

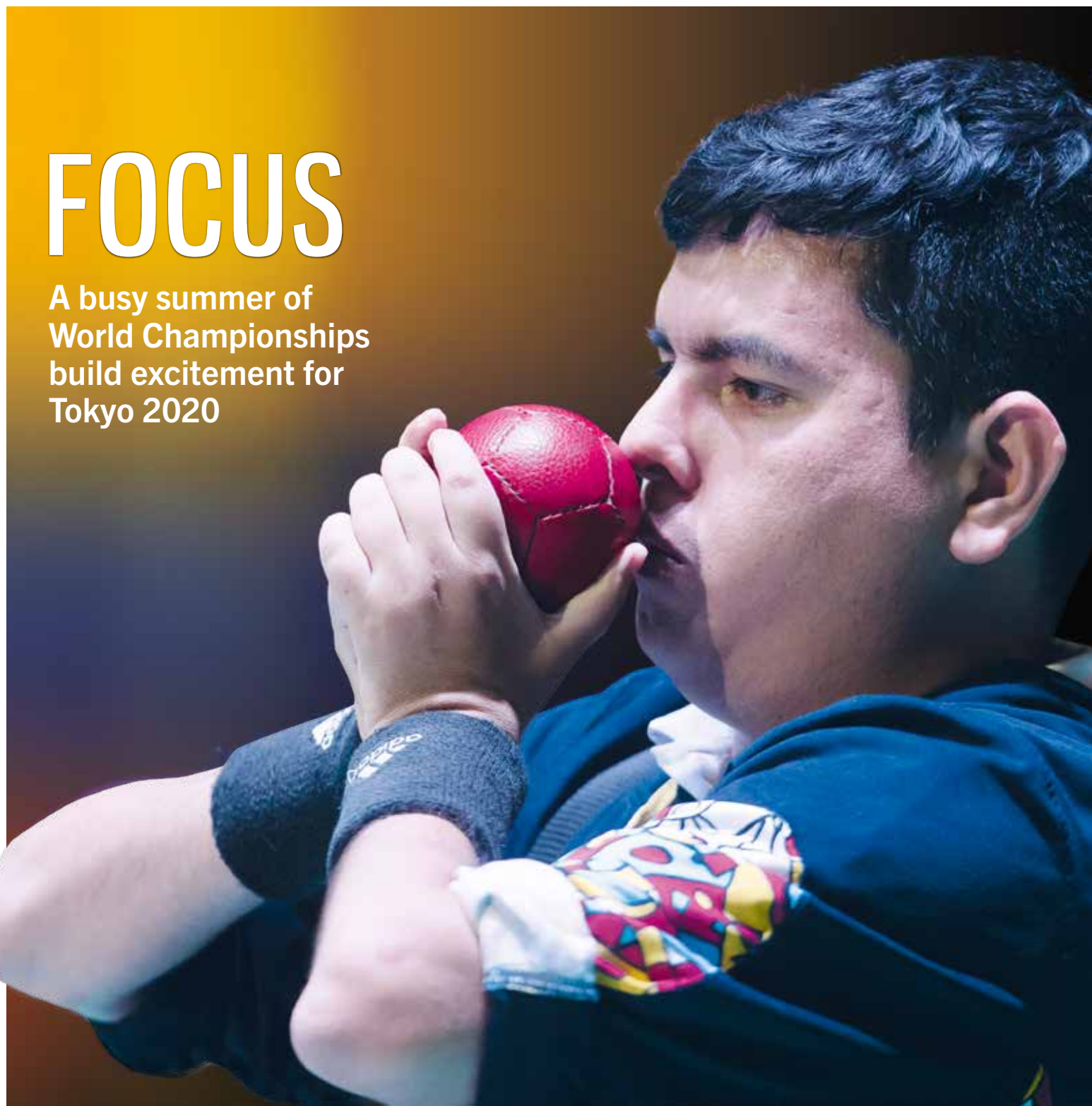
THE PARALYMPIAN



ISSUE # 02 | 2018

FOCUS

A busy summer of World Championships build excitement for Tokyo 2020



> HOW TO ...

Two Paralympians share their transitions to professional careers

> FEATURE

Celebrate 10 years since Beijing 2008 Paralympics

> ATHLETE INTERVIEW

Winter is coming to Brazil, at least for one teenage Nordic skier



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Gaz Choudhry
(on basketball hoop)
and Terry Bywater
celebrate a historic
world title win at
Hamburg 2018.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



“An organisation is strong only if its members are strong, and we will look to introduce new ways to address the different needs of members at all levels.”

Welcome to the final edition of The Paralympian for 2018, a magazine packed full of sport following an extremely busy and sensational summer of World Championships.

This is the first edition since September's IPC Gathering and I would like to thank all members who participated for their fantastic contributions to three intense days of discussion and debate in Madrid.

All the members' comments captured are now feeding into the new IPC Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 which will be published in the first half of the new year alongside the first IPC Athletes' Council Strategic Plan.

Having visited many IPC members throughout 2018 to greater understand their needs, one of the key focus areas for the new Strategic Plan will be measures that can be taken centrally to strengthen and advance the IPC membership. An organisation is strong only if its members are strong, and we will look to introduce new ways to address the different needs of members at all levels.

Another focus area going forward will be pursuing the human rights agenda and highlighting how the Paralympic Movement's tremendous work drives social inclusion. More than one billion people globally have an impairment and far more must be done to

respect their human rights. We have a powerful voice in this area, a voice we aim to make stronger through a number of new strategic alliances.

The Paralympic Games are the world's number one event for showcasing the abilities of people with an impairment. I am delighted therefore that the “Transforming Lives Makes Sense for Everyone” campaign – launched in December in partnership with the United Nations Human Rights Office – will do much to showcase to a worldwide audience how the Paralympic Movement's work really does change lives and societies for the better.

Finally, we are nine months on from signing our latest partnership agreement with the IOC. It is already paying dividend with the IPC's commercial portfolio bolstered by several new additions and renewals. The Paralympic Movement also has more representation than ever before on IOC Commissions and I believe we end 2018 in a stronger position with the IOC than at any time in the IPC's history.

Andrew Parsons
IPC President



THE PARALYMPIAN

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Being a Paralympian meant more than winning for Germany's Heinrich Popow.



Almudena Rivera — representative of the Spanish media Marca that won the 2017 Paralympic Sport and Media Awards — leads a panel of Spanish athletes at Madrid 2018.



IPC member representatives heard from their president Andrew Parsons about the IPC-IOC agreement. They also participated in workshops ranging from youth development to classification.

Members share views in Madrid

More than 200 stakeholders attended September's IPC Membership Gathering in Madrid, Spain, to share their views on the Paralympic Movement's future direction.

During three days of meetings and workshops, representatives from around 100 IPC member organisations discussed key areas that will form part of the next IPC Strategic Plan due to be published in 2019.

The six topics that were chosen by IPC members to be discussed were:

- being an athlete-centred organisation
- ensuring athlete health and well-being
- the future of classification
- youth development
- enhancing membership engagement governance review

Attendees also received updates on the IPC-IOC Agreement, the IPC Athletes' Council strategy, the Agitos Foundation strategy and the IPC's efforts on diversity and inclusion. IOC Vice President Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr gave a speech during the opening session.

Prior to the Gathering, a Media and Marketing Summit was held, attracting around 150 attendees from around the Paralympic Movement.

IPC strengthens human rights agenda support

IPC President Andrew Parsons has called on institutions around the world to do more to empower and respect the human rights of persons with a disability.

Speaking at the United Nations Human Rights Council Social Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, on 1 October, to mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Parsons highlighted how sport is one of the best vehicles for promoting human rights.

"The practice of sport is itself a human right and it is sport that has a unique unifying power to attract and inspire, bringing together and empowering people of all backgrounds free from discrimination," said Parsons who used his address to question the stigma still attached to disability.

While at the Social Forum, the IPC accepted an invitation to join the Advisory Council of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights.

The Centre works towards a vision of a world of sport that fully respects human rights by sharing knowledge, building capacity and strengthening the accountability of all actors through collective action and promotion of the Sporting Chance Principles.



IPC joins Advisory Council of Centre for Sport and Human Rights.

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

+++ **IPC:** The IPC announced the composition of several Standing Committees whose job it is to consult and advise the IPC in a number of key areas.

+++ **NHK:** As part of its effort to raise awareness ahead of Tokyo 2020, Japanese broadcaster NHK produced a third episode of the anime series "Animation x Paralympic: Who is your hero?" featuring wheelchair tennis player Shingo Kunieda.

+++ **SWITZERLAND:** Swiss bank Raiffeisen extended its sponsorship of the Swiss Paralympic team until 2020.

+++ **TOYOTA:** Former IPC President Sir Philip Craven was ratified as a board director of IPC Worldwide Partner Toyota.

+++ **WADA:** The IPC's anti-doping programme at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games was commended by the WADA independent observer teams in its report published in June.

+++ **USA:** US Paralympians and Olympians will earn equal pay outs for medal performances as part of a continued effort to direct more resources to Paralympic sports by the United States Olympic Committee.

IOC membership

At the 133rd IOC Session in Buenos Aires, Argentina, IPC President Andrew Parsons was elected an IOC member.

Parsons, 41, was one of nine officials to be elected at the session alongside the likes of Morinari Watanabe, President of the International Gymnastic Federation; Giovanni Malagò, President of the Italian Olympic Committee; and William Blick, President of the Uganda National Olympic Committee.

When Parsons was elected as IPC President in September 2017 he made strengthening the relationship with the IOC and securing the future of the IPC and Paralympic Movement his number one priority.

In March 2018, the IPC and IOC signed an historic agreement through to 2032 which deepens existing co-operation between the two

organisations and provides the Paralympic Movement with even greater stability.

"Since we signed the agreement in March there has been tremendous progress and co-operation at all levels between our two organisations and the future looks extremely exciting. By working closer together, we really can do so much more to use sport as a tool to changing society for the better," Parsons said.

Underlining the growing co-operation between the two organisations, a record 12 representatives from the Paralympic Movement were named to 13 IOC Commissions, with Parsons and Chief Executive Officer Xavier Gonzalez included in several groups.

WOWOW Emmy Award

The second season of "Who I Am", a series of eight documentaries featuring some of the world's leading Para athletes, was nominated for an International Emmy Award.

The series, produced by Japan's leading premium broadcaster WOWOW, was shortlisted alongside programmes from Brazil, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Goodbye Aleppo, a BBC film documenting the work of citizen journalists in Syria, was the eventual winner at November's ceremony in New York, USA.

The "Who I Am" series was launched two years ago telling the stories of several Para athletes

on their journey to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. Athletes covered in the first two series included Italian wheelchair fencer Beatrice Vio, Brazilian swimmer Daniel Dias and Slovakian skier Henrieta Farkasova.

In September, WOWOW was awarded best TV sports programme at the Asian Broadcasting Union Awards that were held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

The third season started on 25 October featuring eight athletes, including Japan's swimmer Keiichi Kimura, Polish table tennis player Natalia Partyka and Thai boccia player Watcharaphon Vongsa.



WHO I AM

IPC & WOWOW Paralympic Documentary Series



New IPC sponsors and suppliers

The IPC's sponsorship portfolio expanded with the addition of a new sponsor and a supplier. Additionally, two long-term partners extended their support.

Bridgestone, the world's largest, tyre and rubber company, became the IPC's seventh Worldwide Paralympic Partner. The mid-October announcement followed news that long-term partner Visa extended its support of the Paralympic Movement through to 2032.

From 2021, Allianz, a supporter of the IPC since 2006, will become a Worldwide Paralympic Partner after the insurer struck an agreement to join the Worldwide Olympic Partner programme as well.

In addition to the new sponsorship agreements, ASICS joined the IPC as an Official Supplier. The agreement will not just benefit the IPC, but also the Paralympic summer sports the IPC acts as international federation for; several Para athletes; and a number of developing NPCs.



++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

+++ **WADA:** The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) published the 2019 List of Prohibited Substances and Methods. The list comes into forced on 1 January 2019.

+++ **IPC:** The 2019 IPC General Assembly will take place in Bonn, Germany, as part of the celebrations to mark the organisation's 30th anniversary. The biennial meeting will take place at the city's World Conference Centre between 26 and 27 October. A two-day conference will precede the General Assembly.

+++ **IRAN:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Chief of Youth and Sport Section Alexander Schischlik visited Tehran to meet with officials of NPC Iran.

+++ **CANADA:** Karen O'Neill, the Canadian Paralympic Committee's Chief Executive was named Canadian Sports Executive of the Year by Sports Media Canada.

+++ **BRAZIL:** More than 7,000 school children from 48 cities around Brazil took part in the country's National Paralympic Athletes' Day which was organised by the Brazilian Paralympic Committee.

+++ **HONG KONG:** Around 1,200 people took part in Para sport exhibitions to celebrate the second Hong Kong Paralympic Day on 8 July.

+++ **KAZAKHSTAN:** Toyota has provided four buses, two of which have been adapted to support the needs of Para athletes, to NPC Kazakhstan to help with its daily activities.



IPC staff members don Asics uniforms at the IPC Membership Gathering in Madrid 2018.

Lima 2019 preparations continue

A delegation from the Americas Paralympic Committee (APC), led by President Julie O'Neill Dussliere, and the IPC were in Lima, Peru in late October for the seventh Parapan American Games Co-ordination Commission.

Following three days of meetings, the APC left with a greater understanding of what still needs to be done before Lima 2019.

"The infrastructure elements of the project are coming along nicely and set new benchmarks for accessibility in Peru," O'Neill Dussliere said.

