing for achieving good results?”

“In general we started to work with Para athletes in 2007. Our aim was to develop Paralympic sport like the Olympic sports.”

Yuldasheva mentioned another element: “We have sponsors so we have the money to help the athletes prepare in the best possible conditions.

“During recent years, we have been organising training camps and Uzbekistani coaches attended some others abroad to gain more knowledge.”

Judokas were among Uzbekistan's strongest representatives. In Rio, they won three golds, one silver and six bronzes, overtaking swimming and athletics as the country's top sport.

Akhmatjanov believes there is a historic reason behind the nation's success in judo.

“It is Uzbek Kurashlari ‘wrestling,’” he said. “This is a historical type of sport coming from our parents and grandparents. Judo looks like this Uzbek Kurashlari but it has its own rules.”

Yuldasheva added: “Judo is the most popular sport in Uzbekistan and we organised training camps with Japanese and Korean judokas and coaches, who we consider to be some of the best in the world?”

Another country who did better than ever before in Rio was Colombia with the South American country wining 17 medals,

15 more than in London. This haul included two golds, Colombia's first Paralympic titles for 36 years.

“We implemented a strategy covering the whole Colombian sport in every region, club, national federation and institute to raise awareness of the importance of developing Para sports,” said David Acosta, Colombian Paralympic Committee Sports Director.

“For this period of four years, Para athletes had the support they never had before. Besides, we conducted a study to check which sports we had more chances of winning medals at the Paralympic Games and focused our efforts on those, prioritising them.

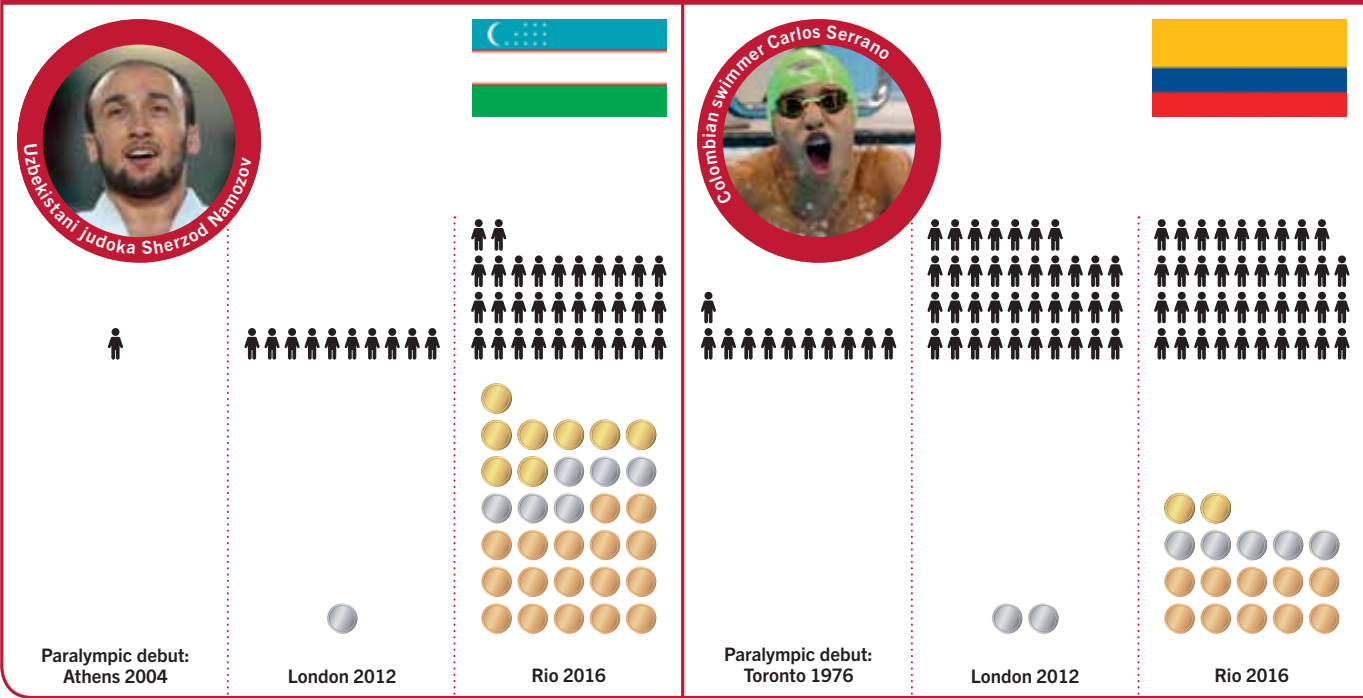
“We also performed monthly checks on some of the best Para athletes to determine if there was something, either mental or physical, which could affect them when competing.

“At Rio 2016, we raised the bar pretty high and achieved national visibility. Now more people know what Para sports are about and the media is paying more attention to them.”

Swimming sensation Carlos Serrano, who won a gold, silver and bronze medal in Rio, said: “This unprecedented performance showed that Colombia is improving step by step. All the athletes gave their best in Rio and they know it, whether they achieved their goals or not.”

A GLANCE AT UZBEKISTAN'S AND COLOMBIA'S DEVELOPMENT

See how their athlete participation and medal hauls compare since their Paralympic debuts, London 2012 and Rio 2016.





... made their Paralympic debuts:
canoe and triathlon.

6
countries



... made their Paralympic debuts:
Aruba, Congo, Malawi, Somalia,
Sao Tome & Principe and Tonga.

7
medals



... were won by Belarus' swimmer Ihar Boki, who ended as Rio 2016's most decorated Paralympian.

83
countries won



... at least one Paralympic medal,
the most ever in the history of the Games.

Games coverage in
154
countries



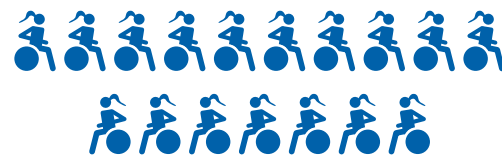
... by television,
radio and online outlets.

RIO
2016
by the
numbers

220
world records



1,669
female athletes



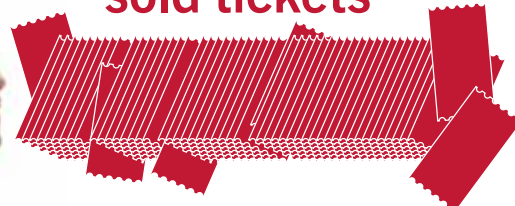
... competed in Rio,
a record number which doubled
the one from Atlanta 1996.

Engagement of
1.5B
people

... by the IPC's digital
media activities
around the world.



2.15 M
sold tickets



... making Latin America's
first Paralympic Games
the second biggest ever in this regard,
only behind London 2012.



in review

Latin America's first Paralympic Games came to a close with plenty of memorable sporting performances. Here is a look back at what happened in each of the 22 sports.



Great Britain	3	2	1	6
China	3	2	0	5
Iran	2	1	1	4

Archery

Great Britain topped the medals table whilst Iran's Zahra Nematì repeated her historic gold medal success from London 2012.

The British had their most successful Paralympic showing, especially in the women's individual W1 category where Jessica Stretton, Jo Frith and Vicky Jenkins completed a sweep of the podium. Frith and John Walker then partnered up for gold in the mixed team W1.

China was not far behind in the medal standings. The women's individual compound open was an all-Chinese showdown for gold and saw Zhou Jiamin defeat her team-mate Lin Yueshan in a thrilling shootout.

After competing at the Olympics weeks earlier, all eyes were on Nematì who, at London 2012, made history by becoming the first Iranian woman to win Olympic or Paralympic gold. She lived up to the hype, defending her women's individual recurve open title.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



ZAHRA NEMATÌ (IRI)
Iran's flagbearer during the Olympics Opening Ceremony reaffirmed her dominance in the women's individual recurve open with gold; was also part of the mixed team that won recurve open silver.



