

ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVES' CALL Q&A

ATHLETE PROTESTS AT PARALYMPIC GAMES

1. What's the IPC position on athlete protests in light of the worldwide against racism and other social injustices? Are athletes allowed to protest and to what extent can they do so?

As an organisation, we work hard particularly to end the stigma that is attached to disability while also pursuing greater equality in areas such as race, gender and sexuality. The IPC is aware of the views of some athletes and NPCs who are calling for the right to protest on the podium or field of play during the Paralympic Games.

This is why the IPC Athletes' Council, with the full support of the IPC Governing Board, have launched a [consultation](#) exercise with the global athlete community over the coming months. Para athletes can register online via this [page](#).

Time is on our side and the IPC is keen to listen and learn before we determine what solutions may be needed. The starting point will be a series of focus groups which will be held in multiple languages and have a dual purpose.

The groups aim to provide the athlete community with a better understanding about the current rules, including what is and what is not allowed by athletes, and why the rules are in place. For example, allowing protests would give a platform for subjects many people agree with but also would give the green light for protests to take place on subjects that people might find abhorrent. A fine balance needs to be struck as the last thing we want the Games to be is a platform for spreading hate. The second purpose of the focus groups is to gather first-hand the ideas and thoughts of Para athletes and how they could make their voices heard at the Paralympic Games.

TOKYO GAMES - PRE-TRAINING

1. In an effort to ensure all athletes can travel to Japan and train during quarantine (if need be) pre-Tokyo Games, are the IPC/IOC considering creating training bubbles so athletes can travel and safely prepare for their events?

Unfortunately, it is too early to be able to give an answer on this. Plans are being developed for COVID-19 countermeasures at the Games while efforts are being made around the globe to address COVID-19. There will be further clarity as time passes and plans will constantly be refined as we move towards the Opening Ceremony date.

TOKYO GAMES - OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES

1. About Tokyo 2020 sports venue: do you already know if there are any modifications compared to what was planned for this year? And do you already know if there will be only one Opening Ceremony for Olympics and Paralympics and the same for the Closing Ceremony?

The IPC, IOC and Tokyo 2020 are looking into every area of Games operations in order to simplify them, and reduce costs, while at the same time maintaining the athlete and sport experience.

Currently we are leaving no stone unturned, reviewing service levels, quantities, activities, operations and venues. It is a very worthwhile exercise as it may create efficiencies and savings for future Games hosts.

BEIJING 2022 GAMES

1. Are there any discussions around the Beijing Games being potentially postponed?

The Beijing 2022 Games are scheduled to take place from 4 to 13 March 2022.

CLASSIFICATION

1. Some IFs are experiencing increasing problems with Intentional Misrepresentation during classification and have apparently problems to handle them (because they have no regulation, no structure, no sanctioning policy and/or no specific communication in place). Athletes representatives are pushing for many years, so this subject is seriously assessed and treated but unfortunately not too much is happening. What can the IPC do to help us to obtain our IF to move forward on the subject? Is the IPC willing to/would like to create a cross-sport working group (or similar) to gather and share best practice so the all parasport community improve on that topic?

The IPC has previously developed guidelines for detecting IM and is scoping to update these in future. All IFs whose rules are in compliance with the Code have rules in place to manage IM. We are unable to confirm at this point if there will be a cross-sport working group but appreciate the suggestion and will explore it further with the Classification Committee. On a separate note, the IFs and NPCs have an opportunity to meet on an annual basis with the Classification Committee and IPC Classification Team and exchange best practice across different areas of classification.

2. Would it be helpful if the IPC had a public code compliance dashboard for all International Federations that can be accessed by athletes?

The IPC supports all its members in different areas including compliance. IF's athlete representatives have access to this information through their organisations and can inform their athlete communities.

CLASSIFICATION - INTERNATIONAL WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL FEDERATION

In January 2020, the IPC Governing Board took a decision to remove wheelchair basketball from the 2024 Paralympic Games programme for failure to comply with the IPC Athlete Classification Code. The exclusion may, however, be lifted if the IWBF becomes fully compliant with the IPC Athlete Classification Code by no later than the end of August 2021.

As part of an IPC approved action plan, the IPC Governing Board granted the IWBF a temporary extension to comply with the IPC Athlete Classification Code. During this extension period, all wheelchair basketball players set to compete at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games with sport classes 4.0 and 4.5 were to have their eligibility reassessed to determine whether or not players have an Eligible Impairment under the IPC Athlete Classification Code. Players found without an Eligible Impairment would not be allowed to compete at the Games.

The IPC empathises with the affected athletes and assures them that the decision was athlete-centred.

The IPC has published four public updates (direct links below), and also provided an update during the recent call with athlete representatives.

- <https://www.paralympic.org/news/wheelchair-basketball-could-lose-tokyo-2020-spot>
- <https://www.paralympic.org/news/ipc-and-iwbf-meet-discuss-tokyo-2020-and-paris-2024>
- <https://www.paralympic.org/news/iwbf-granted-more-time-tokyo-2020-athlete-eligibility>
- <https://www.paralympic.org/news/ipc-clarifies-iwbf-statement>

1. Why didn't the IPC interfere sooner with IWBF regarding the Athlete Classification Code compliance?

The decision of the IPC Governing Board in January 2020 came after no substantive progress was made by the IWBF. This was despite the matter being raised with the IWBF many years previously, and despite multiple offers of support from the IPC and the IPC Classification Committee. The IWBF had ample time and opportunity to address this matter well in advance of Tokyo and simply chose not to do so. As explained in the

published communications, the IPC Governing Board is deeply frustrated by the IWBF's conduct in respect of this matter.

2. Why did the IPC not inform anyone else about the concerns? What did the IPC do to protect the entire IWBF community?

In terms of communication, the IPC ordinarily does not comment on Athlete Classification Code compliance matters outside of the formal process set out under the Code.

The interests of athletes (and other stakeholders) were indeed fully taken into account by the IPC Governing Board in making its decision (including the interests of athletes who do have an Eligible Impairment). Indeed, considering athletes' interests is a longstanding habit of the Governing Board. The IPC Governing Board also includes six retired Para athletes, as well as the chair of the IPC Athletes' Council.

It is important to note that while sanctions for member non-compliance may have a wider impact (including on athletes), these types of sanctions are required in sport so that the relevant governing body can properly enforce its rules on a global basis.

3. IWBF informed its members that no changes would be made before Tokyo 2020. Why were the third parties not informed that IWBF was not code compliant?

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