"The Athlete Village is close to completion and the Videna complex in the heart of the city – which will host many sports including athletics, swimming, cycling and wheelchair basketball – is unrecognisable from what we saw 10 months ago. These venues will certainly leave tangible legacies.

"Away from the infrastructure projects, a lot of work still needs to be done in some key areas and there is not a moment to waste in terms of preparations. Lima is a city world-renowned for its levels of traffic and the delivery of a strong and accessible transport plan is essential and a top priority for every client attending the Games.

"With more than a quarter of a million tickets to sell, the production of a ticketing plan, sales strategy and campaign also need to be delivered if the objective of full venues is to be achieved."



Lima
2019
PARAPANAMERICANOS

23 AUGUST –
1 SEPTEMBER 2019

1,980
ATHLETES

17
SPORTS



Members of the APC and IPC toured the Lima 2019 Athlete Village 10 months away from the Parapan American Games

+ + NEWS IN-BRIEF + +

+++ **ANTI-DOPING:** Two Ukrainian athletes – powerlifter Anton Kriukov and Nordic skier Natalia Rubanovska – and Syrian powerlifter Shadi Issa are suspended for two years for anti-doping violations.

+++ **WHEELCHAIR RUGBY:** Vejle, Denmark, will host the 2019 IWRf European Championships Division A from 3-12 August. The top two teams will qualify for Tokyo 2020 while the bottom two will be relegated to Division B in 2020.

+++ **ASIAN PARA GAMES:** The Chinese city of Hangzhou in the Zhejiang Province will stage the fourth edition of the Asian Para Games in 2022. China last held the event in 2010 when Guangzhou was the host city.

+++ **CYCLING:** The organisers of the Yorkshire 2019 UCI Road World Championships in Great Britain announced that a full day of Para cycling events will take place alongside the Championships for the first time.

+++ **FOOTBALL 5:** Seven of the world's best blind football teams will take part in the second World Grand Prix from 19-24 March 2019 in Tokyo, Japan.

+++ **ATHLETICS:** Dubai will host the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships from 7–15 November, the first time the event has taken place in the UAE.

+++ **WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL:** The 2019 men's and women's European Championships will be held in Poland and the Netherlands respectively.

+++ **WHEELCHAIR FENCING:** The 2019 World Championships will take place in Cheongju, South Korea, from 24 – 30 September.

+++ **SNOW SPORTS:** The IPC and the International Ski Federation (FIS) announced a new Cooperation Agreement for the World Para Snow Sports. In line with the new agreement, FIS appointed a FIS Sub-Committee for those Para snow sports to act as a liaison for technical matters between FIS and the IPC and its advisory groups. The agreement is intended to clarify the respective roles of FIS and the IPC, and each organisation's operational involvement in certain snow sports for athletes with an impairment.

World Para Swimming World Series

The third season of the World Para Swimming World Series in 2019 will be the biggest yet, spanning eight countries across four continents from February to June.

Australia, Netherlands and Singapore are the three countries making their debut as World Series hosts. The 2019 edition will kick off in Australian water in Melbourne on 15 February and finish in Berlin in June.

In addition to the German capital, Indianapolis, USA; and Sao Paulo, Brazil, are the two other cities which have been part of the competition calendar since the inaugural 2017 season.

Events will also take place in Glasgow, Great Britain; and Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy.

The 2018 World Series featured more than 1,000 swimmers from 72 countries.

All athletes' results at each World Series event are calculated using a standardised World Para Swimming points system via an online virtual competition platform. This ensures that the overall World Para Swimming World Series winner is the best performing athlete over the duration of the series, meaning that every performance counts.



Brazil's Daniel Dias successfully defended the men's individual World Para Swimming World Series title, while Great Britain's Louise Fiddes topped the women's standings.



Fuji Speedway in the shadow on Mount Fuji will host Tokyo 2020 road cycling events.

Games edge closer

With less than two years to go until the Games, ticket prices, the sport schedule, the first batch of test events and the road cycling courses were all announced by the Organising Committee.

Tickets for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies will cost from JPY 8,000 (approx. EUR 62) to JPY 150,000 (EUR 1,162), while attending a sport event will cost between JPY 900 (EUR 7) and JPY 9,000 (EUR 70). Sales will begin in the summer of 2019.

OPENING
AND CLOSING
CEREMONIES
FROM JPY 8,000
€ 62

SPORT
EVENTS
FROM JPY 900 TO
JPY 9,000
€ 7-70

Record live coverage

A record 16 disciplines from 14 sports will be available for Rights Holding Broadcasters to show live from the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

Badminton, boccia, road cycling, goalball, triathlon and marathon events in athletics – sports that are either new or were not covered at Rio 2016 – will all benefit from live coverage. In addition to live coverage of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, athletics, track cycling, football 5-a-side, judo, sitting volleyball, swimming, table tennis, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis will also be made available live for broadcasters to show.

The decision on which sports will be covered live followed a survey of Rights Holding Broadcasters.

Welcome Someity

The Tokyo 2020 Paralympic mascot's name has been revealed as Someity, which comes from someiyoshino, a popular cherry blossom variety, and additionally echoes the English phrase "so mighty." Someity has tactile cherry blossom sensors and exhibits enormous mental and physical strength.



Accessibility improvements

Beijing 2022 has released guidelines for better barrier-free access as the Chinese capital city gears up for the Paralympic Winter Games.

The 'Guide to Barrier-Free Services' lays out the requirements for barrier-free facilities and services in a wide range of places, including stadiums, hotels and transport terminals.

The Code for Accessibility Design, in effect across China since 2012, mainly covers infrastructure. But the new guide also features barrier-free access to information and services, such as easy access to sports schedules for the blind and convenient wheelchair rentals. It also

covers the training and management of those offering services, and the maintenance of facilities.

Beijing will begin an investigation and devise a plan of action and a supervision system in accordance with the guide. The city already launched a plan earlier this year to upgrade accessibility within three years.

Additionally, Para bobsleigh will not be included at Beijing 2022 after the sport failed to meet one of the minimum requirements laid out by the IPC in September 2016 when the sport was provisionally included.



Tony Estanguet heads the Paris 2024 Organising Committee as its president

PARIS 2024
PARALYMPIC GAMES

Sports programme to be finalised

Twenty-three sports have progressed to the next stage of assessment for inclusion in the Paris 2024 Paralympic sport programme, with a final decision set to be made in January 2019.

After a thorough review of applications from 28 sports, the IPC Governing Board progressed the 22 sports included in the Tokyo 2020 Games, together with CP football.

Sports had until 9 July to complete application packs that featured a series of questions that gave the IPC detailed information regarding each sport's governance, rules and regulations, anti-doping programme compliance and activities, worldwide reach, quadrennial competition

programme and procedures to ensure athlete welfare. Classification Code compliance was also assessed, and the IPC considered the costs and complexity of operations on the Paris 2024 Organising Committee, in line with Olympic Agenda 2020/New Norm.

Following the Board's decision, the IPC provided feedback to the remaining 23 sports, asking several of them for further information. Feedback was also provided to the five sports that were eliminated from the Paris 2024 race for failing to meet the inclusion criteria in a number of areas; the sports were golf, karate, Para dance sport, powerchair football and sailing.

Race for 2026

The race to host the 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games heated up when Calgary, Canada, dropped out, leaving Milan/Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy; and Stockholm, Sweden the remaining Candidate Cities.

The two cities will now take part in a shortened Candidature Stage in line with Olympic Agenda 2020/New Norm. The Candidates will submit a single Candidature File in January 2019, as part of a streamlined process which reduces the cost and complexity for the cities.

The election of the host city will take place at the 134th IOC Session in June 2019.

Development projects receive grant support

Projects from eight NPCs and one International Federation are the first-time beneficiaries among the 29 recipients of the Grant Support Programme (GSP) in 2018. The list was announced by the Agitos Foundation on 17 October.

In its sixth edition, the GSP has made available grants of up to EUR 40,000 for summer and winter sports projects that will impact the growth and development of the Paralympic Movement around the globe.

NPCs Bhutan, Cameroon, Canada, Grenada, Latvia, Luxembourg, Sweden and Togo are receiving grants for the first time, while World Para Snowboard is the new International Federation awarded a grant.



www.agitosfoundation.org

FULL LIST OF THE 2018 GSP FUNDED PROJECTS:

NPCS	
NPC Angola	Training of Para athletics, Para swimming and wheelchair basketball coaches from 18 Provinces of Angola and athletics sports equipment
NPC Bhutan	National Paralympic Day
NPC Cameroon	I'mPOSSIBLE in Cameroon
NPC Canada	Increasing and enhancing the participation of women in leadership roles in the Americas region
NPC Chile	Talentos Para Chile – Road to Santiago 2023
NPC Colombia	Latin American school for the qualification of Paralympic sports – ImPARAbles
NPC Greece	Paralympic education & development for refugees with disabilities III
NPC Grenada	I'mPOSSIBLE Grenada – Moving forward together
NPC Latvia	Para ice hockey development in Latvia
NPC Luxembourg	I'mPOSSIBLE in Luxembourg
NPC Malawi	I'mPOSSIBLE in Malawi
NPC Peru	I'mPOSSIBLE in Peru
NPC Slovakia	Co-operation of Central and East European countries in Paralympic sports
NPC Sweden	Winter Para sports development camps 2019
NPC Togo	National awareness project for the detection of talent Para female athletes
NPC Uganda	Increasing participation of people with a disability in sports at grassroots and representation at Paralympics
NPC USA	The Caribbean Development Project

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	
Americas Paralympic Committee	Strengthening Para sport development in the Americas
Oceania Paralympic Committee	Transitioning talent ID and coach development to a Tokyo 2020 outcome

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS OF SPORT FOR THE DISABLED	
International Federation for Intellectual Impairment (INAS)	Eligibility education and support to classifier training for intellectual impairment sport

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONS	
Badminton World Federation	African Para badminton legacy project
Boccia International Sports Federation (BISFed)	Boccia Development India
International Cycling Union (UCI)	UCI international classifier recertification workshop
World Para Athletics	How to organise a Para athletics event: An educational tool for developing nations
World Para Ice Hockey	Technical delegate course
World Para Nordic Skiing	Technical delegate and Para biathlon referees technical education
World Para Powerlifting	She can lift: Women in Para powerlifting programme
World Para Snowboard	Development camp followed by an entry-level competition
World Para Swimming	Athlete Development Project Asia

NPCs empowered with knowledge



At the OCP level 2 workshop in Estonia, participants were given tools for examining their NPCs' situations and finding ways to overcome obstacles.

The Agitos Foundation launched the second level of its Organisational Capacity Programme (OCP) in Tallinn, Estonia, aiming to provide in-depth knowledge and support to NPCs in governance and planning; marketing and communication; and athlete development.

The first workshop in Estonia covered topics on governance and planning, with representatives from Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania, Serbia and the host country. Participants worked on planning tools and case studies applicable to their own NPCs.

A second workshop of OCP Level 2 was held in August and focused on marketing and communications. Representatives from Argentina, Chile, workshop hosts Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru attended.

Refugees' support from EU Commission



The Agitos Foundation, in partnership with NPC Greece, expanded its activities with refugees in 2018 thanks to a European Commission grant.

The initiative aims to promote social inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers through Para sports by further developing the GSP-funded project "Paralympic Education Development in Refugee and Asylum-seeking Populations," which started in October 2016 in Greece.

The project, which concluded in November, was one of the 19 selected among 101 applications to the European Commission. It provided a space where Greek Para athletes, refugees and other participants could share their experiences.



++ NEWS IN BRIEF ++

+++ **PROUD PARALYMPIAN:** The IPC's athlete education programme will finish 2018 with 15 new Proud Paralympian leaders from around the globe. After going through trainings in Marrakech, Morocco; Sant Cugat, Spain; and Bogota, Colombia; the leaders are now certified to deliver workshops to young athletes.

+++ **EAST AFRICA:** Representatives from Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda gathered in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, for the first Organisational Capacity Programme level 1 training workshop in East Africa. The participants learned how to hold similar workshops in their respective countries, passing on further knowledge of the Movement.

+++ **I'MPOSSIBLE:** Japanese singers Goro Inagaki, Tsuyoshi Kusanagi and Shingo Katori donated all proceeds from their charity single called "Ame Agari no Step" to support the Nippon Foundation Paralympic Support Centre and the Agitos Foundation's I'mPOSSIBLE. The charitable sale period raised a total of EUR 170,000, in which EUR 60,000 was given to the Agitos Foundation. The remainder was allocated to Japan's National Paralympic Sports Federations.

AN NPC THAT TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY THE AGITOS FOUNDATION

Pathways to success in Malawi

Malawi's big sporting names gathered at the Bingu International Convention Centre, Lilongwe, in March 2018 for the country's first sports awards ceremony.

Out of 17 trophies, three were awarded to NPC Malawi for Best Managed Sports Association for 2017; their president James Chiutsi was voted Sports Administrator of the Year; and sprinter Prisca Kachule was named Best Female Athlete with a Disability.

Malawi is not known for winning medals at a Paralympics or World Championships. They sent their first athlete to a Paralympics at Rio 2016 – Taonere Banda – who was disqualified in the 1500m T12-13 heats.

