

# Ethic Issues – or rather - Asking Difficult Questions

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# Introduction

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## Ethnographic Snapshots

- Technology Transfer – wheelchairs (Seoul 1988)
- Classification and ‘fair’ contests (Berlin 1994)
  - Lack of ‘fairness’ costs
- The pressure to organise a sporting spectacle where classification a) advantages no one b) makes sense to athletes and c) makes sense to an increasingly diverse consumers base is a tall order.
  - Mix in technology and it is an ethical minefield.

## A troublesome tussle with technology

- *I saw something amazing today – ‘truly’ inspirational - this American named Tony Volpentest who was born without forearms or lower legs – blew the competition away in the single below the knee amputee 100m – INCREDIBLE! (Field Notes – Barcelona 1992)*
- *I spoke to the IPC Athletics Committee Chair today – to raise issues related to me by the single below the knee amputee sprinters – They feel that Tony V should not be allowed to compete in the Games –are situations when no legs is better than one? - The chair said these complaints are just sour grapes on behalf of the athletes - I am not sure - how robust is the classification system?(Field Notes – Atlanta 1996)*
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYxBWIY8iYc>

# Grounding our decisions



|   |                         |                          |  |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Friendship, Unity<br>and<br>Sportsmanship | Sport without<br>Limits | Mind, Body<br>and Spirit | Spirit in Motion<br><i>Empower,<br/>Inspire, Achieve</i> |
| 1960 - 1988                               | 1988 - 1994             | 1994 - 2003              | 2003 -   |

# **IPC Handbook 2012 – on technology**

- Section ii, Chapter 3.10 – fundamental principles for the use of equipment [technology] in IPC sanctioned events
  - 3.1.1 Safety
  - 3.1.2 Fairness
  - 3.1.3 Universality
  - 3.1.4 Physical prowess
- How do the performances of bilateral above and below the knee amputees fit within these regulation with the current athlete numbers?

# Summary

- We need to be better at dealing with difference and avoid ablest assumptions.
- I believe need to consider standardizing technology in a much more rigorous manner.
- This is a minefield for classifiers but I believe we have to ultimately start with ethical questions that help us engage in producing a sporting environment where fair play is at the heart of the ideology –