

The IPC's update on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – 1/10/2020

The purpose of this biweekly update is to keep everyone within the Paralympic Movement informed of the latest developments with the COVID-19 pandemic and how it relates to the Paralympic Games and Para sport.

This week's update contains the following information:

- Latest updates from Tokyo 2020 and the IPC
- Marketing Para sport in a time of COVID-19, by Alexis Schäfer, Commercial, Partnerships & Broadcasting Director at the IPC
- Latest World Health Organisation update

The newsletter this week starts with updates from Japan. Since our last newsletter, there have been a series of meetings which provide new updates on Tokyo 2020 and COVID-19, as well as other announcements. Over the next few months there will further updates, as plans are finalised and the picture becomes clearer, but much of the work currently taking place is ongoing, with ideas being debated and discussed.

Our main feature article this week comes from the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) Alexis Schäfer. The IPC recently launched request for information for media rights in Europe for Beijing 2022 and Paris 2024. While we know that COVID-19 has created a tough marketing landscape, it underlines the importance of emphasising the points of difference about Para sport as a media property.

In his article Schäfer says that as brands look to build cause-led marketing programmes, the narrative behind Paralympic sports and athletes, coupled with the enthusiastic and creative support of broadcast partners, has proved a compelling combination. He includes data and research examples of how awareness of the Games has grown by 20 per cent in the last five years and that companies championing inclusive work environments for employees with disabilities are benefitting financially. Para sport and the Games can offer a package that other events cannot.

There is an interesting example in Schäfer's article of the power of our sport to reach different audiences. Last week, World Para Swimming shared on Facebook a 30-second TikTok clip of US swimmer Jessica Long putting on her prosthetic legs. Over the week, it went viral and received 44 million views. It also helped World Para Swimming add over 35,000 new followers, which is great because it means more people can find out about a Para sport.

We want this mail to continually highlight initiatives that National Paralympic Committees (NPCs), International Federations (IFs) and athletes are doing. If you would like to let us know about your story or raise awareness of any other initiative, then please get in contact at ipc.media@paralympic.org.

Tokyo 2020 & IPC update

Measures to ensure a 'post-COVID fit' Tokyo 2020 announced

Last week, following the 10th Coordination Commission, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee unveiled a series of measures to ensure the Games are 'fit for a post-corona world'.

More than 50 measures, which were developed with the IPC and other key stakeholders, have been designed to maximise cost savings and increase efficiencies in Games delivery, with more opportunities to be identified in the build-up to the Games.

So far, organisers have split the measures into four main categories: stakeholders, infrastructure, promotion, and other areas of interest. Initial measures include the reduction of stakeholder personnel attending the Games, streamlining transport services, adjusting spectator activities at competition venues and hosting several pre-Games meetings online.

Further details of the initial measures can be found [here](#).

Second coordination meeting for COVID-19 countermeasures at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games

A meeting of the Three-Party Council took place on 23 September to continue the review of various COVID-19 countermeasures for Tokyo 2020. This organisation represents the Government of Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Tokyo 2020. Among elements, the Council are examining the entire athlete journey from coming into the country, training camps and arrival at the Games.

This is an ongoing process still at the discussion stage and nothing will be finalised until mid-December when the Three-Party Council will likely publish an interim report. The IPC, along with other major stakeholders, will be feeding back into this process on behalf of Members. We would advise

NPCs not to change their current plans until there is clearer detail in December.

Torch Relay update

In news that bodes well for the Paralympic Torch Relay, it was confirmed this week that the Olympic Torch Relay will start its journey on 25 March 2021 from the J-Village National Training Centre in Fukushima Prefecture, and then travel through all 47 prefectures across Japan over a period of 121 days. In principle, the route and the schedule of the Relay will remain as originally planned. We hope to provide an update on the Paralympic Torch Relay soon.

Fantastic plastic – Tokyo 2020 Victory Ceremony podiums made from recycled household

Athletes lucky enough to be on the medal podium next summer will have the efforts of the Japanese public below them. The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, announced this week, that it has successfully collected enough plastic to create the podiums to be used in all Paralympic Victory Ceremonies.

Launched in June 2019, the Recycled Plastic Victory Ceremony Podium Project mobilised Japanese citizens to donate used household plastics for recycling.

And 24.5 tonnes of used plastic later (the equivalent to around 400,000 bottles of laundry detergent weighing 900 grams) means they have all the plastic they need to create the podiums. It's the first Games that members of the public have participated in the collection of used plastic to produce victory ceremony podiums.