But the awards tell a bigger story about the dedication and persistence of an NPC that took advantage of opportunities provided by



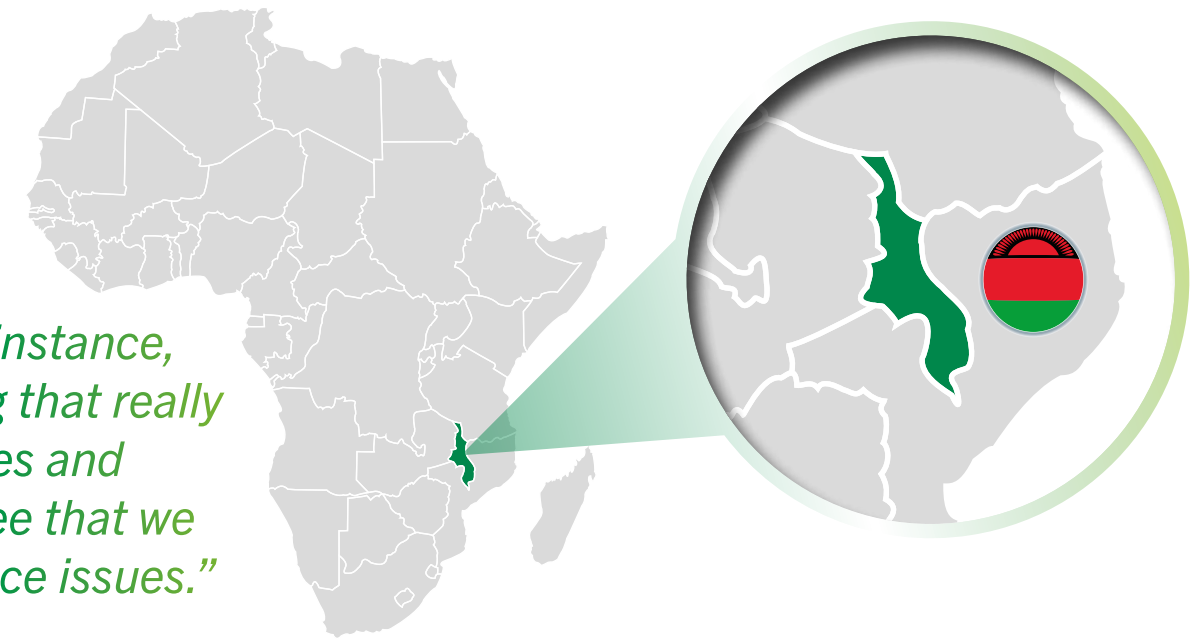
the Agitos Foundation to set up a long-term strategy for success.

Programmes leading to progress

In recent years, NPC Malawi participated in the Agitos Foundation Organisational Capacity Programme (OCP), which aims to build capacity within NPCs. They have been beneficiaries of the Grant Support Programme in 2016, 2017 and 2018; and recently hosted a Sport Technical Course for Para athletics and Para powerlifting, as part of the NPC Development Programme.

"The case of Malawi is an example of an NPC with a lot of challenges but with the determination to do something for their Para athletes," said Jose Cabo, Agitos Foundation Senior Development Manager. "They have put together

"The OCP, for instance, was something that really opened our eyes and helped us to see that we have governance issues."



the structure and given the athletes the opportunities they deserve to be at the Paralympic Games at some point or even just to practice Para sport as a tool of social inclusion."

NPC President James Chiutsi, who joined the organisation in 2013, has seen how much Para sport has developed in Malawi.

"As an NPC we still have challenges when it comes to capacity-building issues, such as skills development, and even management development," Chiutsi said. "The OCP, for instance, was something that really opened our eyes and helped us to see that we had governance issues."

One of the first challenges Chiutsi identified was the need to bring more awareness, not only to Paralympic sport, but to the rights of people with an impairment.



Children from the Monfort school in Chiradzulu, one of the schools implementing I'mPOSSIBLE.

"Culturally, in our society, people with disabilities are looked down upon, even brutalised," Chiutsi said. "So we made sure we had a very strong relation with media, engaging with them, inviting them to our meetings. We had to teach them about Para sports, as initially they had little knowledge about it. This was key to improve awareness and publicity."



Aspiring Para athletes and coaches participated in exercises at the Bingu National Stadium in Malawi's capital Lilongwe

To ensure participation in Para sports, NPC Malawi partnered with organisations that work with people with an impairment and engaged with the Ministry of Education.

"As we are thinking about long-term athlete and coach development pathway, we made sure most of our technical officials are coming from a teaching background, so we can ensure that we have access to young people in primary and secondary schools as well," Chiutsi said. "They need to know that they can also participate in Para sport."

Last year, NPC Malawi organised the country's first national Para athletics championships, which started at district and regional levels.

"We want the athletes and the coaches to become elite," Chiutsi said. "We want them to compete regionally, nationally and internationally and win medals, so we will still be working with the Agitos Foundation to make sure we are still getting the technical support to send these athletes to qualifying events and, eventually, to international competitions like the Paralympic Games."

Among the athletes whose life has been transformed through participation in Agitos Foundation workshops is Kelvin Nyasulu.

"I used to think that sport is for the people who are able," said sprinter Nyasulu. "Sports have helped me a lot because my friends didn't understand me properly and they used to laugh at me. Now I'm not alone, I have friends that are training together and who are helping me now."

Educating the next generation

Malawi was one of the first countries to start implementing I'mPOSSIBLE, the Agitos Foundation's education programme aimed to challenge and change how young people perceive people with an impairment.

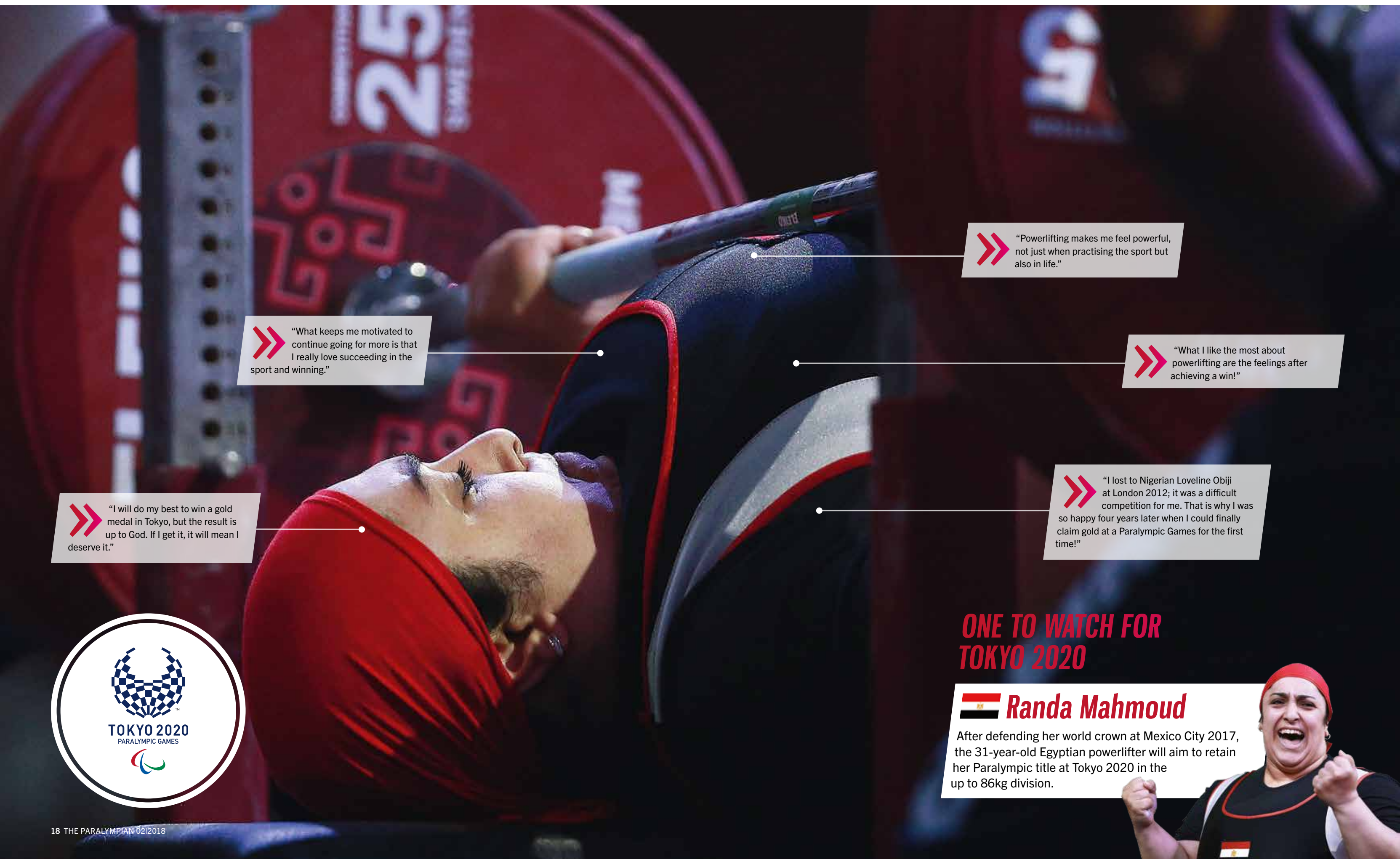
The programme began to be implemented in December 2017 and since then 15 schools started to deliver it.

"We see that the programme can help in increasing awareness of the Paralympic Movement," Chiutsi said. "Before, only people who were somehow involved with the Games had this knowledge, but now even teachers who are not yet involved with the programme have become interested in teaching and understanding."



Coaches and athletes during Sport Technical Course in Lilongwe, Malawi, hosted in July.

Children try goalball during I'mPOSSIBLE session in school in Blantyre, Malawi



“What keeps me motivated to continue going for more is that I really love succeeding in the sport and winning.”



“Powerlifting makes me feel powerful, not just when practising the sport but also in life.”



“What I like the most about powerlifting are the feelings after achieving a win!”



“I will do my best to win a gold medal in Tokyo, but the result is up to God. If I get it, it will mean I deserve it.”



“I lost to Nigerian Loveline Obiji at London 2012; it was a difficult competition for me. That is why I was so happy four years later when I could finally claim gold at a Paralympic Games for the first time!”



ONE TO WATCH FOR TOKYO 2020



Randa Mahmoud

After defending her world crown at Mexico City 2017, the 31-year-old Egyptian powerlifter will aim to retain her Paralympic title at Tokyo 2020 in the up to 86kg division.



▶ DIGITAL DYNAMICS

📈 Trending now: #StokeMandeville70

Dr. Ludwig Guttman organised the first sport competition for 16 injured war veterans in 1948 at a rehabilitation hospital in Great Britain.

The Stoke Mandeville Games as they were known later evolved into the Paralympic Games. On 29 July 2018, people around the Movement celebrated the 70th anniversary.



For more, search the hashtag **#StokeMandeville70** on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.



NO SNOW? NO PROBLEM FOR CRISTIAN RIBERA



Cristian Ribera takes winter sports to new heights in Brazil

CRISTIAN RIBERA

Youngest Paralympian at PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games

Sixth place in men's cross-country long distance sitting

Brazil may not have ski centres due to its predominantly warm climate. But this does not stop cross-country skier Cristian Ribera from practicing the sport he loves.

The 16-year-old, who first tried cross-country skiing at an Agitos Foundation workshop, trains on rollers in the streets of Sao Paulo. He travels to Europe only once a year to practice on snow.

Despite the challenges, Ribera achieved Brazil's best result at an Olympic or Paralympic Winter Games at PyeongChang 2018. He finished sixth in the men's cross-country long distance sitting.

"It is an inexplicable feeling," said Ribera, who wants to study mechanical engineering after graduating from secondary school.

"It was a good event; I managed to have good rhythm throughout. Despite not reaching the top five, I met my goal of ending among the top 10. It was very tough and I did not imagine something like this so young."

Did you expect to produce such a great performance?

Cristian Ribera (CR): Of course I had big expectations, but I did not expect to perform as I did. I gave my best and devoted myself to achieving a great result.

What made it possible?

CR: Much effort and dedication in my training in Brazil made this possible. My family and friends also had a very important role in

this because they have always been by my side supporting me with all their strength. We train on rollers because there is no snow in Brazil. This allows us to run in the streets. We work the technique a lot, but of course the transition to running on the snow is not easy. It is quite different.

Did competing at World Cups prior to the Games help you gain necessary experience on the snow?

CR: Absolutely, they were very important, even more so considering they were the first skiing competitions I took part in! After the first events, I achieved the marks needed. That was really good and motivated me to train harder and outdo myself all the time. I believe the World Cup in Finland in December 2017 was the most important one because I finished fourth in the sprint. That gave me strength and inspired me to get better prepared for the Paralympics.

How did you celebrate?

CR: The reception back in Brazil was great and very exciting. When I arrived at the airport, my family and friends were waiting for me to celebrate together. It was so cool!

What do your family and friends think when they watch you skiing, as it is not something you see every day in Brazil?

CR: They think it is cool and support the idea. Sometimes I train on the road close to my home and they join me because they think it is something new and different. We need to make this sport more visible in the country.

GET A JOB AFTER YOUR SPORTING CAREER

One Paralympian found a job in government and another in communications. Find out more about their approaches.



From athletics to politics



**CHANTAL
PETITCLERC**



Athletic profile:
14-time gold medalist across five Paralympic Games

Education background:
Bachelors of Science in History at the University of Alberta in Edmonton

Current occupation:
Quebec senator

Chantal Petitclerc received a call, offering her a job she did not apply for.

On the other line was Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

► The offer: to serve parliament.

It might have looked easy for one of the world's most successful Paralympians. Petitclerc however, would argue otherwise.

After Beijing 2008, Petitclerc retired. She served numerous boards and committees; did a lot of public speaking and was Canada's Chef de Mission at the Rio 2016 Paralympics.