JOHN WALKER (GBR)
Beat the Czech Republic's No. 1 David Drahoninsky in a tight 141-139 victory; left Rio with two golds (men's recurve and mixed team W1).



ZHOU JIAMIN (CHN)
Won double gold (women's individual compound and mixed team compound open) in her Paralympic debut; only one of two archers to bag two gold medals in Rio.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



OMARA DURAND (CUB)
The T12 sprinter lived up to the expectations by sealing a hat-trick of titles. She set blistering world records in the 100m (11.40) and the 400m (51.77), and a Games record in the 200m (23.05).



MARCEL HUG (SUI)
In his fourth Paralympics, the Swiss world record holder and multi-world and European champion finally won gold, topping the podium in both the men's 800m and marathon T54 events.



LIAM MALONE (NZL)
At his debut Paralympics, Malone won medals and set Paralympic records in each of his three events. He took gold over 200m and 400m T44 and silver in the 100m.



China	32	23	12	67
United States	16	15	11	42
Great Britain	15	7	11	33

Athletics

Chinese athletes once again topped the athletics medals table for a fourth successive Paralympics with T53 racer Zhou Hong-zhuan leading the way, winning three golds and one silver.

The USA's Tatyana McFadden was the stand-out athlete of the Games winning four golds and two silvers in the T54 class to round-out her best Paralympics.

The men's 1,500m T13 final provided the biggest talking point however, with the top four finishers all clocking times faster than the gold medallist in the Rio Olympics.

For the home fans, there was much to cheer. Petruccio Ferreira took gold in the 100m T47, and smashed a 16-year-old world record along the way, whilst siblings Ricardo and Sylvania Costa de Oliveira both won their respective long jump T11 events.

One of the most engaging events for the crowd was the men's high jump T42 which was eventually won by India's Mariyappan Thangavelu.

In total 69 world records were set at the Olympic Stadium during 10 days of competition which attracted 1,136 athletes from 146 participating countries.





Zhou Hongzhuo

The T53 athlete won three golds (400m, 800m and 4x400m relay) and a silver in 100m, while breaking two world records.



My favourite moment from Rio 2016 was definitely when I was standing top of the podium, while staring at the Chinese flag being risen and listening to my country's national anthem. I will never forget that."



Thailand	2	1	2	5
South Korea	1	1	1	3
Brazil	1	1	0	2
Slovakia	1	1	0	2

Boccia

Thailand emerged as the sport's powerhouse, winning every medal event they competed in, including the all-Thai individual BC2 final. Compatriots Worawut Saengampa and Watcharaphon Vongsa duelled for the gold, with Vongsa defeating the defending world champion 5-4.

Hong Kong's Yuk Wing Leung, the 2004 champion and 2008 silver medalist in the individual BC4, made up for not medalling at London 2012 by claiming his second Paralympic gold in Rio.

After winning four medals, including three golds at London 2012, Brazil was hoping for similar success on home soil. Although they did not manage any individual medals, they enjoyed success in the pairs events.

Antonio Leme, Elvani Soares da Silva and Evelyn de Oliveira clinched Brazil's lone gold in the pairs BC3. Defending BC4 champions Eliseu dos Santos, Dirceu Pinto and Marcelo dos Santos had to settle for silver as the trio of Samuel Andrejčík, Robert Durkovic and Michaela Balcova won gold and Slovakia's first Paralympic medal in the sport.



Great Britain	3	0	2	5
Australia	1	1	1	3
Ukraine	1	1	0	2

Canoe

Great Britain stole the show in the sport's Paralympic debut as Jeanette Chippington (KL1), Emma Wiggs (KL2) and Anne Dickins (KL3) all won their respective races. Swimmer-turned-canoeer Chippington edged Germany's Edina Muller by just 0.114 seconds in a thrilling finish to seal gold and her 13th Paralympic medal.

Two bronze medals from Ian Marsden (KL1) and Nick Beighton (KL2) in the men's events added to the British haul.

The great rivalry in the men's KL2 between Australia's Curtis McGrath and Austria's six-time world champion Markus Swoboda lived up to expectations. McGrath showed that his gold medal from the 2016 International Canoe Federation (ICF) World Championships was no fluke, as he beat Swoboda by 1.5 seconds for the gold.

The men's KL1 was the most unpredictable, with neither Brazil's Luis Cardoso (2015 world champion) or China's Xiaowei Yu (2016 world champion) making the podium. In fact, it was Poland's Jakub Tokarz, the runner-up in both the last two Worlds Championships, who topped the podium.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



WATCHARAPHON VONGSA (THA)
Left Rio as a double gold medalist, defeating reigning world champion Worawut Saengampa in the individual BC2 final and helping his team win the pairs event.



YUK WING LEUNG (HKG)
Took his third Paralympic medal (first gold since Athens 2004) in the individual BC4, the most competitive category.

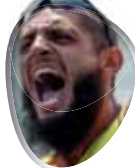


DAVID SMITH (GBR)
Won the individual BC1 category, beating Thailand's No. 1 ranked and defending Paralympic champion Pattaya Tadtong along the way.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



CURTIS MCGRATH (AUS)
After handing Markus Swoboda his first finals loss at the 2016 Worlds, McGrath followed up five months later with another upset at Rio 2016 to stamp his authority.



SERHII YEMELIANOV (UKR)
Defeated Germany's three-time world champion Tom Kierey in the KL3 by just 0.1 seconds, about the same margin he lost to Kierey back at the 2016 Worlds.



JEANETTE CHIPPINGTON (GBR)
Beat close rival Edina Muller by the tightest of margins for her first Paralympic medal since she was a swimmer at Athens 2004.

									
Great Britain	8	2	2	12	Germany	8	3	3	14
China	3	2	2	7	Italy	5	2	5	12
The Netherlands	2	3	3	8	Great Britain	4	1	4	9

Cycling

Great Britain led the cycling track medals table and finished third in the cycling road events to top the sport's overall standings. They picked up three gold medals courtesy of Sarah Storey, who became Britain's most decorated female Paralympian amassing 14 golds, eight silvers and three bronzes.

Ukraine enjoyed medal success through Yegor Dementyev, who claimed two golds in the C5 class, whilst Italy's former Formula 1 driver Alex Zanardi added two golds and one silver to his Paralympic haul

15 years after the life-changing accident that cost him his legs.

The Brazilian crowd who attended the Rio Olympic Velodrome for the track events and Pontal for the road competition also had a reason to celebrate as Lauro Chaman won his country's first two cycling Paralympic medals, a bronze in the men's road time trial C5 and a silver in the road race C5.

On the penultimate day of the Games, Iranian cyclist Bahman Golbarnezhad died in an accident in the men's C4-5 road event.



				
Great Britain	7	4	0	11
The Netherlands	1	2	4	7
Austria	1	1	0	2
Belgium	1	1	0	2
Norway	1	1	0	2


Equestrian

After the Dutch threatened Great Britain's dominance at the 2016 European Championships, British riders responded by winning seven out of 11 medal events in Rio. British success included the coveted team title, an event they have won at every major Championships since the early 90s.


The Netherlands' lone gold came from Sanne Voets in the individual freestyle grade III. European champion Rixt van der Horst was just a point shy of gold in the individual freestyle grade II, which went to Great Britain's Natasha Baker. Teammate Demi Vermeulen also had to settle for silver behind Baker in the individual test grade II.

Brazil's grade Ia rider Sergio Oliva was his country's best medal prospect in the sport and did not disappoint. Fractions short of winning silver in both the individual championship and freestyle tests grade 1a, his two bronze medals meant the world to him as he dropped to his knees with emotion after winning his second medal.


