

THE PARALYMPIAN



ISSUE # 01 | 2019



EMPOWERED

More female
Para athletes
are rising up to
challenges

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Paralympic Movement celebrates women's achievements

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Marketing secrets of a successful wheelchair basketball Worlds

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The USA's Keith Gabel high fives kids who attended a Para snowboard camp held during the 2019 World Championships

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"The IPC has achieved a great deal in a relatively short space of time – probably far more than most could have imagined 30 years ago when the organisation was formed."

Dear readers,
As the IPC prepares to celebrate its 30th anniversary this autumn, the organisation is changing, gearing up for its further evolution.

membership-focussed and make for a more inclusive world through Para sport. With so many opportunities out there, it is important we maximise our potential, developing the Paralympic Movement at all levels in the coming years.

Since the last edition of The Paralympian, we have announced a change of leadership at the head of the IPC management team, confirmed the IPC will move to bigger offices in our home city of Bonn, Germany, made strong progress with the governance review and the IPC Athletes' Council published its first strategy.

This edition of The Paralympian underlines why I am so excited for the future of the Paralympic Movement. The last six months have been jam-packed featuring great Para sport events with taekwondo and ice hockey leading the way with outstanding World Championships. This summer promises to follow suit with no less than 12 World Championships ahead of us.

Soon to follow will be the IPC Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and the bringing together of the IPC membership at October's IPC General Assembly and Conference. There will also be several other exciting announcements over the summer months, so keep an eye out for them!

Add into the mix the Lima 2019 Parapan American Games, Tokyo 2020 Test Events, 2026 Paralympic Winter Games host city announcement, as well as the production of the first-ever Paralympic video game, and I am sure you will share my enthusiasm and passion for the future.

October's meetings in Bonn will be an ideal opportunity to celebrate how far the IPC has come since its creation in 1989. The IPC has achieved a great deal in a relatively short space of time – probably far more than most could have imagined 30 years ago when the organisation was formed. However, in my view, the IPC's best and most fruitful years lie ahead as we aim to become more athlete-centred,

Andrew Parsons
IPC President

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THE PARALYMPIAN

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International Paralympic Committee
ISSN 1609-1329

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Andrew Parsons addressing media during a February press conference regarding the RPC's reinstatement

IPC reinstate Russian membership

The Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) has been conditionally reinstated as an IPC member following a 30 month-long suspension and the publication of high-level requirements the organisation must continue to meet until 31 December 2022.

The decision was taken by the IPC Governing Board after the RPC met 69 of the 70 reinstatement criteria originally outlined by the IPC in November 2016.

Andrew Parsons, IPC President, said: "Since its suspension in August 2016, the RPC has made significant progress in transforming its governance and how it goes about its anti-doping activities. The RPC met 69 of the 70 reinstatement criteria originally outlined by the IPC which gives us the confidence that it is now a much-improved organisation from the time when it was suspended.

"As Russia disappointingly did not accept the findings of the McLaren Report, we can only lift the suspension under strict conditions.

More information at: www.paralympic.org/russian-paralympic-committee-reinstatement

Citi partners with IPC and NPCs

Global bank Citi became the IPC's third International Partner in December 2018 in an agreement that will also benefit 18 NPCs.

Those NPCs are: Australia, Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Costa Rica, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand and the UAE.

Citi serves clients through a local presence in each of these 18 NPC communities and will engage fans through integrated marketing campaigns and promotions to generate excitement and national pride around the extraordinary accomplishments of the countries' Para athletes. Citi will also work to help support the day-to-day needs of individual NPCs.

Citi has a long heritage of supporting the Paralympic Movement dating back to 2012. During this time, it has sponsored the US Olympic and Paralympic teams, the 2018 IWRF Wheelchair Rugby World Championship, 2018 World Para Swimming Allianz European Championships and the 2018 Para Powerlifting Americas Open Championships in Colombia.

The agreement will run through to 2020.



First Paralympic video game



The IPC has teamed up with one of the biggest names in world gaming to produce the first official Paralympic sport video game for global launch in 2020.

Created by JP Games, a brand-new game developing studio founded by Final Fantasy XV director Hajime Tabata, the game aims to engage a younger audience in the Paralympics.

"The Pegasus Dream Tour" is a completely new sports role-playing game, where players participate in a virtual Paralympic Games that takes place inside a fantasy metropolis known as Pegasus City.

Here, players awaken their special abilities or "Xtra Power" in an alternate Paralympics world dynamically rendered in ways that only video games can achieve. The makers are planning for the "Pegasus Dream Tour" to be accessible on various platforms, including smartphones.

Hajime Tabata, JP Games said: "With this video game, we want to contribute to the future growth of the Paralympic Games, not just as a sporting event, but as entertainment as well, with content that we hope will have lasting value in the future."



++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

+++ **LIMA 2019:** Worldwide Paralympic Partner Toyota signed as Gold Sponsor of the 2019 Pan American and Parapan American Games. Additionally, 90,000 people applied to volunteer at the Games that begin in August.

+++ **AUSTRIA:** "Talent Days 2019" targeting 8-18-year-olds is part of NPC Austria's strategy to uncover the next generation of Para athletes in the country.

+++ **WADA:** The World Anti-Doping Agency 2019 List of Prohibited Substances and Methods came into force on 1 January 2019.

+++ **IPC:** Multi-award winning adam&eveDDB was appointed as the IPC's first creative agency. The London-based agency will work pro-bono to help grow the Paralympic Movement's profile globally.

+++ **VISTA 2019:** South African Leslie Swartz, Britain's Nick Webborn and the Netherlands' Marjan Olfers will be keynote speakers at September's VISTA 2019 conference in Amsterdam.

+++ **HONOURS:** India's Deepa Malik received the IPC's 2019 International Women's Day Recognition for her efforts and achievements in inspiring women in the Paralympic Movement. Former IPC President Sir Philip Craven was also honoured at the 19th German Paralympic Media Awards for his outstanding achievements.

+++ **KAZAKHSTAN:** IPC President Andrew Parsons visited the country's National Paralympic Training Centre and met with Prime Minister Bakytzhan Sagintayev during a visit in January.

+++ **AUSTRALIA:** The Federal Government announced AUD 12 million of new funding at an event to launch the new Paralympics Australia brand.

+++ **FUNDRAISING:** So inspired were sociology students at Montgomery College, Maryland, USA, by watching a film about Algerian Tokyo 2020 hopeful Kawther Zahia Si-amar that they raised funds to help ease the financial burden for the shot-putter. The class also raised funds to buy a new wheelchair for Iranian Barcelona 1992 Paralympian Sara Azizi.



Campaign wins UN award

The IPC's 'Transforming Lives Makes Sense for Everyone' campaign, which showcases the employment legacy of the London 2012 Paralympics, won a prestigious international award in May.

The digital campaign – produced in partnership with the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Office and funded by BP and Bridgestone – took home a UN Sustainable Development Goals Action Award at a glittering ceremony in Bonn, Germany.

The IPC picked up the award in the Includer category, one of seven categories at the

Awards, which received more than 2,000 submissions from 142 countries.

"It is a wonderful honour for our team, whose hard work and commitment made this series a reality, and a fantastic recognition of how the work of the Paralympic Movement helps to advance the UN's Sustainable Development Goals," said Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Craig Spence, who accepted the award on behalf of the IPC.

"We would like to thank BP and Bridgestone, because without them we would not

have even been able to implement this campaign.

"It is through their dedication, sponsorship and support of the Paralympic Movement that we can do this.

"Finally, we would like to thank the 4,237 people, the Para athletes, who competed at London 2012 and changed attitudes towards disability. Their amazing performances inspired the world, and it is thanks to them that one million more persons with disabilities are in employment in Great Britain now."



New headquarters from 2020

Due to the continued expansion of the IPC, the organisation will move to a new headquarters in Bonn, Germany, in 2020. Bonn has been its home for the past 20 years.

The move follows talks with the City of Bonn, the State Government of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and Federal Government, to find a new location for the IPC's growing workforce.

The new building, located next to the river Rhine and adjacent to Bonn's World Conference Centre, is approximately 500m from the IPC's current base on Adenauerallee and has capacity for approximately 150 employees.

Andrew Parsons, IPC President, said: "The IPC and its employees are extremely proud to have

called Bonn and North Rhine-Westphalia our home for the last 20 years and we are absolutely delighted and hugely excited at the prospect of moving to new headquarters next year.

"The IPC is hugely grateful to the State Government of NRW for their commitment and support and are looking forward to our future co-operation.



Andrew Parsons, IPC President, tours the organisation's new office building in Bonn, Germany

"Since establishing our foundations in Bonn in 1999, our team has grown significantly helping to amplify the impact of the work we undertake transforming the lives of millions of persons with disabilities around the world.

"By relocating to the former State Representation, we believe we can continue advancing the Paralympic Movement, create a stronger connection between the IPC, the city and the State, and further our work making for a more inclusive society through Para sport.

"We have ambitious plans for our new headquarters which will benefit schools, the local community and the whole Paralympic Movement. We are eagerly looking forward to the move."

IPC begins search for new CEO

As part of the next stage in its business evolution, the IPC announced the departure of its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Xavier Gonzalez in March.

The 59-year-old Catalan joined the IPC as Paralympic Games Liaison Director in 2002 and soon after became the Interim Chief Operating Officer. In 2004, he was appointed CEO and during his tenure managed the IPC's evolution into one of the most respected governing bodies in world sport.

Replacing Gonzalez as Interim CEO will be Dr. Mike Peters, a two-time Paralympian in CP football, who joined the IPC in 2015 as Chief of Staff before becoming Chief Operating Officer in 2018.

Gonzalez said: "It has been an absolute privilege and honour to have served the IPC, the Paralympic Movement and Para athletes



for the last 17 years. This role has not just been a job, but my passion and my life providing many memorable and thoroughly enjoyable life changing experiences.

"I am extremely proud of what I have helped to deliver with the support of the outstanding team and dedicated network of volunteers since 2002. To see the evolution of Para sport and the development and growth in global recognition of Para athletes around the world has been amazing; Para athletes really are now seen as sport stars

who deliver mind-blowing performances few thought possible years ago. The level of media and broadcast coverage they now secure, as well as the commercial support within the Movement, really is a far cry from what it used to be. It's also amazing to see the size and global reach of the IPC and Paralympic Games now compared to when I joined when we had no money and employed just a handful of people."

Andrew Parsons, IPC President, said: "There are few words that can properly do justice to the impact Xavier has had on the IPC and the Paralympic Movement. Under his leadership, he has done an outstanding job, effectively building the IPC from a start-up to a globally well-respected sports organisation.

"The IPC Governing Board will always be grateful for his contribution in progressing the Paralympic Movement."

First African Para Games

"A dream becomes a reality," is how African Paralympic Committee President Leonel da Rocha Pinto described news that Rabat, Morocco, will make history in January 2020 when it stages the inaugural African Para Games.

Around 1,200 athletes are expected to attend the event which will feature seven sports: athletics, blind football, goalball, powerlifting, sitting volleyball, taekwondo and wheelchair basketball. Most of the sports will act as qualifiers for Tokyo 2020.

Running alongside the Games will be athlete classification evaluation, anti-doping educational courses and a Proud Paralympian workshop.

Pinto added: "It is another important step for the recognition of sports for people with disabilities in the African continent.

"In October last year during a meeting of African Ministers of Sports, Education and Youth organised by the African Union in Algiers, the African Paralympic

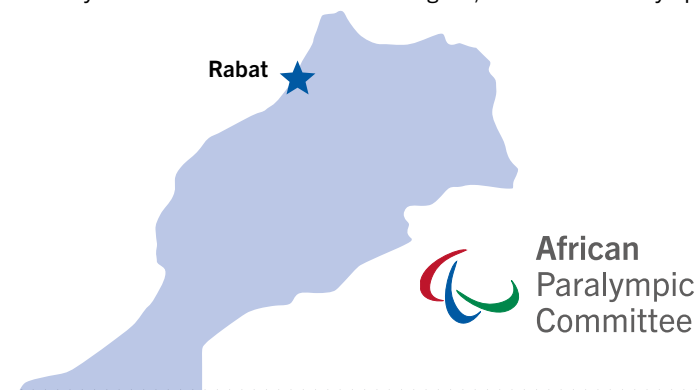


Leonel da Rocha Pinto, third from right, at the signing protocol agreement for the first African Para Games

Committee was recognised as the legitimate umbrella body for all matters related to Sports for Persons with a Disability.

"I am very grateful that the Royal Kingdom of Morocco and the Moroccan Sports Minister will give our African athletes the platform to showcase their excellence."

Hamid Al Aouni, President of NPC Morocco, said: "We do have fantastic sports facilities here in Rabat; well-prepared and experienced experts that will organise the Games; the government and partners who will support; and society that love all type of sports."



Roland Garros welcomes quad events

History was made at Roland Garros this year, after the French Tennis Federation confirmed that quad singles and doubles wheelchair tennis events will be included in the June 2019 competition schedule.

The announcement means that quad singles and doubles events will now join men's and women's singles and doubles events on the schedule at all four Grand Slam tournaments.

This follows the announcement made by the All England Club in November that quad events will be held at Wimbledon from 2019 onwards. During last year's Wimbledon competition, a quad doubles exhibition match was held.

The new events will also form part of the Wheelchair Tennis Tour and will offer ranking points to participants.

Wheelchair tennis has been played at all four Grand Slams since 2007.



Previously, only women's and men's singles and doubles events were contested on the clay courts in Paris

Laureus Award for Farkasova

Almost 12 months on from winning four gold medals at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, Slovakia's Henrieta Farkasova was recognised at the 2019 Laureus Sport Awards.

At a glittering ceremony in Monte Carlo, Monaco, the Slovakian vision impaired alpine skier was named the Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability.

"We were certainly not expecting it, especially coming from a country where sports aren't really professional," said Farkasova who collected the award together with guide Natalia Subrtova. "It's more of a hobby and we really need to go to our jobs and then do this in our free time so we're tr-

ly humbled and privileged to be standing here on this podium. It means a lot to us."

Dutch wheelchair tennis player Diede de Groot, Canadian cross-country skier Brian McKeever, US cross-country skier Oksana Masters, Greek boccia player Greg Polychronidis and German long jumper Markus Rehm were also up for the award.

At PyeongChang 2018, Farkasova won gold in the downhill, giant slalom, super combined and super-G. She also won silver in slalom.

Other winners at the Laureus Awards included Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic, US gymnast Simone Biles and the French FIFA World Cup winning men's football team.



Henrieta Farkasova, left, with her guide Natalia Subrtova at the awards ceremony in Monaco

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

+++ **ANTI-DOPING:** Powerlifters Vikram Singh Adhikari of India and Farzin Noori of Iran have both been suspended for four years for committing anti-doping violations. Para ice hockey players Tyler Carron of the USA and Italy's Gianluigi Rossi were suspended for 18 months and two years respectively for violations at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games. Costa Rican wheelchair racer Lauens Molina Sibaja also received a four-year suspension for failing an out-of-competition test.

+++ **ATHLETICS:** Japan will stage its first World Para Athletics Championships when the competition comes to Kobe in 2021. It will be the 10th edition of the Worlds, with around 1,300 athletes from 100 countries set to compete at the Universiade Memorial Stadium.

+++ **INAS:** Table tennis events at the October's INAS Global Games in Brisbane, Australia, will be recognised by the ITTF for the first time.

+++ **POWERLIFTING:** The 2019 World Para Powerlifting World Championships have been rebranded following the renaming of the Kazakh capital city of Astana to Nur-Sultan after the country's first President. Eleiko has also extended its partnership with World Para Powerlifting for a further five years.

+++ **SHOOTING:** The vision impaired class was added to the sport following a transfer of governance from IBSA to World Shooting Para Sport.

+++ **SITTING VOLLEYBALL:** The International Volleyball Federation and World ParaVolley teamed up for the first time to explore co-operative opportunities in the following disciplines: indoor volleyball, beach volleyball, snow volleyball, sitting volleyball and beach ParaVolley.

+++ **SNOW SPORTS:** Are and Ostersund, Sweden, will jointly host the 2023 World Para Snow Sports Championships in January. Alpine skiing and snowboard Worlds will take place in Are, while Ostersund will be home to the Nordic skiing Worlds – featuring biathlon and cross-country events. A total of 750 participants are expected to take part in the Worlds.



Japanese Para athletes showcased their sports to kids during 500-days-to-go celebrations

Pictograms and torch unveiled

The official Paralympic sport pictograms include 23 designs, with each of the 22 sports represented by one pictogram, and one used for each of the two cycling disciplines.

The pictograms were created with the aim of helping people overcome language barriers through the use of internationally recognisable images to depict individual sports.

This is the first time that badminton and taekwondo pictograms are being used, as these two sports were newly added to the Paralympic programme.

The Paralympic torch was also revealed.

Uniting tradition and modern technology, the shape of the torch resembles that of a Japanese traditional "Sakuramon" cherry blossom emblem. Aluminium construction waste from temporary housing built in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake was used to create it, transforming materials that witnessed the rebuilding of shattered lives into a symbol of peace. The torch is also designed to depict the



shape of a flame. The five flames generated from the petal unite at the centre of the torch, generating even greater brilliance.

Change already happening

There are signs that with under 500 days to go, the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games are already having a transformational impact on Japanese society.

In terms of transport infrastructure, Tokyo has made great improvements to barrier-free transportation

ahead of the Games with the city's Haneda Airport recently named the world's best airport for persons with reduced mobility and accessible facilities.

Almost 90 per cent of train stations and airport terminals benefit from flat floors, while for bus terminals this figure is nearly 94 per cent. By the time of the Games, the aim is for all transport hubs to be 100 per cent accessible. In addition to infrastructure improvements, the number of accessible trains and low-floor buses has increased

significantly in recent years with the Games acting as the catalyst.

