

FROM THE  
**PRESIDENT'S**  
**DESK**

**BARRY COUZNER OAM**



**2023**





# **2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CUP**

**Despite obvious security concerns, the 2023 Sitting Volleyball World Cup went ahead in Cairo, Egypt without incident.**

**After considerable difficulties for the teams, 13 male and 10 female teams from 17 countries competed in the new capital city “Olympic sports city” venue with the support of the Egyptian Ministry of Sport and a tireless Howayda Mondy (EGY) and our own TD, Glenn Stewart (AUS).**

# **2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CUP**

**Such administrators behind the scenes are often forgotten, but in this case, I am sure that they deserve our applause since without them, the event would not have proceeded.**

**Congratulations to the winners, IRI (men) and CHN (women).**

**In the process, by winning the silver medal, CAN (W) qualified for Paris with the men's qualifier yet to be announced.**



# **2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CUP**

**Whilst there, together with Lori Okimura, Louise Ashcroft and Glenn Stewart, I had the honour of meeting with The General Syndicate of Sports Professions with whom I later signed an MoU for cooperation on matters such as education and research.**

**This is a great example of future side benefits that can arise out of events.**



# 2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CUP





# **ASIAN PARA GAMES SITTING VOLLEYBALL HANGZHOU, CHINA**

**This was an amazing event, conducted at the level of a Paralympic Games and illustrating why CHN is renowned for their ability to plan, organise and deliver great events.**

**Everything that I saw and experienced was of the highest quality, including venues, event presentation, transport, media coverage, opening and closing ceremonies, medal presentations and also the volunteer uniforms!**

# **ASIAN PARA GAMES SITTING VOLLEYBALL HANGZHOU, CHINA**

**Whilst there, I had the opportunity to represent World ParaVolley at other ParaSport events by presenting medals to the athletes in athletics, swimming and blind football a great privilege afforded to me by the Asian Paralympic Committee with whom we have a very positive relationship.**

**General Manager Phil Allen has already lodged the application for our participation in the 2026 Asian Para Games in Japan - update - this has been approved!**



# ASIAN PARA GAMES SITTING VOLLEYBALL HANGZHOU, CHINA



## Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games





# 2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS



**The 2023 ParaVolley Pan America (PVPA) Zone Championships were held earlier in the year in Edmonton, Canada with Brazil (men) and USA (women) winning gold and qualifying for Paris 2024.**



# 2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS



**The 2023 ParaVolley Asia Oceania (PVAO) Zone Championships were held in Almaty, Kazakhstan who hosted this event for the very first time with KAZ (men) and CHN (women) qualifying for Paris 2024.**

**The gold medals were won by IRI (men – who had already qualified for Paris) and CHN (women).**

**It was historic that KAZ were able to deliver such an event as host and hopefully do so again in the future.**



# 2023 SITTING VOLLEYBALL ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS



EUROPEAN  
SITTING VOLLEYBALL  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
MEN & WOMEN  
CAORLE 2023

**The 2023 ParaVolley Europe (PVE) Zone Championships were successfully delivered in Caorle, Italy with Bosnia & Herzegovina (M) and Italy (W) claiming the coveted places in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games by winning gold.**

**The men's final was extremely close with Germany taking BIH to 5 sets and ITA (W) defeated SLO (W) 3 sets to 1.**

**The event began with a colourful parade in the streets of the ancient city of Caorle that everyone enjoyed.**



# **PVA SITTING VOLLEYBALL ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Due to insurmountable difficulties, including the inability to attach the event to the African Para Games, ParaVolley Africa has rescheduled the Zone Championships from 2023 to early 2024 with the event to proceed in Lagos, Nigeria from 29 January to 3 February 2024.**



# STRATEGIC PLANNING IN LA

With incredible planning from General Manager Phil Allen and Vice President Lori Okimura, and professional facilitating from Wayne Hellquist (WPV Life Member) and Gary Moy (USA) the Strategic Planning event of 3 days was truly inspirational. Apart from the Board Members, we had several “Thought Leaders” who were invited to specifically add additional minds to the challenge.

