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**PARIS 2024:**  
**THE PARALYMPIC GAMES EXPLAINED**

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Simone Miglio

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Embracing the Extraordinary: The Spirit of the Paralympics

#### *Defying Expectations and Showcasing Abilities*

The Paralympic Games stand as a beacon of human resilience and determination, a global stage where athletes with disabilities defy expectations and showcase their extraordinary abilities. More than just a sporting event, the Paralympics embody a powerful movement towards inclusivity, challenging stereotypes, and inspiring millions around the world. These Games celebrate the boundless potential of the human spirit, proving that with passion, dedication, and unwavering belief, anything is possible. Publishing 2021

#### *A Platform for Inclusion and Inspiration*

The Paralympics provide a platform for athletes with a wide range of impairments to compete at the highest level, demonstrating their skill, strength, and sportsmanship. From wheelchair basketball to para-athletics, blind football to para-swimming, the Games offer a diverse array of sports that cater to different abilities. By showcasing these incredible athletes and their achievements, the Paralympics challenge societal perceptions of disability, promoting a more inclusive and accepting world. They inspire individuals with disabilities to pursue their dreams and challenge their limits, while also encouraging everyone to embrace diversity and celebrate the unique abilities of every individual.

### A Journey Through Time: The History of the Paralympic Movement

#### *The Stoke Mandeville Games: Pioneering Spirit*

The roots of the Paralympic movement can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II, when Dr. Ludwig Guttmann, a neurosurgeon at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in England, pioneered the use of sport as a rehabilitation tool for injured veterans. In 1948, he organized the Stoke Mandeville Games, a competition for wheelchair athletes that coincided with the opening of the London Olympics. This marked the birth of organized

sports for people with disabilities, laying the foundation for the Paralympic movement as we know it today.

## *From Rome 1960 to Global Recognition*

The Stoke Mandeville Games continued to grow in size and scope, attracting athletes from around the world. In 1960, the first official Paralympic Games were held in Rome, coinciding with the Summer Olympics. Since then, the Paralympic Games have become a parallel event to the Olympics, held in the same host city and showcasing the athletic prowess of individuals with disabilities on a global stage. The Paralympic movement has witnessed remarkable progress, with increasing participation, expanding sports categories, and a growing recognition of the achievements of Paralympic athletes. Today, the Paralympics stand as a powerful symbol of inclusion, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence in the face of adversity.

## **Paris 2024: A Beacon of Hope and Inspiration**

### *The City of Lights Embraces the Paralympics*

In 2024, the world's gaze will turn to the enchanting city of Paris as it proudly hosts the Paralympic Games. The "City of Lights" will illuminate the extraordinary talents and unwavering determination of Paralympic athletes, creating a spectacle of sporting excellence and human triumph. Paris 2024 promises to be a landmark event, not only in the history of the Paralympic movement but also in the ongoing journey towards a more inclusive and accessible world.

### *A Legacy of Accessibility and Inclusion*

Paris, renowned for its rich history, vibrant culture, and iconic landmarks, is poised to embrace the Paralympic Games with open arms. The city's commitment to accessibility and inclusion is evident in its extensive preparations, ensuring that athletes, spectators, and visitors with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy the Games. From accessible transportation and accommodation to adapted venues and inclusive cultural programs, Paris 2024 aims to set a new standard for hosting a truly accessible and inclusive global sporting event. The Games are expected to leave a lasting legacy, inspiring future generations and fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the abilities of people with disabilities.

# Chapter 2

## Sports and Categories

### Overview of Paralympic Sports

#### *A Tapestry of Disciplines: Showcasing Diverse Abilities*

The Paralympic Games, a parallel event to the Olympic Games, celebrate the remarkable athleticism and achievements of individuals with disabilities across a wide spectrum of sports. These Games showcase a diverse tapestry of disciplines, ranging from the explosive power of wheelchair rugby and the precision of archery to the strategic brilliance of wheelchair fencing and the graceful elegance of para-equestrian dressage. Paris 2024 is set to feature 22 sports and over 500 events, offering a captivating spectacle of skill, determination, and sportsmanship that will inspire and excite audiences worldwide.

#### *Leveling the Playing Field: The Classification System*

Central to the Paralympic Games is a meticulous classification system designed to ensure fair and equitable competition. This system groups athletes based on the impact of their impairment on their athletic performance, fostering an environment where individuals with different impairments can compete against others with similar functional abilities. By leveling the playing field, the classification system highlights the unique skills, strategies, and adaptations that each athlete brings to their chosen sport. The classification process is rigorous and ongoing, with experts evaluating athletes' functional abilities to ensure they are placed in the most appropriate categories, thus maximizing their potential and showcasing their true talents.

### Paralympic Sports

#### *Archery*

##### 1. Essence of Archery

- Paralympic archery is a test of precision, control, and mental focus, where athletes with various impairments compete to hit a target with a bow and arrow.

- It requires incredible concentration and steady hands, as even the slightest movement can affect the trajectory of the arrow.
- To ensure fair competition and enable athletes with different abilities to participate, Paralympic archery incorporates a range of adaptive equipment, including wheelchairs, stools, and mouth tabs for those with limited arm or hand function.



