

The IPC's update on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – 15/10/2020

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:

- The return of competition sport – report
- Latest updates from Tokyo 2020 and the IPC
- Latest World Health Organisation update

Usually we start off our COVID-19 newsletter updates with an insight article from around the Paralympic Movement. However, this week we thought we would shine a light on the fact that competitive Para sport is making a successful returning to the calendar.

As hopeful proof of a new normal in sport, we have a round-up report of sport that has place since our last newsletter. It features events in the worlds of tennis, athletics, rowing, swimming, Para powerlifting and Para triathlon.

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.

There are great stories out there to shout about. This week there was a great example in the form of India's Para badminton ace Manasi Joshi, who continues to inspire fellow Para athletes around the world.

From setting examples to breaking stereotypes, Joshi has been a trailblazer ever since she took up the sport following an accident in 2011 and became a world champion last year.

She had reason to celebrate this week when TIME magazine featured her as a Next Generation Leader, a first for a Para athlete. The occasion soon turned into a double delight with the star shuttler getting a one-of-a-kind Barbie doll modelled to her likeness, on the occasion of International Day of Girl Child, on Sunday, 11 October. You can read the full story [here](#).

Para sport starts to make its return

Although the threat of COVID-19 remains real across the world, live sport with athletes is gradually making a return. Para sport is no exception to

this new normal and in recent weeks we have seen the successful and safe staging of the first competitive action in many months. Here we highlight some of the activity that's taken place.

Para Powerlifting – Challenge Cup, Kyoto, Japan, 3-4 October

Japan's best Para powerlifters returned to action in Kyoto. Athletes had the chance to compete for the first time in a World Para Powerlifting-sanctioned event since the COVID-19 outbreak. Due to the restrictions, the competition was held without spectators.

The third edition of the Japan Challenge Cup was a gateway to newcomers and a possibility for experienced athletes to improve their ranking. Among those competing was Hideki Odo (men's up to 88kg) bronze medallist at the 2018 Asia-Oceania Open Championships and the 2018 Asian Para Games in Indonesia.

Athletics – London Marathon, Great Britain, 4 October

Originally scheduled for April 26, and usually a mass participation event, this year's London Marathon took place with only elite athletes, including the wheelchair races.

Both races took place in cold and wet conditions on a specially designed looped circuit, and without any spectators because of coronavirus restrictions.

- In the men's event Canada's Brent Lakatos emerged victorious in a sprint finish with Britain's David Weir, with Switzerland's marcel Hug third.
- In the women's race Switzerland's Manuela Schar suffered a shock defeat as the Netherlands' Nikita den Boer ended her run of nine successive major marathon wins.

Tennis – French Open, Paris, France, 7-10 October

The French Open at Roland Garros was the second Wheelchair Tennis Grand Slam in as many months. The sport has done an exceptional job in creating secure environments for players, coaches and officials. Highlights included:

- Great Britain's Alfie Hewitt clinching his second Roland Garros men's singles title, and the fourth of his career.

- Japan's Yuj Kamiji claiming a fourth women's singles title by defeating compatriot Momoko Ohtani in the first all-Japanese wheelchair singles final in Grand Slam history.
- Australia's Dylan Alcott ensuring he is the only name etched into the Roland Garros quad singles trophy, defending his victory in last year's inaugural event.
- Britain's Gordon Reid and Alfie Hewett completing a clean sweep of men's wheelchair doubles Grand Slam titles in 2020.
- Dutch top seeds Diede De Groot and Aniek Van Koot secured a hat-trick of Roland Garros women's wheelchair doubles titles.

Para Triathlon - 2020 ITU Paratriathlon World Cup, Alhandra, Portugal, 10 October

Para triathlon World Cup racing finally returned for the first time since Devonport back in February, with Alhandra in Portugal the venue for some of the best in the world to make their long-awaited return to the blue carpet.

There were 10 classes of races across the downtown Alhandra venue 25km north of Lisbon that saw a 750m swim in the Tagus River, before the three-lap, 20km bike and a straight 5km run along the riverbank to the finish.

Rowing - European Rowing Championships, Poznan, Poland, 11 October

Rowing returned after six months with no competition. The wider European Championships featured four Paralympic events.

- Nathalie Benoit of France claimed the top honours in the PR1 women's single sculls.
- In the PR1 men's single sculls final, Ukraine's Roman Polianskyi added a European Rowing Championships title to his Paralympic and world crowns.
- The PR2 mixed double sculls final was won by Dutch pairing of Annika van der Meer and Corne de Koning.
- The Italian team of Cristina Scazzosi, Alessandro Brancato, Lorenzo Bernard, Greta Muti and Lorena Fuina came out on top in the PR3 mixed coxed four final.