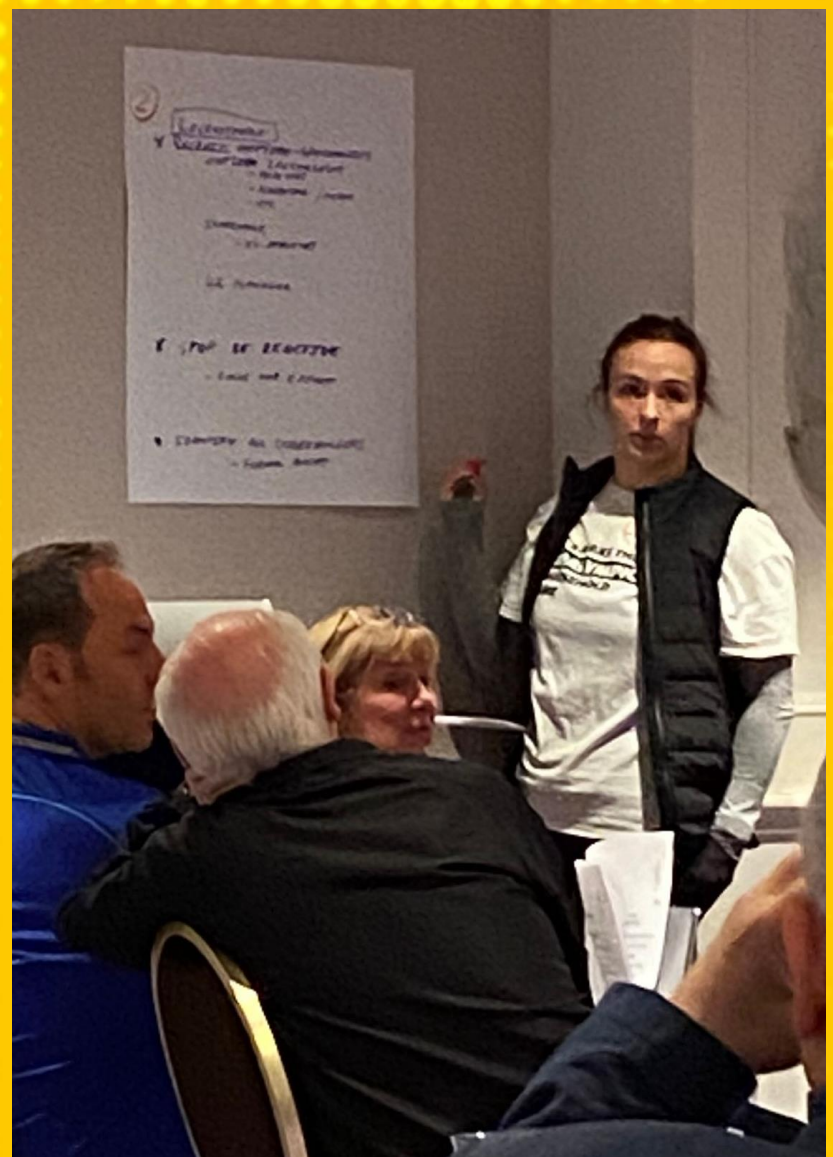




# STRATEGIC PLANNING IN LA

The focus was on the upcoming 4-5 years, but based on some of our recent history, I took the opportunity to show how remarkable World ParaVolley is as an international federation that is largely (99%) volunteer driven.

It was especially pleasing to note the leadership roles undertaken by our two athlete representatives, Nicky Nieves and Heidi Peters.





# STRATEGIC PLANNING IN LA

One major vision was for both sitting volleyball and standing beach paravolley to be included in the 2032 Brisbane Paralympic Games.

More will follow about the Strategic Planning meeting as we look forward to writing up the Plan and begin implementation in 2024.





## **SIDE MEETINGS IN LA**

**Following the Strategic Planning meeting, Vice President Lori Okimura used her incredible connections and networks to enable her, Phil Allen and me to meet with several organisations located in LA, the site of the 2028 Paralympic Games.**

**We first visited the campus of the University of Southern California (USC) and inspected their volleyball and beach volleyball facilities, concluding that surely in the future, this would be a great future competition venue and Development Centre.**



## **SIDE MEETINGS IN LA**

**Then we visited the famous Manhattan Beach to evaluate the possibility of holding a Standing Beach ParaVolley event there in 2024 and beyond.**

**This was followed the next day with a visit to the Sport Department of the LA28 Organising Committee - we were the first Paralympic IF to organise such a visit with the Sport Department - a great “first” to have!**

**Discussions ensued about the needs of the sitting volleyball competition that will prove beneficial to our athletes in the future.**