Figure 2.1: Para Archery

## 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic archery follows similar rules to Olympic archery, with athletes aiming to score the highest points by hitting the center of a target at various distances.
- Recurve bows and compound bows are the two main types used, and athletes can use assistive devices based on their classification.
- Competition formats include individual, team, and mixed events, adding to the excitement and showcasing the diverse talents of Paralympic archers.

## 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic archery utilizes a classification system based on the athlete's physical impairment.
- There are three main categories:
  - W1 for athletes with significant limitations in their upper and lower limbs
  - W2 for those with impairments primarily affecting their lower limbs
  - Open for athletes with less severe impairments
- The classification system ensures that athletes compete against others with comparable functional abilities, fostering fairness and enabling everyone to reach their full potential in the sport.



## *Athletics*

### 1. Essence of Athletics

- Paralympic athletics encompasses a wide range of track, field, and road events, pushing athletes with various impairments to the limits of their physical capabilities.
- It's a showcase of speed, power, endurance, and technical skill, with athletes competing in events like sprints, long jump, discus throw, and marathons.
- Paralympic athletics demonstrates the extraordinary feats that can be achieved through dedication, training, and the unwavering pursuit of personal bests.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic athletics adheres to the fundamental rules of athletics, with adaptations made to accommodate different impairments.
- Athletes can utilize adaptive equipment such as racing wheelchairs, running blades, and throwing frames to maximize their performance.
- Competitions typically involve heats, semifinals, and finals, creating a thrilling atmosphere as athletes strive for podium finishes and record-breaking performances.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic athletics employs a complex classification system that takes into account various impairments, including visual, physical, and intellectual disabilities.
- Athletes are assessed based on their functional abilities, ensuring fair competition among those with similar levels of impairment.
- This system uses a combination of letters and numbers to categorize athletes, such as T/F classes for track and field events, allowing spectators to understand the specific classifications and appreciate the unique challenges and achievements of each athlete.

## *Badminton*

### 1. Essence of Badminton

- Paralympic badminton is a fast-paced and dynamic sport that showcases the agility, reflexes, and tactical acumen of athletes with various impairments.
- It involves hitting a shuttlecock over a net using a racket, demanding quick movements, precise shots, and strategic gameplay.
- The sport offers both singles and doubles competitions, providing opportunities for athletes to demonstrate their individual skills and teamwork.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic badminton follows the core rules of badminton, with modifications made to accommodate different impairments.
- Athletes can compete in standing or wheelchair categories, and the court dimensions and net height might be adjusted for certain classifications.
- The competition format typically includes group stages followed by knockout rounds, culminating in exciting finals where athletes battle for medals and glory.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic badminton employs a classification system based on the athlete's physical impairment, ensuring fair competition among those with similar functional abilities.
- The system uses a combination of letters and numbers to categorize athletes, such as WH for wheelchair users and SL for standing lower limb impairments.
- The classifications consider factors like muscle power, range of movement, and balance, allowing athletes to compete against others with comparable levels of impairment and showcase their badminton skills.

## *Boccia*

### 1. Essence of Boccia

- Boccia, a precision ball sport, is a captivating display of strategy, accuracy, and finesse.
- Athletes with severe physical impairments, often using wheelchairs or assistive devices, compete by propelling or rolling balls towards a target ball, aiming to get their balls closest to the target.
- It's a game of tactics and control, requiring players to carefully assess the playing field and execute their throws with precision.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Boccia is played on a flat, rectangular court, with athletes taking turns throwing or rolling their balls towards the target.
- The game can be played individually, in pairs, or in teams, and points are awarded based on the proximity of each ball to the target.
- The sport uses specially designed balls and assistive devices, such as ramps and head pointers, to enable athletes with various impairments to participate fully.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Boccia has a classification system that groups athletes based on the severity of their physical impairments.
- There are four main classifications:
  - BC1 for athletes who can throw or kick the ball



Figure 2.2: Para Bocce

- BC2 for those who can throw the ball but require assistance with positioning
- BC3 for those who cannot throw or kick the ball and use a ramp to propel it
- BC4 for athletes with other impairments affecting their coordination and movement
- This system ensures fair competition and allows athletes with diverse abilities to demonstrate their skills and strategies in the sport.

## *Canoe (Para Canoe)*

### 1. Essence of Canoe

- Paralympic canoe, also known as para-canoe, is a thrilling water sport that showcases the strength, endurance, and paddling technique of athletes with physical impairments.
- It involves paddling a canoe or kayak over a set distance, demanding a combination of upper body power, core stability, and precise boat control.
- The sport offers both sprint and long-distance events, providing opportunities for athletes to excel in different paddling disciplines.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic canoe follows similar rules to Olympic canoe, with modifications made to accommodate different impairments.