★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



ALYDA NORBRUIS (NED)
Norbruis showed big improvement from her lone London 2012 silver. In Rio, she won two golds and a bronze in the C2 class.




HANS-PETER DURST (GER)
The 58-year-old was the fastest on the road, as he sealed gold in both the men's road race and the time trial T-2, proving age is no barrier.




ERNST VAN DYK (RSA)
At his seventh Paralympic Games, his third as a cyclist, the former swimmer and track and field athlete won gold in the men's road race H5.


★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



SERGIO OLIVA (BRA)
Oliva broke Europe's stranglehold over the medals by taking bronze in the individual and freestyle grade 1a; only the second Brazilian to win a medal in the sport.



PEPO PUCH (AUT)
Won gold in the individual championship test grade 1b – arguably the most competitive class – by one point; took silver in the individual freestyle.



NATASHA BAKER (GBR)
Won two individual grade II golds, including a narrow victory over strong competition from Dutch rider Rixt van der Horst in the freestyle; helped her nation win the team championships.



Jefinho

Three-time Paralympian, key offensive player who helped Brazil win their fourth straight title.

“

The match against China, in which I scored the two winning goals, was my best ever playing for the national team. I am not sure if those were the two nicest goals I have ever scored but definitely the most important ones.”

“

I did not expect so many people to attend the Paralympic Games. They went to watch athletes competing and not people with disabilities.”

“

It is hard to stay on top for a long time. This ongoing challenge makes me want to win more.”





Brazil	
Iran	
Argentina	

Football 5

Superstars Jefinho and Ricardinho paved the way on home soil for Brazil to win a fourth successive Paralympic gold in sensational style.

Following a 1-0 victory over Iran in the final, the Rio 2016 hosts maintained their 100 per cent record in this sport since it was introduced into the Paralympics in 2004.

With Jefinho living up to his billing as the “Paralympic Pele” by scoring a number of outstanding goals that went viral on social media, Brazil triumphed over the Asian champions. After an eight year absence, Argentina made the podium once again securing bronze with a penalty shoot-out win over China.



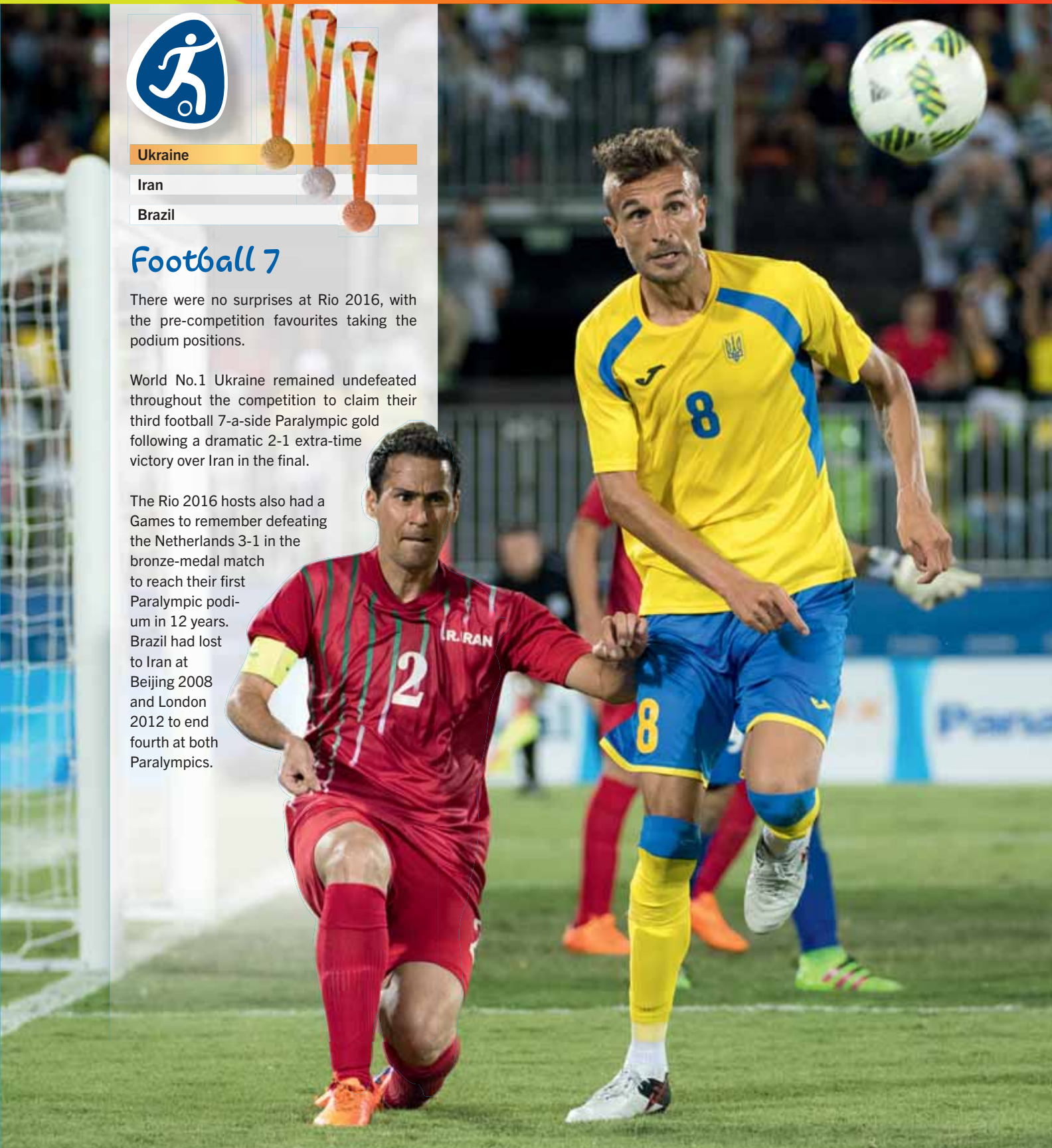
Ukraine	
Iran	
Brazil	

Football 7

There were no surprises at Rio 2016, with the pre-competition favourites taking the podium positions.

World No.1 Ukraine remained undefeated throughout the competition to claim their third football 7-a-side Paralympic gold following a dramatic 2-1 extra-time victory over Iran in the final.

The Rio 2016 hosts also had a Games to remember defeating the Netherlands 3-1 in the bronze-medal match to reach their first Paralympic podium in 12 years. Brazil had lost to Iran at Beijing 2008 and London 2012 to end fourth at both Paralympics.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



JEFINHO (BRA)
His stunning two goals in the semi-final against China made him the talk of social media with online users in awe at his skill level.



SILVIO VELO (ARG)
The Argentinian legend, a two-time world champion, ended his successful career in the sport by winning his third Paralympic medal.



BEHZAD ZADALIASHGHARI (IRI)
His goal against Morocco after dribbling past the entire African team had to be seen to be believed, a sensational strike.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



VOLODYMYR ANTONIUK (UKR)
The 37-year-old was undoubtedly the most valuable player of the competition, ending as the top scorer with seven goals and leading Ukraine to the Paralympic title.



LEANDRO GONCALVES DO AMARAL (BRA)
He was fundamental in the host nation winning bronze, scoring a hat-trick as Brazil defeated the Netherlands 3-1.



MEHDI JAMALI (IRI)
The midfielder was Iran's key player. He netted three goals in the semi-finals against Brazil and scored the equaliser in the final against Ukraine to force extra-time.



Men	Lithuania	USA	Brazil
Women	Turkey	China	USA

Goalball

New Paralympic champions were crowned at Rio 2016 with Lithuania’s men and Turkey’s women winning their maiden titles.

Lithuania have been consistently amongst the top teams in recent years, taking silver

at both Sydney 2000 and Beijing 2008, and finishing fourth at London 2012 and the 2014 World Championships.