The former wheelchair racer was also not afraid to be an advocate on disability topics, during and after her sporting career. Eventually, her name was referenced to Trudeau for the Quebec senator position.

"I believe that everything I did from retirement, and even before my retirement, to that point gave me the credibility, expertise and competence," she said. "They did not

appoint me because I had medals, but because I had also voiced myself on many concerns, not only when it comes to sports, but persons with disability and discrimination."

► Petitclerc also said the Prime Minister's call was good timing.

While there was high demand for her to deliver keynote speeches at corporate events, she was also raising her son. Less travelling, stability and a pension plan would certainly make her life easier.

► Her new job though presented a steep learning curve.

She studied history, not law, and recalled her first few months when the senate was working to pass a bill on assistance in dying.

"I had to catch up a lot on reading a bill, understanding a bill, what is an amendment, how is a bill articulated, how it is applied through regulations," she explained. "But when it came to defending the most vulnerable in Canada, when it comes to access to

assistance in dying, I had the 'lived experience.' I knew what it is like for persons with a disability, I knew persons with a disability, with very severe disabilities, who would consider assistance in dying, for example.

"The key was that I quickly understood. I thought, I'm not going to try and fake it. I'm not a lawyer. That is not what I can bring to parliament. But what I can bring is a voice to whom we need to protect, who we need to make sure this bill will be for."

During her three years in the senate, Petitclerc realised, even more, that what helped her win 21 Paralympic medals really does transition to the professional world.

"How organised I am, how good I am to set up a goal, divide it, articulate it and make it happen, translates from sport in my senate work environment," Petitclerc said. "I get a lot of compliments (about my work ethic). And this comes from training. It comes from sports."

► Her advice for other Para athletes is to make a career plan and understand that what works for some, might not work for others.

"I know amazing Olympians who did great at the Olympics while studying medicine," Petitclerc said. "They liked to have something else to talk and think about when they weren't training. Others like me, sports, world records, medals were my life. Anything else was a distraction. I wasn't lazy. But it was not my personality to split, and you need to know what works for you."



From swimming to digital media



TUCKER DUPREE



Athletic profile:
4-time Paralympic swimming medallist;
2-time world champion

Education background:
Bachelor of Science in Digital Marketing and
Communications from DeVry University

Current occupation:
Digital Media Communications Co-ordinator at BP

► After accomplishing all he could in swimming, Tucker Dupree was ready to move on.

What he did during his sporting career was important in setting him up for the next chapter in his lift.

“I thought my success in the pool was going to translate into endless sponsorships, but I was wrong,” Dupree said. “While I did receive some amazing sponsorship opportunities, it wasn’t easy, and it was a lot of work to continue to foster those relationships. I learned a lot about building my personal brand and how to give value back to a sponsor.

“Eighty per cent or more of employers require some form of a university degree so I knew that was one key to my future success,” Dupree said.

He graduated high school in 2007 and took two years off from university to focus on the London 2012 Paralympics. He took another three to prepare for Rio 2016. Unexpectedly what typically is a four-year process to earn a bachelor’s degree, took nine years.

“I probably would not have taken off school,” he laughed when asked if he would have done anything differently during his sporting career. But he was able to complete his studies by taking online classes at DeVry University, which was in partnership with the United States Olympic Committee.

► He also had a passion for what he was studying.

As a vision impaired athlete, Dupree knew how important digital technology was. As a Paralympian and motivational speaker, he also had a passion for communication, so he coupled both into his degree.

During his sporting career, he was also marketing himself as an athlete and brand to help him secure top sponsors, skills which he used to build his portfolio and then utilised to transition into the corporate world. Ultimately, education, preparation, passion, hard work, and networking added up to a job.

► Showing he could manage studying, competing, networking and building his brand/business, were huge resume boosts.

“As much as we live in the bubble of ‘Oh this is a lot of fun and a lot of people think highly of you as an elite disabled athlete,’ that type of environment is great however that is not the reality outside of the sporting world,” he said. “Outside of sport, unless you find a company that really understands what (being a Paralympian) looks like, it doesn’t really hold a lot of value to them, which can be hard to hear if you haven’t put any preparation into your life after sport.”

► He wants federations to understand that the future of sport includes a duty to care for athletes.

“We are people first and athletes second,” Dupree said. “I see a lot of opportunities where athletes could start to prepare for life after sport and gain tangible business skills with the support of their federations.”



For more on how Para athletes can develop their careers on and off the field of play, visit the IPC Athlete Career Programme here:

 www.paralympic.org/athletes/career-programme/what

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF... **STINNA** **TANGE KAASTRUP**

Stinna Tange Kaastrup has been riding internationally since she was 16 years old.

She captured the hearts of many when she made her Paralympic debut at Rio 2016, winning two bronze medals. Born without legs, Kaastrup entered September's 2018 World Equestrian Games in Tryon, USA, as a one to watch in the grade II category.

Here is how the 24-year-old's week went.



SUNDAY

Hurricane Florence arrived in North Carolina. We stayed inside our hotel. It was very wet, but we were not as affected as others.

I was with my boyfriend Stefan Nielsen, and we stayed in and enjoyed a low-key night. My horse, Smarties, was also safe from the storm, so the day off was good.



MONDAY

The sun came out to dry things off, and we went over to the venue to train. Smarties felt fabulous and danced away. It was the last evening before the competition started, and I was really nervous. Sleep is important to me. I went to bed early. But then my mom knocked on my door about half an hour later to wish me luck before my competition.



TUESDAY

The first day of competition – the individual test. One of my pre-competition routines, after the physio loosens me up, is to do my hair and makeup. I joke that you can always tell I'm nervous before a competition when I have too much makeup on!

I got heat stroke in the warm-up arena because I kept riding with my jacket on (the formal jacket we wear in competition). This was a mistake because my body is really small and so I heat-up really quickly. I panicked. But I also knew my test by heart. We had everything planned down to the smallest detail.

Then the most amazing thing happened – I became a world champion for the first time in my life! There were lots of tears and I was so happy and proud of what Smarties and I had done. We celebrated by going out for dinner and I bought my groom a pair of boots.



WEDNESDAY

A chilled-out day watching my teammates ride, followed by a little bit of shopping afterwards.

I got to bed a bit late because we struggled to find somewhere to eat in Tryon. With the team competition happening over the next two days, I was also excited and began going through my competition routine in my head.

THURSDAY

I rode for my country in the team test and got the highest score of the grade. We needed to be on the podium for this as the three winning teams secure qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics! I was really pleased with my test and knew that my teammates could post good scores. But I also knew it would be very close going into day two!

FRIDAY

To our disappointment, we finished fourth in the team test behind Germany. We were so close. We gave it all we got. But we had to focus on Saturday's freestyle competition. I went home early as I was really struggling with the heat in Tryon.

SATURDAY

Freestyle time! Every rider says this is their favourite event because we get to dance with our horses. Smarties and I really showed today what an amazing partnership and bond we have. I love him so much, and today I became world champion in freestyle too! There are no words to describe the feeling. It was just so amazing. After the competition, of course we celebrated!



10

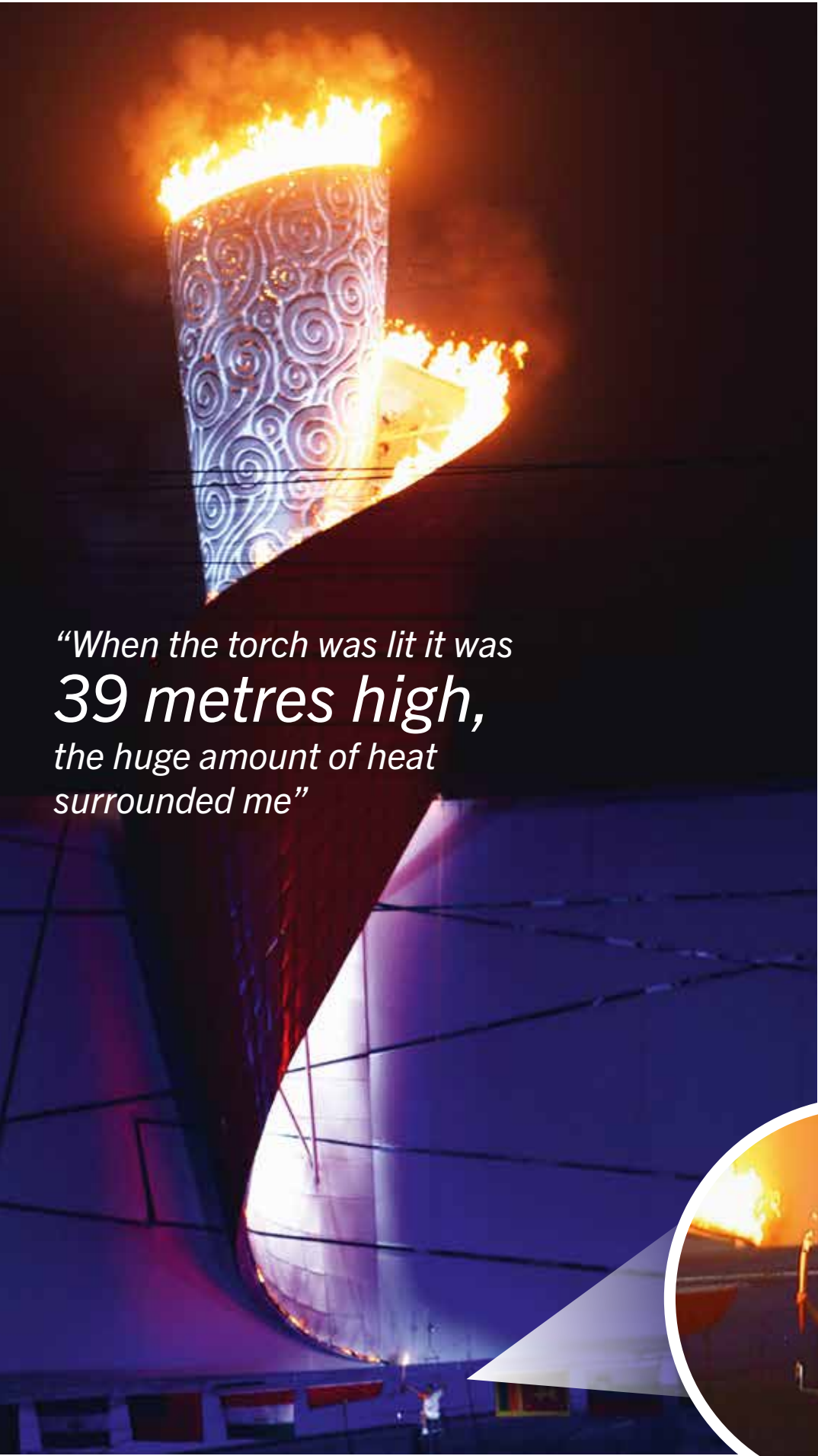


years on from Beijing 2008

It has been a decade since China's Paralympic champion Hou Bin created one of the most iconic moments in Paralympic Games history.

Bin was the athlete tasked with lighting the cauldron to begin the Beijing 2008 Games. The way he did it left the world – and the 90,000 spectators inside the immense Bird's Nest stadium – in awe, and ignited a Paralympics that would be a catalyst for societal change in China.





“When the torch was lit it was 39 metres high, the huge amount of heat surrounded me”

Paralympic spirit in action

With the Paralympic torch fixed to his wheelchair, Hou Bin used his bare hands to haul himself and his wheelchair toward the stadium’s roof. By the time he reached the summit, he took a deep breath and lit the cauldron to a thunderous roar from the crowd.

“I did not dare to look down when I was climbing up,” recalled Bin. “When the torch was lit it was 39 metres high, the huge amount of heat surrounded me.

“All the lights of the Bird’s Nest were focused on the torch. I was in the dark, and as I slowly lowered myself down the rope, I cried. I was scared to death. I was about to collapse. I finally finished my historic task.”

The Chinese high jumper, who admits he has a fear for heights, won Paralympic titles at three consecutive Games from Atlanta 1996 through to Athens 2004.

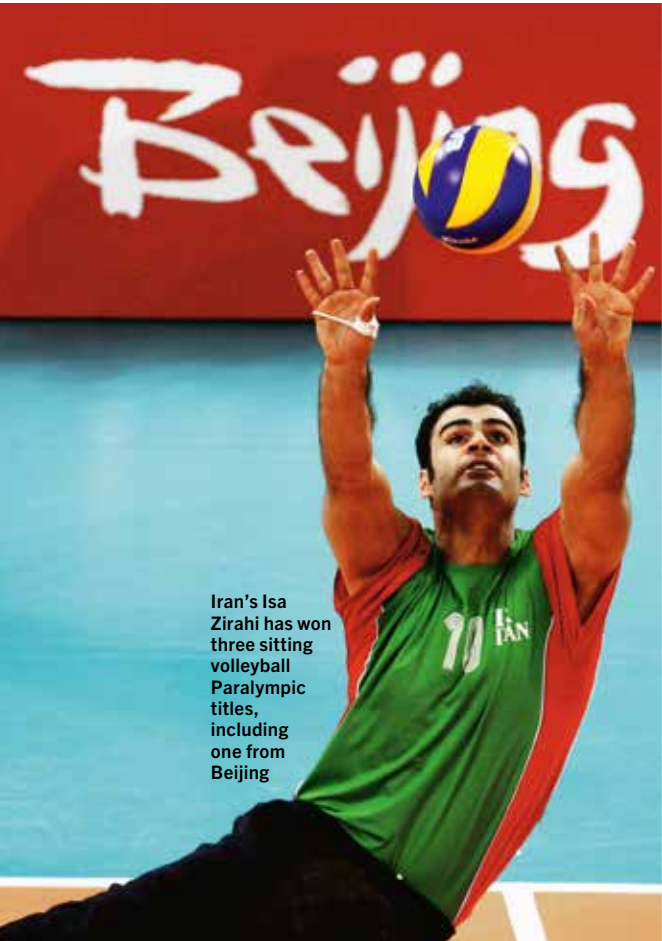
But his climb on 6 September 2008 was even more remarkable than it first appeared — he did it with a broken finger, suffered days earlier during a rehearsal.