Para sport is also benefitting from more commercial support than ever before in Japan. Tokyo 2020 boast 70 Paralympic partners so far while the number of companies supporting the Japanese Para Sport Association has increased by 52 per cent since 2015.

IPC President Andrew Parsons is convinced Tokyo 2020 will also lead to greater employment opportunities for persons with a disability.

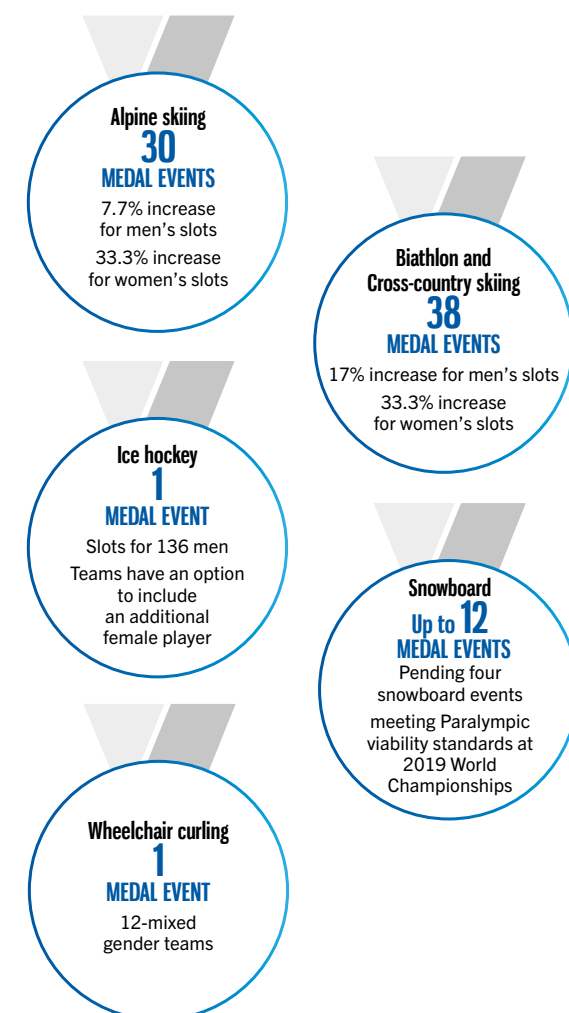
"Historically, persons with disabilities have been on the edges of Japanese society, however the 2020 Games are changing this," Parsons said. "Most employers still fall short of the two per cent government target for employing persons with disabilities, but I fully expect this figure to grow, especially next year when the Games take place. During the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics, millions of Japanese people will witness the outstanding abilities of Para athletes first-hand and I am certain that this will transform attitudes towards disability and make Japan a more inclusive country for all."



Medal events announced

Beijing 2022 will feature a maximum of 748 Para athletes and up to 82 medal events – two more than PyeongChang 2018.

In addition to having 39 medal events for men, up to 39 events for women (pending a decision on the snowboard programme) and four mixed events, there will be a maximum of 234 slots available for women. If all slots are taken, it will represent a 76 per cent growth on the 133 women who competed in PyeongChang.



Sports programme announced

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games sports programme will remain the same as the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics with 22 sports included.

The IPC Governing Board's decision was taken at a meeting in January.

The 22 sports that will be included are: athletics, archery, badminton, blind football, boccia, canoe, cycling, equestrian, goalball, judo, powerlifting, rowing, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, triathlon, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair fencing, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis.

CP football, which made the final stage for consideration, was not included in the Paris 2024 Paralympic sport programme.

Celebration with education

Paralympic and Olympic Week returned for the third time at schools and universities across France, as

the countdown to the 2024 Games continued. The third edition was launched at a secondary school in northern Paris on 5 February.

Supported by the French Ministry of Education and the sports Movement, the celebration is a key event in Paris 2024's educational programme, which seeks to promote education through sport and put civic and sporting values at the heart of learning.

Dora Maar Secondary School was chosen for the launch because of its close proximity to the future Paris 2024 Athletes' Village, and was attended by notable names including Paris 2024 President Tony Estanguet and Sophie Cluzel, French State Secretary in charge of Persons with Disabilities.

Arnaud Assoumani (athletics) and Charles Rozoy (swimming) were among the athletes who took part in French, History, Geography and English lessons in which sport was used as an educational tool.



Sitting volleyball on display to raise awareness of Paris 2024

Historic training camp staged in Asia



Para swimming educators were onsite to share their knowledge with camp participants

The impact of the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games is being felt in the host nation, with the Agitos Foundation holding their largest training camp that saw participants from eight Asian nations in Icheon, South Korea.

The camp, held 28 November – 1 December 2018, welcomed 65 athletes and 28 coaches from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Vietnam and hosts South Korea. The participants learned more about

athletics and swimming at the state-of-the-art facilities of the Korean Paralympic Committee's (KPC) Icheon Training Centre, which has more than 18 Para sport specific venues.

During the sessions, athletes and coaches improved and exchanged their knowledge guided by Para athletics educators Richard Robert and Lawrence Judge (USA); and Para swimming educators Gary Francis (New Zealand) and Martin Salmingkeit (Switzerland).

Alongside the event, the Agitos Foundation organised morning sessions of Proud Paralympian workshops for the training athletes, in which they could learn about the Paralympic Movement,

ethics and fair play, athlete health and well-being; and how to work with media.

Sessions were led by Proud Paralympian leaders Gyu Dae Kim, a track and field athlete from South Korea; and Hong Kong wheelchair fencing Paralympic champion Yu Chui Yee.

The camp was held in partnership with the Korea International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) and the KPC. It was the first event following the agreement among the three organisations signed during the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games to support developing countries in the Asian region.

Developing Americas female leaders

The first Agitos Women in Sport Leadership workshop took place in February in Ottawa, Canada, with 30 participants from 12 nations taking part.

The three-day workshop included discussions about leadership, networking, mentorship, and finding a way forward for women in sport.

The project was born out of a survey conducted in partnership between NPC Canada and the Americas Paralympic Committee. The findings showed that the representation of women in senior leadership roles in the Americas region was at about 36 to 38 per cent, while technical roles such as coaching was even lower at about 17 per cent.

It was decided to focus first on leadership in administration roles. The Ottawa workshop was the kick-off for the Agitos Women in Sport Leadership project, which will ultimately last eight months, concluding with another workshop in Lima following the 2019 Parapan Am Games.

In between this period, the participants have worked on develop-

ing a project in their home country related to supporting women in sport, receive advice from a mentor, work on their own leadership learning path, and participate in a number of webinars on key topics.

The activity, led by NPCs of Canada and Peru, was one of the 29 projects funded by the Agitos Foundation Grant Support Programme in 2018.



Women from 12 countries in the Americas attended the first leadership workshop in Canada

Athletes reach podium



Taonere Banda (MAW) and Monica Munga (ZAM), silver and gold at the Dubai Grand Prix

Athlete support from the Agitos Foundation paid dividends at February's World Para Athletics Grand Prix in Dubai, UAE.

Taonere Banda (Malawi) and Monica Munga (Zambia) came away with medal success at the 2019 season-opening event. Munga captured gold in the women's 400m T12/13 and silver in the 200m T11/12/13. Banda took home silver in the women's 400m T12/13.

Lesotho's Lekoetje Bolae also joined them on the podium by claiming silver in the men's 400 m T13.

In total, the Agitos Foundation supported 14 athletes and seven coaches from seven countries through its NPC Development Programme.

AGITOS
Foundation
Developing Sport,
Changing Lives

++ NEWS IN-BRIEF ++

+++ **BADMINTON:** Ahead of the IWAS World Games in Sharjah, UAE, the Badminton World Federation held a sport technical course for athletes and coaches from West Asia. The activity had 40 participants from eight countries and was supported by the Agitos Foundation NPC Development Programme.



+++ **SWEDEN:** From 16-19 January and 3-6 April, the Swedish Paralympic Committee hosted two Winter Development Camps. Twenty athletes and coaches from Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, France, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and USA took part. It was one of 29 projects funded by the 2018 Grant Support Programme.

+++ **POWERLIFTING:** Ahead of the Lagos 2019 International Para Powerlifting Competition, the Agitos Foundation invited 30 athletes and 11 coaches from six African nations to take part in a sport technical course. During the training camp, athletes attended Proud Paralympian sessions.

+++ **OCP:** From 13-16 March, nine Caribbean countries became the first to attend the Organisational Capacity Programme (OCP) Level 1 under a new format, with content being delivered with a more in-depth approach over four days of workshops. They will work during the next two years with mentors on action plans to improve their governance and planning, marketing and communications and athlete development.



CASE STUDY

I'mPOSSIBLE: Educating the next generation of Paralympic fans

Thousands of kilometres separate the three elementary schools. But the children in Tokyo, Nur-Sultan and Blantyre were buzzing with the same excitement last December.

They all had the same task: to translate into drawings and writing the Paralympic values, as part of national contests to celebrate the first anniversary of the I'mPOSSIBLE education programme. A total of 1,755 schoolchildren in Japan, Kazakhstan and Malawi engaged in the activity.

As part of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December), each NPC hosted a celebration to award the contest winners with I'mPOSSIBLE gold, silver and bronze medals.

I'mPOSSIBLE was launched in December 2017 for learners aged 6-12 that provided them with a primary toolkit. The following year, it was expanded to secondary learners aged 13-18.

The programme is designed for teachers to use a range of easy-to-use lesson ideas introducing pupils to inclusion through the Paralympic values, Para sports and the inspirational achievements of Para athletes from around the world.

"People tend to see what is impossible, what is incapable of when they see a person with a disability. However, the I'mPOSSIBLE programme is teaching children to see the possibilities and the potential of athletes with an impairment. That is a really huge perception change," said Miki Matheson, three-time Paralympic gold medalist and Programme Manager at the Nippon Foundation Paralympic Support Centre.

Pilot programme in Japan

Matheson's commitment has been fundamental to the implementation of I'mPOSSIBLE in Japan, the first country to pilot the programme early in 2017 in the build up to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. So far about 15 per cent of

elementary schools in the country have used the programme.

This year, children from Japan, Kazakhstan and Malawi will have something in common with many others around the globe. As of May 2019, 25 NPCs have signed the I'mPOSSIBLE Terms of Use Agreement, meaning they are ready to implement or are already implementing the programme.

"In 2018, the programme reached more than 138,000 students around the globe and we are thrilled to see this number growing as we expand the programme to new countries," said Kaitlyn Mudge, Agitos Foundation Programme Manager.

All NPCs are welcome to utilise the programme toolkit free of charge, provided that the Terms of Use are signed with the IPC and its devel-

opment arm the Agitos Foundation to ensure consistent delivery of the programme.

Global instructors

In March and April 2019, the Agitos Foundation hosted a teacher training in Luxembourg, where the programme will start being implemented this year, and Singapore – the second in the country, after a first one in November 2018.

Following the training in the Asian country, the Agitos Foundation visited schools that are already implementing the education programme to monitor and evaluate their progress. Other countries will be visited in 2019 to collect learnings and evidence of the impact of I'mPOSSIBLE in order to review strategy and support other countries in their implementation.

DRAWINGS FROM SCHOOLCHILDREN AGED 6-9 ABOUT THE PARALYMPIC VALUES:



Kazakhstan



Japan



Malawi

Countries that signed I'mPOSSIBLE Terms of Use Agreement*

NPCS	
Aruba	Japan
Armenia	Kazakhstan
Austria	Lithuania
Brazil	Luxembourg
Bhutan	Malawi
Cameroon	Mexico
Cape Verde	Peru
Colombia	Portugal
Costa Rica	Sierra Leone
Georgia	Singapore
Grenada	Uganda
Hong Kong	Zambia
Iran	

*as of May 2019

In June 2019, with the support of the World Academy of Sports, the Agitos Foundation, trained five I'mPOSSIBLE Global Instructors from Asia, Africa, Americas, Europe and Oceania. The instructors helped guarantee scale and consistency in the delivery of teacher trainings around the globe.

Reaching home of Paralympic Movement

As part of the celebrations to mark the IPC's 30th anniversary, children in Bonn, Germany, will also be inspired by the Paralympic values and the achievements of Paralympic athletes.

Three schools in Bonn, where the IPC is based, have implemented the programme this year. In February, a teacher training took place at the Bonn International School,

with seven instructors who teach students aged 6-12.

"Inclusion is something we have to deal with on an everyday basis, whether it's different skill abilities or just different personal experiences," said Daniela Klinge, Subject Leader for Physical and Health Education at the Bonn International School.

"I thought the training was fun, engaging and informative and it really provided us with tools, tangible things that we can actually apply within Bonn International School."

In June, further teacher training took place.



“I believe it will be difficult for Morocco to qualify for Tokyo 2020, given the development of the African economy and the technical level of our competitors. We will have to work hard to win the continental title in 2019!”

“The material things do not make us feel more motivated; blind football is a matter of love.”

“Competing at a Paralympic Games was a dream come true. Playing the opening game against Brazil and even scoring the first goal was an unforgettable memory for me.”

“To grow as a disabled person in Morocco is not easy because there are many obstacles. But sports help overcome those challenges.”

ONE TO WATCH FOR TOKYO 2020

★ **Abderrazak Hattab**

“Bourzouk,” as he is nicknamed, captained Morocco in their second World Championships at Madrid 2018 and reached the quarter finals. He is expected to lead a fast-improving squad to another Paralympic performance.



▶ DIGITAL DYNAMICS

#BalanceForBetter

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The 2019 campaign theme of #BalanceForBetter was a call-to-action for driving gender balance across the world. On 8 March, Para athletes and IPC staff got involved digitally.

A GIF and photo mosaic of IPC staff members were created to support the cause, and shared on social media:



Female Para athletes took over the IPC, World Para Sports, Agitos Foundation and Americas Paralympic Committee Instagram accounts:



Norway's Lena Schroeder on @paraicehockey's account
www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17977732237228673/



Venezuela's Oriana Teran on @parapowerlifting's account
www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/18009684280165661/



Women at the IPC were also greeted with a note of encouragement.



AGING WELL



Daisuke Ikezaki is helping Japan make history in wheelchair rugby

DAISUKE IKEZAKI

2018 World Championships



Named tournament's
Most Valuable Player

Rio 2016 Paralympics



Nation's first Paralympic medal
in the sport



Daisuke Ikezaki is like a fine wine; he gets better and better with age.

Having celebrated his 41st birthday in January, the 3.0 classified wheelchair rugby veteran is in as good a form as he has ever been. And, with a home Paralympics on the horizon, the veteran and the team appear to be peaking at the right time.

His motto is "Practice, practice, practice," and it served him well in 2018 as he guided Japan to their first world title in Sydney, Australia.

"I was happy to be world champions for the first time, but I think it's a passing point for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games," said Ikezaki who switched to wheelchair rugby from wheelchair basketball a decade ago.

"I think the result (winning in Sydney) was a combination of the individual strength we've accumulated so far."

"I think it's proof that if you have the confidence in your competitive ability, you will always win."

Such is Ikezaki's determination and desire to continually improve that he resumed training within a week after the 2018 Worlds.

He admitted there was no particular change in his life after the biggest win of Japan's history in the sport.

But that might change if Japan secures their first Paralympic gold in 2020.

"Individually, I want to work harder than ever before for Tokyo 2020, gain experience abroad and build up more strength," Ikezaki said.

"The team will work on individual skills, mental growth and aim to win at the World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge 2019."

The World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge takes place 16-20 October and acts as the sport's Paralympic test event, an opportunity for Japan to give their home fans a taste of the thrilling action to come.

"He wants all players to understand all situations and is not satisfied with mediocre performance."

Japan's breakthrough bronze medal at Rio 2016 was the first step towards their success in Sydney.

"We are not only aiming at a gold medal (at Tokyo 2020), but also for many people to know the attraction of Para sport and wheelchair rugby.

"I want to play to convey the greatness of the competition.

"I think a lot of coverage in the media and awareness has increased, but we have to keep working to make it permanent."

Japan's coach Kevin Orr believes Ikezaki's fierce competitiveness, will to win and ability to make his teammates believe they can win are what make him an outstanding player.

"He is very tactically knowledgeable and serves as a coaching extension on and off the court," Orr said.

"He wants all players to understand all situations and is not satisfied with mediocre performance.

"Age is not a limiting factor if we can use the depth of our team.

"Daisuke has a great work ethic and his training allows him to compete with the other great players in the world."

But like every high performance Para athlete, there is always room to grow.

"Daisuke needs to continue to improve his fundamental skills. His biggest focus is to improve his situational awareness – his complete understanding of when and where to take risks," Orr added.

When quizzed on whether Tokyo 2020 would be his last international competition, Ikezaki only said he wants to continue in the sport for as long as possible.

MAXIMISE SOCIAL MEDIA – THE PARALYMPIC WAY

Ahead of the Lima 2019 Parapan American Games, a leading NPC and athlete share their top tips.



A tool to bring fans behind the scenes



BRAZILIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE



@Ocpboficial

61,800 followers

on Instagram



@cpboficial

103,000 followers

on Twitter



@ComiteParalimpico

576,000 followers

on Facebook

*as of May 2019

They use the Instagram stories tool to offer behind-the-scenes video footage and images showcasing a day in the life of the athletes, whether in training or competition.

“People get curious when we’re talking about Paralympic sport when they see something more attractive – beautiful photos, athletes in action, and high performance,” explained CPB social media supervisor Rafael Sena.

► Utilising the best content

Recently, the CPB hired a professional photographer to take photos of swimmers at water level showing unfiltered images of the athletes as they are with no arms or legs.

“People loved it,” Sena said. “Some of the comments were funny to read like, ‘Oh my God, he is so hot’. Another girl said ‘Now I’m interested in Paralympic sports.’”