They finally claimed Paralympic gold following a 14-8 win over the USA in the final. World champions Brazil completed the podium with victory over Sweden for bronze.

After winning the European title last year, Turkey’s women added the Paralympic crown as they ensured China had to settle for a bittersweet silver medal for a third consecutive Games. The USA collected bronze after beating Brazil.



Uzbekistan	3	1	6	10
China	2	0	0	2
Mexico	2	0	0	2

Judo

Uzbekistan surprisingly topped the medals table in judo with 10 medals, three of which were gold thanks to male judokas Sherzod Namozov (-60kg), Utkirjon Nigmatov (-66kg) and Adiljan Tuledibaev (+100kg).

China’s over 70kg world champion Yuan Yanping extended her winning streak to three Paralympic Games as she added Rio 2016 gold to the crowns she had won at Beijing 2008 and London 2012.

A final that will long be remembered is the women’s up to 57kg between Ukraine’s world No.1 Inna Cherniak and Brazil’s Lucia Araujo, with the former taking the title in front of a huge vocal crowd.

Mexico’s Lenia Ruvalcaba claimed the vacant women’s up to 70kg throne following the retirement of Spain’s triple Paralympic champion Carmen Herrera, whilst Brazil’s four-time Paralympic champion Antonio Tenorio made history by sealing his sixth consecutive medal at a Paralympic Games, a silver in the up to 100kg.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS

GENRIK PAVLIUKIANEC (LTU)
He was fundamental in Lithuania’s success in Rio, scoring 35 points throughout the tournament, including eight in the final against the USA.

SEDA YILDIZ (TUR)
The 17-year-old was an all-around key player in the finals, scoring one of Turkey’s four goals and making 25 blocks (second most on the team).

LEOMON MORENO (BRA)
Brazil once again reached the goalball Paralympic podium and Moreno had much to do with that, scoring four points in the 6-5 victory over Sweden in the bronze-medal match.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS

SHERZOD NAMOZOV (UZB)
The 24-year-old beat Uruguay’s Henry Borges, Azerbaijan’s defending gold medallist Ramin Ibrahimov and Japan’s Makoto Hirose all by ippon for his first Paralympic title in the -60kg.

YUAN YANPING (CHN)
No judoka seems to be close to putting an end to the Chinese athlete’s winning streak after she secured her third successive Paralympic gold, winning the +70kg.

ANTONIO TENORIO (BRA)
With the silver he won in Rio (-100kg), the four-time Paralympic champion sealed a record six medals in six Paralympics and suggested he could even go for a seventh at Tokyo 2020.



Nigeria	6	2	1	9
China	3	6	3	12
Egypt	3	4	3	10

Powerlifting

Siamand Rahman's performance at Rio 2016, becoming the first powerlifter to break the 300kg barrier, was undoubtedly one of the best performances ever seen at a Paralympic Games.

The Iranian went on to lift 305kg and finished the day with an unprecedented 310kg lift, the equivalent of a large Siberian tiger, to set a new world record in the men's over 107kg and secure his second successive Paralympic gold.

He was not the only powerlifter to stand-out. Nigeria's Josephine Orji, in the women's over 86kg, and Paul Kehinde, in the men's up to 65kg, both won their respective categories with world-record lifts.

Egyptian Sherif Osman claimed his third successive Paralympic gold, in the men's up to 59kg, as did Mexico's Amalia Perez in the women's up to 55kg. Chinese powerlifters also proved to be strong, taking three golds, six silvers and three bronze medals in Rio.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



MAJID FARZIN (IRI)
Overshadowed by his compatriot Siamand Rahman's achievement, Farzin still delivered an outstanding performance winning gold in the men's up to 80kg with a world record lift of 240kg.



LIDIIA SOLOVIOVA (UKR)
Ukraine's only ever powerlifting Paralympic champion bounced back from her bronze-medal performance four years ago in London to take her third Paralympic gold.



CONG LE VAN (VIE)
The 32-year-old won Vietnam's first ever Paralympic gold by breaking the world record (183kg) to win the men's up to 49kg.



Great Britain	3	0	1	4
Ukraine	1	0	0	1
China	0	2	0	2

Rowing

Both the men and women's single sculls (ASM1x and ASW1x) featured the unexpected as new Paralympic champions emerged.

Reigning world champions Moran Samuel of Israel in the ASW1x and Erik Horrie of Australia in the ASM1x were coming off strong seasons, however both failed to win gold. The titles went to Great Britain's former cyclist Rachel Morris and Ukraine's Roman Polianskyi, respectively. Morris overcame a slow start to power through for the win. Polianskyi's only major competitions prior to Rio were World Cups in Poznan, Poland (silver medal finish) and one in 2015 in Varese, Italy (fourth place).

Overall, Great Britain dominated the regatta, winning three of the four boat classes. Tom Aggar's bronze in the ASM1x meant the British medalled in every event. Their strongest boat was the mixed coxed four crew (LTAMix4+) of Grace Clough, Daniel Brown, Pamela Relph, James Fox and coxswain Oliver James, who defended their title from four years ago.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



RACHEL MORRIS (GBR)
Captured her second Paralympic title but her first as a rower.



ROMAN POLIANSKYI (UKR)
Flew under the radar to claim gold, having competed in only two World Cups prior to Rio.



GREAT BRITAIN LTA MIXED COXED FOUR
Continued their dominance in the event, winning their second straight Paralympic title.



Australia	2	1	0	3
France	1	0	0	1
Canada	0	1	1	2

Sailing

The stunning Marina da Gloria, surrounded by the world famous Sugar Loaf and Corcovado mountains, hosted the thrilling sailing competition which Australian sailors dominated.

Dan Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch retained the Paralympic title in the two-person SKUD18

class as expected, winning eight of the 10 races, to finish ahead of Canada's John McRoberts and Jackie Gay. Great Britain's Alexandra Rickham and Niki Birrell won bronze.

Australia's other gold came in the three-person Sonar, with Colin Harrinson, Jonathan Harris and Russell Boaden (26 points) finishing way ahead of the US (44) and Canadian (51) crews on the podium.

French sailor Damien Seguin returned to the top of the Paralympic podium in the 2.4m Norlin OD, 12 years after winning gold in Athens. Australia's Matthew Bugg and Great Britain's defending champion Helena Lucas completed the podium.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



DAMIEN SEGUIN (FRA)
He won gold at Athens 2004, silver at Beijing 2008 and could not reach the podium at London 2012, but bounced back to take the top spot in Rio.



DAN FITZGIBBON AND LIESL TESCH (AUS)
Won their first Paralympic title at London 2012 and have dominated the SKUD18 since, winning two world titles and multiple World Cups.



PAUL TINGLEY (CAN)
The Canadian, who took gold in the 2.4m Norlin OD at Beijing 2008, won bronze again in the Sonar at Rio 2016, as he did 16 years ago at Sydney 2000.



China	5	2	1	8
Slovakia	2	1	0	3
Iran	2	0	0	2

Shooting

Competitions were dominated by female shooters, with women collecting seven out of a possible 12 Paralympic titles.

Chinese athletes were the most successful with five golds, eclipsing other nations. Slovakia's Veronika Vadovicova was the sport's joint most decorated athlete with two golds and one silver.

Cuiping Zhang excelled for China, equalling Vadovicova with two wins and a silver on the rifle range in both women's and mixed competitions.

Rio 2016 saw the dawn of a new era in the men's SH1 class. Sweden's 17-time Paralympic champion Jonas Jacobsson left what many believe to be his last Paralympic Games without a medal.

The Swedish shooter was beaten in his favourite event by, amongst others, Serbian gold medallist Laslo Suranji in the R7 (men's 50m rifle three positions SH1). However Jacobsson remains one of Para sport's most decorated athletes with 30 medals from 10 Paralympic Games.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



SAREH JAVANMARDIDODMANI (IRI)
Made history by becoming the first female Para sport shooter to win gold for Iran; won the P2 (women's 10m air pistol SH1) and P4 (mixed 50m pistol SH1).