“I was worried about what would happen, but I felt the support and trust of the team around me, and so I slowly forgot my fear,” he said.

“The great scene of the Opening Ceremony was full of magic and limitless possibilities of art and the power of the Paralympics. This feeling made me forget my timidity in the climb.”

His accomplishment showcased to the world the ability of Paralympic athletes to push their bodies to the absolute limit.

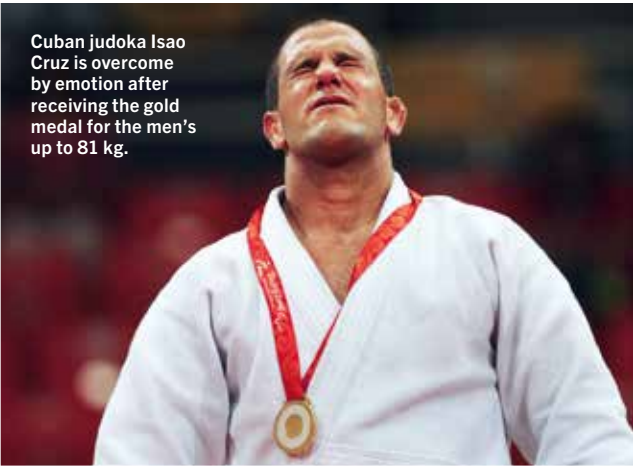
In the midst of a colourful and beautiful Ceremony, China was also experiencing the power of the Paralympic spirit like never before.



Iran's Isa Zirahi has won three sitting volleyball Paralympic titles, including one from Beijing



Beijing 2008 were the first Games where riders competed in the five grades.



Cuban judoka Isao Cruz is overcome by emotion after receiving the gold medal for the men's up to 81 kg.



The men's Australian wheelchair basketball team battled their way to gold in 2008



Polish table tennis sensation Natalia Partyka won back-to-back singles titles in Beijing.

Catalyst for change in China

Prior to Beijing 2008, China's 83 million people with an impairment were excluded from society. The country was inaccessible, inhospitable and in many ways inhumane for anyone with an impairment.

But over the past decade, Bin has noticed significant change in his country.

“After Beijing 2008, many people with impairments participate in sports, which is of epoch-making significance to the social and sporting pursuit of ‘equality for all’ spirit,” Bin said. “With the popularisation of disabled sports in China, many disabilities, with vision impairment and physical disability, have participated in marathon races, outdoor Gobi Challenge (outdoor footrace) and so on. This not only has helped the disabled integrate into society, but also has helped improve their mental health and physical rehabilitation.”

Winning the right to host the 2008 Paralympics also triggered the Chinese government to improve the lives of people with an impairment and protect their rights as equal members of society.

Then-IPC President Sir Philip Craven recalled the struggle to get traction for the Paralympics with the Organising Committee. But a meeting with then-Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao made a difference.

“It was scheduled for 15–20 minutes and lasted for 40,” Sir Philip said. “It was all about what sport can do for society and in particular what Para sport can do for society.

“After that meeting in February 2006, Wen Jiabao declared the Games — Olympics and Paralympics — of equal splendor. And that is when we got very good support.”

New legislation on building of accessible facilities was passed to meet the requirements of the Games. More than RMB 67 million (EUR 8.5 million) was spent making 60 of the country's most popular tourist destinations accessible. Elevators and wheelchair ramps were installed at the most popular spot on the Great Wall of China, and accessibility was improved in the 600-year-old Forbidden City and Imperial Palace.

China also took pride in their home athletes topping the medals table with 211, changing the country's attitudes toward impairment.

“The only way you change the people's thinking is through positive experience,” Sir Philip said. “You don't tell them you have to and bring in laws that force them to do it. They have to develop those ideas in a positive sense.”

Beijing 2022, the next chapter

The Paralympics will return to China in 2022, and this time the Winter Games are expected to add another dimension of change in the country.

While China's participation in summer sports has progressed, the next step is winter sports. “The Paralympic Winter Games will provide an all-round upgrade to barrier free facilities,” Bin said. “This is to meet the needs of every person with impairment and the elderly.”

Sir Philip added: “When one big event finishes, there is never quite the same enthusiasm because there is nothing similar going on. So you need to renew that experience for the nation.

“A second edition does not do any harm at all, and it makes people remember (Beijing 2008), and now it's a new generation.”

20
SPORTS



archery, athletics, boccia,
cycling, equestrian,
football 5-a-side, football 7-a-side,
goalball, judo, powerlifting,
rowing, sailing, shooting, sitting volleyball
swimming, table tennis,
wheelchair basketball, wheelchair fencing,
wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis

146
COUNTRIES
TOOK PART



5

NPCS
MADE THEIR FIRST APPEARANCES



Burundi, Gabon, Georgia,
Haiti and Montenegro



BY THE
NUMBERS

ROWING
made its
PARALYMPIC DEBUT



MOST DECORATED ATHLETE
Swimmer Daniel Dias (BRA)



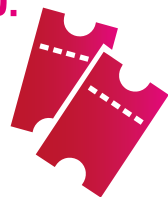
3
ATHLETES
WON
5
GOLD MEDALS
EACH:

Swimmers Matthew Cowdrey (AUS)
and Natalia du Toit (RSA).
Wheelchair racer
Chantal Petitclerc (CAN)

1.82 million

TICKETS SOLD.

The Opening and
Closing Ceremonies were
sold out, as were all
swimming events and
most athletics sessions.



BROADCAST BY

64

RIGHTS HOLDERS TO



COUNTRIES

from all five continents

3.8 billion

cumulated audience

TOTAL BROADCASTING TIME

increased by 200 per cent
compared to the
Paralympics four
years before



Athens 2004



Beijing 2008



MEDALS TABLE

CHN	89	70	52
GBR	42	29	31
USA	36	35	28
UKR	24	18	32
AUS	23	29	27

I'M NOT MISSING
ANYTHING.
WELL, MAYBE
ANOTHER MEDAL.

To reach your goals, dare to break down barriers.

Ellen Keane, Paralympic Swimmer



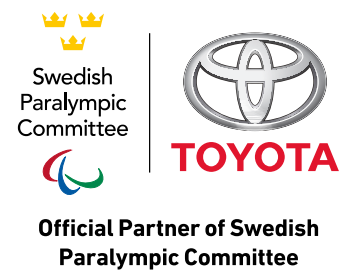
International Partner



Allianz



PARTNERSHIP ACTIVATION IN SWEDEN



Toyota's ground-breaking partnership announced in 2015 was the first of its kind to encapsulate the IPC, all NPCs and future Paralympics Games under one agreement.

NPC Sweden took advantage to build off Toyota's "Mobility for All" vision and began activation activities immediately.

Video campaign

The NPC set up a duel between the country's best Para table tennis player Anna-Carin Ahlquist and their most popular able-bodied, and arguably the world's greatest, player Jan-Ove Waldner.

The match was filmed and videos released in March 2018 to ride the momentum of the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

▶ www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ad3CPDmXnMI

"One of Toyota's long-term objectives in Sweden is to show that Para sport and Para athletes should be seen as equal to any other active person without impairments when it comes to their skills, effort and time they put in to be on an elite level," said Maria Suneson, Marketing Director of NPC Sweden. "They also aimed to show a Para sport woman in particular since women in general don't get the same attention and recognition as men."

Reponses

The campaign went live for three weeks during PyeongChang 2018, generating positive reactions and engagements.

"We gained a lot of media articles, as well as a lot of attention in social media," Suneson said. "Toyota also had an outdoor campaign for the video as well as printed ads in newspapers."

During its campaign period, the video was seen in its full length 103,053 times, a strong result considering the population in Sweden is only 10 million people. In total, people watched the video for 5,613 hours and had 18,851,439 impressions (YouTube not included)*.

More to come

The campaign is one of many coming up in Sweden showing different athletes and sports, and all the same theme: Para athletes competing against athletes without impairments.

Four similar campaigns have been lined up between now and February 2019, focusing on wheelchair basketball, cross-country skiing and Para ice hockey.

Toyota Sweden is financing the NPC's "Podium Programme," which provides eight athletes financial and material support for three years.

Six 'Start Your Impossible' camps have taken place this year in different Swedish cities.

The camps recruit people with impairments into sports, whether it is for a career or for fun. The NPC had been running the camps before Toyota's partnership and Toyota joined in to help.

Takeaways from first activation

Suneson said the relationship grew stronger as NPC Sweden and Toyota became more knowledgeable and understanding of each other's businesses and objectives.

"We are working on an even closer partnership and to give each other relevant information about upcoming events so that there is enough time to plan extra things to do together," she said. "We are also working to educate the Swedish Toyota agency more. The more they understand, the better ideas will come up."

At the moment, it is difficult to measure the impact of the partnership but these are just the early stages.

"We who work in NPC Sweden know a great deal about the worldwide partnership and the marketing that has been done," Suneson said.

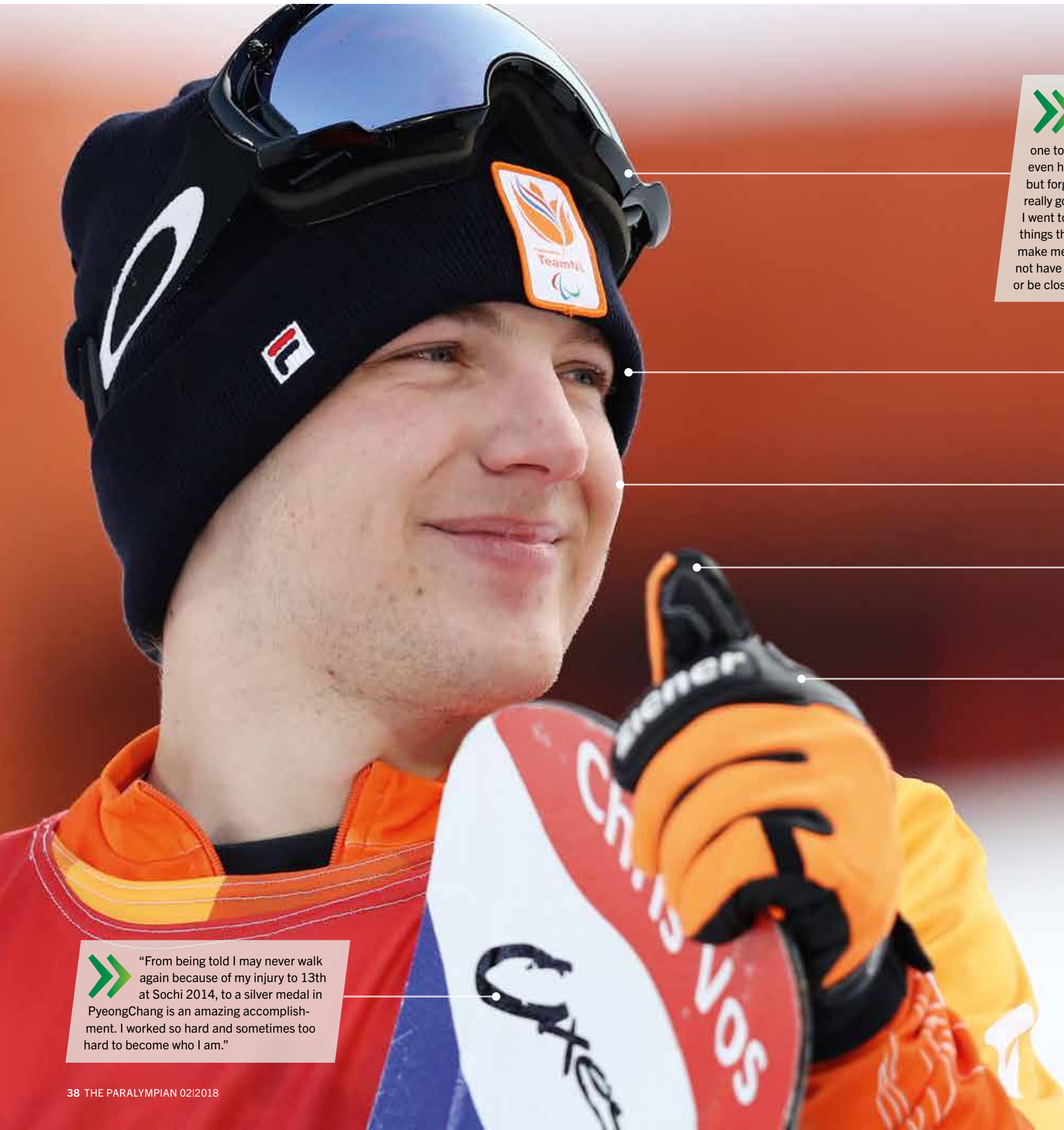
"But, to be honest, I don't think the average Swedish person does. I believe the 'big buzz' will happen during the Paralympics in Tokyo 2020."