Earlier this year, Sena worked with a university on digital research to see how people viewed Paralympic sports in Brazil. The research showed that “while the Rio Paralympics was a turning point,” there was a need for more education. Many people still don’t see the Paralympics as high-performance sport.

“After this research we’ve tried to show more competitions and how hard our athletes work in training,” said Sena.

The CPB started to livestream competitions on Facebook, YouTube and their website because the research showed people were not as interested in Paralympic sport because they could not watch it on television.

Sena believes this offers an important lesson for NPCs.

“You are the owner of your content. Don’t be a hostage to media channels. If the problem is not enough space for Para sport

on TV, an NPC can show more competitions on social media because they have the space. Try to make more live videos and show more competitions.”

► Interact with users

For those with limited budget or expertise, Sena admits it does not take a lot. “You can go with a mobile phone and microphone. You need to show something to prove it works. That’s how we started here.”

There is one other kind of content Sena has found works well on Instagram during competitions. “When we call for the audience to cheer for Brazilians, they get more engaged with us,” he said.

The CPB also use polls, answer questions and interact with followers like they are best friends having a conversation.

► Athletes as ambassadors

Sena believes it is important to produce at least one interesting post on social media daily. The CPB offers social media training to athletes because they are the best ambassadors for the Movement. The CPB teaches athletes about content that works well and not well. Sena recommends, for instance, that athletes steer clear of commenting on controversial political issues in Brazil.

“Athletes forget they are like a brand. The athlete’s name is the most important thing they have. They need to be careful with the kind of content they are publishing.”

Athletes are taught how to use hashtags the right way and to tag the NPC so they can amplify posts together.

“The best message (for athletes) is you can’t just sit and wait for someone to recognise how awesome you are. But you can scream that out on social media.”

An athlete's tips on social media



GUSTAVO FERNANDEZ

Athletic profile:
Winner of 2019 and 2017 Australian Open,
and 2016 French Open

First Latin American to reach world
No. 1 in wheelchair tennis



@gustifernandez4

44,400 followers

on Instagram



@gustifernandez4

24,400 followers

on Twitter



@gustifernandez4

9,211 followers

on Facebook

*as of May 2019

For a guy who does not consider himself the best social networker, wheelchair tennis star Gustavo Fernandez is pretty good at it. He has 44,400 followers on Instagram alone.

"It's kind of weird. I think the followers came with my sports success. I'm not the best at promoting myself. Actually, I feel I am pretty lousy doing that," Fernandez said.

Fernandez runs his own social media accounts and posts when he feels like it.

"I like to do it myself because I like to be honest and pure," he said. "I want them to see me as I

am. Not as a business machine and sometimes when you get involved with an agency their priority is on other things. What I would suggest to athletes is to keep being yourself. If you want to post something, post it. If you don't want to post something, don't do it."

That strategy has worked well for Fernandez. He shows cool photos of his daily life, the training for tennis and is not afraid to share a few opinions.

"What I like about what I do on social media is I'm spontaneous. I don't hide. If I'm happy or maybe a little upset. I am who I am. And I just show it on social media."

» **"I want them to see me as I am. Not as a business machine and sometimes when you get involved with an agency their priority is on other things."**

He also has fun with his followers because it relieves tension between competition.

"I like to interact with the people – maybe play some jokes sometimes about soccer, sometimes about life, maybe a TV show I'm looking at. Tennis is a very lonely sport sometimes once you're outside and alone and you've got the social network to interact with people and it's cool."

While he likes people to get to know him, he does not share everything and says it is a delicate balancing act on social media when it comes to issues like politics.

"I don't like to get involved in that kind of thing especially. Sometimes you try to say something and the people that read it on the other side of the screen, they sometimes don't understand exactly what you are saying."

Fernandez has seen the kind of content that works best.