MCKENNA DAHL (USA)
The 20-year-old's bronze medal in R5 (mixed 10m air rifle SH2) was historic, becoming the first female Para athlete to win a shooting medal for the USA, claiming her country's first medal in the sport since Athens 2004.



VESELKA PEVEC (SLO)
Set a new qualification and finals Paralympic record to claim gold in R4 (mixed 10m air rifle standing SH2) on her Paralympic debut.



   			
Men	Iran	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Egypt
Women	USA	China	Brazil

Sitting volleyball

The women’s side saw the end of a dynasty, as the USA defeated China for the gold medal. China had beaten the USA for gold in every Paralympic final since the women’s competition was added to the programme for Athens 2004, however in September, the US secured a famous 3-0 victory.

The men’s final was a different story. Iran and Bosnia and Herzegovina have traded major international titles for a generation and it was no surprise when the two met for the fifth straight Paralympic final. This time, Iran took back the gold medal with a 3-1 win over their rivals.

With home support behind them, both Brazil’s men’s and women’s teams made the bronze medal matches. The women’s team won the nation’s first ever medal in the sport with a 3-0 win over Ukraine, whilst the men’s team lost a five-set thriller to African champions Egypt, who captured their first medal in the sport since Athens 2004.

History was also made in Rio when Rwanda represented the first ever African women’s sitting volleyball team at the Paralympics.

   				
China	37	30	25	92
Ukraine	25	24	25	74
Great Britain	16	16	15	47

Swimming

Belarus’ Ihar Boki was the most decorated athlete at the Paralympic Games for the second time running, as China dominated the medals table.

The 22-year-old Belarusian won six golds and one bronze medal to own the men’s S13 events. On top of those, he broke world records in the 50m and 100m backstroke, and 100m butterfly.

Host nation Brazil put on an exceptional show for the thousands of vocal spectators at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium. They took four gold, seven silver and eight bronze medals. Every single one was cheered as if it was their first.

Clodoaldo Silva, the athlete who inspired Brazil’s most decorated Paralympian Daniel Dias to take up swimming, retired after a warm embrace with his teammate and a final victory lap of the pool.

Wenpan Huang left with five golds and four world records to headline China’s swimming campaign. The USA’s Bradley Snyder lowered the 30-year-old world record in the men’s 100m freestyle S11, winning three golds and one silver.

The results produced first swimming medals for countries such as Hong Kong, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, whilst Cuba and Colombia won their first gold medals in decades.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



HEATHER ERICKSON (USA)
The captain was named “Most Valuable Player” and “Best Receiver;” finished with a team-high of 65 points.



MORTEZA MEHRZAD SELAKJANI (IRI)
The tallest Paralympian at the Games was top scorer with 28 points in the gold-medal victory.



JANAINA CUNHA (BRA)
Scored a team-high 22 points (17 spikes) as Brazil claimed their first medal in the sport in front of a home crowd.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



CARLOS SERRANO (COL)
The 18-year-old won Colombia’s first gold medal in 36 years in the men’s 100m breaststroke SB7, in a new world record time.



DANIEL DIAS (BRA)
The S5, SB4 swimmer consistently delivered to the home crowd, winning four golds, two silvers and a bronze as part of the relay team’s comeback effort.



ANNA STETSENKO (UKR)
Broke the 20-year-old world record of Germany’s Yvonne Hopf in the women’s 50m freestyle S13, shaving 0.04 seconds off the time from Atlanta 1996.



Dimosthenis Michalentzakis

The teenager surprised many when he won the 100m butterfly S9 by a quarter of a second.



My mind clicked and I just remembered all the encouraging messages and wishes that I got before coming here. I had all of these in my heart as I swam and that is how I finished.”



I certainly respect my opponents. Both Federico Morlacchi from Italy and Tamas Sors from Hungary are very accomplished swimmers.”



During our race I fought with my body and soul and I wanted this medal really bad.”





China	13	7	1	21
Poland	2	3	3	8
France	2	1	2	5

Table tennis

China flexed their strength, with 13 of their 21 medals being gold. Three singles finals featured an all-Chinese showdown. Perhaps their most notable victory was in the women’s class 1-2 with Jing Liu defending her Paralympic title against South Korea’s No. 1 Su-Yeon Seo.

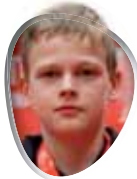
The men’s class 6 was one of the most anticipated match-ups. In a repeat of the 2015 European finals, Denmark’s Peter Rosenmeier avenged his loss to Spain’s Alvaro Valera with a thrilling five-set victory. Meanwhile, Belgian teenage sensation Laurens Devos made headlines when he captured the men’s singles class 9 title at just 16-years-old.

After bursting onto the scene in 2013, Croatia’s world and European champion Sandra Paovic made her long-awaited Paralympic debut. A former able-bodied player who competed at eight World Championships, Paovic overcame a life-threatening car accident to win the women’s singles class 6.

Polish standout Natalia Partyka took her fourth singles Paralympic gold in the women’s class 10. Her only scare came when she faced Brazil’s Bruna Costa Alexandre in the semi-finals but pulled away 3-2.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



LAURENS DEVOS (BEL)
The 2015 European champion showed he is the real deal after taking Paralympic gold at 16 years old.



JING LIU (CHN)
Beat rival and world No. 1 Su-Yeon Seo to take her third straight singles gold; also won her third straight teams title.



NATALIA PARTYKA (POL)
The multi-world, European and Paralympic champion, and three-time Olympian, extended her dominance with the singles gold.



USA	2	1	1	4
Great Britain	1	2	1	4
The Netherlands	1	1	0	2

Triathlon

The first Paralympic champions were crowned in the sport’s Games debut.

Germany’s Martin Schulz stamped his authority in the men’s PT4 with the gold, finishing ahead of 19-year-old Canadian rival Stefan Daniel, who had upset Schulz at the 2015 Worlds. Spain’s Jairo Ruiz Lopez claimed the bronze.

The women’s equivalent saw the USA’s Grace Norman, 18, complete a perfect race to upset Great Britain’s favourite Lauren

Steadman. France’s Gwladys Lemoussu rounded off the podium.

The US women had more glory as they swept the PT2 category, when Allysya Seely, Hailey Danisewicz and Melissa Stockwell went 1-2-3, respectively.

Australian Katie Kelly and her guide Olympian Michellie Jones remained dominant in the women’s PT5 with the win. Great Britain completed the podium, as Alison Patrick and guide Hazel Smith claimed silver, Melissa Reid and Nicole Walters took a sprint finish for third.

The Netherlands’ Jetze Plat and Geert Schipper took gold and silver, respectively, in the men’s PT1, and Italy’s Giovanni Achenza clinched bronze.

Great Britain’s Andrew Lewis was victorious in the men’s PT2. The battle for silver was tight, but Italy’s reigning world champion Michele Ferrarin was runner-up, and Morocco’s Mohamed Lahna, the lone African athlete in the field, took home the bronze.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



MARTIN SCHULZ (GER)
Took gold in arguably the most competitive class and avenged his loss to rival Stefan Daniel back at the 2015 Worlds.



GRACE NORMAN (USA)
The youngest athlete on the field emerged as the surprise winner in the women’s PT4, showing her 2016 World gold was no fluke.



JETZE PLAT (NED)
In a toss-up between him and Australian top-ranked Bill Chaffey, Plat was dominant since the swim to take gold.

				
Men	USA	Spain	Great Britain	
Women	USA	Germany	The Netherlands	

Wheelchain Basketball

The USA secured double gold as both the men and women’s teams won their respective finals. It was the first time in 28 years that both teams claimed both gold medals at a Paralympic Games.