*As of early October 2018



▶ Watch the full video campaign on YouTube <https://bit.ly/2Qew3i5>





“It was a tough year mentally and physically. With World Championship gold medals in my pocket, I was the one to watch in PyeongChang. I raised the bar even higher, and saw only a medal as my goal, but forgot to have fun. I struggled but got really good help from my parents and coaches. I went to a mental coach and started to do the things that I wanted, and do the things that make me happy. If I had not done this, I would not have been able to win any medal or be close.”



“I’m really happy with my medal and how I performed in Korea was amazing. I hope I inspired a lot of people and hope to be able to do so more in the future.”



“The silver medal means nothing is impossible. This is my life and I’m so happy I can do this and inspire people to go after their dreams.”



“Fourth place in the banked slalom was a bummer. I was really stoked for the boys who won medals. They were so fast that day.”



“After PyeongChang, we had two weeks of craziness. Then we went away from it all for one month to recharge and have some fun in the sun. After that, we began to build up slowly again with the programme. Our programme will be different than the last four years. Last year we hammered a lot on our strength. Now we have a big base and we are now focusing on cross-over sports like skating, surfing, mountain biking, climbing, racing and boxing.”

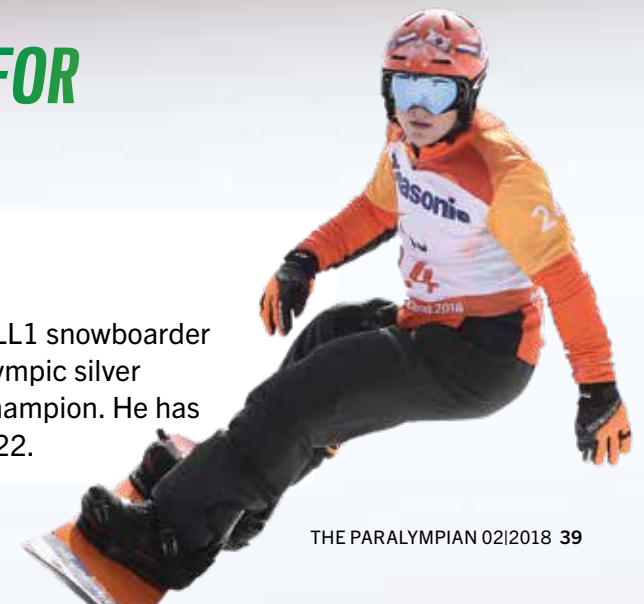


“From being told I may never walk again because of my injury to 13th at Sochi 2014, to a silver medal in PyeongChang is an amazing accomplishment. I worked so hard and sometimes too hard to become who I am.”

ONE TO WATCH FOR BEIJING 2022

 **Chris Vos**

At 20-years-old, the Dutch SB-LL1 snowboarder can already call himself a Paralympic silver medallist and four-time world champion. He has a lot more in store for Beijing 2022.



3 – 8 June

Goalball World Championships



In Malmo, Sweden; Brazil retained the men’s title, while the women’s side crowned a new champion in Russia.

Leomon Moreno was the star of the men’s final scoring five goals as Brazil ran out 8-3 winners against Germany. Brazil’s world title means they have made the podium at every major competition since the London 2012 Paralympics.

Belgium beat Paralympic champions Lithuania 9-2 for the men’s bronze medal.

Having won silver in 2014, Russia’s women claimed gold with a 4-3 thriller over Paralympic champions Turkey. With the scores tied at 3-3, Arina Gerasimova scored the winning goal.

Brazil celebrated another podium, with the women’s team taking third-place for their best finish at a Worlds with a 7-2 victory against Canada.

<http://www.wcg18.se>



SPOTLIGHT ON

SEVDA ALTUNOLUK (TUR)
Aggressive throwing style was crucial in Turkey’s path to the final; top scorer with 46 goals.

7 – 17 June

Blind Football World Championships



Brazil won their third straight world title after defeating rivals Argentina 2-0 in Madrid, Spain.

Richardinho broke the deadlock for the Paralympic champions. Cutting in from the touchline, the tournament’s top scorer unleashed a thunderbolt from eight metres out which ricocheted in off the post and into the net. Raimundo Nonato hit the game winner in the last minutes.

Apart from claiming their fifth world title, Brazil also secured a slot at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics where they will try to maintain their 100 per cent Games record. They also received their trophy from Spain’s 2010 FIFA World Cup winning coach Vicente del Bosque.

The bronze medal match was a clash of regional champions. Asian title holders China defeated European gold medallists Russia 2-1.

The 2018 Worlds featured 16 teams and were the biggest in history. The competition saw debuts for Costa Rica, Iran, Mali, Mexico, Thailand and Russia.

www.madrid.blindfootballworldcup.com



SPOTLIGHT ON

RICARDINHO (BRA)
Despite a broken nose, he still scored a crucial goal in the final; the tournament’s top scorer with 10.

15 – 22 July

Sitting Volleyball World Championships



European champions Russia caused a major upset by taking the women’s world title following a 3-1 victory over reigning Paralympic gold medallists USA in Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Defending two-time world champions China beat Italy in straight sets to win the women’s bronze medal.

The competition was held at sites across the Netherlands, with the men’s final seeing Iran take down defending champions Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-0 in The Hague.

Iran reclaimed the world title for the first time in eight years to go along with their gold from Rio 2016.

Brazil won their second Worlds medal – after silver in 2014 – by beating Ukraine in a very tight match for bronze.

www.worldparavolley.org



SPOTLIGHT ON

MORTEZA MEHRZADSELAKJANI (IRI)
Was at his dominant best once more to help Iran regain the world title.

2 – 5 August

Para Cycling Road World Championships



Italian cyclists ruled their home World Championships in Maniago as they topped the medals table with 17. Fabrizio Cornegliani led the way for the hosts, winning both the time trial and road races in the men’s H1.

It was also a successful competition for US cyclists, who finished second in the medals table with nine golds. Two-time Paralympic champion Shawn Morelli won the women’s road race and time trial C4 events. Her compatriot H2 rider William Groulx added to his stellar 2018 World Cup season by winning the road race title.

In a widely anticipated return to competition after giving birth to her son, Great Britain’s most successful Paralympian Sarah Storey won both the women’s C5 events to take her overall Worlds medal tally to 31.

It was business as usual for Dutch athletic machine Jetze Plat, who defended both his time trial and road race H4 titles.

<http://maniago2018.it>



SPOTLIGHT ON

ANDREA ESKAU (GER)
Won gold and silver only five months after winning two biathlon titles at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

5 – 10 August

Wheelchair Rugby World Championship



Japan caused a major upset by beating defending champions and home favourites Australia 62-61 to claim a first world title in Sydney.

In a thrilling final that observers regarded as the sport’s best yet, Japan trailed the Paralympic gold medallists at half-time 32-28 despite forcing numerous turnovers.

The pressure paid dividends in the third quarter and a four-point deficit was quickly turned into a slender lead. Despite a last-gasp attempt by Australian captain Ryley Batt to level the scores and force overtime, the Rio 2016 Paralympic bronze medallists held on for a famous victory which will give them ever greater confidence ahead of Tokyo 2020.

The USA defeated Great Britain 47-36 to secure the bronze medal.

www.2018wrwc.com



SPOTLIGHT ON

DAISUKE IKEZAKI (JPN)
Veteran 3.0-player was named the tournament’s Most Valuable Player.

16 – 26 August

Wheelchair Basketball World Championships



Great Britain’s men caused a major upset to win gold, while the Dutch women claimed their long-awaited first world title, as history was made in Hamburg, Germany.

The British squad stunned tournament favourites and reigning Paralympic champions USA, 79-62. It marked Great Britain’s first official World Championship gold; they won the first unofficial Worlds in 1973. Five Brits scored double-digit points, with Harry Brown and George Bates having 17 apiece in the final.

Still with the bittersweet taste of bronze from the Rio 2016 Paralympics, the Dutch came hungry for gold, and left satisfied after a 56-40 victory over Great Britain. Mariska Beijer’s 21 points delighted the crowd, much of which was a sea of orange in the capacity crowd.

The German women held off China, 44-43 in a thrilling bronze medal game that came down to the final seconds. Australia defeated Iran, one of the tournament surprises, for the men’s bronze, 68-57.

<https://2018wbwc.de>



SPOTLIGHT ON

GREGG WARBURTON (GBR)
Named Most Valuable Player for the men’s tournament, scoring 15 points toward an historic gold.

12 – 18 August

World Boccia Championships



Worawut Saengampa punched the air in celebration, while Greg Polychronidis was brought to tears following emotional title wins in Liverpool, Great Britain.

Saengampa secured a dominant win over China's Zhiqiang Yan for the BC2 gold, redemption for his silver medal win at Rio 2016. The Thai athlete also secured the BC1-2 pairs gold, helping his country finish atop the medals table.

Greece's Polychronidis also found solace from his Rio 2016 silver with a dramatic comeback win over South Korea's Howon Jeong, the very athlete who beat him in the BC3 Paralympic final. The Greek athlete also won the pairs event.

Home favourite and Paralympic champion David Smith triumphed over China's Kai Sun for the BC1 title. China celebrated gold with Yusansen Zheng's BC4 victory over Colombia's Euclides Grisales. Slovakia captured the BC4 pairs event.

The Championships were also covered live for the first time thanks to the BBC in Great Britain and NHK in Japan television.

www.bisfed2018worldboccia.com

SPOTLIGHT ON

GREG POLYCHRONIDIS (GRE)
Dramatically won his first major individual gold medal with his final shot attempt.

23 – 26 August

Para Canoe World Championships



Several reigning champions were overthrown in Montemor-o-velho, Portugal.

Great Britain's Charlotte Henshaw beat her teammate and defending world and Paralympic champion Emma Wiggs in the women's KL2. Sweden's Helene Ripa captured the women's KL3 title ahead of Australian veteran Amanda Reynolds. Ukraine's Maryna Mazhula also surprised in the women's KL1, finishing ahead of Great Britain's Paralympic, world and European champion Jeanette Chippington.

On the men's side, a new rivalry emerged in the KL3. Ukraine's Serhii Yemelianov retained his title just ahead of Brazil's Caio Carvalho. Australia's Curtis McGrath remains untouchable in the KL2, while Italy's Estaban Farias held onto his 2017 title in the KL1.

With three new medal events added to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic programme, the men's VL2 and VL3, and women's VL2 were more important than ever.

McGrath secured the double winning the VL3 title. The men's VL2 saw only 0.6 seconds separate winner Igor Tofalini and Luis Silva – both Brazilian. Meanwhile Wiggs found redemption winning the women's VL2.

www.canoeicf.com

SPOTLIGHT ON

CURTIS MCGRATH (AUS)
One of the few reigning Paralympic champions to survive the wave of new talent; captured double gold.



6 – 9 September, 12 – 15 July, 7 – 9 June

US Open, Wimbledon, Roland Garros



At the US Open, the year's final Grand Slam, Great Britain's Alfie Hewett beat topseed Shingo Kunieda to secure the second singles Grand Slam of his career. It was not enough to knock the Japanese player off the world No.1 spot however, especially after Kunieda's success at Roland Garros.

In fact, it was an all-Japan affair on the Paris clay with Yui Kamiji hoisting the women's singles trophy after defeating the Netherlands' Diede de Groot in three sets. However, the woman of the year remains de Groot, whose US Open win marked her fourth major singles title and third in 2018; she won Wimbledon to become the first player to go back-to-back in the women's singles.

Sweden's Stefan Olsson believed it was no coincidence that the birth of his son two years ago helped him win back-to-back Wimbledon men's singles title.

In the quad division, Australia's Dylan Alcott served spoils to home favourite David Wagner to capture his second US Open singles title.

www.itftennis.com

SPOTLIGHT ON

SHINGO KUNIEDA (JPN)
Returned to the No. 1 men's singles ranking spot for the first time since 2016 after winning his seventh Roland Garros singles championship.



9 – 16 September

World Rowing Championships



The sport's biggest rivalry grew hotter after Australia's Erik Horrie beat reigning Paralympic champion Roman Polianskyi for a thrilling win in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

Despite the Ukrainian holding a boat's length lead entering the final stretch of the PR1 men's single sculls final, Horrie still took his sixth successive world title.

No other boat could match Birgit Skarstein's stroke rate as the Norwegian defended her title in the women's equivalent. Israel's Moran Samuel took a sensational silver just six months after giving birth to her daughter.

Great Britain remain undefeated in major Championship finals after winning the PR3 mixed coxed four event fractionally ahead of the USA.

The Netherlands' Annika van der Meer and Corne de Koning defended their title in the PR2 mixed double sculls.

Four new medal events were contested at the World Championships for the first time: the PR2 men's and women's single sculls; and the PR3 men's and women's pair.

www.worldrowing.com

SPOTLIGHT ON

CORNE DE KONING (NED)
Completed an unbeaten season with a pair of golds, becoming the first Para rower to claim world titles in different boat classes.



15 September

World Triathlon Grand Final



A record-equalling 13 different countries won at least one medal in Gold Coast, Australia.

All 10 members of the British team made the podium, highlighted by Lauren Steadman. After a disappointing second-place finish at the 2017 Worlds and a coaching change, Steadman found redemption by winning the women's PTS5, in which the top three were separated by one minute. Her compatriot Dave Ellis battled with the USA's Aaron Scheidies in the men's PTVI to win a thriller by 20 seconds.

Home favourite Bill Chaffey ended a successful career with a respectable sixth place finish in the men's PTWC. The category has swung over to Jetze Plat, who won his third title just three weeks after taking double gold at the Para Cycling Road World Championships.

The 27-year-old Dutchman moves closer to Chaffey's record of five world titles.