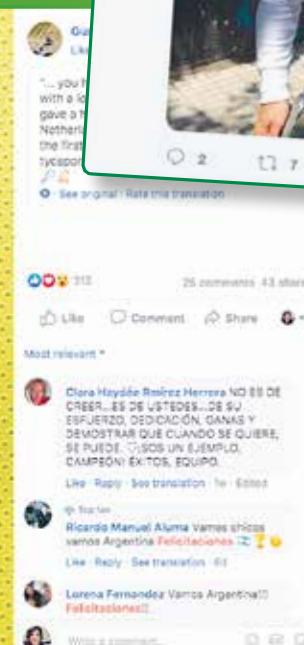
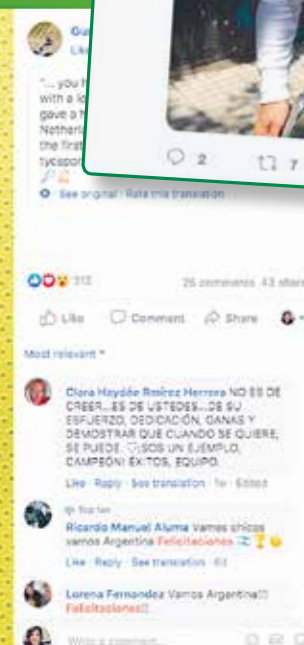
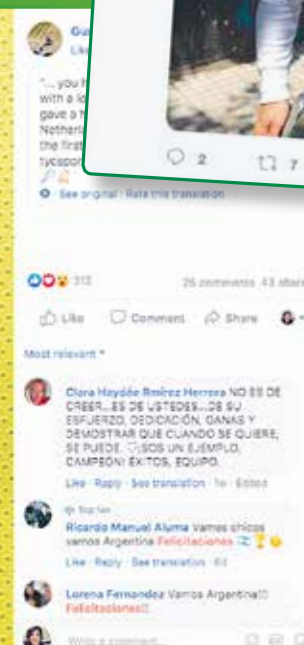
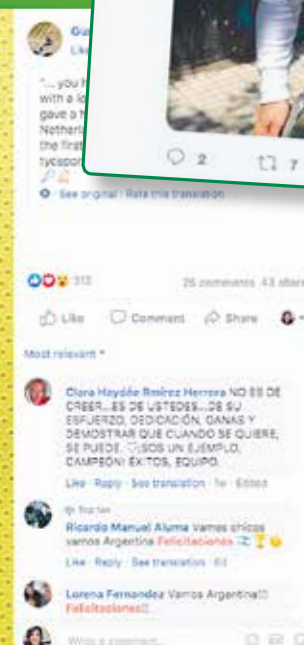
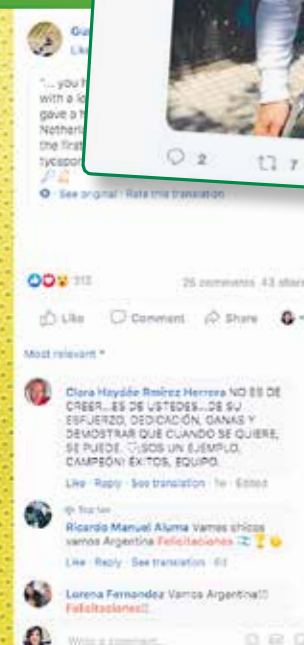
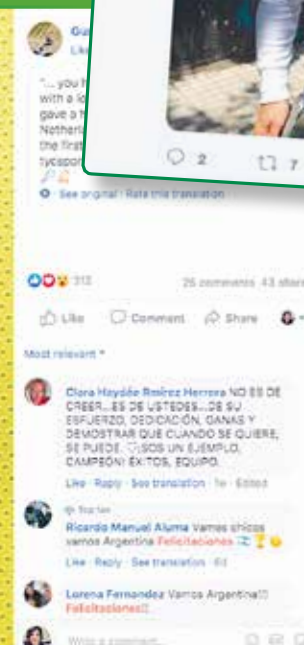
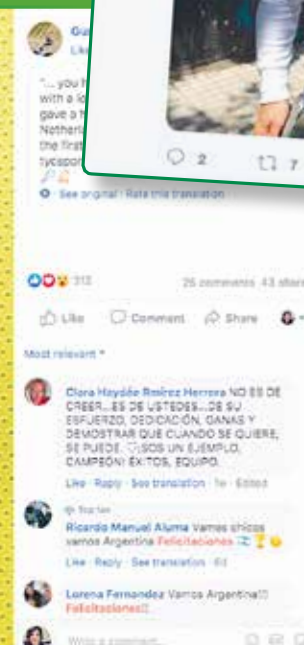
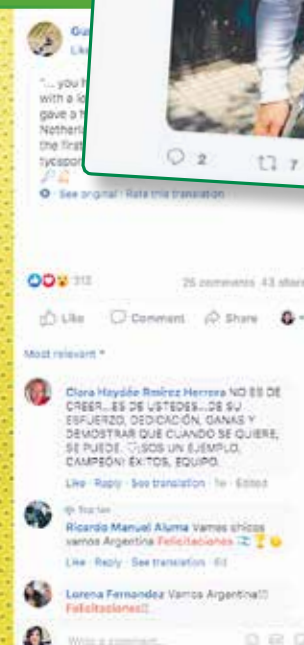
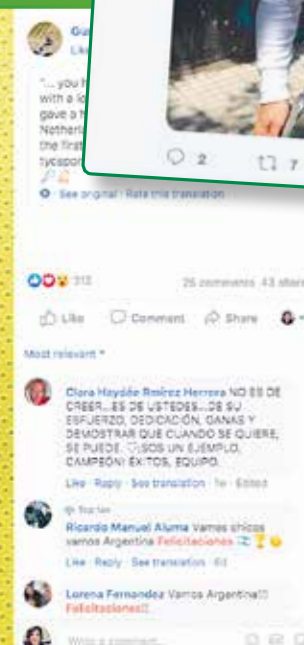
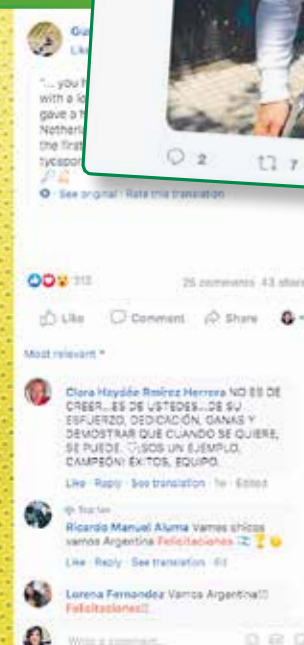
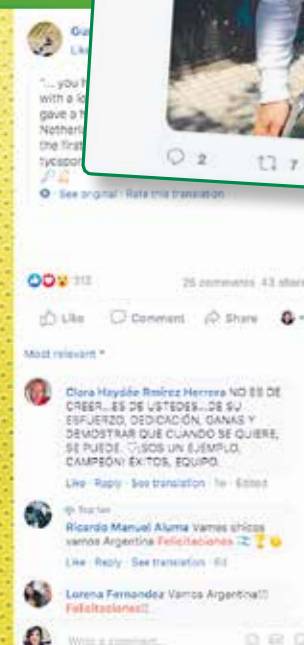
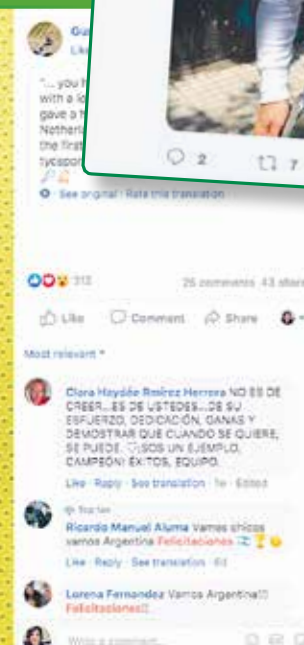
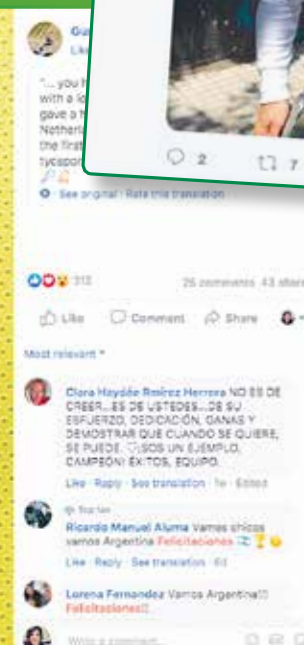
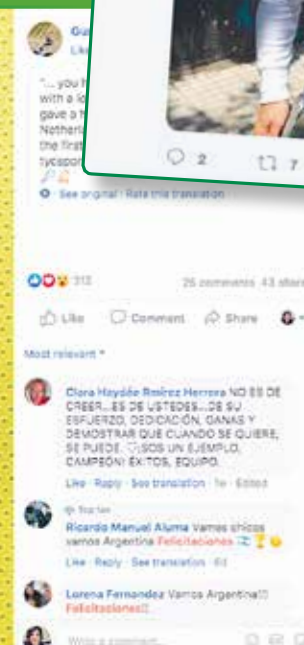
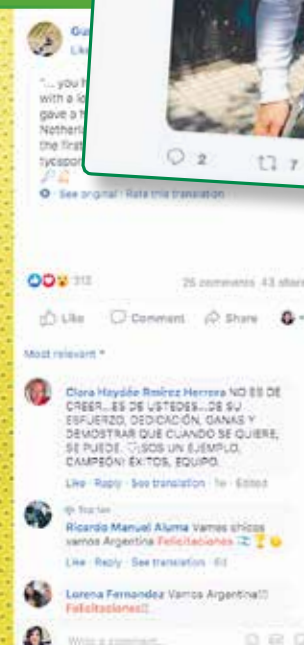
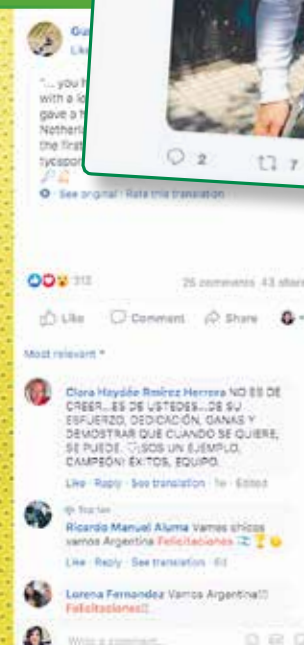
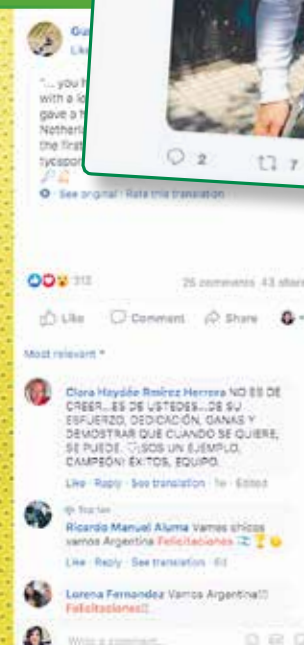
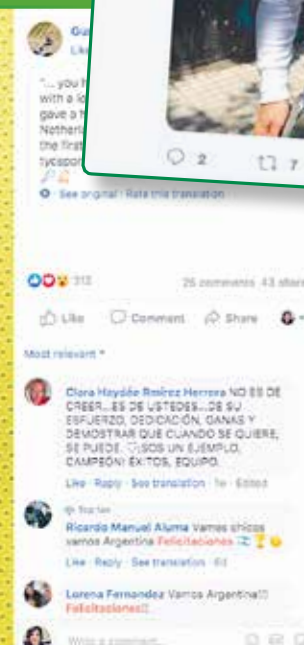
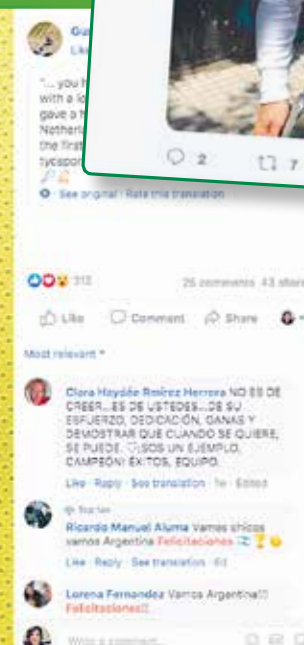
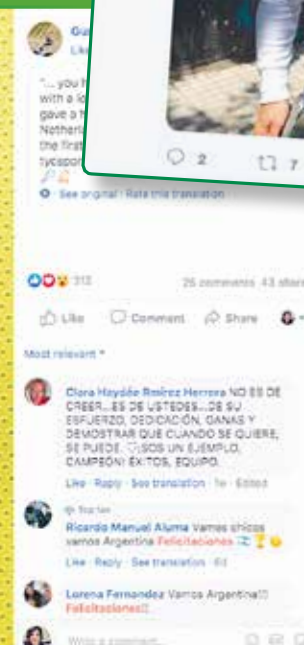
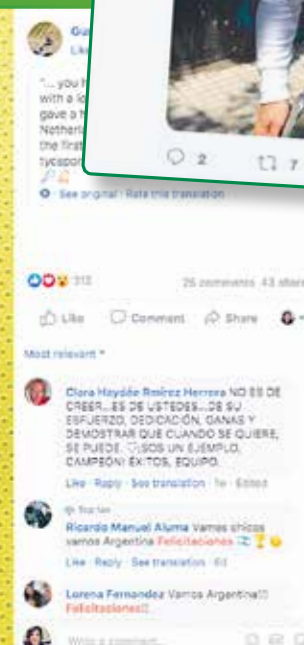
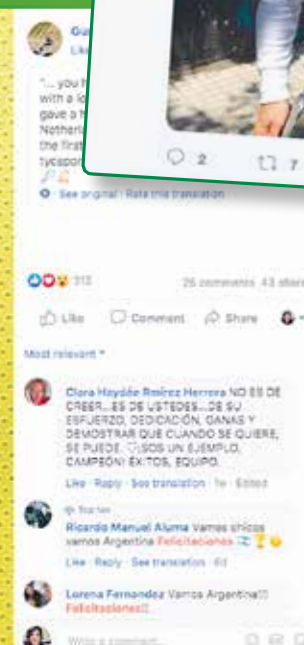
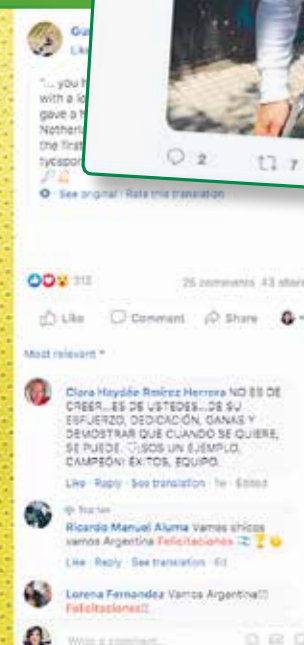
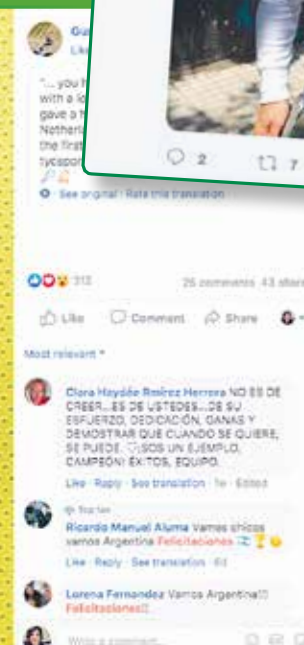
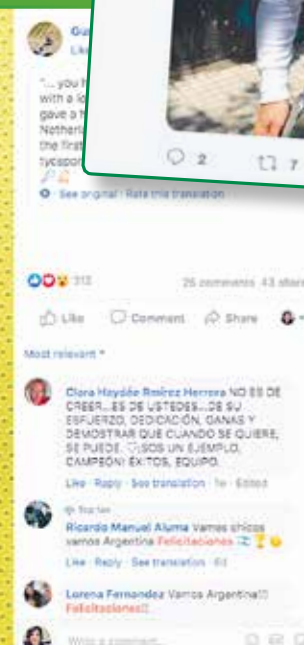
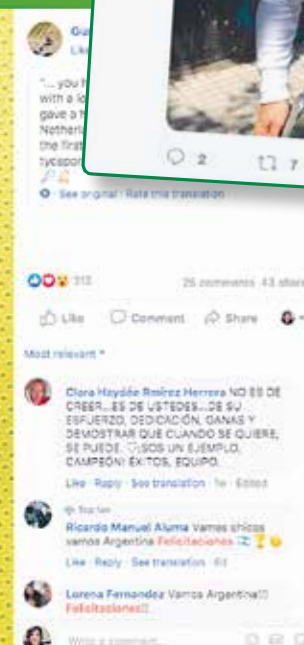
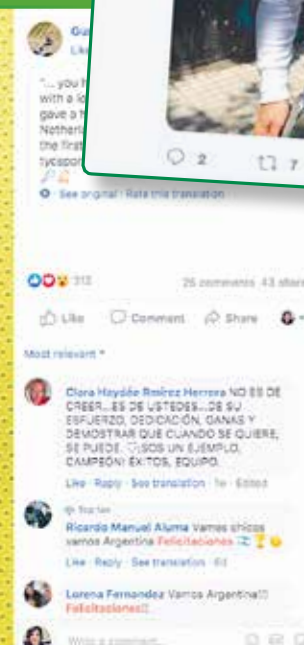
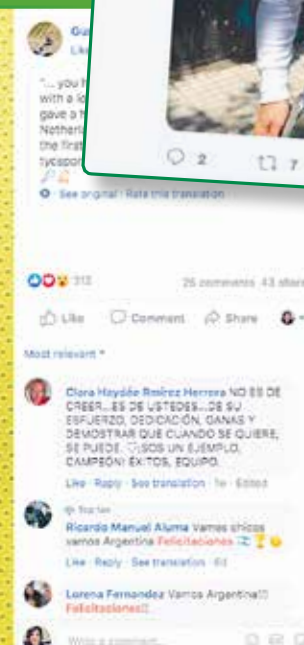
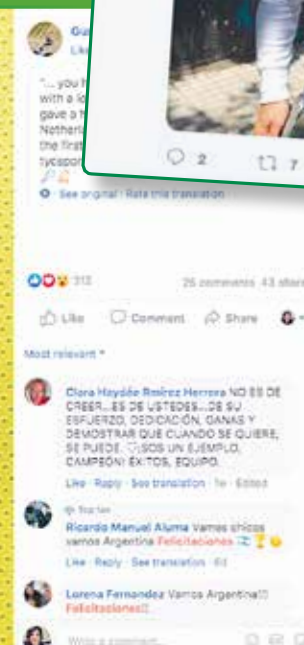
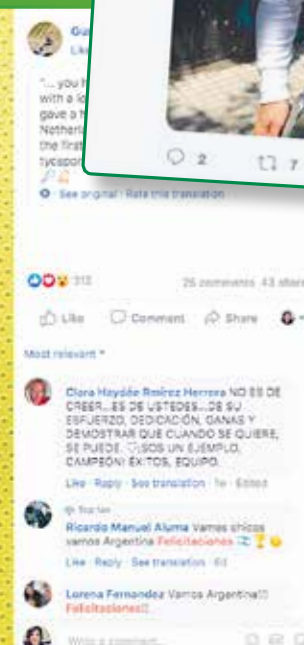
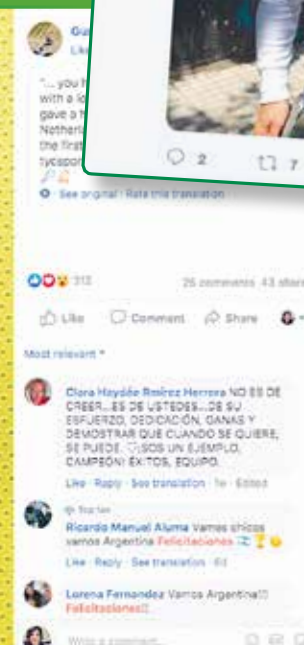
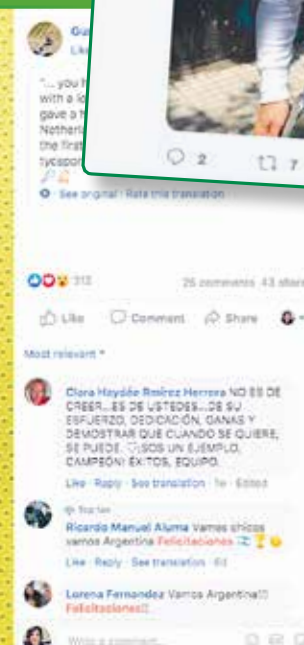
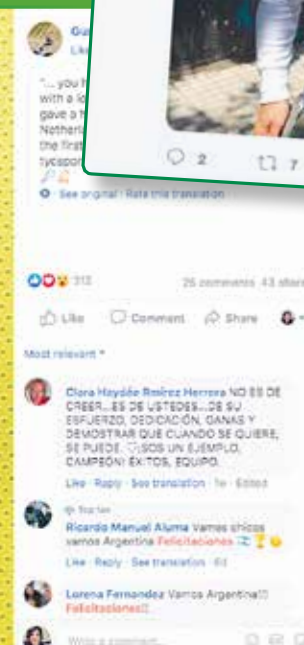
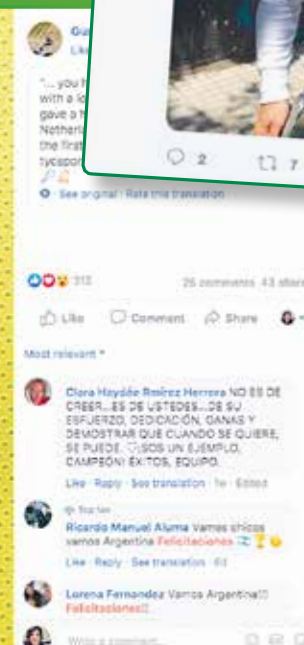
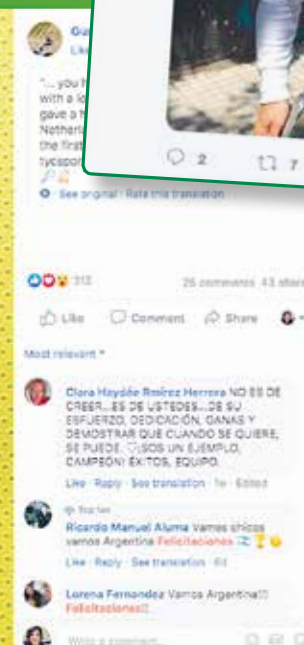
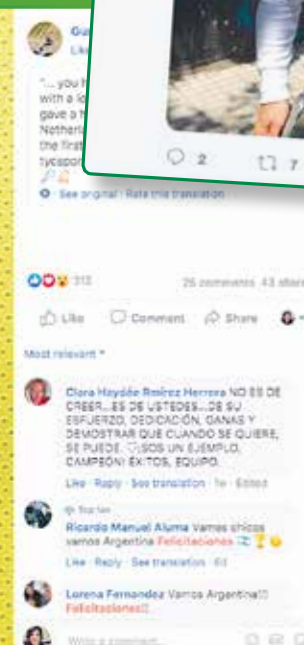
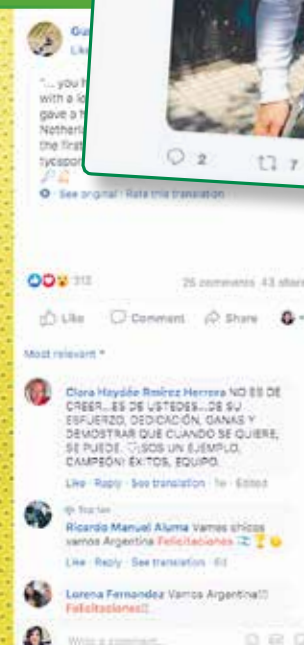
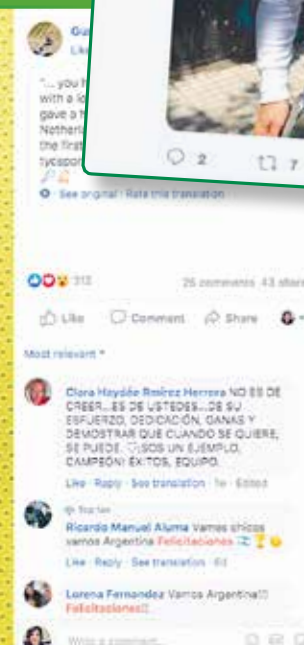
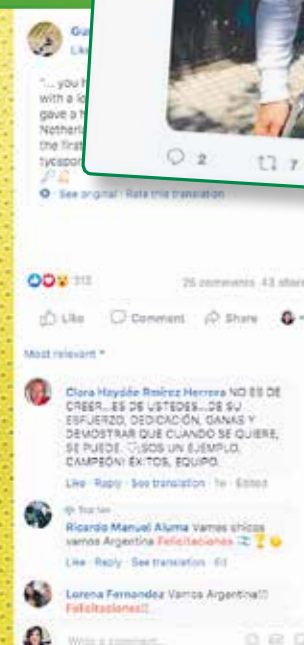
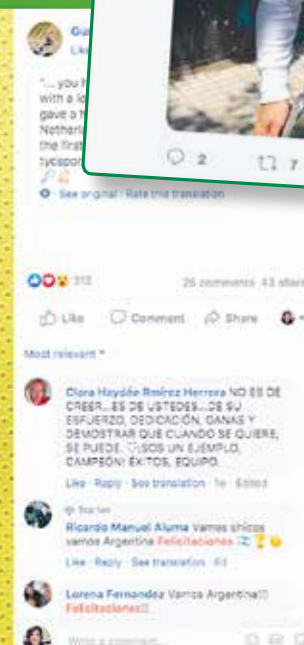
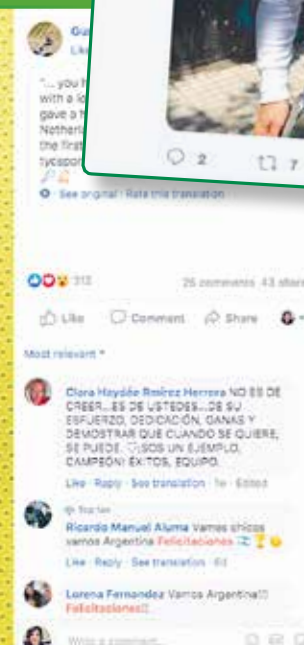
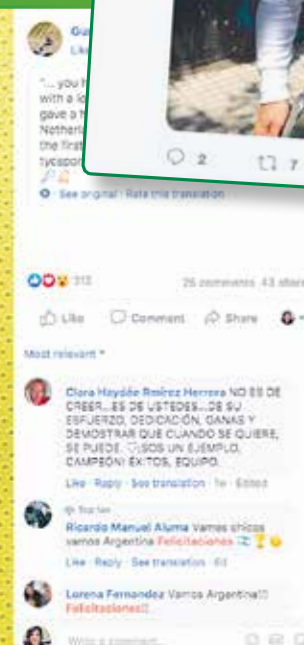
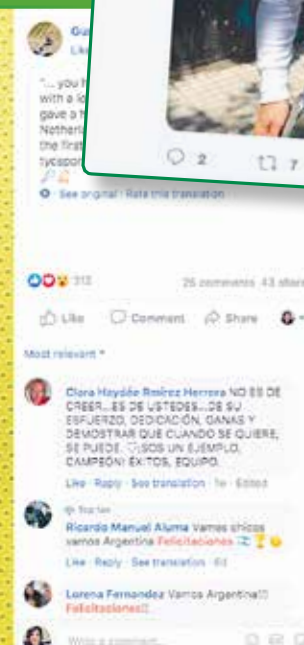
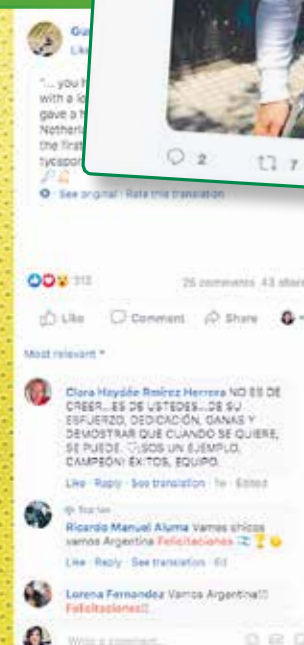
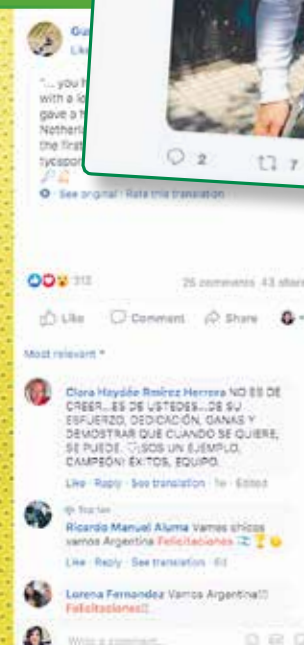
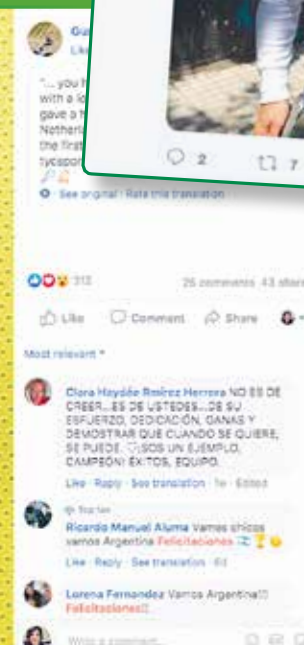
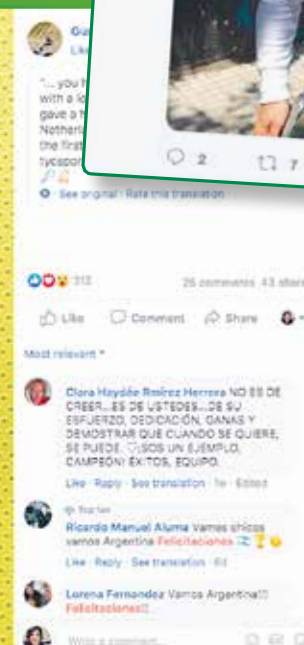
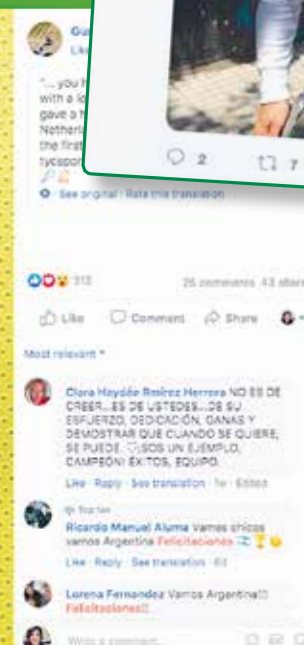
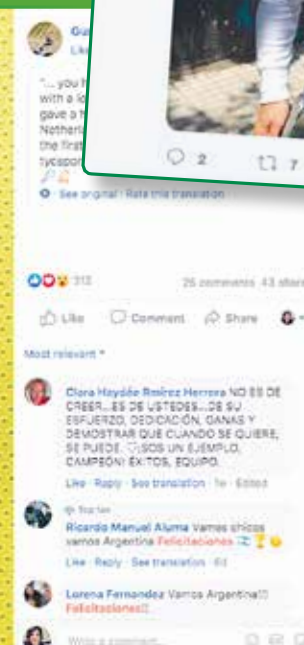
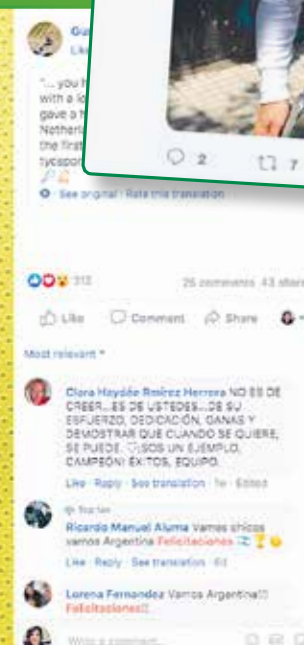
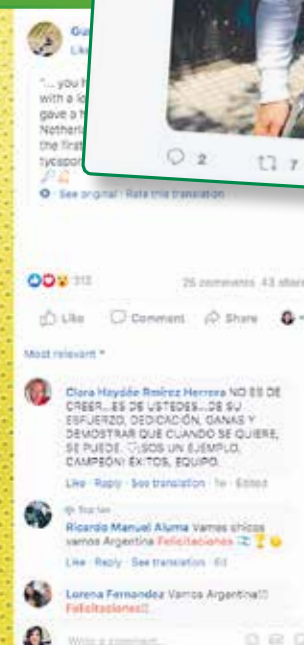
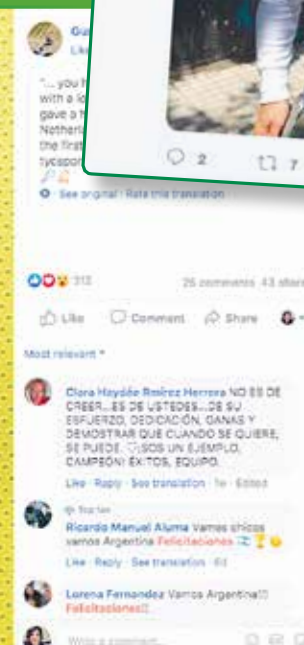
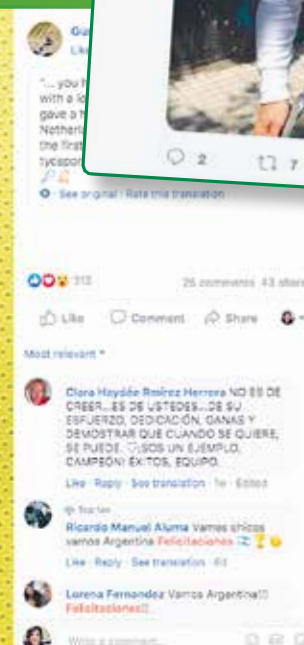
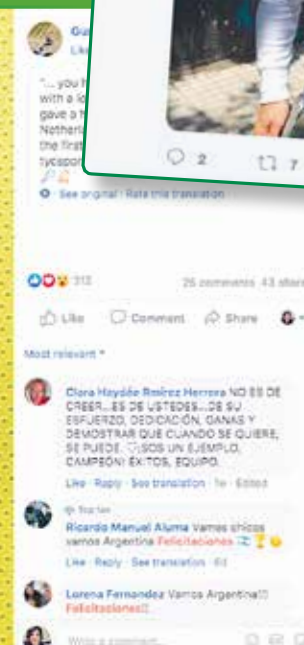
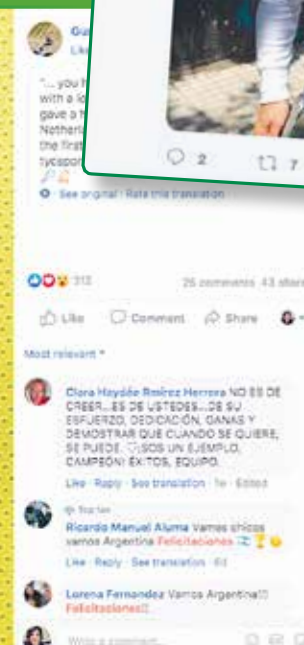
"People like to know a bit about my private life but especially about my sport's life. To share results, practice, what I do on court, off court. How I take care of myself. What kind of workout I do mentally and physically."