Swimming - Berlin World Series, Germany, 15-18 October

The World Series is back and swimmers from 11 countries are competing in German capital, including seven London 2019 gold medallists.

It is the first World Para Swimming competition in eight months. It was initially scheduled to take place in June – before the season was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The competition will be closed to the public, but Para swimming fans can follow it live on [World Para Swimming Facebook page](#)*.

Tokyo 2020 & IPC update

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

A meeting of the Three-Party Council took place on 9 October 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.

The meeting focused on:

- COVID-19 countermeasures for athletes at competition venues
- COVID-19 countermeasures for athletes in the Village
- Approach to testing athletes in the Village
- Rules and behaviour (code of conduct) for athletes.

The materials are accessible via this [link](#).

All these measures are also currently being discussed in other forums, primarily the twice-a-week joint working sessions on COVID-19 with IOC, IPC and Tokyo 2020. There was a third joint IOC-IPC-Tokyo2020 working session this week related to the development of COVID-19 countermeasures.

Tokyo 2020 diary dates of note

- 23 October - World Broadcasters Meeting
- 24 October - Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) will hold a grand opening ceremony of the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, one of the new permanent venues TMG has constructed and will be used as the venue for the Paralympic Games.
- 26, 28 and 30 October - NPC Chef de Mission Meetings
- 8 November – The first Olympic-discipline international sports event to be staged in Tokyo since the COVID outbreak will be artistic gymnastics. The event will feature 32 athletes from Japan, China, Russia and the USA. A maximum of 2,000 fans would be allowed to attend the one-day International Gymnastics Federation sanctioned

event at Yoyogi National Gymnasium.

IPC podcast series 'A Winning Mindset: lessons from the Paralympics' – have you listened yet?

The IPC recently launched a new weekly podcast called 'A Winning Mindset: lessons from the Paralympics'. We are speaking to athletes from over 20 sports and 20 countries around the world not just about sport, but about what life lessons Paralympians can share.

The podcast series is getting really encouraging numbers and feedback, but we would love to widen the reach and interest further. So if you haven't listened to them yet then head [here](#) to find the links to these fantastic interviews:

- Britain's Jonnie Peacock on performing under pressure and family.
- USA's Tatyana McFadden on the power of inclusion and campaigning for change.
- Greek boccia player Greg Polychronidis on overcoming setbacks.
- IPC President Andrew Parsons on inspirational leadership.
- Australia goalball captain Meica Horsburgh on mental health.
- French wheelchair basketball player Grace Wembolua on body confidence.
- Hong Kong badminton player Daniel Chan on self-acceptance.

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](#).

Writing and photography events call for entries to highlight impairment challenges

We wanted to highlight two initiatives that may be of interest to members:

- European Disability Forum 2020 photo competition "Inaccessible places"

- The European Disability Forum is looking for EU/EEA citizens or residents from all age to submit photos showing inaccessible places for persons with disabilities in various areas of life: images of public, private places related to work, leisure, cultural or sportive life. There are small cash prizes on offer and the deadlines for entries is 30 October. The find out more about the competition click [here](#).
- sportanddev call for articles: 'Including persons with disabilities in sport'.
 - The sportanddev organisation is looking for articles in the run up to the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December. They are looking for contributions on behalf organisations highlighting how they are working on the disability issues. Individuals can also share their views on the topic. If you are interested in contributing this is the [link](#).

World Health Organisation update

According to World Health Organisation's (WHO) latest Daily Situation Dashboard on 15 October 2020 11:03 CEST, the number of confirmed worldwide cases has risen to over 38.2 million, although John Hopkins University of Medicine is reporting that over 26.7 million people have recovered. Three countries – the USA, India and Brazil – account for half of all recorded global cases.

Around the world, we are now seeing an increase in the number of reported cases of COVID-19, especially in Europe and the Americas.

There has been some discussion recently about the concept of reaching so-called 'herd immunity' by letting the virus spread. However, the WHO is emphatic that never in the history of public health has herd immunity been used as a strategy for responding to an outbreak, let alone a pandemic.

WHO is hopeful that countries will use targeted interventions where and when needed, based on the local situation. They understand the frustration that many people, communities and governments are feeling as the pandemic drags on, and as cases rise again, but emphasised that there are no shortcuts, and no silver bullets.

For every country that is experiencing an increase, there are many others that have successfully prevented or controlled widespread transmission

with proven measures. Those measures continue to be the best defence against COVID-19.

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>