The USA's Paralympic champion Allysa Seely earned the women's PTS2 to round off her unbeaten season. The result was one she had been yearning for after health issues at last year's Championships.

Her teammate Mark Barr also completed a perfect season in the men's PTS2, beating Britain's double world champion Andy Lewis by 32 seconds.

www.triathlon.org

SPOTLIGHT ON

STEFAN DANIEL (CAN)
Produced a brilliant run to hold off German rival and Paralympic champion Martin Schulz in the men's PTS5 class, securing his third career world title.



18 – 22 September

World Equestrian Games



The Netherlands changed the established order of international Para dressage by knocking Great Britain off the top of the podium in the team competition for the first time at a Paralympics or World Championships.

Individually, the Dutch were just as dominant in Tryon, USA. Sanne Voets (grade IV) and Rixt van der Horst (grade III) achieved a golden triple.

Italy's Sara Morganti (grade I) enjoyed double delight including an emotional freestyle win two years after her horse was unfit to compete at Rio 2016.

The host nation medalled four times, highlighted by Rebecca Hart's silver and bronze medalled in grade III events. Brazil's Rodolpho Riskalla claimed a pair of silvers just two years after taking up the sport. Japan's Tomoko Nakamura came away with freestyle grade I bronze for her nation's first medal in global competition, and a nice promise ahead of Tokyo 2020.

<https://tryon2018.com>

SPOTLIGHT ON

RIXT VAN DER HORST (NED)
Was the only defending champion in both individual and freestyle events to retain their titles, and did so on her new horse Findsley.



17 – 20 October

Para Table Tennis World Championships



Lasko-Celje, Slovenia, was the host of 325 athletes competing for 21 singles world titles.

Serbia's Borislava Peric-Rankocic, 46, finally captured the one major gold medal missing in her career after winning the women's class 4. Belgium's reigning Paralympic and double-European champion Laurens Devos also seized that elusive title, adding "world" to his resume in the men's class 9.

Top-seeded players Natalia Partyka (class 10) from Poland, Netherlands' Kelly Van Zon (class 7) and China's Mao Jingdian (class 8) remained ever-so dominant by retaining their respective women's singles titles.

The men's class 6 saw two of the sport's biggest rivals again battle for gold. Spain's Alvaro Valera and Denmark's Peter Rosenmeier own a fair share of the Paralympic, world and European titles. It was the Dane who took back the world gold he lost to Valera four years ago.

There was also a dramatic five-setter in the men's class 8, with Great Britain's 23-year-old Ross Wilson emerging as the surprise winner over China's Zhao Shuai for his first major career gold.

www.ipttc.org/

SPOTLIGHT ON

KELLY VAN ZON (NED)
After being stunned at the 2017 European Championships by her Turkish rival Kubra Korkut, Van Zon got her revenge with a diving, game-winning shot that went viral on the internet.



13 – 19 August

Para Swimming European Championships



Ukraine became the first country since 2011 to win more than 100 medals at a European Championships, picking up 106 overall, including 33 golds.

In Dublin, Ireland, Belarus' Ihar Boki was the most successful swimmer and also broke the world record in the men's 100m freestyle S13.

Dutch 18-year-old Liesette Bruinsma won four golds and broke three world records, including the women's 400m freestyle S11 that had stood for eight years.

A slew of other teenage talents were on display. Nora Meister, 15, put Switzerland on top of the podium twice, the first time that has happened at the Euros. France's Ugo Didier and Great Britain's Maisie Summers-Newton are only 16 and bagged golds at their first Championships.

www.paralympic.org/dublin-2018

SPOTLIGHT ON

IHAR BOKI (BLR)
Won seven gold medals in seven individual events in seven days.



20 – 26 August

Para Athletics European Championships



Poland topped the medals table in Berlin, Germany, with the likes of Michal Derus (T47) and Barbara Niewiedzial (T20) taking home multiple gold medals.

Frenchman Pierre Fairbank dominated the men's T53 races, claiming four titles – the most successful individual in Berlin.

The host nation also excelled. Johannes Floors (200m, 400m T62) and Felix Streng (100m, 200m T64) both completed sprint doubles, while Markus Rehm was one of 15 world record breakers leaping a staggering 8.48m in the long jump T64.

www.paralympic.org/berlin-2018

SPOTLIGHT ON

MARIE-AMELIE LE FUR (FRA)
Broke the women's long jump T64 world record, a stunning accomplishment after a horrific start to the year when she lost her unborn baby.



6 – 13 October

Asian Para Games



MEDALS TABLE			
China	172	88	59
South Korea	53	45	46
Iran	51	42	43

History was made in Jakarta, Indonesia, when North and South Korea marched together at the Opening Ceremony in a world-first for a Para sport event. It did not stop there as a combined Korean swimming team claimed bronze in the men's 4 x 100m freestyle relay 34 points.

Backed by raucous home support, the hosts enjoyed their best performance at an Asian Para Games, finishing fifth in the overall medals table with an unprecedented 37 golds. In badminton, a sport that will debut at Tokyo 2020, Indonesia won six golds, highlighted by Dheva Anrimusthi's singles and doubles titles.

China topped the medals table with a stunning 172 gold medals, setting world records in athletics, powerlifting and swimming. Their women's wheelchair basketball team claimed gold with a 100 per cent win record, while their women's sitting volleyball side successfully retained their title.

<https://asianparagames2018.id/en/>

SPOTLIGHT ON

EHSAN MOUSANEZHAD KARMOZDI (IRI)
Powerlifter-turned-judoka had a dream debut by stunning South Korea's reigning Paralympic champion Choi Gwang-Geun in the men's up-to-100kg.



The Michael Jordan of wheelchair basketball reflects on the glory days

Patrick Anderson's Paralympic careers – Part I & II

Patrick Anderson hoisted his wheelchair on his back, walked up the stairs on his stumps and watched the final of August's 2018 Wheelchair Basketball World Championship from the upper-deck stands.

For the first time in his career, arguably the sport's greatest player, whose no-look passes and ball-handling craftsmanship awed onlookers, was not playing for a major championship gold medal.

Instead, he was on a different side of the game, enjoying a different chapter in life.

Anderson was sharing his predictions on the men's final, explaining why the USA could

beat Great Britain because they reminded him of Team Canada's golden era, a time when they won back-to-back Paralympic titles in 2000 and 2004, followed by 2006 world gold.

PART I

At 39-years-old and with a towering frame while in his wheelchair, Anderson still plays the sport. He is targeting Tokyo 2020, a Games that will take place 20 years after he made his Paralympic debut in Sydney.

But the thought of a fifth Paralympics never crossed his mind 10 years ago after a disappointing Beijing 2008.

In the semi-finals, Canada stunned the USA by coming back from a 20-point deficit to win in

overtime, a victory Anderson calls one of his most thrilling.

"We didn't reset for the final," he said. "We kind of basked in that glow for a while."

As a result, Canada failed to become the first men's wheelchair basketball team to win three straight Paralympics, losing out 72-60 to Australia in the final.

Anderson was convinced he was done and decided to pursue his other passion – music.

He moved to New York with his wife Anna and together they created the band The Lay Awakes.

"I sort of blame myself, for in hindsight, not being all in," Anderson said. "It's a bad feeling to know that you could have done more to prepare and to come that close... that was disappointing. I could have invested a lot more."

This regret formed his approach for the London 2012 Paralympics, a Games he described as "more of a grind."



LONDON 2012

"I moved to New York and had other things going on in life. So when I made the decision to play, I wanted to play, but it involved a lot more sacrifice because my life did not revolve around basketball like it had before."

His decision was worth it. The final was a rematch of 2008, with Canada taking revenge to win 64-58.

"Looking up at the end of the game and seeing my parents and my wife, my best friend and my brother was memorable," he said. "The final in London, I felt like I played one of my best Games."

PART II

Anderson has no regrets about missing Rio 2016.

He was living in New York with his wife, raising their first child and pursuing their music career together. He could not fully commit to traveling to Toronto for training.

"By that point in my career I wanted to be in or out, and I felt like being in just didn't fit," Anderson said.

But even then he never fully retired.

The 2018 Worlds marked his eighth major international competition, his first since London 2012. Despite an unfamiliar 12th place finish in Hamburg, Germany, Anderson is still committed to competing at Tokyo 2020. To achieve this Canada will need to qualify via the Lima 2019 Parapan American Games.

"At my age I'm trying to look in the mirror and be honest with what I can and can't do and where I can still improve," he said. "With age, there are certain things that are sort of gone and lost forever – well at least on their way out the door in terms of speed and quickness and recovery time."

"But upstairs in the mental part of the game, the emotional side of

the game, the skill side, those are areas where I can still improve even as I approach my 40s, as Tokyo approaches.

"Motivation for me is to lay and lead in a way that unlocks untapped potential in our programme. I can't be the same player I was 10 years ago. But there are certain things I can do to help these guys play at a higher level," he added.



Hamburg 2018



Patrick Anderson

PARALYMPIC GAMES

London 2012: Gold
Beijing 2008: Silver
Athens 2004: Gold
Sydney 2000: Gold

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

2018: 12th place
2006: Gold
2002: Bronze
1998: Bronze



Athens 2004



SYDNEY 2000

Winter sports are in full swing

Following a thrilling PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, all eyes will be on the 2019 winter sport World Championships.

21 January – 1 February

World Para Alpine Skiing Championships



Kranjska Gora in Slovenia and Sella Nevea in Italy will jointly host the 2019 World Championships. The technical events (slalom and giant slalom) will take place in Kranjska Gora. The speed events (downhill, super-G and super combined) will be in Sella Nevea. Both cities are separated by just 35 km.

Expect a number of skiers who medalled as teenagers on their Paralympic debuts to come back stronger: France’s Arthur Bauchet, Italy’s Giacomo Bertagnolli, Great Britain’s Menna Fitzpatrick (turned 20 in May), Canada’s Mollie Jepsen, Netherlands’ Jeroen Kampschreur and Norway’s Jesper Pedersen, to name a few.

www.paralympic.org/sella-nevea-kranjska-gora-2019

2018 – 2019 World Cup dates

- 17 – 22 December: Sella Nevea, Italy
- 16 – 17 January: Zagreb, Croatia
- 4 – 6 February: Kranjska Gora, Slovenia
- 8 – 10 February: Veysonnaz, Switzerland
- 4 – 9 March: Espot, Spain
- 11 – 15 March: La Molina, Spain
- 18 – 21 March: Morzine, France

16 – 24 February

World Para Nordic Skiing Championships



Around 140 athletes from 20 countries are expected to compete in Prince George, Canada. Home favourites can star at a major Championships in familiar territory for the first time, especially after their heroics at PyeongChang 2018, winning 16 medals. Mark Arendz not only won a remarkable six medals from six races in PyeongChang, including a gold in biathlon; he also has two world titles to defend. His teammates Collin Cameron, Brittany Hudak, Emily Young and Natalie Wilkie will also be hoping to build on their PyeongChang medal-winning performances.

www.paralympic.org/prince-george-2019

2018 – 2019 World Cup dates

- 12 – 19 December: Vuokatti, Finland
- 12 – 19 January: Ostersund, Sweden
- 12 – 17 March: Sapporo, Japan

26 – 31 March

World Para Snowboard Championships



After its hugely popular second appearance at a Paralympic Games, snowboard will build off that momentum in Pyha, Finland. Riders will have already competed in five World Cup events prior to the 2019 Worlds, giving an indication of who to watch for. The USA is expected to field a strong team after topping the PyeongChang 2018 medals table, winning five of the 10 events. It was similar to their results from the 2017 World Championships in Big White, Canada, where they also tallied the most medals with seven, including three golds.

www.paralympic.org/pyha-2019

2018 – 2019 World Cup dates

- 4 – 7 February: Big White, Canada
- 4 – 8 March: La Molina, Spain
- 2 – 10 April: Klovnsjo, Sweden



ONES TO WATCH

Jeroen Kampschreur (NED)

Teenage world champion can call himself a Paralympic champion after winning the men’s sitting super combined.

Henrieta Farkasova (SVK)

Almost had a perfect Paralympics with guide Natalia Subrtova, winning four of her five events.

Theo Gmur (SUI)

The 22-year-old had an outstanding Games debut going three-for-three.



Benjamin Daviet (FRA)

Won the most gold medals in the sport from PyeongChang with five medals, including three golds.

Oksana Masters (USA)

Overcame an elbow injury to win two cross-country Paralympic titles; if healthy, she can collect more gold this season.

Taras Rad (UKR)

The 18-year-old biathlete is a star on the rise after winning gold on his Paralympic debut.



Brenna Huckaby (USA)

Lived up to the hype on her Paralympic debut by sweeping her women’s SB-LL1 events.

Mike Minor (USA)

Proved he can handle pressure with a blistering final run in the men’s banked slalom SB-UL in PyeongChang.

Matti Suur-Hamari (FIN)

Veteran took Paralympic gold in the men’s snowboard-cross SB-LL2 and will be the centre of attention at his home Worlds.

27 April – 4 May

World Para Ice Hockey Championships



ONES TO WATCH

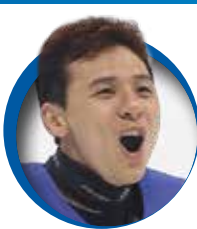
Ostrava, Czech Republic, will see the return of the world's best eight teams following a thrilling 2018 Paralympic Winter Games. The final in PyeongChang saw the USA come back to disappoint defending world champions Canada in overtime. Meanwhile South Korea will hope their historic Paralympic bronze medal over Italy will be the start of more medal hope.

www.worldparaicehockey.com



Declan Farmer
(USA)

The 20-year-old played hero twice for the USA in the Paralympic final; first to tie the game and then to win the gold.