Fernandez found an old CD where as a young boy he is jumping on a trampoline with his able-bodied friends. He posted it because his followers love to see "his human side" and the resiliency of Paralympic athletes.

"We have a story to tell and some people will be inspired by it and I think social media helps you to connect with that kind of thing."

For athletes who might think they do not have time for social media, Fernandez thinks they might be missing out on an opportunity that could lead to more awareness and even sponsorship.

"It's part of the job. It helps people understand better what you do and who you are. That's a good thing because especially with Paralympic sport, people usually don't know what you do. Social media can break that barrier and show that what we do is real sport."



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF... PEDRO PABLO DE VINATEA

The 31-year-old is the face of Para badminton in Peru. He will play under the spotlight at his home Parapan American Games in August.



MON



TUE



MONDAY

First thing I do is meticulously prepare my bag for training. I must have my contact lenses, prosthesis and a strap to keep it in place while playing badminton. I also need a patch for my finger as I lost sensitivity after an accident. Of course, my sporting gear and rackets should also be inside my bag. I must be very disciplined!

TUESDAY

Tuesdays are very similar to Mondays. I start early in the morning to train at the VIDENA Sports Complex, the main venue for Lima 2019. After the morning session, I go to work at BCP, the biggest bank in Peru. My title is "Process Improvement Assistant Manager." My working hours are flexible, as I have to combine it with my training. After work, I head back to VIDENA for my evening training. It was this Tuesday in April when I learned I would be on the national team at Lima 2019!

WEDNESDAY

I do not train in the evening, so I take this opportunity to do other things such as errands, visit my girlfriend Sofia or give motivational speeches. I have to be careful when I do not have training and need to watch my diet. I have a healthy eating plan throughout the week that includes lots of vegetables and fruits; and I eat many times per day. I also need to keep a good sleeping regime and try to go to bed early; but I never manage to do so before midnight.



WED



THU



FRI



SAT



SUN

THURSDAY

Thursdays are good days because my girlfriend, who works at the same bank but at another branch, comes to the one I am at and we have lunch together. I try to devote as much time to her on Thursdays. If we do not make special arrangements like this, we will not see each other often due to our different responsibilities.

FRIDAY

I start the workday early so that I can finish early, usually by 2 pm. I can then train earlier and visit the doctor if I feel pain. I also get to train with able-bodied players, which is pretty cool. It is quite exhausting. But afterward I still try to spend my evenings with Sofia or talk to my mom.

SATURDAY

Weekends are the perfect opportunities to spend time with loved ones. Sofia is so important to me; we have been together for almost 10 years before I even took up Para badminton. I was diagnosed with cancer at 15 and had my leg amputated. I focussed on recovering mentally and physically, and also on my studies. And she has been fundamental in the process.

SUNDAY

I love watching Formula 1 or badminton competitions. They usually start very early in Peru, but I make the effort to get up because I am passionate about these events. I also use Sundays to spend time with my family. My dad passed away a couple of years ago, but I meet my mom, my siblings or my girlfriend's family. I do not go out at night very often because it breaks my routine, unless there is a special occasion with friends of mine.

WINNING MORE THAN GOLD

As three-time Paralympian Mami Tani continues her attempts to qualify for Tokyo 2020, she explains her vital role in bringing the Paralympic Games to her home country.



Japan’s Mami Tani is more nervous than she has been her whole life. She feels the weight of her country on her shoulders. She has spent a decade on the world stage competing at front of thousands in the long jump at the Paralympics at Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 and London 2012.

But this is different.

It is September 2013 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Tani, formerly Sato, knows she has one chance to get this right. She has been trembling in rehearsals. She has never done a public speech before in English and yet she is kicking off the presentation for Tokyo 2020, hoping the members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will vote for Tokyo over Madrid, Spain; and Istanbul, Turkey.

Tani starts by telling the story of how she became a Paralympian. At 19, she was active in many sports while in university. She was a runner, swimmer and cheerleader. When Tani started to have pain in her right ankle, she went to see a doctor. It was bone cancer. Within a few weeks, her life was turned upside down. She had to have her leg amputated.

While it was a devastating turn of events, she says, “Sport saved her during a dark period in her life” and gave her new confidence. She tells the IOC members, “Most of all, I learned that what was important was what I had, not what I lost.”

While Tani hooked the IOC voters with that beginning, they had no idea what was coming next.

When it hits home

The year before Tani’s third Paralympics, on 11 March 2011, a devastating earthquake and tsunami hit Japan, killing 15,000 people. Within minutes, Tani’s hometown, Kesennuma, was under water.

“I was living in Tokyo and I was watching what was going on there on the TV news,” she recalls. “It was horrendous watching the tsunami and a big fire spread in my hometown.”

Six agonising days passed before Tani finally made contact with her family and heard their voices again. “When I got a phone call from my mom after six days, I cried.”

Tani joined a group of athletes who brought supplies and messages of support from other Japanese school children to Kesennuma.



Mami Tani, a 2017 world champion, is aiming to qualify for triathlon at her home Paralympic Games in Tokyo

» “We saw the faces of the children were changing. Only then did I see the true power of sport.”

“It was so tough for the children there. They were not crying. But their faces were so sad,” says Tani.

She knew the power sport could have, so she started organising games and getting the children there to play sports and have moments of fun to briefly put some of their worries aside.

“We saw the faces of the children were changing,” she explains. “Only then did I see the true power of sport,” she related to the IOC members in Argentina. It helped “to create new dreams and smiles. To give hope.”

“We have to continue this Movement until 2020 and beyond,” she continues.

Tani’s emotional story and how compelling it was for the IOC was highlighted by best-selling author Carmine Gallo in his book The Storyteller’s Secret. Gallo pointed out that in the past Japan would typically start an Olympic bid presentation with a senior leader such as the prime minister.

“You may not be writing this article about Tokyo 2020 if it hadn’t been for storytelling, and Mami was the one who kicked it off,” says Gallo. He says Tani’s story has all the classical elements of heroic epic stories that have captivated people for years. She talked about her rise and fall, overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles, her rebirth and transformation.

Athlete stories are golden

While Tani’s was just the first of a series of emotional stories Tokyo shared in its presentation, Gallo notes she set the perfect tone. And he says Tani offers a great lesson for the Paralympics in a broader sense.

“The Paralympics are sitting on a treasure trove of stories,” Gallo says. “So many Paralympic athletes have the same kind of hero’s journey (like Tani’s), and that’s gold.”

When the Japanese celebrated after Tokyo was selected, Tani became more of a household name there.



Gallo says the newspaper headlines took notice of the previously little known long jumper. The Japan Times headline read, “Sato Shines as Role Model”. The Guardian noted, “Japanese bid’s passion earns Tokyo the 2020 Olympic Games” and they gave special mention to Tani.

Tani is now married with a four-year-old son. She is juggling life as a mom, wife, her work and her life as an athlete.



Tani has worked to raise awareness of the Paralympics on home soil



Tokyo 2020 would be special for Tani with family support

She is training hard once again attempting to qualify to compete in a new event, triathlon in the PTS4 category, at Tokyo 2020. The course for triathlon runs through the area where she works and where her son goes to nursery.

“It would be the most memorable time of my life if I could compete in a home Games,” she says.

And to know she played a big part in making it happen.

MARKETING SECRETS OF HAMBURG 2018

Anthony Kahlfeldt reveals how he dressed the German city with the event branding, filled venues and attracted partners for the 2018 Wheelchair Basketball World Championships.



A large banner was placed along one of Hamburg's most popular tourist attractions

Along the wall of Germany's busiest harbour hung a massive bright blue 170m wide banner. Facing directly at Hamburg Hafen, a top tourist attraction, it read: "ZA-DONK! ROLLSTUHL-BASKETBALL-WM 2018 IN HAMBURG".

Such a giant advertisement in Germany's second largest city was just one of many examples of the ambitious approach to promoting the 2018 Wheelchair Basketball World Championships.

STEP 1: Meet them face-to-face

In October 2016, Anthony Kahlfeldt, CEO of the Organising Committee, met with team members and set a clear goal: "To make the best event for the athletes, the best event for the spectators, and the best event for our partners."

The team's budget included EUR 3 million from the city, a result of Hamburg's bid for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Although the Games bid fell through, the money and planning remained.

To deliver the event they wanted, they calculated a EUR 4.8 million total budget that rose to EUR 5.9 million in real costs. With revenues also coming from team entry fees, it meant the Organising Committee needed to raise EUR 2.6 million.

Kahlfeldt and his team developed a plan to talk to potential partners, engage with the decision-makers in companies personally, and market an idea that had not existed before.

The Organising Committee landed more than 50 partners, including the city of Hamburg and a German NBA legend.

To land the Dallas Mavericks' Dirk Nowitzki as a Hamburg 2018 patron, Kahlfeldt drove to Bamberg, 550 kilometres from Hamburg, to meet Nowitzki's manager Holger Geschwindner, someone he knew personally.

"We met for a coffee, discussed the challenges of getting wheelchair basketball on TV and Hamburg 2018's vision to deliver a spectacular sport event backed by a strong promotional campaign featuring a schools programme and free ticketing," Kahlfeldt recalled.

"I pointed out that we needed Nowitzki's support to attract partners and Geschwindner agreed, offering to deliver the event together."

As a Hamburg 2018 patron, Nowitzki sent a video message supporting the event that was used in presentations to partners.

Just as he did with meeting Geschwindner, Kahlfeldt scoured his contact list, reaching out

to people he knew personally. Through perseverance, he set up meetings to share his vision for the event.

Hamburg mayor Peter Tschentscher and local entrepreneur Alexander Otto joined Nowitzki as patrons, boosting the event's profile. Securing high-end accommodation for athletes further underlined to partners how serious he was about organising a world-class event.



STEP 2: Believe in what you're selling

Before convincing partners, Kahlfeldt needed to convince himself.

He was not organising the FIFA World Cup, where partners come first to you. But the size and scale of Hamburg 2018 would be similar: 28 teams, 94 games, two world champions. He used that as a selling point.

"At the beginning during presentations, I thought 'This will not work. You will never get such an amount of money for organising this thing,'" explained Kahlfeldt. "After the tenth presentation I said to my colleagues 'Now I'm at the point where I believe myself what I'm talking about.'"

Importantly, he sold the emotions of Para sports. All the teams, athletes and storylines heading to Hamburg would produce emotions that normally could only be felt during the Paralympics and Olympics, two major events Germany had not experienced since the 1970s. Such an "emotional" atmosphere however, could only be generated by spectators packing the stands.



The German city was decked out with Hamburg 2018 branding

STEP 3: Pack the venues with fans

The main competition venue at Edel-optics.de Arena had a capacity of 1,573, including 249 wheelchair spaces. The two other competition halls held 300 people, 50 for wheelchair users.

"We wanted to stage an event where ticket prices were fair and not too high," Kahlfeldt said.

Overall, 14,762 single tickets and 458 season tickets were sold. Each day, the main venue averaged 1,100 spectators, and 250-300 at the smaller halls.

"We were 80 per cent sold out," said Kahlfeldt. "We didn't expect that every game, but it was so amazing."



The 2018 Wheelchair Basketball World Championships was a sell-out event

Key to success was providing the best spectator experience, while maintaining low ticket prices. A pass for all matches was EUR 50. Tickets for the opening day and finals games were EUR 10. Regular day tickets to the Centre Court after 18:00 cost EUR 5. During the day, entrance to all arenas was free.

During breaks, in the park space around the venue, spectators enjoyed live music, tried Para sports, ate from local food vendors and lounged on outdoor furniture. All services were provided by partners.

"After-work parties" for partners drove attendance in the evenings. During the day, local schoolchildren attended matches. Around 5,000 youngsters were expected, but nearly 12,000 turned up.

"We wanted to connect the city of Hamburg with sport, culture and education," he said. "Everyone on the team worked very hard for this to happen. And we were able to see the results over the 11 days of competition."

"It was crazy to see all these schoolchildren in the park and the sports arena, especially seeing so many people, adults included, try Para sports!"

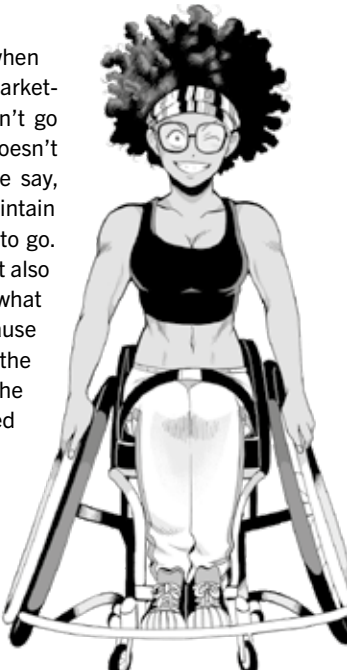
"We did not expect such interest and participation even though we wanted to stage an event that appealed to everyone, inspired them and captured them emotionally."

STEP 4: Teamwork and independence

Before taking on the task of Hamburg 2018, Kahlfeldt had one condition: "I will only do this if I can make my own decisions with my team."

He wanted the Organising Committee to act independently of the existing sports association structures. A fresh and innovative approach was required.

"It is very important when you find a line for marketing, you stick to it. Don't go left, don't go right. It doesn't matter what the people say, you must focus and maintain the direction you want to go. Adjust little things – but also have confidence in what your team says, because you are working with the people who believe in the same goal," concluded Kahlfeldt.





“I wanted to be like Marit Bjorgen when I was little, before I got the disease in my foot. But then I got the damage in my foot, and so now I want to be the Marit Bjorgen of Para sports. She is my idol.”

“I have been working a lot on my technique since PyeongChang, especially in the classic. I saw at this season’s Vuokatti World Cup that my middle distance and sprint went well, and that was because of technical training and conditioning, together with the team. I’ve been training a lot with the boys.”

“I think my breakthrough moment was the sprint in the Paralympics, when I got the silver medal. In the qualification, I won by like 12 seconds, and it was then I knew that I was one of the best in the world.”