- Athletes compete in various boat classes, including kayaks (K) and va'a (V), and the competition format typically involves heats and finals.
- The sport utilizes adaptive equipment, such as specialized seats and paddles, to ensure athletes with various impairments can participate safely and effectively.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic canoe employs a classification system based on the athlete's physical impairment, ensuring fair competition among those with similar functional abilities.
- The system uses a combination of letters and numbers to categorize athletes, such as KL for kayak lower limb impairments and VL for va'a lower limb impairments.
- The classifications consider factors like muscle power, trunk function, and balance, allowing athletes to compete against others with comparable levels of impairment and demonstrate their paddling prowess.

## *Cycling*

### 1. Essence of Cycling

- Paralympic cycling is a thrilling display of speed, endurance, and technical skill, featuring athletes with various impairments competing on bicycles, tri-cycles, handcycles, or tandems.
- The sport encompasses a range of disciplines, including road races, time trials, track cycling, and mountain biking, offering opportunities for athletes to excel in different cycling styles and terrains.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic cycling follows similar rules to Olympic cycling, with adaptations made to accommodate different impairments.
- Athletes compete in different classes based on their impairment and the type of bike they use. Competitions can be individual or team events, and they involve various formats such as time trials, road races, and pursuit races.
- Adaptive equipment plays a crucial role, with specialized bikes, handcycles, and tandems enabling athletes to participate and compete at their best.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic cycling uses a comprehensive classification system based on the athlete's impairment and functional abilities.
- The system considers factors such as muscle power, range of movement, coordination, and vision.
- Athletes are categorized into different classes, such as C for cyclists with physical impairments and B for visually impaired cyclists who compete on tandems with a sighted pilot.
- This classification ensures fair competition and allows athletes to compete against others with comparable levels of impairment.

## *Equestrian (Para-Dressage)*

### 1. Essence of Equestrian

- Paralympic equestrian, also known as para-dressage, is a graceful and elegant sport that highlights the harmony between horse and rider.
- Athletes with physical impairments showcase their skill, balance, and communication with their equine partners as they perform a series of intricate movements and patterns.
- This sport demonstrates the unique bond between humans and animals and the transformative power of therapeutic riding.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic equestrian is governed by the rules of the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), with adaptations for athletes with impairments.
- Competitions involve individual and team events, with riders performing dressage tests at different levels of difficulty.
- Horses are carefully selected and trained, and adaptive equipment such as mounting blocks and specialized saddles may be used to assist riders with specific needs.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic equestrian uses a classification system based on the rider's physical impairment and functional abilities.
- There are five grades, ranging from Grade I for riders with the most severe impairments to Grade V for those with minimal impairments.
- The classification process assesses factors like muscle strength, coordination, balance, and vision, ensuring that riders compete against others with similar functional abilities.

## *Football 5-a-side*

### 1. Essence of Football 5-a-side

- Football 5-a-side, a sport specifically designed for athletes with visual impairments, is a thrilling and fast-paced game that relies on sound and touch.
- Players, except for the goalkeeper, are blindfolded and use a ball with a bell inside to navigate and score goals.
- The sport showcases exceptional spatial awareness, ball control, and teamwork, as players rely on communication and trust to succeed.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Football 5-a-side is played on a smaller field with sideboards to keep the ball in play.
- Each team consists of four outfield players and a sighted goalkeeper.

- The game is played in two 25-minute halves, and players must shout "Voy!" when approaching the ball to avoid collisions.
- The sport utilizes a special ball with a bell and requires players to wear eye-shades to ensure a level playing field.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- All outfield players in football 5-a-side are classified as B1, meaning they have very low visual acuity or no light perception.
- The goalkeeper, however, can be fully or partially sighted.
- This classification ensures fair competition and highlights the remarkable skills and adaptations of athletes with visual impairments in navigating and playing the game.

## *Goalball*

### 1. Essence of Goalball

- Goalball, a unique team sport designed for athletes with visual impairments, is a thrilling contest of agility, accuracy, and sound perception.
- Players, all blindfolded, attempt to roll or throw a ball with bells embedded into the opposing team's goal, while their opponents try to block the ball using their bodies.
- The sport demands exceptional hearing, spatial awareness, and teamwork, creating an intense and exciting atmosphere.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Goalball is played on a court with tactile markings, and each team consists of three players.
- The game is played in two 12-minute halves, and players must roll or throw the ball along the ground to score.
- The ball has bells inside to allow players to track its movement, and players must remain silent during the game to enhance their hearing.
- The sport showcases the incredible adaptability and athleticism of athletes with visual impairments.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- All players in goalball are classified as B1, B2, or B3, based on the severity of their visual impairment. B1 players have the least visual acuity, while B3 players have the most.
- All players wear eyeshades to ensure a level playing field, regardless of their classification.
- This system fosters fair competition and highlights the impressive skills and strategies employed by athletes with visual impairments in this unique sport.



