AKZHANA ABDIKARIMOVA

Country: Russia
Date of Birth: 22/4/1984
Sport: Nordic Skiing

Sports Career

Paralympic Games: 2014 - Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi/ Para Biathlon / Middle, Individual LW 10-12 / 5th place
2018 - Winter Paralympic Games in PyeongChang/ Para Biathlon / Participant

World Championships: 2015 - World Championship in Doha / Para Athletics/ Women Relay / T53-54 / 2-d place

As an athlete performing in two different sports at the high level, I have experienced that in each sport there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed. Of course, they are different from each other, but the vector is approximately the same.

Imperfect classification system, reduction or elimination of disciplines for some classes, reduction of number of weak classes, the problem of doping, these are the main problems that catch my eye.

I came into the sport when I was 25, before that day I had never done anything active, I had no idea it was even possible.

Our love wasn't at first sight, it took me more than a year to realise it was my place.

And, for almost 12 years now, the world of sport and the Paralympic Movement itself have given me a sense of right direction, a sense of independence and significance. I owe this phenomenon literally everything, and now the need to be of service to the community is growing in me as well.

My team and I have been involved in the development of children's sports (skiing and wheelchair racing) for about two years.

My biggest dream is that children discover the sport, fall in love with what they do and discover new horizons for themselves. And for this we need coverage and education, broadcasts not only of big tournaments, more competitions for juniors (in some sports there are none at all).
By working together, making important decisions together now, we can build a confident future not only for ourselves, but also for the new generation of athletes. I would be lying if I said that I know how to solve all of our problems, but I can say with absolute certainty that I will do my best to hear, understand and correctly deliver the voice of athletes in addressing issues that affect them directly.

**Why do you wish to run for the IPC Athletes’ Council?**

Sports and the Paralympic Movement have given me a bright and active life, it’s time to become useful to the sports community myself. To make my own contribution to the common cause.

**What special skills, background and expertise will you bring to the IPC Athletes’ Council?**

More than 11 years of a professional sports career and experience in two different sports, gives me the ability to look at things from different angles. Education and work in PR, marketing and sociology will also help to facilitate dialogue, both with athletes and organisations.

**How has sport impacted your life?**

Sports have shown me that anything is possible if you choose a goal, the right people around you and put all your strength and love in what you believe in!

**What is your vision for the IPC Athletes’ Council?**

Four main challenges were identified:
1. Welfare and safe sport because of the pandemic
2. Doping-related issues
3. Review of the classification
4. Promotion of the mass para sports in the world through educational platforms and sports activities.

**What is the biggest challenge you have experienced as an athlete? How did you overcome it?**

Sports, like all life, is a series of ups and downs. The hardest thing is to accept it, not to give up when you are not satisfied with the result. I can't say that I deal with failures easily, but I break down difficulties into small tasks, and it's much easier to solve them than the big one.