“I had a goal to take one medal at the Paralympics Games. I definitely was the strongest in the sprint. I hoped for a medal, and silver was very good for me.”

“I will definitely compete in Beijing 2022. It’s my goal. I hope for a gold medal there.”

“Sprint is my favourite Nordic skiing event because you have to be very explosive. You have to use a lot of power in a very short time. I think I’m good at that. Long distance is a little more difficult but I’m still young and I have a lot to learn. So maybe long distance will be one of my favourite distances later.”

“Outside of sports, I do a lot of music. I play the violin and also piano.”

ONE TO WATCH FOR BEIJING 2022

 **Vilde Nilsen**

The 18-year-old surprised many, winning silver in the women’s sprint standing at PyeongChang 2018. A year later, her talent exploded at the World Championships in Prince George, Canada, with four gold medals.



21 January – 1 February

World Para Alpine Skiing Championships



Veteran Marie Bochet was one of two undefeated champions, as young Norwegian talent Jesper Pedersen collected his first Worlds medals (two silvers, two bronze)

France’s Marie Bochet and the Netherlands’ Jeroen Kampschreur were both unbeatable at the 2019 Worlds, securing five gold medals apiece.

For standing skier Bochet, it was the third sweep of her career while it was the first for 19-year-old sit-skier Kampschreur.

Bochet’s compatriot Arthur Bauchet won three gold medals in the men’s standing technical events, emotionally celebrating each time he crossed the finish line.

Giacomo Bertagnolli and guide Fabrizio Casal won four gold medals in total, three of which (downhill, super combined and super-G) came on home snow in Sella Nevea, Italy.

Three women shared the spoils in women’s sitting. Japan’s Momoka Muraoka (giant slalom and super combined) secured two golds as did Germany’s Anna Schaffelhuber (downhill and super-G). Schaffelhuber’s compatriot Anna-Lena Forster took the slalom title.

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

MEDALS TABLE			
France	8	1	1
Netherlands	5	1	0
Italy	4	1	0

SPOTLIGHT ON

JEROEN KAMPSCHREUR (NED)
Known more as a technical racer, the teenager proved uncatchable in both speed events to secure a first career Grand Slam.



23-25 January

Australian Open



Stefan Olsson made up for his singles loss by winning the doubles with Joachim Gerard. Meanwhile, Diederik De Groot was outstanding in her singles victory

Securing Australian Open singles titles in January all held different meanings for Dylan Alcott, Diederik De Groot and Gustavo Fernandez.

Although it was his fifth straight quad singles crown, Alcott was overcome with emotion as

he celebrated in front of a huge home crowd on Australia Day. The match was also broadcast live on Australian TV for the first time. Alcott also teamed up with compatriot Heath Davidson to defend their doubles title in three sets over Great Britain’s Andy Lapthorne and the USA’s David Wagner.

De Groot won her third Grand Slam tournament in a row, routing Japan’s No. 2 seed Yui Kamiji 6-0 6-2.

But the doubles victory was another story for the 22-year-old, who

alongside compatriot Aniek Van Koot, had to battle to the end of three sets against fellow Dutchwoman Marjolein Buis and Germany’s Sabine Ellerbrock.

Argentina’s Fernandez ended a four-match losing streak in Grand Slam finals to claim his third major title. He held off Swedish rival Stefan Olsson 7-5 6-3 in the men’s singles. Olsson did leave with a victory, joining Belgium’s Joachim Gerard for their first Grand Slam title together.

www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/home.aspx



SPOTLIGHT ON

DYLAN ALCOTT (AUS)
All cameras and attention were on the home favourite, who beat US rival David Wagner 6-4 7-6(2) in a ee-saw final on a national holiday.



» “It’s a dream come true. After my win in GS (giant slalom) I thought ‘Yeah, you did it, but now focus on the slalom’. I was focussed on it and I did it again, so I can’t dream of anything better.”

Arthur Bauchet, France, after winning giant slalom and slalom golds

5-6 February

World Para Taekwondo Championships



World champions in the 12 Paralympic-affiliated divisions came from 10 different countries, while 22 different nations won medals

MEDALS TABLE			
Russia	4	5	5
Turkey	4	2	5
Serbia	2	3	2

*Only Kyorugi events

New stars rose to the podium while many top-ranked fighters left Antalya, Turkey, disappointed.

Iran's Mahdi Pourrahnama surprisingly failed to win a fifth straight crown, suffering only his second loss in eight years. Instead, Mexico's world No. 6 Juan Garcia Lopez was victorious in the men's up to 75 kg K44.

Lopez was not the only fighter from the Americas to cause an upset. Brazil's Debora Menezes won the women's over 58 kg K44 prize; Great Britain's defending champion Amy Truesdale failed to medal.

Truesdale's compatriot Matt Bush secured gold in the men's over 75 kg, an event in which

Croatian world No. 1 Ivan Mikulic failed to register a point.

Disqualification for an illegal kick meant Mongolia's Enkhtuya Khurelbaatar could not defend her title in the women's up to 49 kg K44.

Thailand's Khwansuda Phuangkitcha was awarded the win.

Danish dynamo Lisa Gjessing withdrew from her semi-final due to injury, opening up the competition for China's Li Yujie to top the podium in the women's up to 58 kg K44.

www.worldtaekwondo.org

SPOTLIGHT ON

BOLOR-ERDENE GANBAT (MGL)
One of the few top-ranked athletes to survive the wild Worlds, winning his fourth straight gold in the men's up to 61 kg K44.



3-10 March

World Wheelchair Curling Championship



Scotland fell short of their first World Championship title since 2005

MEDALS TABLE
China
Scotland
South Korea

Almost one year after winning their country's first Paralympic winter gold medal, China continued to show they are the dominant force in wheelchair curling with a first world title win in Stirling, Great Britain.

The PyeongChang 2018 champions defeated Scotland in a final that went into the eighth end. The hosts needed three points to keep their hopes alive. With two stones left to play, Scotland had one in the house and the last-stone advantage. But China skip Haitao Wang executed a perfect take-out to remove the Scottish stone and spoil their golden hopes.

The bronze medal match saw South Korea take down Norway, the defending world champions. Norway took the first end but only by a single point. From then on, it was South Korea's game, as they went on to win 10-3.

Norwegian legend Rune Lorentsen, who retired from international competition after the event, was voted the championship's sportsmanship award winner.

www.worldcurling.org/wwhcc2019

SPOTLIGHT ON

HAITAO WANG (CHN)
Held his nerve in the critical moment by taking out the Scottish stone lying closest to the centre of the house and scored two points in the seventh end to secure a first world title.



15-24 February

World Para Nordic Skiing Championships

The weather might have dipped as low as minus-25 degrees Celsius, but competition remained hot with a mix of veterans and youngsters lighting up Prince George, Canada.




France's Benjamin Daviet secured five world titles across cross-country and biathlon events in the men's standing – a feat he was not expecting especially with rival Mark Arendz having home support.

At her first major international competition after recovering from a shoulder injury, the USA's Oksana Masters proved she is still the best in the women's sitting by sweeping all individual cross-country events, to go with two biathlon golds.

Just like the 2017 Worlds, Ukrainian skiers ended top of the medals table with nine golds, 16 silvers and 17 bronze. Liudmyla Liaschenko (women's standing) was the most decorated athlete with three biathlon golds, one gold in cross-country and another in the relay.

Jet lag was not an issue for Canada's Brian McKeever who competed just a few days after attending the Laureus Awards ceremony in Monaco. The most decorated cross-country skier in Paralympic history won the men's cross-country long distance vision impaired race.

www.paralympic.org/prince-george-2019

MEDALS TABLE			
Ukraine	9	16	17
USA	6	7	2
Germany	5	3	7



Canada's first Para Nordic skiing Worlds was filled with thrillers, as well as legends and break-out stars making headlines

SPOTLIGHT ON

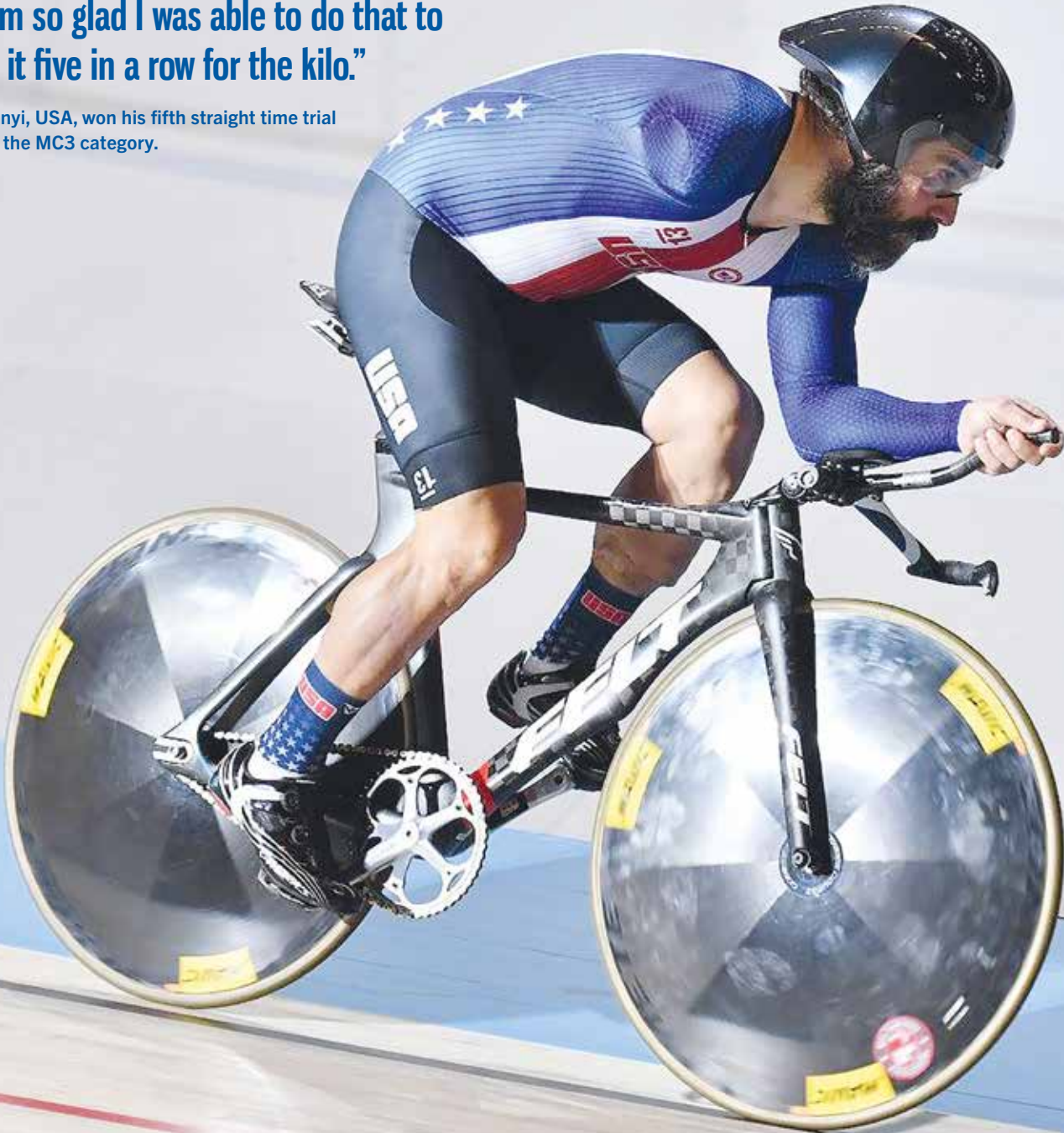
VILDE NILSEN (NOR)
Teenage Worlds debutant won three individual world titles and also helped her team take gold in the open relay.

14-17 March

Cycling Track World Championships

» “I’m really happy with the kilo race. It was my personal-best time at sea level, and I was definitely focussed on this event. I really wanted to defend my title in this race, and I’m so glad I was able to do that to make it five in a row for the kilo.”

Joe Berenyi, USA, won his fifth straight time trial crown in the MC3 category.



Spain's Ricardo Ten Argiles set a world record in the men's individual pursuit C1

MEDALS TABLE			
Great Britain	10	9	1
Australia	9	5	3
China	7	3	3

Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands witnessed one of the biggest shockers at the Omnisport Apeldoorn velodrome, when home favourite Caroline Groot upset Paralympic legend Sarah Storey for gold in the women's 500m time trial C5.

Great Britain's most decorated Paralympian still managed to race her way to victories in the women's 3km individual pursuit and scratch C5. Compatriot and Rio 2016 champion Sophie Thornhill, with pilot Helen Scott, was the fastest in the women's 1km time trial and sprint tandem. These were all part of a successful four days of competition for Team GB as they topped the medals table with 10 golds.

Another shocker came when Australian Darren Hicks won the men's individual pursuit C2 ahead of Canadian Paralympic champion Tristen Chernove.

But Colombia proved to be a rising powerhouse in the sport following an outstanding perfor-

mance which included two golds, two silvers and three bronze. Alejandro Perea Arango was the nation's most decorated cyclist in Apeldoorn with gold in the men's 1km time trial C2, plus a silver and bronze.

www.uci.org/para-cycling



SPOTLIGHT ON

PAIGE GRECO (AUS)
Broke three world records over two days in the women's 3km individual pursuit, 500m time trial and 200m flying sprint C3.

26-31 March

World Para Snowboard Championships



Poland's Monika Kotzian after winning the women's snowboard-cross SB-UL gold medal



The first four-way border-cross races were contested at a World Championships

Pyha, Finland, witnessed the return of a long-awaited champion, a breakthrough for a young rider, and history made when four-way snowboard-cross made its Worlds debut.

Maxime Montaggioni appeared in his biggest competition since the 2017 Worlds, where he won banked slalom gold and border-cross silver. After injury held him back from his Paralympic debut in PyeongChang, the French rider looked stronger by sweeping both men's SB-UL disciplines.




Following the retirement of Dutch legend Bibian Mentel-Spee, one of her proteges Lisa Bunschoten succeeded her mentor in the

women's SB-LL2. The 23-year-old became a double world champion in Pyha, securing her first major career gold medals.

The USA collected a staggering six medals. Mike Schultz held off his younger compatriot Noah Elliott for the men's banked slalom SB-LL1 title. But Elliott responded by taking the border-cross gold. Keith Gabel took a thriller in the men's SB-LL2 to add to the USA's medals tally.

Sun Qi gave China plenty to cheer for ahead of the Beijing 2022 Paralympics by winning the men's banked slalom SB-LL2.

www.paralympic.org/pyha-2019

MEDALS TABLE			
France	4	0	0
USA	3	1	2
China	2	3	1



SPOTLIGHT ON

MAXIME MONTAGGIONI (FRA)
Came back from heart-breaking injury prior to PyeongChang 2018 to become a double world champion.



» “There’s been so many people watching here all week in the Czech Republic and I’m glad we got to put on a good product for them. ... Hopefully it inspires one young kid missing a leg or with spina bifida who wants to play Para ice hockey and needs somebody to look up to. As a kid, I had those idols, and that’s what inspired me to become a hockey player.”




Canadian team captain Tyler McGregor

27 April – 4 May

World Para Ice Hockey Championships



After falling short of the podium at PyeongChang 2018, Italy were hoping to play for another major medal in Ostrava. But it was not meant to be

MEDALS TABLE	
	USA
	Canada
	South Korea

An electrifying week with sold-out games ended in dramatic fashion, with a huge crowd witnessing the USA take an incredible 3-2 overtime win over arch-rivals Canada in Ostrava, Czech Republic.

Following a 0-0 first period, Canada's Liam Hickey knocked in a power-play goal. The USA responded a few minutes later when Josh Pauls evened the match. Canada appeared on their way to repeating their title when their defender Rob Armstrong found the net.

But the USA's Declan Farmer forced overtime with 3:26 left. He then connected with Brody Roybal for the golden goal in the extra period.

It was a record-tying fourth world title for the US squad and happened a year after they won the 2018 Paralympic title.

PyeongChang 2018 bronze medallists South Korea kept the momentum going after hosting last year's Games with a 4-1 win over the Czech Republic. In front of 8,600 spectators who packed into the arena, the home fans saw the Czech team come away with their best result in seven years with a fourth place finish.

www.paralympic.org/ostrava-2019

SPOTLIGHT ON

BRODY ROYBAL (USA)
Twenty-year-old played the hero when scoring the game-winning goal in an overtime thriller.



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3-9 June

World Archery Para Championships



China's Wu Chunyan will aim to repeat her success from last October when she upset favourite Zahra Nemati

The stakes could not be higher in 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands, as the world's best Para archers aim for coveted world titles and the first Tokyo 2020 quota places.

After success on home territory in 2017, China are expected to send a strong team to contest the eight individual medal events. Reigning Paralympic champion Zhou Jiamin and Ai Xinliang will hope to retain their respective titles in the women's and men's compound open. In 2018, Xinliang added Asian Para Games gold to his first career world title.

The event's most exciting rivalry could be in the women's recurve open. Iran's reigning Paralympic and world champion Zahra Nemati was stunned at the 2018 Asian Para Games when she lost out to China's 2017 Worlds bronze medallist Wu Chunyan.

After success at the Rio 2016 Paralympics and the 2017 World Championships, British Para archers will look to continue their dominance of the W1 categories.

www.archery2019.com

ONES TO WATCH



Alberto Simonelli
ITA

Opened the 2019 season in spectacular fashion, breaking his own world record in the men's compound open.



Zahra Nemati
IRI

The two-time Paralympic champion will look to bounce back after a shock loss at the 2018 Asian Para Games.



Jessica Stretton
GBR

Still a teenager, but already a Paralympic and world champion in the women's recurve W1.