Figure 2.3: Goalball

## *Judo*

### 1. Essence of Judo

- Paralympic judo, a martial art adapted for athletes with visual impairments, is a dynamic and strategic sport that emphasizes throws, grappling, and ground-work techniques.
- It demands strength, agility, balance, and precise timing, as athletes engage in close combat to try to throw or immobilize their opponents.
- The sport showcases the incredible skill and determination of visually impaired athletes who have mastered the art of judo through dedicated training and adaptation.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic judo follows the core principles and techniques of traditional judo, with modifications to accommodate athletes with visual impairments.
- The main difference is that contestants start the match gripping each other's judogi (uniform), and verbal cues are used to guide the athletes during the contest.
- The competition format involves different weight categories, and matches are won by throwing the opponent to the ground with control, immobilizing them, or forcing them to submit.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic judo is open to athletes with visual impairments, categorized into different classes based on their level of visual acuity.

- The classifications range from B1 for athletes with no light perception to B3 for those with some residual vision.
- This system ensures fair competition and allows visually impaired athletes to showcase their judo skills and compete against others with similar levels of impairment.

## *Para Powerlifting*

### 1. Essence of Para Powerlifting

- Para powerlifting is a demonstration of raw strength and determination, where athletes with physical impairments compete to lift the heaviest possible weight in a bench press.
- It requires immense power, technique, and mental fortitude, as athletes push their bodies to the limit in pursuit of lifting extraordinary weights.
- The sport celebrates the strength and resilience of athletes with disabilities, showcasing their ability to overcome challenges and achieve remarkable feats.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Para powerlifting follows the core rules of powerlifting, with adaptations for athletes with impairments.
- Athletes lie on a bench and attempt to lift a barbell loaded with weights, using only their upper body strength.
- The competition involves three attempts, and the highest successful lift is counted.
- The sport utilizes specialized equipment, such as bench press stations and assistive devices, to ensure safe and fair competition for athletes with different impairments.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Para powerlifting employs a classification system based on the athlete's body weight and the impact of their impairment on their lifting ability.
- Athletes are grouped into different weight categories, and within each category, they are further classified based on the functional impact of their impairment.
- This ensures fair competition among athletes with similar levels of impairment and allows them to showcase their strength and technique on a level playing field.

## *Rowing*

### 1. Essence of Rowing

- Paralympic rowing is a test of strength, endurance, and teamwork, featuring athletes with physical impairments competing in boats on calm water courses.



- It demands synchronized movements, powerful strokes, and unwavering focus, as rowers propel their boats towards the finish line.
- The sport showcases the beauty of teamwork and the remarkable athleticism of individuals with disabilities.

## 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic rowing follows similar rules to Olympic rowing, with adaptations for athletes with impairments.
- Rowers compete in different boat classes, including single sculls, double sculls, mixed coxed fours, and mixed double sculls.
- The competition format involves heats and finals, with rowers striving to achieve the fastest times.
- Adaptive equipment such as specialized seats and oars are used to enable athletes with various impairments to participate and compete effectively.

## 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic rowing utilizes a classification system based on the athlete's functional abilities.
- There are three main categories:
  - PR1 for athletes with limited trunk and arm movement
  - PR2 for those with limited trunk movement but good arm and shoulder function
  - PR3 for those with trunk and arm movement but limited leg or lower body function
- This system ensures fair competition and allows athletes with different impairments to showcase their rowing skills.

# *Shooting Para Sport*

## 1. Essence of Shooting Para Sport

- Shooting Para Sport is a test of precision, focus, and control, where athletes with physical impairments compete in various shooting disciplines using rifles, pistols, or shotguns.
- It demands exceptional hand-eye coordination, steady nerves, and the ability to maintain composure under pressure.
- The sport showcases the remarkable accuracy and skill of athletes with disabilities, proving that limitations can be overcome with dedication and training.

## 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Shooting Para Sport follows the core rules of shooting, with adaptations made to accommodate athletes with impairments.
- Athletes compete in different events based on their classification and the type of firearm used.

- The competition format involves shooting at targets from specific distances, and scores are based on accuracy and precision.
- Adaptive equipment, such as shooting stands and specialized grips, is used to enable athletes with various impairments to participate and compete.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Shooting Para Sport employs a classification system that groups athletes based on the impact of their impairment on their shooting ability.
- There are three main classes:
  - SH1 for athletes who can support the weight of the firearm with their arms
  - SH2 for those who require a shooting stand for support
  - SH3 for visually impaired athletes who use acoustic signals to aim
- This classification system ensures fairness and allows athletes with different impairments to compete on a level playing field.

## *Sitting Volleyball*

### 1. Essence of Sitting Volleyball

- Sitting volleyball is a fast-paced and exciting team sport adapted for athletes with physical impairments affecting their lower limbs.
- Players compete on a smaller court, sitting on the floor, and use their upper body strength, agility, and teamwork to volley the ball over the net and score points.
- The sport showcases the incredible athleticism and competitive spirit of athletes with disabilities, demonstrating their ability to adapt and excel in a challenging and dynamic environment.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Sitting volleyball follows the basic rules of volleyball, with modifications to accommodate athletes with impairments.
- The court is smaller, the net is lower, and players must maintain contact with the floor when playing the ball.
- Teams consist of six players, and the game is played in sets, with the first team to reach a certain number of points winning the set.
- The sport utilizes a standard volleyball and requires players to have at least one buttock in contact with the floor at all times.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Sitting volleyball has a classification system that groups athletes based on the impact of their impairment on their playing ability.
- There are two main classifications:

- VS1 for athletes with minimal impairment
- VS2 for athletes with more significant impairments
- This system ensures fair competition and allows athletes with different functional abilities to participate and compete against others with comparable levels of impairment.

