PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2017

The awards were presented on 7 September 2017 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, to the following athletes:

BEST FEMALE

Omara Durand (CUB): The world’s fastest female Paralympian lived up to expectations at Rio 2016. The Cuban sprinter won a trio of Paralympic gold medals, smashing her own world records in the 100m and 400m T12 – both that she set at the 2015 World Championships. She even set a Paralympic record of 23.05 in the 200m T12.

BEST MALE

Siamand Rahman (IRI): The world’s strongest Paralympian broke his own world record by lifting 310kg – a moment many were waiting to happen in Rio. It was Rahman’s second consecutive Paralympic title.

BEST MALE DEBUT

Laurens Devos (BEL): The Belgian became the youngest male Paralympic table tennis champion at 16 years old after winning gold in the men’s singles class 9. He did not drop a single set in the finals.

BEST FEMALE DEBUT

Beatrice Vio (ITA): Italian wheelchair fencer took the Paralympic piste at only 19 years old. Already entering Rio 2016 with hype as a young world champion, Vio captured gold in the women’s individual foil category B. She was the only quadruple-amputee in international wheelchair fencing and also led the Italian team to a bronze medal in the team foil.

BEST TEAM

Turkey's women's goalball: In their first appearance at a Paralympic Games, Turkey upset favourites and three-time Paralympic silver medallists China 4-1 to claim their maiden Paralympic title.
BEST OFFICIAL
Kate McLoughlin (AUS): Her leadership and support for the 177 athletes and 150 officials leading up to and during Rio 2016 helped lead Australia to fourth place on the medal tally in Rio.

PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2015
The awards were presented on 14 November in Mexico City, Mexico, to the following athletes:

BEST FEMALE
Anna Schaffelhuber (GER) won Best Female after she became only the second female athlete at a Paralympic Winter Games to win gold in all five alpine skiing events.

BEST MALE
Roman Petushkov (RUS) became the first athlete in history to win six gold medals (four biathlon races and two mixed relay cross-country events) at a single Paralympic Winter Games.

BEST GAMES DEBUT
Alexey Bugaev (RUS) made a huge impact in his first Games. At 16 years old, Bugaev won a medal in all five alpine skiing standing events: gold in the super combined and slalom events, silver in the downhill and giant slalom and bronze in the super-G.

BEST TEAM
Team USA became the first ice sledge hockey team to win back-to-back Paralympic titles in Vancouver and Sochi.

BEST OFFICIAL
Hans Peter Neeser (SUI) served as the IPC Race Director for cross country skiing and biathlon during Sochi 2014. He was instrumental in pioneering and developing a close working relationship with broadcast that led to
unprecedented close co-operation and co-ordination of schedule and venue planning.

**BP COURAGE AWARD**

Bibian Mentel-Spee (NED) won the BP Courage Award in recognition of her efforts to get snowboard into the Paralympic programme. After successfully campaigning to get the sport into Sochi 2014, the Dutch athlete won Paralympic gold to cap a memorable season that also saw her win seven World Cup events.

**PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2013**

The 2013 awards were presented on 23 November in Athens, Greece, to the following athletes:

**BEST FEMALE**

Esther Vergeer (NED) finished one of Paralympic sport’s most successful ever careers with a fourth wheelchair tennis singles title and gold in the doubles.

**BEST MALE**

David Weir (GBR) competed on eight days and was unbeatable winning four golds in as many events in what is widely regarded as one of Paralympic sport’s most competitive classes.

**BEST FEMALE DEBUT**

Marlou Van Rhijn (NED) followed up winning 100m and 200m European titles in June, by claiming 100m silver and 200m gold at the Paralympics. She also set new world records for both sprints in London.

**BEST MALE DEBUT**

Alex Zanardi (ITA), the former Formula 1 driver won two individual handcycling gold medals at Brand Hatch as well as team silver.
BEST TEAM
Brazil Football 5-a-side, won their third successive gold in this event without even conceding a goal.

BEST OFFICIAL
Sylvia Sekowska (GER), Head Table Official for wheelchair rugby who, in the lead-up to the Games developed and delivered a comprehensive training project that enabled a pool of qualified National Technical Officials from the host country to be selected for the Games.

PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2011

BEST MALE
The German Alpine Skiier Gerd Schoenfelder took home four golds and one silver in his sixth and final Paralympic Games in Vancouver. In a glittering career he won 22 Paralympic medals, including 16 golds.

BEST FEMALE
Verena Bentele, a German visually impaired Nordic Skier, won five gold medals in as many races at the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. She stood atop the podium in Biathlon (3km Pursuit, 12.5km Pursuit) and Cross-Country Skiing (15km Freestyle, 5km Classic Style, Sprint Classic Style), taking her total Paralympic Games medal count to 16, including an impressive 12 golds.

In 2011 she retired as the most successful Paralympic biathlete ever.

