



2024 IPC ATHLETES' COUNCIL ELECTION

CANDIDATES BOOKLET

AUGUST 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) included in its structure the Athletes' Committee as a Standing Committee of the IPC. The first election of the Athletes' Committee was held in 1990 during the World Games for the Disabled in Assen, the Netherlands. Following the strategic review in 2003, the IPC Athletes' Committee became an Advisory Council and was renamed IPC Athletes' Council.

The IPC Athletes' Council is the collective voice of Paralympic athletes within the IPC and the Paralympic Movement. Its role involves providing feedback, advice, and reporting to the Governing Board on IPC matters from the athletes' perspective, representing the interests of Paralympic athletes, and actively engaging with the athlete community.

The chairperson of the IPC Athletes' Council and first vice-chairperson are also members of the IPC Governing Board as ex-officio voting members.

- Six (6) athletes are elected during each Paralympic Summer Games
- Three (3) athletes are elected during each Paralympic Winter Games
- The term of office for elected members will be four (4) years

2 IPC ATHLETES' COUNCIL ELECTION

WHO CAN VOTE

All athletes with (Aa) in Paris 2024 are eligible to vote.

WHEN AND WHERE

Voting starts on 26 August and ends on 5 September in the following locations:

Paris Paralympic Village

- 26 August to 5 September in the PLY House from 9:00 to 21:00

Chateauroux Village

- 26 August to 5 September in the Athlete Lounge from 9:00 to 14:00 and from 16:00 to 21:00

Please note that operating hours will vary on the day of the Opening Ceremony.

HOW TO VOTE

1. Visit a voting station and present your accreditation card. Your eligibility to vote will be confirmed in the system and you will be directed to a voting booth.
2. In the voting booth, follow the instructions on the electronic system. Select your preferred language, then choose the athlete(s) you want to vote for by clicking their names. You can select a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of six (6) candidates.

Athletes who require assistance may select an assistant to support them during voting.

If you have any questions or need help, please ask at the voting location or contact your Chef de Mission.

RESULTS AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The elected candidates will be announced after the vote count on 6 September. The names of the six (6) winners will be shared with the media and posted on the IPC website (www.paralympic.org).

The official announcement and presentation of the elected Athletes' Council members will happen during the Closing Ceremony on 8 September.

3 CANDIDATES

The IPC approved 25 candidates to run for six (6) summer representative positions on the IPC Athletes' Council during the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

- Mr. Saif ALNUAIMI (NPC United Arab Emirates - Shooting Para Sport)
- Ms. Najwa AWANE (NPC Morocco - Wheelchair Tennis)
- Ms. Mariska BEIJER (NPC Netherlands - Wheelchair Basketball)
- Ms. Martina CAIRONI (NPC Italy - Para Athletics)
- Mr. Lenine CUNHA (Virtus - Para Athletics)
- Ms. Maria DELGADO NADAL (NPC Spain - Para Swimming)
- Mr. Iaroslav DENYSENKO (NPC Ukraine - Para Swimming)
- Ms. Omara DURAND ELIAS (NPC Cuba - Para Athletics)
- Ms. Luca Anna EKLER (NPC Hungary - Para Athletics)
- Mr. Daniel Chan HO YUEN, (NPC Hong Kong, China - Para Badminton)
- Mr. Ayao Severin KANSA (NPC Togo - Para Athletics)
- Ms. Vladyslava KRAVCHENKO (NPC Malta - Para Swimming)
- Ms. Husnah Biramahiire KUKUNDAKWE (NPC Uganda - Para Swimming)
- Mr. Leomon MORENO DA SILVA (NPC Brazil - Goalball)
- Ms. Tania NADARAJAH (NPC Great Britain -Para Archery)
- Ms. Zahra NEMATI (NPC I. R. Iran -Para Archery)
- Mr. Sherif OSMAN (NPC Egypt - Para Powerlifting)
- Mr. Benjamin PRITCHARD (World Rowing - Para Rowing)
- Mr. Charles ROZOY (NPC France - Para Swimming)
- Mr. Mario Ernesto SAYES (NPC El Salvador - Boccia)
- Ms. Denise SCHINDLER (UCI - Para Cycling)
- Mr. Fatmir SEREMETI (NPC Sweden - Goalball)
- Mr. Takayuki SUZUKI (NPC Japan - Para Swimming)
- Ms. Yujiao TAN (NPC China - Para Powerlifting)
- Mr. Yoomin WON (NPC Korea - Wheelchair Basketball)

NOTE: The nominees have been listed in alphabetical order within the booklet, while the responses to the questions have been presented reflecting the candidates' original answers.