## *Swimming*

### 1. Essence of Swimming

- Paralympic swimming is a showcase of grace, power, and determination, as athletes with various impairments compete in a variety of swimming strokes and distances.
- It demands exceptional technique, strength, and endurance, as swimmers navigate the water with speed and precision.
- The sport celebrates the adaptability and resilience of athletes with disabilities, demonstrating their ability to overcome challenges and achieve excellence in the aquatic environment.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic swimming adheres to the fundamental rules of swimming, with modifications made to accommodate athletes with impairments.
- Swimmers compete in different strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly), distances, and events (individual, relay).
- The competition format typically involves heats, semifinals, and finals.
- Adaptive equipment such as starting platforms, lane ropes, and tapping devices for visually impaired swimmers are used to ensure safe and fair competition.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic swimming utilizes a complex classification system that considers the athlete's physical, visual, or intellectual impairment and its impact on their swimming ability.
- Athletes are categorized into different classes based on their functional abilities, with each class representing a specific range of impairment.
- This system ensures fair competition and allows athletes with diverse abilities to showcase their swimming skills and achieve their personal bests.

## *Table Tennis*

### 1. Essence of Table Tennis

- Paralympic table tennis is a fast-paced and exhilarating sport that showcases the agility, reflexes, and tactical brilliance of athletes with various impairments.



Figure 2.4: Para Tabletennis

- Players compete in standing or wheelchair categories, battling each other across a table with small rackets and a lightweight ball.
- The sport demands lightning-fast reactions, precise hand-eye coordination, and strategic shot placement, captivating spectators with its intensity and skill.

## 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic table tennis adheres to the fundamental rules of table tennis, with adaptations made to accommodate different impairments.
- The game is played in singles and doubles formats, and points are scored by hitting the ball onto the opponent's side of the table so that they cannot return it legally.
- The sport utilizes a standard table tennis table, net, and balls, and athletes can use adaptive equipment like wheelchairs or prosthetic limbs based on their classification.

## 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic table tennis employs a classification system that groups athletes based on the impact of their impairment on their playing ability.
- Athletes are categorized into different classes, with classes 1-5 for wheelchair users and classes 6-10 for standing players.
- The classifications consider factors such as muscle power, range of movement, and balance, ensuring fair competition among athletes with similar functional abilities.

## *Taekwondo*

### 1. Essence of Taekwondo

- Paralympic taekwondo is a dynamic and exciting martial art that showcases the power, precision, and agility of athletes with physical impairments affecting their lower limbs.
- Standing on one leg, athletes deliver powerful kicks and punches to score points against their opponents.
- The sport demands exceptional balance, coordination, and tactical awareness, demonstrating the remarkable adaptability and fighting spirit of athletes with disabilities.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic taekwondo follows the basic rules of taekwondo, with modifications to accommodate athletes with impairments.
- Matches are contested in a standing position, with athletes wearing protective gear and scoring points by landing kicks and punches on designated target areas.
- The competition format involves different weight categories and knockout rounds, culminating in thrilling finals where athletes battle for gold.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic taekwondo currently includes only one sport class, K44, for athletes with impairments in their upper limbs.
- However, the sport is continuously evolving, and future editions of the Games may include additional classifications to accommodate athletes with other impairments.
- The current classification system ensures fair competition among athletes with similar functional abilities and allows them to showcase their taekwondo skills.

## *Triathlon*

### 1. Essence of Triathlon

- Paralympic triathlon is the ultimate test of endurance and versatility, combining swimming, cycling, and running into a single, grueling event.
- Athletes with various impairments showcase their strength, stamina, and determination as they navigate the challenging course, transitioning seamlessly between the three disciplines.
- The sport celebrates the indomitable spirit of Paralympic athletes and their ability to push beyond limits.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Paralympic triathlon follows the core principles of triathlon, with adaptations for athletes with impairments.
- The distances for each discipline vary depending on the classification, and athletes can use adaptive equipment such as handcycles, racing wheelchairs, or prosthetic limbs.
- The competition format typically involves a continuous race, with athletes transitioning between the swim, bike, and run segments.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Paralympic triathlon features a classification system that groups athletes based on their impairment and functional abilities.
- The system considers factors such as muscle power, range of movement, coordination, and balance.
- Athletes are categorized into different classes, such as PTWC for wheelchair users, PTS for athletes with severe impairments who use prosthetics or assistive devices, and PTVI for visually impaired athletes who compete with a guide.
- This classification ensures fair competition and allows athletes with diverse abilities to showcase their multi-sport skills.