The USA’s Rebecca Murray had sensational scoring, shooting 60 per cent from the field as her team dethroned the defending Paralympic champions Germany 62-45.

Jake Williams and Brian Bell also showcased their offensive prowess, combining for 35 points as the US men defeated Spain 68-52. Spain however emerged as the surprise finalists of the tournament and left Rio with their heads held high, claiming their country’s first medal in the sport.

Both Great Britain’s teams showed significant improvement from London 2012. After just missing the podium four years ago, the British men took Turkey to a thrilling 82-76 overtime victory for the bronze medal. The young British women’s team was no match for the experienced Dutch squad, who took a bittersweet bronze having being tabbed as pre-competition favourites.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



REBECCA MURRAY (USA)
Was on fire in the finals, scoring a game-high 33 points to give the US their first Paralympic gold since Beijing 2008.



STEVE SERIO (USA)
The team captain orchestrated a dynamic offensive system, finishing the finals with 10 assists and a modest seven points.



TERRY BYWATER (GBR)
Was key in Great Britain’s comeback to force overtime against Turkey, and eventually win the bronze; finished with game-high 25 points.

				
China	9	4	4	17
Ukraine	2	0	2	4
France	2	0	1	3

Wheelchain fencing

Many eyes were on Italy’s Beatrice Vio, the overwhelming favourite in the women’s individual foil category B. The 19-year-old did not disappoint, as she defeated China’s Jingjing Zhou, who was coming off individual epee gold, for the 15-7 win.

But it was all China throughout the competition. Their fencers captured 17 of the 27 available medals; this included two all-Chinese gold medal bouts.

China’s world No. 2 Jing Rong denied Hong Kong’s Yu Chui Yee an eighth Paralympic gold in the women’s foil category A. But Yu’s silver medal still meant she equalled the record for the most Paralympic medals held by a female fencer.

Ruyi Ye was another one of China’s key victors, as he claimed back-to-back Paralympic titles with a win over Hungary’s world No. 2 Richard Osvath in the men’s category A foil. Gang Sun upset Great Britain’s world No. 1 Piers Gilliver to take the men’s epee category A competition, a sweet victory, after defeating Gilliver by just a point in the final of the 2015 World Championships.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



BEATRICE VIO (ITA)
Went on an 11-match winning streak ahead of Rio 2016 and lived up to the hype with gold over multi-medallist Jingjing Zhou.



GANG SUN (CHN)
Upset top-ranked Piers Gilliver in a tight 15-13 finals bout; left Rio with four medals, including gold in the foil team open.



JINGJING ZHOU (CHN)
The most decorated fencer from Rio with four medals (three golds); her only loss was to Beatrice Vio.



**Beatrice
Vio**

Gold medallist in
the women's foil
category B at
19 years old.



“ Before my departure from Italy, I was really scared because the pressure was at a very high level. But I promised myself to enjoy every single moment and to have fun, and I did that.”

“ The most important thing is to transform fear to adrenaline, adrenaline to competitiveness and competitiveness to happiness.”

“ I was really nervous (to take a selfie with US President Barack Obama) but excited at the same time. Everything was a dream when I received the inviting email. I thought it was a joke.”



Vio and Obama at the White House for the State Dinner



Australia			
USA			
Japan			

Wheelchair rugby

In arguably the most evenly and closely contested wheelchair rugby final ever seen, Australia defeated the USA 59-58 in double overtime to claim their second consecutive Paralympic gold. In front of a deafening crowd at the Carioca Arena, Ryley Batt's stellar performance was fundamental in the champions' success, scoring 27 goals in the gold-medal match, including the decisive score 49 seconds before the end of the game.

Australia remained undefeated throughout the competition, finishing top of Group B after beating Great Britain, Brazil and Canada to advance into the semi-finals, where they beat Japan.

Tokyo 2020 hosts Japan went on to make history by securing a first medal in the sport with a hard-fought 52-50 victory over Pan American champions Canada in the bronze medal match.

Even though they finished bottom of their groups, France and Brazil also produced some good performances, proving the gap with the powerhouses is rapidly closing.



The Netherlands	2	2	0	4
Australia	2	0	0	2
Great Britain	1	3	2	6

Wheelchair tennis

For the seventh successive Games, the women's single final was an all-Dutch affair with Jiske Griffioen succeeding the legendary Esther Vergeer as the Paralympic champion. Griffioen beat Aniek van Koot in three sets for gold. The two later won doubles gold together against compatriots Marjolein Buis and Diede de Groot, the third Games in a row the women's gold medal doubles match had consisted solely of Dutch players.

The men's singles finals saw Gordon Reid defeat teenager Alfie Hewitt in an all-British showdown. The pair teamed up in the doubles, but had to settle for silver as the French veterans of Stephane Houdet and Nicolas Peifer proved too much.

Australian Dylan Alcott topped Great Britain's Andy Lapthorne in the quad singles finals, then joined Heath Davidson for another gold in the doubles over the USA's defending champions David Wagner and Nick Taylor. Wagner took quad singles bronze, while Lapthorne and Jamie Burdekin captured bronze in the doubles.

Japan's Yui Kamiji clinched the women's singles bronze, while Great Britain's Lucy Shuker and Jordanne Whiley took home doubles bronze. Japan's Shingo Kunieda and Satoshi Saida partnered to claim the men's doubles bronze medal.



★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



RYLEY BATT (AUS)
The 27-year-old scored 158 goals, including 27 in the final, to help Australia win their second Paralympic gold.

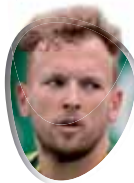


DAISUKE IKEZAKI (JPN)
Starred in the bronze-medal match, scoring 19 goals, leading his team to a 52-50 victory over Canada.



CHUCK AOKI (USA)
He was one of the best players of the tournament as the USA took silver to better their bronze-medal performance from London 2012.

★ TOP 3 PERFORMERS



DYLAN ALCOTT (AUS)
A wheelchair basketball gold medallist from Beijing 2008, Alcott won the quad singles gold without dropping a set, then added doubles gold.



JISKE GRIFFIOEN (NED)
Extended her dominance in the women's division, winning singles gold then joining teammate Aniek van Koot for doubles victory.



GORDON REID (GBR)
Topped his first ever Grand Slam singles wins in 2016 with his first Paralympic singles title.



PyeongChang 2018

With less than 500 days to go until the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, the Organising Committee (POCOG) has begun a series of Test Events in November through to next April which will include six Paralympic winter sports.

The first Paralympic winter sport Test Event will be the World Wheelchair Curling Championships that will be staged between 4-11 March. Featuring 10 teams, the event will take place in the 3,500 seat capacity Gangneung Curling Centre.

From 10 March, the Para snowboard World Cup Finals, and the Para biathlon and Para cross-country skiing World Cups will also take place in PyeongChang.

At Sochi 2014 Para snowboard made its Paralympic debut and between 10-13 March, the climax of the season will involve boarders competing in banked slalom and snowboard-cross events.

Between 10-15 March, the 7,500 capacity Alpensia Biathlon Centre, which was originally

built in 1998 but has had a facelift ahead of the 2018 Games, will welcome the world's best Para biathlon and Para cross-country skiers.

March will also see PyeongChang host the IPC Alpine Skiing World Cup Finals, an event which will see skiers compete in downhill, super-G, super combined, giant slalom and slalom.

The final Paralympic Test Event will be World Para Ice Hockey Championships A-Pool which will take place between 12-19 April.

The USA, the defending world and Paralympic champions, will be one of eight teams taking to the ice at the newly constructed 10,000 seat capacity Gangneung Hockey Centre.

The PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games will take place between 9-18 March.