3.1 SAIF ALNUAIMI

Country/Territory: United Arab Emirates

Date of Birth: 03/03/1978

Sport: Shooting Para sport

Discipline: SH1/R–R7

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 6th in Tokyo 2020 and competed in Rio 2016

World Championship: 5th 2019, competed in 2018 and 2010

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

To help improve the Paralympic sports experience, especially for new athletes around the world.

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

I am a well experienced spoke man and will get the voice of the athletes to be heard.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

A positive oriented person who will guide his fellow athletes to great achievements.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport gave me a purpose in life, and a reason to wake up every morning to reach the goal I put for myself.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

It's essential for athletes to be heard because it will have a positive impact in their performance.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

If it achieves its goals it will encourage more people with disability to join the Movement.

3.2 NAJWA AWANE

Country/Territory: Morocco

Date of Birth: 18/04/1998

Sport: Wheelchair Tennis

Discipline: Women's Wheelchair Tennis

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: First round in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: 11th in 2024 and 12th in 2016

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

I am passionate about representing the interests and well-being of athletes within the Paralympic Movement. I believe that by serving on the council, I can make a positive impact and contribute to the growth and development of our sport.

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

With my unique skills, background, and expertise, I can effectively advocate for athletes. My experience as an athlete, leadership abilities, and commitment to collaboration will help represent their voice on the council.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

To me, being an Athlete Leader means being a role model, advocating for athletes' rights, and inspiring change. I aim to promote inclusivity, equality, and a positive environment for all athletes.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has profoundly shaped me, teaching perseverance, teamwork, and resilience. It gives me purpose, belonging, and fulfilment, helping me overcome challenges and achieve my goals.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes' voice is crucial as it embodies the Paralympic Movement's core. Their perspectives shape our sport's future. Amplifying their voice fosters a more inclusive, athlete-centered, and successful movement.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can better support athletes, the IPC, and the Paralympic Movement by fostering open communication, transparency, and collaboration. Engaging with athletes and addressing their needs ensures they are central to decision-making. Promoting welfare, development, and representation contributes to the Paralympic Movement's success and growth.

3.3 MARISKA BEIJER

Country/Territory: Netherlands

Date of Birth: 29/06/1991

Sport: Wheelchair Basketball

Discipline: Women's Wheelchair Basketball

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Gold medal in Tokyo 2020, Bronze medal in Rio 2016 and Bronze medal in London 2012

World Championship: Gold medal in 2022, Gold medal in 2018, Bronze medal in 2014, 5th in 2010

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

I want to join the IPC Athletes' Council to leverage my decade-long experience as a Paralympian to enhance athlete opportunities and professionalism within the Paralympic Movement.

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

With my marketing degree I bring strong communication skills and a commitment to inclusivity. My work with a foundation against disability stigma further enriches my view.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being an Athlete Leader means being a role model who provides guidance, support, and inspiration, demonstrating professionalism and the importance of life balance beyond sports.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has gifted me with extraordinary opportunities to embrace life to its fullest potential. Sport transformed my life, boosting my confidence and resilience.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes' voice is crucial as it reflects their experiences and drives the Paralympic Movement. Empowering athletes ensures their insights lead to meaningful changes and greater inclusivity.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

Despite recent progress, athletes still find it hard to engage with the AC. It's crucial for the AC to be more open and approachable, and I'm eager to help make that happen.

3.4 MARTINA CAIRONI

Country/Territory: Italy

Date of Birth: 13/09/1989

Sport: Para Athletics

Discipline: 100m T63/Long jump T63

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Two Silver medals in Tokyo 2020, Gold medal in Rio 2016, Silver medal in Rio 2016, Gold medal in London 2012

World Championship: Gold medal in 2023, Silver medal in 2023, two Gold medal in 2017, Gold medal in 2015, two Silver medal in 2015, two Gold medal in 2013

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

To give to the athletes voice more power and to keep engaging with the IPC Board as adviser for the big decisions.