## *Wheelchair Basketball*

### 1. Essence of Wheelchair Basketball

- Wheelchair basketball is a fast-paced and exhilarating team sport that showcases the agility, skill, and teamwork of athletes with physical impairments affecting their lower limbs.
- Players maneuver their wheelchairs with precision, dribbling, passing, and shooting the ball to score points against their opponents.
- The sport is a dynamic blend of athleticism, strategy, and sheer determination, captivating audiences with its intensity and excitement.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Wheelchair basketball follows the core rules of basketball, with adaptations made for wheelchair users.
- Players compete on a standard basketball court, using specially designed wheelchairs that allow for quick turns and maneuverability.
- The game is played in four 10-minute quarters, and points are scored by shooting the ball through the hoop.
- The sport demands exceptional ball-handling skills, teamwork, and strategic awareness, as players navigate the court and execute plays to outmaneuver their opponents.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Wheelchair basketball utilizes a classification system that evaluates the athlete's functional abilities and assigns them a point value based on their trunk control, sitting balance, and ability to push and maneuver the wheelchair.
- Players are grouped into teams with a maximum total point value, ensuring a balance of abilities on the court.
- This system fosters fair competition and allows athletes with diverse impairments to participate and contribute to their team's success.

## *Wheelchair Fencing*

### 1. Essence of Wheelchair Fencing

- Wheelchair fencing is a strategic and elegant combat sport that showcases the precision, agility, and tactical acumen of athletes with physical impairments.
- Seated in wheelchairs that are securely fastened to the piste (fencing strip), athletes engage in duels using épée, foil, or sabre weapons, aiming to touch their opponents with the tip of their blade.
- The sport demands lightning-fast reflexes, precise movements, and strategic thinking, creating a captivating display of skill and athleticism.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Wheelchair fencing adheres to the fundamental rules of fencing, with adaptations for athletes with impairments.
- The wheelchairs are fixed to the piste, and athletes use modified grips and techniques to wield their weapons.
- The competition format involves individual and team events, with fencers competing in different categories based on their weapon and classification.
- Matches are won by scoring the most touches within a set time or reaching a certain number of points first.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Wheelchair fencing utilizes a classification system based on the athlete's trunk control and fencing arm mobility.
- There are two main categories:
  - Category A for athletes with good trunk control and fencing arm mobility
  - Category B for those with limited trunk control or impaired fencing arm function
- This classification ensures fair competition and allows athletes with different levels of impairment to showcase their fencing skills and compete against others with comparable abilities.



Figure 2.5: Wheelchair fencing

## *Wheelchair Rugby*

### 1. Essence of Wheelchair Rugby

- Wheelchair rugby, also known as "murderball," is a fast-paced and full-contact team sport that showcases the power, agility, and strategic brilliance of athletes with impairments affecting their limbs and trunk.
- Played on a basketball court, athletes use specially designed wheelchairs to carry, pass, and dribble a volleyball across the opponent's goal line.
- The sport is a thrilling spectacle of collisions, athleticism, and teamwork, demonstrating the resilience and competitive spirit of athletes with disabilities.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Wheelchair rugby combines elements of basketball, rugby, and handball, with modifications for wheelchair users.
- Each team consists of four players, and the game is played in four 8-minute quarters.
- Players use their wheelchairs to block and tackle opponents, creating a physically demanding and strategic game.
- The sport utilizes specialized wheelchairs designed for durability and maneuverability, and athletes wear protective gear to minimize the risk of injury.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Wheelchair rugby employs a unique classification system that assigns point values to athletes based on their functional abilities.
- The system considers factors such as trunk control, arm and hand function, and overall mobility.



- Each team is allowed a maximum number of points on the court at any given time, ensuring a balance of abilities and promoting fair competition among teams.

## *Wheelchair Tennis*

### 1. Essence of Wheelchair Tennis

- Wheelchair tennis is a dynamic and exciting sport that showcases the agility, skill, and strategic prowess of athletes with physical impairments affecting their lower limbs.
- Players compete in wheelchairs, using specially designed rackets to hit a tennis ball over a net.
- The sport demands exceptional hand-eye coordination, quick reflexes, and tactical awareness, offering a thrilling spectacle of athleticism and competition.

### 2. Rules, Equipment, and Competition

- Wheelchair tennis follows the same basic rules as able-bodied tennis, with the exception that the ball is allowed to bounce twice on the player's side of the court.
- Players compete in singles and doubles formats, using standard tennis rackets and balls.
- The competition format includes various tournaments and events, culminating in the prestigious Paralympic Wheelchair Tennis Championships.

### 3. Categories and Classifications

- Wheelchair tennis has two main categories:
  - Open division for athletes with impairments affecting their lower limbs
  - Quad division for athletes with impairments affecting both their upper and lower limbs
- This classification system ensures fair competition among athletes with similar functional abilities and allows them to showcase their tennis skills on a global stage

## Chapter 3

# The 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris

### The City of Lights Welcomes the World

#### *A Breathtaking Backdrop for Paralympic Excellence*

In 2024, the heart of France will beat to the rhythm of the Paralympic Games, as the iconic city of Paris welcomes athletes and spectators from across the globe. Renowned for its timeless beauty, rich history, and vibrant culture, Paris is set to provide a breathtaking backdrop for the extraordinary feats of Paralympic athletes. From the majestic Eiffel Tower to the historic Champs-Élysées, the city's landmarks will serve as inspiring symbols of human endeavor and resilience.