Deadline extended for P&G Athletes for Good Fund

In the last newsletter, we informed you about the P&G Athletes for Good Fund. This is a joint initiative with P&G, the IPC and the IOC, that will issue 52 grants, each for the sum of USD 10,000, directly to the causes supported by Paralympic and Olympic athletes who are advancing important work in the areas of equality and inclusion, environmental sustainability and community impact. The grant money will go directly to the charity of choice for each athlete.

Unfortunately, technical problems meant that the site was not live for a few days. As a result, P&G have extended the deadline for applications to Tuesday, 6 October. If you have a Tokyo 2020 Paralympic athlete or hopeful

who has carried out charitable work in the past year to help build and serve your community, P&G invite them to apply for a grant on behalf of that organisation. Athletes can submit an application on Athlete365 at this link <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/athletes-for-good-fund-pg>

Tokyo 2020 Paralympic competition schedule

The full schedule is available on the Tokyo 2020 website.

Tokyo 2020 Qualification

The qualification regulations for all 22 sports can be found here: <https://www.paralympic.org/tokyo-2020/qualification-criteria>

Para sport event postponements and cancellations

The list of cancelled Para sport events remains on the IPC website and is being regularly updated. You can find details [here](#).

Marketing Para sport in a time of COVID-19, by Alexis Schäfer, Commercial, Partnerships & Broadcasting Director at the IPC

Last month, the IPC launched a request for information (RFI) for media rights in Europe for Beijing 2022 and Paris 2024. We know that, because of COVID-19, it is a challenging media landscape out there. That though makes it more important to position the point of difference about Para sport compared to other sports properties. And we have much in our favour.

The Paralympic Movement recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of the first Paralympic Games where the city of Rome and 400 athletes from 23 countries made history. Since then, the Paralympic Games have grown exponentially in size, scale and impact:

- At Rio 2016, there were 4,328 athletes from 159 countries and a record cumulative global TV audience of 4.1 billion.
- We are the third largest sports event on the planet in terms of ticket sales.
- We are the world's No. 1 sports event for driving social inclusion.

That last point is an important one as brands increasingly develop purpose-led marketing strategies – the Paralympics are different from other rights properties.

Without doubt businesses get world-class sport, where the standards are raised at every Games, but we transform attitudes towards the world's largest marginalised community, the one billion people across the globe

who have a disability. We create opportunities for them to be active members of society. We ensure that host cities and countries initiate change through laws and accessible infrastructure. The Paralympics are different because they offer the prospect of delivering societal change through sport.

And people are increasingly alive to this opportunity. Nielsen data shows that global awareness of the Paralympic Games in 2015 was 65 per cent, but that figure increased to 85 per cent by 2020. The demographics of this target group are slightly younger, higher educated and are often from households with children.

Understanding and reaching out to the target audience for the Paralympics is important for the future development of the Paralympic Movement, the IPC and for brands that want purpose-driven campaigns.

Pioneering broadcast

Those seeking inspiration should look no further than the UK's Channel 4. In 2012, they changed the broadcast landscape of Para sports. From powerful promotional campaigns to running a recruitment scheme to ensure 50 per cent of their on-screen presenters had a disability, Channel 4 have delivered record audiences for Para sport.

Going into the London 2012, only 14 per cent of the British public were looking forward to them. Post-Games research revealed that 83 per cent of viewers agreed Channel 4's coverage improved society's attitude towards people with a disability. Crucially, it had legacy. By 2018, there were 3.85 million disabled people in employment in Great Britain, a million more than in 2012.

Channel 4 wants to maintain their prized position as a world leader in inclusion. In their recent pitch to retain the UK Paralympic media rights to the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, they outlined that a new element of their partnership will be reaching out and informing persons with disabilities that everyone has a route to exercise.

The storytelling potential of the Paralympic Movement and its ability to achieve transformational change is captured by the Netflix documentary *Rising Phoenix*, which I know many of you have enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity it gives to profile the Games and its athletes.

Rising Phoenix debuted on the streaming platform in the middle of our #WaitForTheGreats one-year-to-go campaign. Despite the fact the Games were postponed, the film and the support of our members and athletes help

the IPC deliver record levels of engagement on Paralympic social channels – #WaitForTheGreats secured over 143 million Twitter impressions in two weeks.