6-8 June, 11-14 July, 5-8 September

Roland Garros, Wimbledon, US Open



The Netherlands' Diede de Groot is on her way to Grand Slam history

Dutch world No.1 Diede de Groot could become the first woman since her compatriot Esther Vergeer to hold all Grand Slam singles titles should she win Roland Garros this June.

De Groot, a losing finalist to Japan's Yui Kamiji on the Paris clay last year, currently holds the Wimbledon, US and Australian Open crowns. While De Groot dominates women's wheelchair tennis, competition in the men's game is wide open. Shingo Kunieda is likely to head into Roland Garros as the world No. 1. But Japan's defending champion will have Argentina's Australian Open winner Gustavo Fernandez breathing down his neck.

On grass, Sweden's Stefan Olsson will look to secure his third straight Wimbledon win. However, home favourite and defending US Open champion Alfie Hewitt should not be ignored.

After sealing his fifth Australian Open title at home in January, Dylan Alcott will aim to impress as quad singles and doubles events are included at Roland Garros and Wimbledon for the first time.

www.itftennis.com/wheelchair

ONES TO WATCH



Shingo Kunieda
JPN

Back at world No.1 after an injury plagued 2017 but faces stiff competition.



Giulia Capocci
ITA

Burst onto the international scene in 2018. Won two titles to earn a top 10 world ranking for the first time in her career.



David Wagner
USA

Multiple-Grand Slam winner seeking a return to world No.1 after losing his place to rival Alcott.

12-20 July

World Para Powerlifting Championships



At Kitakyushu 2018, 29-year-old Lingling Guo broke her own world record

World records are expected to fall in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, with Lingling Guo one of the strongest contenders to rewrite history books. At the 2018 Asia-Oceania Open Championships in Kitakyushu, Japan, the Chinese athlete broke the women's up to 45kg world record three times in 20 minutes, eventually lifting 114kg.

In the women's up to 55kg class, Ukraine's Mariana Shevchuk will start as favourite after raising the world record to 130.5kg earlier this year.

It will be a tough battle between Chinese and Nigerian powerlifters to top the medal standings. China led the way at the 2017 World Championships in Mexico City. But it was Nigeria who dominated at Rio 2016.

This will be the last big event before the world's best powerlifters begin their final preparations towards Tokyo 2020.

www.paralympic.org/nur-sultan-2019

ONES TO WATCH



Sherif Osman
EGY

Aiming to break the world record in the men's up to 59 kg after successfully defending the African title in 2018.



Amalia Perez
MEX

Looking to leave a meaningful legacy by claiming her fourth gold at what could be her last World Championships.



Siamand Rahman
IRI

Has always left the world record attempts until the biggest competitions; Nur-Sultan 2019 may very well be that moment he was waiting for.

19-25 August

Para Badminton World Championships



Hong Kong's Chan Ho Yuen caused the upset of 2018 when he ended Jungjun Kim's winning streak at the Australia Para Badminton International

Para badminton will make its Paralympic debut at Tokyo 2020 and this event in Basel, Switzerland, will be a good indicator of who will most likely contest for medals in the Japanese capital next year.

Last October's Asian Para Games underlined India's credentials in the sport. Pramod Bhagat took gold to finish 2018 top of the men's SL 3 world rankings while Tarun Tarun also claimed an Asian title to secure his top-five spot in the men's SL 4 rankings.

While Tarun took Asian gold, his French rival Lucas Mazur captured the SL 4 European crown to go alongside his world title and world No. 1 spot.

Competition in the women's WH 1 class is expected to be tight with Germany's European champion Valeska Knoblach likely to go head-to-head with Thailand's Worlds bronze medallist Sujirat Pookkham.

www.basel2019.org

ONES TO WATCH



Lucas Mazur
FRA

The European and defending world champion will be tested in one of the most competitive categories.



Jungjun Kim
KOR

Suffered his first defeat since 2012 last December but can prove he is still the best in the men's singles WH 2.



Leani Ratni Oktilla
INA

Top ranked women's singles SL 4 player coming off a strong 2018 but needs to defeat China's reigning world champion Cheng Hefang.

21-24 August

Para Canoe World Championships



The women's KL1 will be a tight race after Great Britain's Jeanette Chippington surrendered her title to Ukraine's Maryna Mazhula

A wave of new talent has emerged in the sport and these Worlds in Szeged, Hungary, will establish the leading names ahead of Tokyo 2020.

After tasting success in other Para sports, Great Britain's Charlotte Henshaw and Sweden's Helene Ripa both claimed world titles in 2018. Former swimmer Henshaw took the world title away from compatriot Emma Wiggs in KL2, while Ripa – a Sochi 2014 cross-country Paralympic champion – defeated Australia's Rio 2016 silver medalist Amanda Reynolds in KL3.

The rivalry to watch could be in the men's KL3 between Ukraine's Serhii Yemelianov and Brazil's Caio Carvalho, who was 0.73 seconds shy of gold last year.

In addition to six kayak medal events, three Va'a events were approved for the Tokyo 2020 programme. In Szeged, Australia's Curtis McGrath (men's VL3); Brazil's Igor Tofalini (men's VL2) and Russia's Larisa Volik (women's VL3) will look to defend their 2018 titles.

www.canoeicf.com/paracanoe-world-championships/szeged-2019

ONES TO WATCH



Serhii Yemelianov
UKR

Reigning Paralympic and world champion is the athlete everyone in the KL3 class is chasing.



Charlotte Henshaw
GBR

Ended Wiggs' winning streak of five world titles to become the new face of women's KL2.



Curtis McGrath
AUS

Reigning world and Paralympic champion has shown his talents extend to Va'a as well as kayak events.

25 August – 1 September

Para Rowing World Championships



This will be the best opportunity for nations to qualify their boats for Tokyo 2020

All eyes in Linz-Ottensheim, Austria, will be on the men's single sculls (PR1 M1x) as the biggest rivalry in Para rowing gears up for another thrilling chapter.

At last year's Worlds, Australia's Erik Horrie secured a sixth world title with a stunning overtake of Ukraine's Paralympic champion Roman Polianskyi with 500m to go. The winner this time round will surely start Tokyo 2020 as favourite for Paralympic gold.

Great Britain has won every mixed coxed four (PR3 Mix4+) world title since 2010. But last year the USA came within two seconds of ending that dominance and will push even harder this time round.

In the women's single sculls (PR1 W1x), every boat will be chasing Norway's Birgit Skarstein. Israel's Moran Samuel and USA's Hallie Smith, medallists behind Skarstein last September, are expected to challenge once again.

www.wrch2019.com

ONES TO WATCH



Birgit Skarstein
NOR

Going for a third straight title and may break her own world best time along the way.



Erik Horrie
AUS

Will have to beat the Paralympic champion if he is to secure a seventh successive world title.



Annika van der Meer and Corne de Koning
NED

Back-to-back PR2 mixed double sculls crew went undefeated last year.

23 August – 1 September

Lima 2019 Parapan American Games



The top athletes from the Americas region will all be in Lima this summer



The biggest Parapan American Games to date are coming to Peru for the first time, with Lima receiving a record 1,850 athletes to compete across 17 sports, two more than Toronto 2015.

Hosts Peru are expected to present a battle in badminton, which together with shooting and taekwondo will feature in the Games for the first time. Triple continental champion Pilar Jauregui will be the top contender for gold in the WH 2 category.

Football 5-a-side is arguably the most widely-anticipated team event on Latin American soil, as Argentina seek revenge against Brazil after losing to their arch rivals in the Toronto 2015 and 2018 World Championships final.

In wheelchair rugby, USA are looking to win their first Parapan gold after a thrilling 57-54 defeat against Canada in the final four years ago.

Colombian F34 Paralympic champion Mauricio Valencia aims to take the javelin and shot-put titles, while Paralympic sprint champion Deja Young will be one of the top names representing the USA.

Mexico are hopeful of landing gold through judo Paralympic gold medalists Lenia Ruvalcaba and Eduardo Avila Sanchez, as well as via powerlifting hero Amalia Perez.

Latin America's first wheelchair tennis world No.1 Gustavo Fernandez will be another of the big stars set to compete at Lima 2019.

www.lima2019.pe

ONES TO WATCH



Daniel Dias
BRA

Can Brazil's most decorated Paralympian repeat the 11-gold medal performance from Guadalajara 2011?



Omara Durand
CUB

World's fastest female Paralympian is ready to showcase her speed once more in Peru.



Efrain Sotacuro
PER

Looking to win the men's marathon T46 after achieving a much-celebrated fourth place at the Rio 2016 Paralympics.

1 September

Para Triathlon World Championships



The men's PTS5 category will be one of the most competitive races in Lausanne

Extra pressure will be in the air in Lausanne, Switzerland, as both world titles and Tokyo 2020 qualification slots will be up for grabs.

In the men's PTWC, Jetze Plat could draw closer to matching the record of Australia's Bill Chaffey, who won five world titles. The Dutchman currently holds three world titles. The USA's Allysa Seely will also start as favourite for gold following a near-flawless 2018 season in the women's PTS2.

Once ruled by Australia's Katie Kelly, the women's PTVI appears to have a new face in Spain's 2018 champion Susana Rodriguez. The men's equivalent could be a thriller between Great Britain's world champion Dave Ellis and the USA's Aaron Scheidies, who missed last year's title by 20 seconds.

Canada's Stefan Daniel and Great Britain's Lauren Steadman renewed their affection for the sport after winning their respective PTS5 events in 2018. However, their rivals in Germany's Martin Schulz and the USA's Grace Norman will be hungry for redemption.

www.triathlon.org/paratriathlon

ONES TO WATCH



Stefan Daniel
CAN

Rio 2016 runner-up can show he is gold-medal material for Tokyo 2020 in one of the most highly-contested categories.



Lauren Steadman
GBR

Appears to be back on track after capping a brilliant 2018 season with the women's PTS5 gold.



Wakako Tsuchida
JPN

Silver medallist from last year knows what she must do to win the women's PTWC, especially ahead of her home Paralympics.

9-15 September

World Para Swimming Championships



The last World Championships were held in 2017 in Mexico City

The London Aquatics Centre played host to swimming events at the London 2012 Paralympic Games and will once again welcome the world's best later this year.

The rearranged World Championships will head to the British capital after the IPC decided earlier this year to strip Malaysia of the right to host the event. The Malaysian government failed to provide the IPC with the necessary guarantees that Israeli Para swimmers could participate, free from discrimination, and safely in the Championships.

London 2019, a key qualifier for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, will be the ninth edition of the Championships and marks the second time the event has been staged in Great Britain following the 2015 edition in Glasgow.

Around 600 swimmers from 60 nations are set to compete in the Championships which is a qualifier to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

www.worldparaswimming.com

ONES TO WATCH



Bethany Firth
GBR

Returns to the stage that jump-started her career; multi-Paralympic and world champion coming off two 2018 European titles in the S14 class.



Ihra Boki
BLR

The S13 swimmer was the most successful athlete at last year's Europeans, winning seven golds from seven events.



Yip Pin Xiu
SGN

The three-time Paralympic gold medallist is the one to chase in the S2 category.

12-15 September

Para Cycling Road World Championships



Cyclists will aim to improve their performances from the 2018 Worlds

The biggest road cycling stars will be in Emmen, Netherlands, peddling for coveted titles.

Great Britain's most successful female Paralympian Sarah Storey made a memorable golden return at last year's Worlds after giving birth to her son Charlie. With a full season of training and racing under her belt, she will be even harder to beat this time round.

Winter and summer Paralympic champion Andrea Eskau will be another to follow. The German will try to outdo her performance from Maniago 2018, where she took one gold and one silver.

China's track cycling sensation Li Zhangyu also looks to add gold to his resume on the road. He captured double bronze at the 2018 Worlds in the men's C1 events. His compatriot Wei Guoping could find success in C4 after a pair of golds from October's Asian Para Games.

Italian cyclists will hope to repeat their success from last year's Championships, when they topped the medals table with 17.

www.uci.org/para-cycling

ONES TO WATCH



Alex Zanardi
ITA

Looking to return to form after only leaving last year's World Championships with one bronze medal.



Shawn Morelli
USA

Topped the podium twice in the women's C4 at last year's Road World Championships.



Tristen Chernove
CAN

Rio 2016 champion comes off a strong 2018 on the road as he took one gold and one silver in Maniago.

17-23 September

Wheelchair Fencing World Championships



A thrilling battle saw Dimitri Coutya beat Alessio Sarri 15-14 for the men's epee category B title two years ago. Their rivalry is expected to renew

Regional Championships in 2018 laid down the markers for world title contenders in Cheongju, South Korea.

From the Americas, Brazil's Jovane Guissone took double gold in the men's foil and epee category B events, showing similar form that led to his London 2012 Paralympic gold.

The Asian Championships saw one of the sport's legends return to the top when Hong Kong's multi-Paralympic champion Yu Chui Yee won the women's foil category A. Chinese teenager Haiyan Gu, who caused a major upset at November's World Cup when she beat Hungary's world champion Zsuzsanna Krajnyak, could also challenge.

Fellow Hungarian Richard Osvath remains world No. 1 in the men's foil A despite a semi-final exit at the Europeans, which was won by Russian Roman Fedyaev. In the B category equivalent, Italy's Marco Cima was the surprise victor after a one-point win over top-ranked Dimitri Coutya. But the Brit found solace in the epee, and Poland's Adrian Castro's European title made him the man to beat in the sabre B.

www.iwasf.com

ONES TO WATCH



Beatrice Vio
ITA

Reigning Paralympic, world and European champion in women's foil B is one of the most popular names in Para sports.



Dimitri Coutya
GBR

The epee specialist added the 2018 European title to his World Championship gold, and the youngster will only get better.



Yu Chui Yee
HKG

Former Paralympic champion can prove her comeback is real in Cheongju.

9-19 October

World Shooting Para Sport Championships



World champions from 2018 will be back for more in Sydney

The sport has switched its Worlds to odd years and last year's champions are expected to show up again in Sydney, Australia.

China and Slovakia proved to have the most accurate athletes at the 2018 edition in Cheongju, South Korea. Slovaks Radoslav Malenosky, Veronika Vadovicova and teenage newcomer Kristina Funkova together collected four of the nine individual gold medals on offer in rifle events. China was dominant in the pistol discipline with Yang Chao and Huang Xing capturing two of the five individual titles.

In addition to Funkova, Ukraine's Iryna Shchetnik was the other new exciting talent to emerge from 2018. The prodigy set a world record in the R2 (women's air rifle standing SH1), stunning Paralympic champion Vadovicova at the 2018 European Championships.

The Europeans also saw local favourite Dragan Ristic collect gold in the R5 (mixed 10m air rifle prone SH2), an event the Serbian also won in Cheongju.

www.worldshootingparasport.com

ONES TO WATCH



Sareh Javanmardi
IRI

Pistol queen won both P2 and P4 world titles last year in comeback fashion.



Veronika Vadovicova
SVK

Arguably one of the sport's greatest will be the R2 and R8 favourite.



Abdulla Sultan Alaryani
UAE

Had the best result of his career at Cheongju 2018, winning R6 and R7, the latter with flu-like symptoms.

7-15 November

World Para Athletics Championships



The last World Championships in London saw outstanding performances

The ninth edition of the World Para Athletics World Championships take place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in November, with more than 170 gold medals up for grabs. The event also provides one of the last major opportunities for Para athletes to achieve the vital qualification standards for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

At London 2017, a rapturous crowd were entertained by multiple medal performances by stars including the USA's Tatyana McFadden, Great Britain's Hannah Cockroft and Germany's Johannes Floors. Meanwhile, home favourite Jonnie Peacock successfully defended his gold in the blue riband men's 100m T44; after a year out from the sport, the Briton is back. On the field, Latvia's Diana Dadzite clinched a phenomenal three gold medals; Trinidad and Tobago's Akeem Stewart notched up two world records and Algeria's stars continued to show incredible strength and technique, winning seven of their nine gold medals in throwing events.

Dubai 2019 is set to be just as enthralling.

www.paralympic.org/dubai-2019

ONES TO WATCH



Petrucio Ferreira
BRA

The quest to become the fastest Paralympian of all time continues for Ferreira who clocked 10.50 in 2018 – just 0.04 shy of vision impaired Irishman Jason Smyth.



Daniel Romanchuk
USA

The young wheelchair racer could claim his first global titles on the track after making a name for himself winning major marathons.



Vanessa Low
AUS

Having missed London 2017 due to injury, the 2015 world long jump champion is back with world records in sight.

29 November – 1 December

World Para Dance Sport Championships



Bonn, home of the IPC headquarters, will host its first Para sport Worlds

As part of the IPC's celebrations to mark 20 years in Bonn, Germany, the city will host the world's best Para dancers.

More than 210 athletes from 20 countries will light up the dance floor in the former German capital. It will be the city's first major Para sport event.

The World Championships will be organised by World Para Dance Sport, the sport's international federation, with the support of the City of Bonn.

The fifth edition of the Worlds took place in Malle, Belgium, and made history as the biggest competition yet. Around 170 athletes from 22 countries competed for medals in 18 events, with Ukrainian dancers topping the podium nine times. The 2015 Worlds in Rome, Italy, attracted 150 dancers from 25 countries.

www.worldparadancesport.com

ONES TO WATCH



Olena Chynka
UKR

Danced to five European titles last year and is expected to capture the judges' top marks in Bonn.



Hanna Harchakova and Roman Usmanov
BLR

Dominant partnership in the standard discipline, coming off a 2018 European combi 2 title.



Rhea Marquez and Jun Julius Obero
PHI

The reigning combi Latin and freestyle class 2 world champions always put on a show.