#### *Paris: A City Committed to Inclusivity*

Paris is not only a city of dreams but also a city committed to inclusivity. As it prepares to host the 2024 Paralympic Games, Paris has embarked on an ambitious journey to enhance accessibility and ensure a welcoming experience for all. The city's transformation includes adapting transportation systems, upgrading venues, and implementing innovative solutions to break down barriers and create a truly inclusive environment. From accessible public transport and accommodation to barrier-free access to stadiums and cultural sites, Paris is dedicated to providing a seamless and unforgettable experience for everyone involved in the Games.

### Schedule of Events

#### *Twelve Thrilling Days of Paralympic Competition*

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games will unfold over 12 thrilling days, showcasing a diverse array of sporting events that will captivate and inspire audiences worldwide. From the opening ceremony on August 28th to the closing ceremony on September 8th, Paris will be abuzz with the energy and excitement of Paralympic competition.

Table 3.1: 2024 Paris Paralympic Schedule

	AUGUST								SEPTEMBER			
	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ceremonies	✓										✓	
Blind Football		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Boccia			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Goalball			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Archery			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Para Athletics				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Badminton				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Canoe									✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Cycling Road				✓	✓	✓						
Para Cycling Track					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Para Equestrian						✓	✓	✓				
Para Judo							✓	✓	✓	✓		
Para Powerlifting							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Para Rowing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Para Swimming				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Table Tennis			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Para Taekwondo								✓	✓	✓	✓	
Para Triathlon										✓		
Shooting Para Sport				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sitting Volleyball			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wheelchair Basketball					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wheelchair Fencing				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wheelchair Rugby						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wheelchair Tennis			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## *Witnessing Athleticism and Determination*

Spectators will have the opportunity to witness a wide range of Paralympic sports, from the iconic track and field events at the Stade de France to the thrilling wheelchair basketball matches at the Accor Arena. Each day will bring new opportunities to witness the extraordinary athleticism and determination of Paralympic athletes as they push their limits and strive for greatness.

## **Athletes to Watch**

### *Stories of Triumph and Resilience*

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games will feature a constellation of talented athletes, each with their own unique story of triumph and resilience. These athletes have overcome challenges, defied expectations, and emerged as beacons of inspiration for people around the world. Their stories of perseverance, dedication, and unwavering belief in their abilities will undoubtedly capture the hearts of spectators and leave a lasting legacy.



Figure 3.1: Map of Paralympic Venues in Paris (Source: PARIS 2024 Comité d'Organisation des Jeux Olympiques et Paralympiques (COJOP))

## *Paralympic Stars to Shine in Paris*

### 1. Beatrice Vio (Italy) - Wheelchair Fencing

- **Background and Achievements:** Beatrice Vio, affectionately known as "Bebe," is a force to be reckoned with in the world of wheelchair fencing. At just 25 years old, she has already amassed an impressive collection of accolades, including multiple Paralympic and World Championship gold medals. Her lightning-fast reflexes, tactical brilliance, and unwavering determination have made her a dominant figure in the sport.
- **Personal Story:** Bebe's journey to Paralympic glory is nothing short of inspirational. At the age of 11, she contracted meningitis, which led to the amputation of all four limbs. Despite facing immense challenges, she refused to let her disability define her. With the support of her family and a passion for fencing, she adapted to her new reality and quickly rose through the ranks of wheelchair fencing, becoming a role model for aspiring athletes worldwide.
- **Goals and Aspirations:** Bebe's sights are firmly set on defending her Paralympic title in Paris 2024. She is driven by a desire to continue pushing the boundaries of her sport and inspire others to embrace their own potential, regardless of their circumstances. Her infectious enthusiasm and unwavering spirit make her a true ambassador for the Paralympic movement.

### 2. Markus Rehm (Germany) - Para Athletics (Long Jump)

- **Background and Achievements:** Markus Rehm, known as "Blade Jumper," is a Paralympic long jump legend. He has shattered records and redefined the possibilities of his sport with his incredible leaping ability. Rehm is a multiple

Paralympic and World Champion, and his personal best jump of 8.62 meters is farther than the winning jump in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

- **Personal Story:** Rehm lost his right leg in a wakeboarding accident at the age of 14. Undeterred, he turned to athletics and discovered his talent for long jump. With the aid of a carbon fiber prosthetic blade, he has soared to extraordinary heights, consistently outperforming many able-bodied athletes. Rehm's story is a testament to the power of resilience, determination, and the ability to turn adversity into triumph.
- **Goals and Aspirations:** In Paris 2024, Rehm aims to continue his dominance in the long jump and further solidify his legacy as one of the greatest Paralympic athletes of all time. He also hopes to use his platform to advocate for greater inclusion and opportunities for people with disabilities in sports and beyond.