Engaging content comes in many guises. Last week, World Para Swimming shared on Facebook a 30-second clip of US swimmer Jessica Long putting on her prosthetic legs got 44 million views in a week and helped World Para Swimming add over 35,000 new followers.

Telling the compelling stories of Paralympians, however big or small, helps change global attitudes towards disability. We want the Paralympic Games to have an even greater impact on society by placing disability at the heart of the diversity debate and by using Para sport as a vehicle to drive the human rights agenda.

That's why we recently signed a co-operation agreement with the International Disability Alliance, the global authority on disability rights. Along with other strategic partners who will come on board in the next year, we will develop and implement mutually beneficial strategic inclusive campaigns that will be at the heart of Tokyo 2020 and all future Games.

For businesses, besides building brand awareness and exposure, their involvement and support for the Paralympic Movement is an opportunity to build an inclusive work culture which can bring growth. Recent Accenture research found that companies championing inclusive work environments for employees with disabilities achieved on average across four years, 28 per cent higher revenue, doubled net income and 30 per cent higher economic profit margins.

Partnerships accelerating growth

Investment in Para sport means that many athletes are benefitting full-time from the latest training regimes and sport science. In turn, the standard of sport is high performance and evolving at a rapid rate. At Rio 2016, four visually-impaired Paralympians ran the 1,500m race faster than the Olympic gold medallist. The long jump world record of German amputee Markus Rehm would have won gold at the last three Olympic Games.

Athlete standards are improving worldwide thanks to partner support. Over the last three years, Toyota has invested hugely in the National

Paralympic Development Programme, which aims to increase the knowledge, skills, capacity and opportunities for NPCs at all levels to develop Para athletes and Para sport. It helped 74 Para athletes compete in the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships and seven countries will likely make their Paralympic Games debut in Tokyo.

It is why business understanding the opportunities presented by Para sport are so important. Of course, it allows us to increase the revenue base so that we can support the organisation of the Games and the betterment of our media products. However, processes like the RFI allow us to open and refresh new and ongoing dialogues with interested parties.

Now, in the time of COVID-19, it is more important than ever that partners and potential partners understand how we can enhance the Paralympic Games experience, increase the reach of Para sport as a celebration of human diversity, and ultimately maximise the social impact of the Paralympic Games.

World Health Organisation update

On Monday 28 September, COVID-19 reached a regrettable landmark when it was confirmed that there have been over one million recorded deaths worldwide from the disease. According to WHO's latest Daily Situation Dashboard on 1 October 2020 10:45 CEST, the number of confirmed worldwide cases has risen to over 33.7 million, although John Hopkins University of Medicine is reporting that over 23.6 million people have recovered.

On the same day there was more positive news. WHO announced that a test that can diagnose COVID-19 in minutes will dramatically expand the capacity to detect cases in low- and middle-income countries. The USD 5 test could transform tracking of COVID-19 in less wealthy countries, which have shortages of healthcare workers and laboratories. A deal with manufacturers will provide 120 million tests over six months.

WHO have called it a major milestone, as lengthy gaps between taking a test and receiving a result have hampered many countries' attempts to control the spread of coronavirus. In some countries with high infection rates, experts have said that low testing rates are disguising the true spread of their outbreaks.

The IPC continues to use the WHO and their [site](#) as its main source of information regarding the COVID-19. It provides regular situation reports and have a wide range of guidance on health and protection, travel advice, as well as extensive myth-busting and technical guidance sections.

Their '[Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19](#)' guidance can be accessed on this link.

WHO's WhatsApp messaging service

WHO's WhatsApp messaging service is providing the latest news and information on coronavirus in seven languages: Arabic, English, French, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Arabic

Send "مرحبا" to +41 22 501 70 23 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017023?text=مرحبا

English

Send "hi" to +41 79 893 18 92 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41798931892?text=hi

French

Send "salut" to +41 22 501 72 98 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017298?text=salut

Hindi

Send "नमस्ते" to +41 22 501 73 41 on WhatsApp

<https://wa.me/41225017341?text=नमस्ते>

Italian

Send "ciao" to +41 22 501 78 34 on WhatsApp

<https://wa.me/41225017834?text=ciao>

Spanish

Send "hola" to +41 22 501 76 90 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017690?text=hola

Portuguese

Send "oi" to +41 22 501 77 35 on WhatsApp

<https://wa.me/41225017735?text=oi>