Seung-Hwan Jung
(KOR)

Pacey forward who is expected to keep the medal momentum going.



Tyler McGregor
(CAN)

Arguably one of the sport's best players who will try to help his team find redemption from March's heartbreaker.

3 – 10 March

Wheelchair Curling World Championships



ONES TO WATCH

After winning their country's first Paralympic Winter Games medal, PyeongChang gold medallists China will look to add the world title to their achievements in Stirling, Great Britain. They were the sleeper team in March's Games; their best finish previously in international competition was a silver medal at the 2015 Worlds.

Norway will look to rebound and defend their world title from 2017. Canada – who won all three Paralympic titles prior to PyeongChang – showed they are still a strong team by taking the bronze medal, and are looking for their first world medal since 2013.

www.worldcurling.com



Haitao Wang
(CHN)

Team skip led China to a historic Paralympic win over Norway.



Aileen Neilson
(GBR)

Helped Scotland to World Championships bronze medal that secured qualification for PyeongChang 2018, where Great Britain finished seventh.



Mark Ideson
(CAN)

Played a crucial shot to help secure Paralympic bronze over South Korea and revive Canada's winning tradition.

THE BIG DEBATE

Should International Federations consider holding joint World Championships with other Para or able-bodied sports?



NATALIE DU TOIT (RSA)

13-time Paralympic swimming champion;
Beijing 2008 Olympian

As an athlete, I have experienced both positive and negative moments when integrating able-bodied and Para events and am therefore not for or against the integration. I do believe that much thought and careful planning needs to be put into making it fair for everyone.

When I competed in “inclusive” competitions, I sometimes felt like a spare part – please excuse the pun! At the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games, I competed in the able-bodied 800m event as well as in the multi-disability events. I was very fortunate to do so as my coun-

try had given me permission and I really wanted to qualify for an able-bodied final event alongside my disability events. The multi-disability swimming events felt more like a showcase rather than elite competition and it seemed unfair to those athletes with a more severe impairment who were not chosen for this competition.

Throughout my decade-long career, I competed in both able-bodied and disabled events, as well as open water competitions. I was fortunate to have qualified for the 2004, 2008 and 2012 Paralympic Games, as well as the 2008 Olympic Games. It was exhausting as I ran three calendars in one year!

Combining able-bodied events with 14 categories of disabled events, one can only imagine the enormous amount of time it takes to swim heats and finals per event. For athletes in particular, a warm-up is of utmost importance and to sit and wait for events the entire day is draining. At major events, the TV rights broadcaster is the one that determines the time it airs and the time the finals will be broadcast, so this adds to the scheduling challenges of events. How do you choose who is better to showcase?

On the other hand, disabled athletes also believe that they do not need to compete with able-bodied

athletes as they are definitely good enough as they are, and disability sport is perfect. Opening athletes up to more in terms of learning and experience is important and definitely does shift the bar higher.

For Paralympic events, World Championships are the most important competition. It is at this competition that each athlete can obtain a slot for their country (each top two) in order for their country to send an individual to compete at the Paralympic Games.

The question remains ... which stakeholder should benefit?



DIMITRIJE LAZAROVSKI (SRB)

Head of World Para Snow Sports

World Championships for Para alpine skiing, Nordic skiing and snowboard are held separately but I believe combining them as one event can benefit all sports in the long run.

The winter season is very short, and finding a time slot that works for all three Championships, while not overlapping with other major winter sport events, is a very difficult task.

A joint World Championships avoids this conflict, while also growing the exposure, excitement and atmosphere around each sport. The media impact would be much stronger with 50-plus participating nations and the world’s top athletes in one place.

It would look like a mini-Paralympic Winter Games with just the ice sports missing.

The challenge is locating an appropriate venue that has suitable courses for alpine, Nordic and snowboard. Finding an Organising Committee that can stage this kind of event, as well as sourcing sufficient support from local stakeholders, are other factors to consider.

However, the idea has merit and we have organisers interested to stage such an event in the future.

The logistics will need careful planning. We will need to be very sensitive to how we schedule events in order to maximise global exposure and limit conflicts between the sports.

Overall, I think this is an investment worth making and I do not see many disadvantages. It will require a lot of work and co-ordination with different parties but making the right decisions in the early stages will eliminate the potential risks.

Looking at each snow sport’s media coverage and reflecting on the success of the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games triggered the idea for a joint snow sport Championships. Furthermore, PyeongChang 2018 was confirmation that combining forces can help grow each sport and create a memorable experience both for athletes and fans.

We should look at how we can utilise our resources to stage joint Championships that benefit all sports and the athletes, rather than spending too much time competing with other international federations to search for hosts.



FAY HO (HKG)

Chair of World Rowing’s Para Rowing Commission

Greater integration will make everyone more aware of Para rowing and what inclusiveness looks like.

Para rowing was first raced at the 2002 World Championships and we have since made efforts to fully integrate Para races not just into World Championships, but overall World Rowing events.

For example, race distances were doubled to 2,000m in 2017 in alignment with the able-bodied competitions. This has allowed for the Para rowing finals to be spread throughout the overall Worlds programme covering several days; previously Para rowing world titles were decided on one day. This gives us more spectator and media exposure, and greater opportunities to highlight Para rowing.

Integration has also allowed for combined boat transports, sharing of coaching and support staff, economies of scale for transport and accommodation, and so on. It is surprising that more sports don’t try it!

But more needs to be done to achieve inclusivity.

Umpires, race officials, safety officers and all other support personnel are being educated to handle both Paralympic and Olympic events equally. We have to continually work to unify things

like racing distance, equipment, logistics, spectator experience, water safety, and so on.

Sufficient hotel rooms to accommodate Para athletes with accessibility needs; and venue accessibility are both very important. Solving these obstacles not only benefits competitors, but also spectators and others with such needs.

Naturally, at the outset, there were those who suggested that Para athletes might not fit in well at Olympic events – that they may be too slow, or get in the way on the course, or that it would place too many extra demands on organisers.

Some have said – “Why not just make separate events for Para rowers at other times?” In reality, these are just the kinds of obstacles that are presented to people with impairments in all aspects of their lives. Just as it is necessary to push hard to achieve better gender equality in sports, we also believe in pushing hard to promote inclusivity too and to show that such challenges can be overcome. And this drive comes as much from the athletes as from the International Federation.

The results have been excellent and the bonds and respect between all our athletes have been strengthened. We have also seen the emergence of Para athlete role models who inspire everyone.



Joint meeting and new strategy

“Understanding the current state and being part of the discussion regarding the future of classification is key to many athletes.”

The IPC Athletes' Council held a joint session with the IPC Governing Board in June while significant progress has been made on the development of the group's first strategic plan, which will be launched in early 2019.

During the joint session, there was discussion on the direction of the Paralympic Movement;

members presented the Council's work and took the opportunity to outline some of the biggest challenges facing the athlete community.

Feedback was provided by the Board on the IPC Athletes' Council strategic plan and was shared with stakeholders at September's IPC Membership Gathering.

In November the Council arranged for the IPC's Medical and Scientific Director Peter Van de Vliet to answer a series of questions from athletes during an hour-long Facebook Live. Questions from all around the world were posed during the session which aimed to give athletes a greater understanding of classification and create more transparency around the subject.

“Understanding the current state and being part of the discussion regarding the future of classification is key to many athletes. For that reason, we hosted the first live Facebook Q&A session,” said Chelsey Gotell, Chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council.

Co-opted members

At its September meeting, the IPC Governing Board approved that Singaporean boccia player Nurulasyiqah Mohammad Taha and South Korean track and field athlete Suk Man Hong could have their terms as co-opted members of the IPC Athletes' Council extended for a further two years. The appointment of South Africa's Natalie du Toit as a third co-opted member of the Council was also approved.

Chelsey Gotell, the IPC Athletes' Council chairperson, said: “As part of our commitment to ensure the representation of high support needs athletes and each region on the IPC Athletes' Council, I am very pleased that the Board agreed to the reappointment of two co-opted members and one new one.

“Natalie is one of Africa's most high-profile Paralympians, brings to the Council a vast wealth of experience and knowledge, and is well placed to represent the views of the athlete community.”



Nurulasyiqah Mohammad Taha
Singapore



Suk Man Hong
South Korea



Natalie du Toit
South Africa

New IWRF President



Richard Allcroft
President of the
IWRF



Great Britain's Richard Allcroft was elected President of the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF) at its August General Assembly in Sydney, Australia.

Allcroft, who is the first non-North American to take the position, succeeds John Bishop who stepped down after eight years.

“I've been involved internationally since about 2010 and I've really enjoyed it, just understanding the international landscape, particularly our partnerships with the International Paralympic Committee and World Rugby,” Allcroft said. “We're at a very exciting time for the sport.”

O'Callaghan takes over in Australia



Jock O'Callaghan
President of the
Australian
Paralympic Committee

“... a very important and exciting time for the Paralympic movement.”

Jock O'Callaghan is the new President of the Australian Paralympic Committee, replacing Glenn Tasker in the role.

The move is part of a leadership succession plan approved by the APC Board after Tasker revealed his intention to retire, having served five years as President and 10 years as a Director.

“I am very proud to be given the opportunity and responsibility to lead the APC during what will be a very important and exciting time for the Paralympic Movement,” O'Callaghan said.

“The APC is an incredible organisation and I am excited to see what our Board and our very committed staff and partners can achieve during my tenure as President.”



Classification pioneer passes away



Horst Strohkendl, widely regarded as the godfather of wheelchair basketball classification, passed away on 21 August.

The German dedicated most of his life to wheelchair

sports since he first got involved in 1969. He was the pioneer, developer and author of classification in wheelchair basketball. He became chairman of the first sport-specific classification committee of the International Stoke Mandeville Games Federation and was part of the Executive Committee, alongside former IPC President Sir Philip Craven, when the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) established their independence.

In 1998 Strohkendl, who served the IPC Classification Committee from 2012-2014, received the IWBF's Gold Medal Triad in recognition of his contribution to wheelchair basketball at both national and international levels.

Death of former goalball chairman

Dr. Kari Marklund, a man credited with transforming International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) goalball, died on 10 October.



Between 2011 and 2014, the physicist was the Chairman of the IBSA Goalball Committee and served as President of the Swedish Sports Organisation for the Disabled and Swedish Paralympic Committee from 2003 to 2011.

Marklund was a vastly experienced and highly-respected professional leader. Away from Paralympic sport he was coach of the Swedish basketball team during the 1970s and manager of the team at the Moscow 1980 Olympics.

Outside of sport, he was the Editor-in-Chief of the Swedish National Encyclopaedia and Governor of the province of Norrbotten/Lapland.

THE LAST WORD

DISCOVERING MYSELF THROUGH PARA SPORTS

I'm proud of my whole career. I got the chance to have ups and downs; the chance to learn about my personality. Para sport allowed me to stay the same person.

When I started, I was looking for the limit of my disability. But when I retired, I realised I had never found the limit. Para sports proved me wrong.

There was a time between the Beijing and London Games, when I had to become more selfish. A friend got married and I had to miss it because I was preparing for my competition. I struggled having to make seemingly selfish decisions, and lots of people misunderstood me. But I'm really proud that I kept going and got through that situation.

That time really made me mature and made me the person I am right now. That's why I'm so passionate about running clinics and travelling the world helping people. I'm not interested in myself anymore.

The work I do with Ottobock and the running clinics makes me happy now. I hope sports will be accepted as the best medicine and the best rehabilitation in the world. Based on that, we can expect more professional athletes and even better results.

Every Games was special. At Athens 2004 I was pleased to make the team, to enter the stadium; that was my dream. After Athens my dreams became bigger. Beijing 2008 was nice, but it felt like a step in between.

London 2012 was magical. Something happened for us there. Sport came first, then disability. Para sport became sexy to



HEINRICH POPOW (GER)

Two-time Paralympic champion;

five-time world champion (athletics)

Retired after home 2018
European Championships in Berlin

a younger generation. People no longer had to hide themselves because they didn't want to show others their disability.

My plan had been to win London 2012 gold and then retire.

I crossed the finish line and thought I'd clearly won, but then I saw the replay and realised that



wasn't the case. My feelings and the images didn't match each other; I knew retiring would be the wrong decision.

In 2013 I ran a world record and won the world title. That proved I'd made the right decision. But then I felt like there was nothing more, so that's why I decided to focus more on the long jump and find my limits there.

Then I thought, okay Rio 2016, it's good – but London 2017 will follow. Having thought I wanted to retire there in 2012, I realised here was a chance to match my feelings with the pictures.

I couldn't make London because I got injured doing 'Dancing with the Stars.' I thought, 'I can't retire on the sofa, I have to get back competing, then I can retire.' That's why I chose Berlin 2018.

Berlin was something special. I wasn't in good shape, but there was a reason for that; I was scared about the gap between my competition level and the feeling of retirement. Still, I gave everything and tried to put everything in to the first attempt. So, after the red flag I knew it was going to be different; it wasn't about winning anymore.

I didn't know how to handle the situation. I ran in to the stadium, down the tunnel to the toilets and splashed my face with water, yelling at myself to concentrate and not be so emotional. I came out and saw my family and friends and thought, should I be happy or should I cry? I finished my competitive career with a European silver medal in the men's long jump T63. It was really hard for me. It's something I won't forget.

It's not about the cards you're dealt, it's how you play them

BP is proud to help advance the Paralympic Movement for 10 years.



Ayatallah Ayman Abbas
Swimmer
Egypt



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