## Beyond the Competition: Cultural and Social Impact

### *Challenging Stereotypes, Promoting Inclusion*

The Paralympic Games transcend the realm of sports, acting as a powerful catalyst for cultural and social change. They challenge deeply ingrained stereotypes about disability, showcasing the extraordinary abilities and achievements of Paralympic athletes and inspiring a shift in societal perceptions. By promoting inclusivity, accessibility, and equality, the Games encourage a more accepting and understanding world where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate and contribute.

### *A Lasting Legacy for Paris and Beyond*

The legacy of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games is expected to extend far beyond the closing ceremony. The city's commitment to accessibility and inclusion will leave a lasting impact, creating a more welcoming and barrier-free environment for people with disabilities. The Games will also serve as a powerful educational tool, raising awareness and understanding of disability among the general public. By showcasing the resilience, determination, and triumphs of Paralympic athletes, Paris 2024 has the potential to inspire future generations and foster a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive.

## Chapter 4

# Beyond the Games: The Paralympic Legacy

### Changing Perceptions: The Impact of the Paralympics

#### *Transforming Societal Views on Disability*

The Paralympic Games have served as a powerful catalyst for transforming societal perceptions of disability, challenging stereotypes, and showcasing the incredible abilities and achievements of athletes with impairments. Through their unwavering determination, resilience, and sporting excellence, Paralympic athletes have shattered preconceived notions and inspired a shift in how society views and values individuals with disabilities. They have demonstrated that disability is not a limitation, but rather a facet of human diversity that encompasses a wide range of talents, strengths, and perspectives.

#### *Shifting the Paradigm: From Medical to Social Model*

The Games provide a powerful platform for challenging the medical model of disability, which often focuses on limitations and deficits, portraying individuals with disabilities as objects of pity or charity. Instead, the Paralympics emphasize the social model, which recognizes that disability is created by societal barriers and attitudes, not by the individual's impairment. By showcasing athletes who excel in their chosen sports, using adaptive equipment and techniques, the Games challenge the notion that disability is synonymous with inability. They inspire a more inclusive and accepting world where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate and contribute.

### Challenges and Opportunities

#### *Barriers to Access and Participation*

While the Paralympic Games have made significant strides in promoting inclusion and accessibility, people with disabilities continue to face challenges in accessing sports and pursuing athletic careers. These challenges can include physical barriers, such as inaccessible facilities and transportation; lack of funding and resources for adaptive sports

programs; limited access to qualified coaches and training facilities; and pervasive negative societal attitudes that underestimate the potential of individuals with disabilities.

## *Empowering Dreams: Seizing Opportunities*

However, the Paralympic movement has also created a multitude of opportunities for individuals with disabilities to overcome these challenges and achieve their sporting dreams. The Games have inspired the development of adaptive sports programs and facilities, increased awareness and funding for Paralympic athletes, and fostered a more inclusive sporting culture. Moreover, advancements in technology, such as prosthetic limbs and assistive devices, have expanded the possibilities for participation and excellence in various sports. By providing a platform for athletes to showcase their talents and achieve their goals, the Paralympics are paving the way for a more equitable and accessible future for people with disabilities in sports and beyond. The Games serve as a powerful reminder that with the right support, opportunities, and determination, individuals with disabilities can achieve anything they set their minds to.

## **Getting Involved: Your Paralympic Journey**

### *Embarking on Your Path: Finding Your Sport*

The Paralympic movement extends far beyond the elite athletes who compete on the world stage. It's a global community that embraces and empowers individuals with disabilities to engage in sports and physical activity at all levels. Whether you aspire to become a Paralympian or simply want to enjoy the physical, social, and emotional benefits of sports, there are countless ways to get involved and embark on your own Paralympic journey.

### *Embrace the Challenge: Unleash Your Potential*

Begin by exploring the wide array of Paralympic sports and identifying one that sparks your interest and aligns with your abilities. Connect with local clubs, organizations, and community centers that offer adaptive sports programs and provide access to specialized equipment and facilities. Seek out experienced coaches and mentors who can provide guidance and support tailored to your needs. Embrace the challenge, celebrate your progress, and never underestimate your potential. The Paralympic movement is a testament to the power of the human spirit, and with dedication, perseverance, and the support of a welcoming community, you can achieve extraordinary things. Remember, the Paralympic journey is not just about winning medals; it's about discovering your own strength, resilience, and the joy of pushing your boundaries.

# Acknowledgments

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the following individuals and organizations for their invaluable contributions to the creation of this ebook:

- The International Paralympic Committee for providing access to resources and information about the Paralympic Games.
- The Paralympic athletes and coaches who generously shared their time, insights, and inspiring stories.
- The organizing committee of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games for their commitment to accessibility and inclusion.
- My professors and mentors for their guidance and support throughout my academic journey.
- My family and friends for their unwavering encouragement and belief in my abilities.



# About the Author

Simone Miglio (student ID: 978605) is a student passionate about sports and social inclusion. With a keen interest in the Paralympic movement, Simone has dedicated time and effort to researching and documenting the remarkable stories of Paralympic athletes and the transformative power of the Games. This ebook represents Simone's commitment to promoting understanding and appreciation for the Paralympic Games and the athletes who embody its spirit.

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