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS

18 July
Asian Para Taekwondo Open Championships
Amman, Jordan

27-28 July
Judo European Championships
Genova, Italy

19-25 August
European Para Dressage Championships
Rotterdam, Netherlands

4-5 September
Judo Asia and Oceania Championships
Atyrau, Kazakhstan

14 September
Triathlon European Championships
Valencia, Spain

15-24 September
Blind Football European Championships
Rome, Italy

16-21 September
Table Tennis European Championships
Helsingborg, Sweden

5-14 October
Goalball European Championships
Rostock, Germany

9-20 October
INAS Global Games
Brisbane, Australia

2-10 November
Blind Football Central American Champs
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

15-26 November
Blind Football African Championships
Abidjan, Ivory Coast

2-11 December
Goalball Asian/Pacific Championships
Chiba, Japan

Lillehammer

1994 Most decorated Winter Paralympian recalls home Games

Some of the most defining moments in history happened 25 years ago. In 1994, Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black President; legendary movies Pulp Fiction, Forrest Gump and The Lion King hit the cinemas; and Internet giants Amazon and Yahoo! were founded.

It was also a memorable year in sports with Norway staging the Paralympic Winter Games. A total of 471 athletes from 31 countries travelled to Lillehammer and competed across five sports: alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, ice hockey and ice sledge racing.

Nordic sit-skier and ice speed skater Ragnhild Myklebust was the standout athlete at the Games, taking five golds, two silvers and two bronze medals to help the host country finish atop of the medals table.

"I remember how cold it was, but it was really nice and all competitions were great," she said.

EXHAUSTING SCHEDULE

Lillehammer was elected host city in 1988 after beating Ostersund, Sweden, in the final round of voting at the 94th International Olympic Committee Session. "I was following on TV and when they announced the winner I screamed 'YES!'"

From all the events she took part in, Myklebust feels the women's 3x2.5 km cross-country relay open was special. "I skied really fast. Just after starting, I was astonished to see that all my competitors were far behind. We won and I was faster even than the standing skiers!"

"There was no time to celebrate, though, because I had to compete every day. I went to bed early."



RAGNHILD MYKLEBUST

Myklebust was fully focussed on performing well and had little time for spare-activities. "It was nice having home support from your family, but I was busy with my races and did not want to get distracted by anything else."



Ragnhild Myklebust



- Most decorated athlete at Lillehammer 1994 with nine medals
- Five-time Paralympian, 22-time gold medallist
Innsbruck 1988
Albertville 1992
Lillehammer 1994
Nagano 1998
Salt Lake City 2002

She added the Games were "good for Para athletes as they had the chance to compete internationally" and highlighted how much more coverage the Paralympics are getting now, "especially on the Internet."

MOST DECORATED WINTER PARALYMPIAN

No other Para athlete has won more Paralympic Winter titles than the Norwegian, who made her Games debut in 1988 in Innsbruck, Austria.

During a glittering career spanning five Paralympic Winter Games, Myklebust claimed a staggering 27 medals, including 22 golds, three silvers and two bronze.

Only the USA's six-time Paralympian Trischa Zorn – a winner of a staggering 41 Para swimming titles – has won more Paralympic golds.

Myklebust, who retired after the Salt Lake City 2002 Paralympic Winter Games, even boasts 14 gold medals more than her compatriot Marit Bjorgen, the most decorated winter Olympian.

"I actually never think about being the most decorated winter Paralympian," Myklebust said. "It is only when they mention the athletes who have won more medals, and they talk about able-bodied athletes while saying nothing about us that I think about it."

It may take many years, if it ever happens, to see another athlete winning so many titles at a Paralympic Winter Games.

"I am not sure if my record will ever be broken," said Myklebust. "I think competition nowadays has gotten harder than when I used to compete."

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

In 2021, Lillehammer will again be in the spotlight as it stages the first joint World Para Snow Sports Championships in alpine skiing, Nordic skiing and snowboard.

"Hopefully it will be important for Para athletes to develop themselves and for people with disabilities in general who may feel inspired by what they see," said Myklebust.

"It is not just about competition but about a way of living. There need to be changes in society. Sometimes people smile at you to be nice, but there are no actual changes. You must fight as a person with a disability to gain your place as an active citizen.

"Through sports you can show what you can do and that you can be part of society just like any other."

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1994?



February
Yahoo!
was born



10-19 March
Lillehammer Paralympic
Winter Games



Paralympics '94
Lillehammer



10 May
Nelson Mandela becomes
South Africa's first
democratically elected President



21 May
Pulp Fiction
released



15 June
The Lion King
released



23 June
Forrest Gump
released



5 July
Amazon
was born

THE BIG DEBATE

Should NPCs be independent governing bodies or integrate with their respective National Olympic Committees (NOC)?

The Oceania region is made up of nine NPCs. With the exceptions of Australia and New Zealand, the majority of our NPCs have had in the past limited governance structures, ineffective leadership or Boards who were not connected to local government or corporate leaders, or their respective National Sporting Organisations (NSO). They were formed with good intentions but lacked the connections, drive and credibility to really sell the Para sport brand in their communities.

The Oceania Paralympic Committee have been working to create a bottom-up approach. We started by identifying potential athletes and engaging them in sport. We then targeted mainstream coaches because we knew we had the athletes. But if the coaches were not available, accessible or committed to inclusion, the athletes would walk away.

The next step has been a focus on governance, and to make any gains, change had to occur at the Board level first. This meant a change to Constitutions to include the National Sporting Organisations/Federations as members.



PAUL BIRD

President of Oceania Paralympic Committee

In both cases for the NPCs of Fiji and Vanuatu, we targeted key people who had the skillset to be leaders and who could develop the governance structures. While Fiji and Vanuatu have good connections with their NOC they are happy to remain independent.

On a visit to Fiji in 2017, I read an article in the inflight magazine from the General Manager of Fiji Link airlines Shaenaz Voss, whose daughter was part of the Canadian sitting volleyball team at the Rio 2016 Paralympics. I subsequently contacted Mrs. Voss, and after several discussions, she agreed to become involved with the NPC and was then elected their President.

Her corporate background brought knowledge and key partnership connections to the Board.

I encouraged her to connect with Asco Motors (Toyota); as a result, their marketing manager joined the Board. She then created a governance restructure including a new constitution, and NSOs were invited to become members. All of a sudden, structures were in place, sponsors were attracted and effective programmes were formed.

Fiji is a great example of an independent structure developing within two years but predicated on effective leadership, governance structures, sponsor support and strong connections to mainstream sport, allowing targeted athletes to join mainstream programmes.

For Vanuatu, we targeted an expat Australian living in Vanuatu – Margaret Macfarlane. She agreed

to help and was appointed NPC President. Her focus was on governance first, then sponsorship. We supported her with a range of talent identification and coach workshops. In one year, Frianna Kwevira won a bronze medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the first significant international medal for Vanuatu. The NPC is now regarded as the leading sporting organisation from a governance point of view in Vanuatu and is closely connected to the NOC, NSOs and government.

NPCs Fiji and Vanuatu are the ideal cases where an independent model works exceptionally well. But one model does not fit all. In other cases, we are actively pursuing a few of our current members as well as some new potential members to look at developing a joint NPC/NOC partnership, because they are too small to get started on their own, or have the capacity to effectively duplicate a governance structure within a small Island State similar to an NOC.

This is an ongoing governance project for Oceania and one I think will eventually support both independent and joint governance structures.



MASOUD ASHRAFI

Secretary General of NPC Iran

Our NPC was established in 2001 and financially supported by our NOC, even though we implemented our own planning and activities independently.

The success of Iranian Paralympians at London 2012 played a huge role in requesting financial independence from the NOC, onto the Ministry of Sport and Youth and Parliament of Islamic Republic of Iran.

We requested this because of the successful performance delivered by our NPC from 2001 to 2012. We also had a vision towards a more comprehensive development for the Paralympic Movement.

After four years of attempts, financial independence was approved by Parliament in August 2016 on the same day the Iranian delegation was leaving for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

A crucial reason for Parliament's approval was the performance of Paralympic sports since 1979. Highlights include:

- Engaging 20,000 active male and female Para athletes in 20 summer sports and three winter sports in Iran
- Training about 60,000 male and female students, teachers and managers of special schools and people with impairment in 31 provinces
- Extensive support and the ongoing media coverage of the activities
- Extensive support of the

government, Parliament, Ministry of Sport and Youth and NOC from NPC and the Para athletes supervised by the NPC

- Expression of interest from the targeted population's families to encourage and back their children with impairment to be engaged in Para sports
- Hiring skilled and motivated human resources committed to the Paralympic Movement
- Able-bodied National Federations' support of Paralympic sports in Iran.

Since our independence, we have achieved a lot. At the Indonesia 2018 Asian Games, our team won an unprecedented 51 gold, 42 silver, and 43 bronze medals; ranking third among all nations.

The NOC still plays a crucial role in the early steps of establishing an NPC in a country, in terms of supporting, organising and structuring the NPC, along with providing financial and expert resources to the committee. This supportive role can be considered as an 8-16 year plan. However, in the next stages, it is mandatory for an NPC to become independent in terms of financial and planning issues.

Compared to the Olympics, it is not feasible for NPCs to find financial sources through sponsors. So, expanding the support of NOCs and their sponsors from NPCs following the IOC's support of IPC is a reality that comes true only if deeply-rooted beliefs are formed in understanding the Paralympic Movement.



JULIE DUSSLIERE

Chief of Paralympic sport at United States Olympic Committee (USOC)

US Paralympics is a division of the USOC, and it is a huge advantage for the USOC to serve as both the NPC and NOC in our country. Unlike most countries, Olympic and Paralympic sport receive no federal government funding in the US. Our support comes from sponsors and donors who provide the resources that athletes need.

Because we are combined, we are much more efficient in using those resources to support athletes. Our Paralympic and Olympic athletes also have more opportunities to train together and participate in combined events. At the Olympic Training Centre in Colorado Springs, there are Olympic and Paralympic athletes living and training side-by-side as they pursue their own journeys to the Games. That camaraderie and solidarity among the athletes help make Team USA stronger.

We have integrated sport science, sports medicine and athlete service divisions that are focused on empowering our athletes to succeed at the highest levels. We also save due to efficiencies with our combined administrative teams: information technology, finance, human

resources, communications and others.

Those same efficiencies are a benefit to our athletes during Games-time, as we are able to share resources and knowledge from our Olympic staff to our Paralympic Games staff. This affords our athletes, coaches and staff a more seamless experience with everything from how transportation works to co-ordinating on supplies that can be shipped over once and used for both Games.

Our Paralympians also benefit from joint promotional efforts from our sponsors and broadcaster and participate in combined events. In recent years, we have seen achievements in inclusion and equality. This includes increasing the investment in Paralympic athletes last year through bringing full parity to the Operation Gold Award payments that the USOC disburses to all medallists from the Olympic and Paralympic Games and World Championships.

Being part of the same organisation ensures that the Paralympic Games and the Olympic Games are viewed as true equals in the US. Through our structure as an integrated NPC and NOC, we demonstrate the true parallel nature of the two Movements.



The first Athletes' Forum was held in Duisburg, Germany

Athletes' Forum set for Colorado Springs

Around 100 Para athletes are expected to attend the second edition of the 2019 IPC Athletes' Forum at the United States Olympic Committee Training Centre in Colorado Springs from 22 – 24 November.

The participants will be drawn from the IPC Athletes' Council, International Olympic Committee Athletes' Commission, Regional Organisations, National Paralympic Committees, Organising Committees, World Anti-Doping Agency and IPC Standing Committees.

The three-day event will give athletes from around the world the chance to have an open discussion about their strategy's "At the heart" implementation; and share information and best practices of athlete representation with one another.

The first Athletes' Forum was held in Duisburg, Germany, in 2017. More than 80 athletes from around 22 IFs, 35 NPCs as well as representation from the WADA Athlete Commission and the IOC Athlete Commission, had an opportunity to discuss and problem-solve various topics relating to the Paralympic Movement.

"At the heart" strategy published

The IPC Athletes' Council published its first strategy which aims to place athletes firmly at the heart of the Paralympic Movement.

Released after two years of consultation with athlete representatives and stakeholders across the Paralympic Movement, "At the heart" aims to act as a guide to both athletes and the IPC membership as to how the IPC Athletes' Council can build athlete leaders and ensure the Paralympic Movement is athlete-centred.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

- Building athlete leaders: Develop mechanisms to build athlete leaders, effective athlete representation models and improved athlete networks.
- Supporting athletes' careers: Equip Para athletes with the tools and resources required to inform and educate them and provide them with opportunities that will help expand their knowledge beyond the field of play.
- Guiding the progression of the Paralympic Movement: Develop resources that support the IPC membership in creating governance structures that include athlete representatives and promote the benefits of having athlete representation formally included in the Membership Constitutions.
- Enhancing the unique sporting environment of Paralympic athletes: Recognise diverse athlete impairments, advocating for their unique needs that enable them to perform at their best.

The IPC Athletes' Council Strategy is available in English, French and Spanish online. www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/publications

Paralympic Order recipient remembered

Jean Stone MBE, a long-time member of the Paralympic Family, passed away. Stone attended the first Paralympic Games in 1960 in Rome, Italy, as a staff member on the British team and had since been committed and passionate about creating opportunities for persons with a disability. In particular, Stone was among the masterminds in developing the sports' technical structures.

Finland mourns death of Paralympic champion

Two-time Paralympic champion Matti Launonen passed away. The Finn's career in athletics, swimming and table tennis spanned three decades. He claimed 13 Paralympic medals in total, including two golds, seven silvers and four bronze.

Snowboard and swimming legends retire

Paralympic champions Bibian Mentel-Spee and Benoit Huot called an end to their glittering careers.

Having won three Paralympic gold medals and seven world titles (four in Para snowboard), plus helping get the sport into the Paralympic Winter Games programme for Sochi 2014, Mentel-Spee wants to transfer her energy toward giving back to the sport at the grassroots level.

The Dutch woman organised a sports festival in April in Switzerland called the "Mentality Games," which invited everyone with a physical impairment to try Para snow sports.

Canadian nine-time Paralympic champion Huot hung up his goggles after more than two decades of Para swimming. He is one of the most decorated Paralympic athletes with 20 medals won at five Paralympic Games.

Working as a swimming commentator for ICI Radio-Canada Tele and as a contributor to Les Eclairés on ICI Première, Huot now intends to continue his mission with youth with disabilities through various initiatives including the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Foundation and the Canadian Paralympic Committee.



Paralympic champion named NPC France President

Three-time athletics Paralympic champion Marie-Amélie Le Fur was elected President of the French Paralympic and Sports Committee (FPSC).

She succeeded Emmanuelle Asmann who had been President since 2013.

Le Fur took gold in the women's 100m T44 at London 2012 and went on to claim a further two in the 400m and long jump T44 at Rio 2016.

Last August, the 30-year-old became the first woman to long jump over six metres at the Berlin 2018 European Championships.

Together with her job as FPSC President, Le Fur will continue training as an athlete as she plans to compete at Tokyo 2020.



Nicole Nieves (16) is among the athletes serving on the commission

Athlete voices for sitting volleyball

World ParaVolley is entering a new era of athlete engagement after holding worldwide elections to choose the members of its Athletes' Commission in early 2019.

World-wide electronic elections were held, and the final seven representatives were chosen from 25 nominated candidates from all four zones of World ParaVolley.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE ATHLETES' COMMISSION ARE:

- Jose Rebelo (CAN) Chair and representing ParaVolley Pan America
- Masoumeh Barouti (IRI) representing ParaVolley Asia/Oceania
- Emile Vunigab (RWA) representing ParaVolley Africa
- Ivan Cosic (CRO) representing ParaVolley Europe
- Tatiana Ivanova (RUS) sitting volleyball representative
- Nicole Nieves (USA) general member
- Dave Newkirk (USA) beach ParaVolley representative

THE LAST WORD

WHY DIVERSITY MATTERS IN WORKPLACES

Moving from Zimbabwe to South Africa opened my eyes to diversity. I went to the University of Johannesburg to study and play wheelchair tennis, and while there, I also had the chance to work with the university administration. I was surrounded by different African races, languages and cultures.

My definition of diversity was further upgraded when I moved to Germany for work at the IPC last September. The majority of people I've met are not black. They come from different parts of Asia, America and Europe. Just look around the office. It is diversity.

Or so many would think.

I believe diversity in a workplace is defined at the core of its employees.

A diverse organisation is more than having people from different countries, cultures and abilities; and having the numbers to support its claim.

Rather, diversity is shown in the employees' backgrounds, experiences, work ethics and perspectives. But the definition does not stop here.

For a workplace to be diverse, there must be this open-minded environment where employees encourage one another rather than discourage; where people accept and understand – or work to understand – each other.

I cannot say to my colleagues I will work the Zimbabwe way if it delays a project. I need to adapt.



NYASHA MHARAKURWA (ZIM)

London 2012 Paralympian in wheelchair tennis

Currently competition co-ordinator for World Para Swimming

But the same way with my impairment. If an employer wants the best out of me, they would also adapt to my needs of an accessible working space. This would lead to motivation, efficient productivity, and better problem solving. Through true diversity, we



Mharakurwa with colleagues and friends at an adaptive CrossFit session

also see ourselves grow as people outside of work.

We're beginning to see the success and power of diversity especially through social media; and when we experience the benefits ourselves, we know it is a good thing.

But organisations struggle to achieve diversity because of the fear of the unknown, which is human.

Some might be afraid to try a new approach to a campaign; hire someone with an impairment or from a different country or university.

Within the organisation, employees might be afraid to ask questions or to ask for opinions from someone they do not normally work with; or have lunch with someone new because it is outside their comfort zone.

I think this can be tackled in two ways.

First, the organisation can provide creative programmes, events and activities not related to work to let employees experience the diversity among them. My university held an international day where international students came together to taste different foods and cultural activities.

Second, on a personal level, we should take responsibility to learn about people we do not know so well. Go beyond small talk and get to know them personally. Be interested. Listen with an open mind. And respect the differences.

Once you do, you realise it is not that difficult.

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 over 10 years.



Tatyana McFadden

Wheelchair racer
United States of America



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