➤ www.pyeongchang2018.com

UPCOMING TEST EVENTS				
4-11 March	9-18 March	10-13 March	10-15 March	12-19 April
World Wheelchair Curling Championships	IPC Alpine Skiing World Cup Finals	Para snowboard banked slalom and snowboard cross events	Para biathlon and Para cross-country skiing	World Para Ice Hockey Championships A-Pool



Tokyo 2020

Just a few days after the closing of the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, the Paralympic flag completed its long journey from Brazil and arrived in Tokyo on 21 September.

The Olympic, Paralympic and Japanese national flags were hoisted and flown together at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Plaza in Shinjuku, one of the Japanese capital's liveliest areas, marking the latest in a series of milestones bridging the two host cities.

The flag-raising ceremony gathered 3,000 spectators and was followed by the kick-off of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic flag tour. During the coming year, the Olympic and Paralympic flags will be exhibited in more than 60 sites in and around Tokyo, including some of the small islands that are part of the metropolis, and in three of the prefectures affected by the 2011 East Japan earthquake. These events are aimed at building further awareness and support for the Games throughout the country.

Judoka Kento Masaki, who won a bronze medal at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, attended the ceremony and commented: "It really brought home the realisation that

Tokyo will not only be the next host city, it will be the first city to ever host the Paralympic Games twice. I think this is a really significant step in building the momentum of the Paralympic Games."

Interest in the Tokyo 2020 Games is also strong in many other countries and made the Tokyo 2020 Japan House in Rio one of the most popular hospitality houses in the Brazilian capital during the 2016 Games. It welcomed more than 82,000 visitors from all over the world, helping to showcase Japan's culture and raise enthusiasm towards the host country of the 2020 Games.

➤ www.tokyo2020.jp/en/



Beijing 2022

The IPC Governing Board provisionally approved the inclusion of bobsleigh for the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games at a meeting in Rio on 5 September.

Bobsleigh will line-up alongside the six existing Paralympic winter sports – Para alpine skiing, Para biathlon, Para cross-country skiing, Para ice hockey, Para snowboard and wheelchair curling – to be part of

the Beijing 2022 programme. The application for skeleton to be included in the Games was not successful due to the sport not fulfilling a number of the criteria needed.

For bobsleigh to be given full approval for inclusion in Beijing 2022, the sport must meet a number of minimum requirements laid out by the IPC Governing Board in both the 2016/17 and 2017/18 seasons.

In each of the two seasons, the sport must host at least six World Cup races plus a World Championships. A minimum of 12 nations from at least three regions should also be participating each year.

The decision is subject to final written approval by both the IOC and the Beijing 2022 Organising Committee.

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

28-29 January Australian Open (wheelchair tennis) Melbourne, Australia	15-20 February IWAS Wheelchair Fencing World Cup Eger, Hungary	28 February – 4 March World Para Powerlifting World Cup Dubai, UAE	28 February – 2 March Chef de Mission Seminar PyeongChang, South Korea	13-16 April ITTF Oceania Championships (table tennis) Suva, Fiji
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22-31 January

World Para Alpine Skiing Championships



Italy's Giacomo Bertagnolli and his guide Fabrizio Casal

The first winter sport World Championships of the year will be held in Tarvisio, Italy, bringing together 140 of the world's best Para alpine skiers from 30 countries.

France's Marie Bochet, who suffered a leg injury in October, will be hoping to return in full fitness as she aims to continue the run that has seen her win 11 world titles in a row in the women's standing class.

On home snow, Italian teenager Giacomo Bertagnolli will try to convert his first place finish in the overall World Cup standings last year in the men's visually impaired class into his first world medals.

As this is the last major Championships before the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, also keep an eye out for South Korea's Jae Rim Yang. After just missing out on the podium at Sochi 2014, the visually impaired skier will be full of confidence for Tarvisio having enjoyed several top three finishes at World and Europa Cup events since.

www.worldparaalplineskiing.org

ONES TO WATCH



MARIE BOCHET FRANCE
GIACOMO BERTANGNOLLI ITALY
JAE RIM YANG SOUTH KOREA

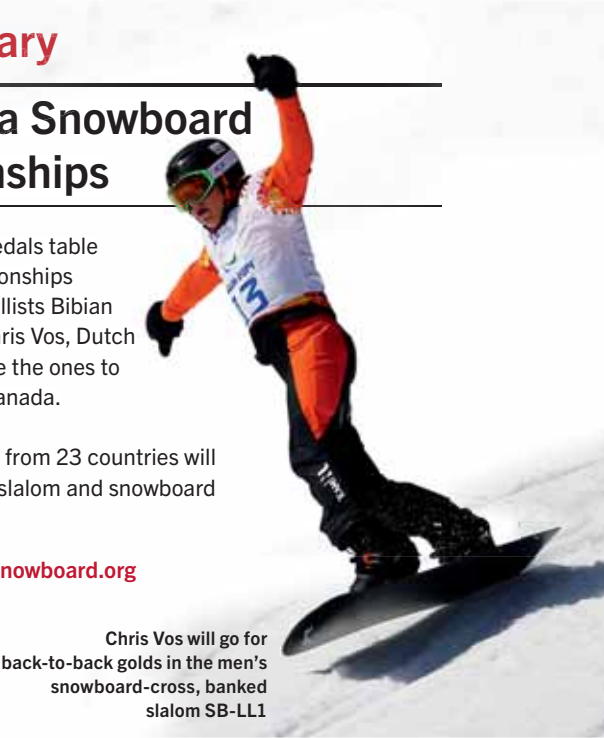
1-8 February

World Para Snowboard Championships

After topping the medals table at the 2015 Championships thanks to gold medallists Bibian Mentel-Spee and Chris Vos, Dutch snowboarders will be the ones to beat at Big White, Canada.

Around 80 boarders from 23 countries will compete in banked slalom and snowboard cross events.

www.worldparasnowboard.org



Chris Vos will go for back-to-back golds in the men's snowboard-cross, banked slalom SB-LL1

10-19 February

World Para Nordic Skiing Championships

Finsterau, Germany, will host the world's best Para biathlon and Para cross-country skiers as 120 athletes from 22 countries compete for 38 world titles.

On home snow, Andrea Eskau will look to defend the three titles she won in 2015 but will find it hard against teammate Anja Wicker.

www.worldparanordicskiing.org



Two-time Sochi 2014 gold medallist Andrea Eskau will have home snow advantage

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

4-7 May World Para Powerlifting World Cup Eger, Hungary	10-14 May IWAS Wheelchair Fencing World Cup Stadskanaal, Netherlands	11-14 May UCI Para Cycling Road World Cup Maniago, Italy	13-20 May ITTF World Team Championships Bratislava, Slovakia	19-21 May UCI Para Cycling Road World Cup Ostend, Belgium
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4-11 March

World Wheelchair Curling Championships

Ten teams will contest the 2017 event which will act as a Test Event for the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games. Russia will start as defending world champions in the 3,500 seat capacity Gangneung Curling Centre but will face strong competition from the likes of Paralympic champions Canada and 2016 world silver medallists Norway. South Korea, who took Worlds bronze, could also surprise.

www.worldcurling.org

Norway has shown rapid growth, being promoted from the B-Pool in 2015 to taking silver at the 2016 World Championships



20-25 March

Youth Parapan American Games



The Brazilian Paralympic Committee's state-of-the-art training centre in Sao Paulo will stage the fourth edition of this event. Around 1,000 athletes, aged 12-21 years old, are set to compete in 12 sports with CP Football and sitting volleyball as new additions from 2013.

Mona is the official mascot for the Youth Parapan American Games

12-19 April

World Para Ice Hockey Championships A-Pool



The USA and Canada are expected to renew their rivalry

The USA will look to continue their dominance of the sport having won Paralympic gold in 2014 and the world title in 2015.