BEST TEAM
Despite losing 2-0 to USA in the gold medal match, Japan’s Ice Sledge Hockey Team picked up an unlikely silver medal in Ice Sledge Hockey. The team caused a huge upset in the semi-finals beating hosts and competition favourites Canada 3-1.
BEST DEBUT
Aged 19 at the time of the Vancouver Games, Ukrainian Oleksandra Kononova won three gold medals and one silver in Biathlon and Cross Country Skiing events.

BEST OFFICIAL
As the IPC Technical Delegate for Cross Country Skiing and an assistant for Biathlon, Christian Egli helped develop the sit-ski sprint course for the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games and contributed to the newly created IPC Nordic Skiing points system.

PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2009

BEST MALE
Australian Swimmer Matthew Cowdery (S9) won a total of eight Paralympic medals at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games. He won four individual gold medals and five overall each in world record times as well as three silver medals. His performances far surpassed his expectations and he particularly enjoyed the 50m freestyle and the 4x100m medley relay.

BEST FEMALE
In her final Paralympic Games, Canada’s Chantal Petitclerc (T54) won five gold medals covering distances from 100m to 1,500m despite facing a deep and talented field featuring many emerging Paralympic stars. Once again she rewrote the record book breaking three world and four Paralympic records. Petitclerc retired having won an impressive 21 Paralympic medals, including 14 gold, during a glittering career.

BEST TEAM
Australia’s Men’s Wheelchair Basketball Team, called the Rollers, upset the odds in Beijing beating reigning Paralympic and World Champions Canada in the gold medal match 72-60.
BEST DEBUT
New Zealand’s Sophie Pascoe (S10) made an outstanding debut at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games winning three gold and one silver medal in Swimming events. Aged just 15 she was the youngest New Zealand athlete ever to win a medal at a Paralympics.

BEST OFFICIAL
As China’s Chef-de-Mission at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games, Wang Xinxian’s contributions were outstanding. He not only supported the preparations of the Beijing Games with his expertise in finances and human resources, he also ensured the participation of Chinese Paralympic athletes in all 20 Paralympic sports.

PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2007

BEST MALE
Canada’s Nordic skier Brian McKeever (B3) won two gold, one silver and one bronze medal at the Torino Paralympic Games, bringing his career total of Paralympic medals to seven.

BEST FEMALE
Canadian Alpine Skier Lauren Woolstencroft (LW1-9) was one of the stars at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Winter Games, winning one gold and one silver medal. She had already won a total of six Paralympic medals in her young career, including three golds.

BEST TEAM
The Canadian Ice Sledge Hockey Team struck gold at the Torino 2006 Paralympic Games, the country’s first gold in the sport, with a 3-0 Final victory over Norway. The gold medal completed the Paralympic medal set for Canada in this sport, following bronze in Lillehammer 1994 and silver in Nagano 1998. In total, four veteran athletes of the Torino team participated on each of these teams.
BEST DEBUT
Swiss athlete Thomas Pfyl (LW 9-2) made an outstanding debut at the Tornio 2006 Paralympic Winter Games claiming one gold and one silver medal in the Alpine Skiing events. In addition, he topped the overall European Cup ranking in 2005/2006 as well as the World Cup ranking in 2007.

BEST OFFICIAL
At the Torino 2006 Paralympic Games, Karl Quade of Germany once again did an excellent job as Chef de Mission of the German Paralympic Team, adding another item to his long lists of outstanding contributions to the Paralympic Movement.

PARALYMPIC SPORT AWARDS 2005

BEST MALE
Brazilian swimmer Clodoaldo Silva (S4) was in superb form at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games winning six gold medals and a silver. He also set four world and five Paralympic records. During the Brazilian trials for the Games he broke all his personal bests and established two new world records.

BEST FEMALE
Japan's Mayumi Narita (SB3/SM4/S4) performances at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games were outstanding, with her emerging as the most decorated athlete of the Paralympics. Narita won seven gold medals and a bronze in the swimming pool, and also set six world and seven Paralympic records.

BEST TEAM
Canada's Men's Wheelchair Basketball Team were a dominant force at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games, completing an undefeated march to win the gold medal, defending their golden performance in Sydney 2000. The repeat Paralympic competition was even more convincing, as the
Canadian team outscored their competition by an average of 24 points per game and were never really threatened throughout the tournament.

BEST DEBUT

Hong Kong’s Wheelchair Fencer Chui Lee Yu made an impressive debut at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games as her excellent performance not only won her two gold medals in individual events but also helped her team to capture two gold medals.

BEST OFFICIAL

At the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games Jonquil Solt of Great Britain, Chairperson of the International Paralympic Equestrian Committee (IPEC), proved to be a calm but persistent and very enthusiastic leader who exercised sound judgement and compassion, demonstrated at various occasions. She succeeded in resolving difficult situations in an exceptional manner, admired by athletes, officials and members.