## **SIDE MEETINGS IN LA**

**Next in the list was LA84, the foundation legacy organisation from the 1984 LA Olympic Games that may be able to assist us with a history project.**

**Finally, we visited Santa Monica Beach, the site of the FIVB Beach Volleyball competition in 2028 - this is a great choice by the FIVB and the Games Organising Committee - so historical and iconic.**



# SIDE MEETINGS IN LA





# WORLD ABILITYSPORT MOU



**At the IPC meeting in Bahrain, Vice President Lori Okimura facilitated the MoU signing between World ParaVolley and World Abilitysport that will provide our athletes greater competition opportunities, including in particular, the Guttman Games that will enable the participation of the standing beach paravolley discipline athletes.**



# **WORLD ABILITYSPORT MOU**

**Whilst in Bahrain, Lori proactively met with the officials from other organisations – all of which add to our ongoing relationship development that enhances our reputation.**

**One meeting in particular has seen ongoing membership and hosting opportunities developed with Bahrain NPC.**



# **GENERAL SYNDICATE OF SPORTS PROFESSIONS – EGYPT**

**The Board has approved the signing of an MoU with the Syndicate, that will enable the two organisations to cooperate on education and research.**

**I was pleased to be able to sign the MoU in LA at the famous SoFi stadium, the site for the 2028 Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony.**

**The Syndicate is made up of academics from approximately 28 Egyptian universities and have a strong focus on physical education, sport, education and research.**



# **PARIS 2024 PARALYMPIC GAMES SITTING VOLLEYBALL FINAL QUALIFIERS**

**After an open bid process, the Board has approved China to host the two final qualifiers for Paris 2024 (men and women) in the beautiful city of Dali, Yunnan Province.**

**Mr Weiping Tu OAM has been appointed by the Board as the Technical Delegate due to his wealth of experience and critical connections with China.**

**The competition dates are 3 to 10 April 2024 and it is anticipated that there will be up to 16 teams competing for the final two places in the sitting volleyball competition in Paris next year.**



# 2024 AWARD NOMINATIONS

To date, the International World ParaVolley Day awards have been given 3 times and we are seeking nominations for the 2024 awards.

More information is available from:

[awards@worldparavolley.org](mailto:awards@worldparavolley.org)





# **2026 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Due to COVID-19, China graciously agreed to hand over the rights to host the 2022 Sitting Volleyball World Championships but had some amazing plans in place, so the Board has decided to offer the hosting rights to China for the 2026 Sitting Volleyball World Championships.**

**This has now been accepted and the event will take place in Hangzhou.**





# **2026 SITTING VOLLEYBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**This will be the first time that a WPV Sitting Volleyball World Championships has been conducted in Eastern Asia.**

**To date, 13 men's and 8 women's World Championships have taken place in Europe, West Asia, Africa and America.**





# AFRO ARABIC SITTING VOLLEYBALL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS



**As President of the Arab Federation for Disabilities Sports, Ehab Hassanein is working to organise the first Afro Arabic Club Championships in Cairo, Egypt early in 2024.**

**I wish the event every success and hope that many of the 22 Arabic countries in the world can participate.**



**2024 WORLD SUPER 6 (M + W)**

# **WS6**

**Negotiations are continuing to offer the World Super 6 event next year that will provide a focus and extra competition mostly for the Paralympic Games qualified teams and I hope that the opportunity will be realised.**



# RETIREMENT

At the meeting in LA, I announced my retirement as President of World ParaVolley due to issues with my vision. This was a sad moment for me as I had been involved with ParaVolley since 1998 but is it a necessary step for me and my wife Leonie at this time.

In this the 10<sup>th</sup> year of my Presidency, and as required by the Constitution, I happily hand the reins over to Vice President Lori Okimura with great confidence that she is the best person to undertake the role of President.



# **RETIREMENT**

**Lori has many decades of sport experience and with LA28 coming up, her amazing connections in the USA will potentially reap great financial and other benefits for World ParaVolley.**

**In addition, she has many international networks with organisations such as the IPC, FIVB, and APSO.**

**I hope that you will all provide her with the high level of support you have given me over the years.**

**Thank you – it has been an honour to serve the World ParaVolley community as a volunteer for 25 years!**



**Finally**

**All the best for  
the end-of-  
year activities  
and especially  
for 2024 – the  
year of the  
Paralympic  
Games!**