Taking place at the Gangneung Hockey Centre and acting as a PyeongChang 2018 Test Event, the USA's biggest threat will come from their neighbours and great rivals Canada who were silver medallists last time round.

On home ice South Korea will be looking for key man Seung-Hwan Jung to have an impact on the tournament. At the 2015 B-Pool World Championships Jung was named Best Forward after scoring 13 goals and contributing nine assists as South Korea was promoted back into the world's elite.

In total eight teams will compete in the 10,000 seat arena that has been purpose built for next year's Games.

www.worldparaicehockey.org

ONES TO WATCH



JOSH PAULS USA
SEUNG-HWAN JUNG SOUTH KOREA
BRAD BOWDEN CANADA

ISSUE OF THE SEASON

How can sports that make their Paralympic debuts continue to grow and develop?

Olof Hansson

Manager, Head of Para Taekwondo Department World Taekwondo Federation (WTF)



more competitors and create role models.

From an International Federation (IF) perspective, I think inclusion on the Tokyo 2020 programme and an IPC-member status gives the WTF further credibility. In turn, it has been "easier" to promote Para taekwondo at a world level. We have improved contacts with NPCs and WTF Member National Associations. It also helps attract sponsors. Our global reach has strengthened.

It has also helped us internally.

The WTF governs both taekwondo and Para taekwondo. Para taekwondo is now included on the biggest stage for Para sports, and that has encouraged internal promotion throughout our organisational and membership structure. By using an organisational structure that is already in place in 206 countries, Para taekwondo has surely developed more rapidly than if Para taekwondo was governed by a Para sport "only" IF.

Now just because we are set to debut at Tokyo 2020, we cannot take our foot off the pedal.

The popularity of Para taekwondo is continuously increasing worldwide. There is no worry from the WTF's side of being able to ensure that Para taekwondo will still be competitive by 2020. The main concern however is coping with the increased administrative and organisational demands of the rapid increase in popularity and participation in the sport.

Other challenges that have come up include the increase in the number of high-level international Para taekwondo events (e.g. regional Championships). But by creating strong partnerships with the Continental Unions and making the World Championships a biennial event, it has become easier to promote more high-level events in the different regions.

But we also have to continue to increase participation. We know the

sport can fit many athletes with impairments worldwide.

The able-bodied version is widely practiced globally. So far, Para taekwondo is strongest in Europe. But by actively promoting Para taekwondo with the National Federations and Continental Unions, more regions have laid the groundwork for future development. It is expected that Africa, Asia and Pan America will see a great increase in the popularity of Para taekwondo over the next few years, and I expect the diversity of the sport to show in the medal standings come Tokyo 2020.

After Tokyo 2020, it's a matter of keeping pace with the increased exposure and not falling backwards.



Birgit Skarstein

Norwegian world champion Para rower

For canoe and triathlon that debuted at Rio 2016, the next years are crucial for their development.

I can speak from experience as Para rowing debuted at Beijing 2008.

Since then, our sport has developed tremendously, thanks to a combination of international exposure, motivation for Paralympic medals and the ability to run the Para rowing races alongside able-bodied World Cups and Championships.

In the last eight years, changes (e.g. to gear, rules) have occurred in rowing, and changes will also happen in canoe and triathlon.

However, International Federations must ensure those changes maximise an athlete's potential while also helping others try out the sport.

When it comes to gear in Para rowing, we need to ensure this is easy and relatively affordable to use, and as similar to the Olympic rowers' gear as possible. This would help make the doorstep into our sport as small as possible for individuals and developing nations. The gear needs to be simple and light, and developed with guidance and experience from our top athletes.

Boats need to be lighter than the rules allow for today, considering how tough it is on shoulders and ribs for rowers who use arms only. There also must be opportunities to make individual adaptations based on athlete impairments.

In terms of events, Para rowing is facing a major change – a probable doubling of the distance to 2,000m. Our events run alongside able-bodied events (which are raced over 2,000m courses). Running parallel with able-bodied events has been one of the biggest factors of success in growing Para rowing into what it is today. That is because doubling our distance would save organisers time from moving the pontoons; in a practical way it's a clever move for our World Cups and Championships.

But at the same time, there is also consideration on changing the composition of boats. Doing this, plus changing the distance, would result in throwing around which athletes

have to row double and single sculls to be able to compete. Thus, athletes rowing single sculls would need to find a partner to compete with. These athletes will already have to make great changes in their training, gear and tactics to adjust to a new distance. So to then change classes toward the next Paralympics is too short of a notice.

To change and adjust rules of competition is necessary – but this has to be for the purpose of pursuing sporting excellence, just as the IPC's vision states. I would argue that there isn't room for more than one great change of rules within one Paralympic cycle. As a Norwegian rower, this is especially important for nations not big on summer sports, since they have fewer athletes and have to develop with a long-term perspective in mind. Athletes need predictability within the rules to be able to excel over time.

I won the World Championships in 2014 and felt I did everything possible heading into Rio and just missed the podium. You can do everything right, travel all year for training camps, have great gear and work your butt off for years, and still not medal. But to me that was a sign that Para rowing is becoming even more competitive. Rule changes should not hinder the competitiveness or discourage athletes from pursuing the sport, but rather be an opportunity to keep pursuing excellence.



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sponsors
grow
IPC vision
debut
WTF
boat composition
distance
backwards
Olympics
triathlon
structure
promote
World Cup
Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games
develop
Asia
Europe
Pan America
FISA
participation
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role models
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major change
able-bodied
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hinder

It was all over the news, Iranian Paralympic cyclist Bahman Golbarnezhad lost his life when making a determined effort to secure glory for his nation.

Bahman was a man who had lost his leg in war, a man who lost his beloved wife to cancer whilst preparing for London 2012, and a man whose story sadly ended at Rio 2016.

Although his tragic death left everyone wondering what nominated him as the victim of the sole fatal accident in the 50-year history of the Paralympics, the moot question to be addressed is what could have gone through his mind not to surrender to devastation, loss, and loneliness?

The answer I believe is life; the most precious irretrievable blessing one could ever attain.

The Iranian poet Ibtisaj wrote a poem titled 'Life':

"Life is beautiful for those seeking for that
"Life is beautiful for those thinking like that
"Life is a once-lifetime experience to live
"Life is worth everything you afford to give"

In the poem, death is the price one has to pay to live life to the full.



Bahman Golbarnezhad
1968 – 2016
Obituary by NPC Iran

Bahman fought for not being futile and ineffective; not living senselessly. He was in search for meaning, for empowerment and inclusion.

What motivated him through all the years of bearing pain and devastation was to achieve the sense of beauty life could give us; the characteristic spirit of a culture, the ethos that contains the most discussed line in all of Keats's "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all/Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

I think Bahman tried to prove that it is worth living as an empowered person. He believed in eternity in its abstract form; the eternity he was feeling with his soul and mind. This is the difference between an ordinary man and a legend and today Bahman Golbarnezhad is fondly remembered as a war hero and a sports legend.

A legend can be anyone worth remembering for a very long time even after they have left the world. Legends are remembered and their tales are cherished; they leave behind a legacy, not in terms of monetary value, but in moral values.

Legendary nature comes not from one's image but from what one stands up for and believes in. It is not about becoming famous; it is about being someone worth remembering and being looked upon for inspiration and growth. Finally, it is about being free, for only those who are truly free can become legends. Those whose life and skills are part of their ancient culture which is to remind people of the world what rich handsome human nature and culture they come from; a culture of unity, solidarity, love, and peace.

They send out a message of friendship and happiness to the world. Them taking part in international arenas indicates how everyone, even those with disabilities can overcome hardship and stand on top. They manifest that you can be 'a leg to stand on', not 'a shoulder to cry on'.



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IPC Vision:

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