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

I'll bring 14 years of experience as a high-level Paralympic athlete and 3 years on the IPC Athletes' Council. I've learned to be both diplomatic and friendly, and to speak out when necessary.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

It means to be able to listen to people's needs, understand politics and be self-confident enough to stand up in front of everybody to say something different or outside the box.

How has sport impacted your life?

It completed my life. After losing my left leg, in 2007, I found my own balance: sport gave me self-awareness and self-confidence.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes are the essence of the Games, so they need to be well represented. They need to be listened for their ideas, for their specific needs, for their wishes.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can support athletes by conveying their needs to the Board. We bring fresh ideas to enhance the IPC and Paralympic Movement. With diverse backgrounds and a shared love for sport, we can make a real difference together.

3.5 LENINE CUNHA

Country/Territory: Portugal, representing VIRTUS

Date of Birth: 04/12/1982

Sport: Para Athletics

Discipline: Long jump and Triple jump

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 6th place in Rio 2016, Bronze medal in London 2012, 5th place in Sydney 2000

World Championship: 9th place in 2019, Silver medal in 2017, Gold medal in 2015, Silver medal in 2011

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

I aim to join the IPC Athletes' Council to represent and advocate for athletes with intellectual impairments, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs addressed within the Paralympic movement.

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

As a Virtus Ambassador and Athletes' Council member, I bring leadership and sponsorship experience to the IPC Athletes' Council. I advocate for equal opportunities for para-athletes with intellectual impairments.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

As an Athlete Leader, I advocate for my teammates, showing honesty, hard work, and teamwork. I aim to inspire younger athletes, ensure their voices are heard, and support their needs.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sports have been my lifeline since meningitis at four left me with impairments. Starting at six, sports gave me joy, strength, and purpose. They taught me resilience, kindness, and determination, shaping my best self.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes' voice embodies sports' heart and soul, advocating for change and ensuring rights. It unites the community, inspires others, and fosters inclusivity. I aim to amplify voices of athletes with intellectual impairments.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can create learning spaces for athletes with impairments, offer guides for schools and workplaces, and promote events like the Virtus Global Games, boosting the Paralympic Movement.

3.6 MARIA DELGADO NADAL

Country/Territory: Spain

Date of Birth: 08/10/1997

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: 100m Backstroke S12/100m Free S12

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 4th place in Tokyo 2020, two Bronze medals in Rio 2016

World Championship: 12 Silver and Bronze medals from 2013 to 2023

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

I aim to join the IPC Athletes' Council to ensure athlete representation. With my experience in Paralympic sport, I'll promote equality, inclusion, and diversity, ensuring all voices are heard and giving back to the sport.

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

My sport science, coaching, and management background, plus 12 years in the Paralympic movement, give me a unique perspective. My communication skills and experience will help me effectively represent athletes on the IPC Athletes' Council.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being an Athlete Leader means being a role model, mentor, and advocate. It involves representing athletes' interests, promoting equality, inclusion, and diversity, and driving change with commitment and passion.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has shaped who I am, teaching discipline, teamwork, and respect. It developed my leadership skills, benefiting my career and relationships. It keeps me fit, manages stress, and broadens my perspective through diverse connections.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes' voice is crucial for representation in decisions affecting their careers. As a Paralympic athlete, I understand our challenges. It's vital our voices are heard to ensure inclusive and fair development in Paralympic sport.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council amplifies our voices, boosts Paralympic visibility, promotes support, ensures equal opportunities, and helps balance sports with studies.

3.7 IAROSLAV DENYSENKO

Country/Territory: Ukraine

Date of Birth: 23/09/1991

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: 100m freestyle, 100m backstroke, 100m butterfly, 400m freestyle

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Four Silver medals in Rio 2016

World Championship: Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in 2019 (5)

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

Advocating for Paralympic athletes from Ukraine and to make new connections and friends inside international Paralympic community.

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

I know the value of exchanging experiences among athletes from all over the world and how deep it can open the mind of people involved in it. Considering my 11 years career as a Paralympic athlete I got lots of experience to share.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

My mission as an athlete is to inspire future generation of Paralympians and show them the beauty of our sport and let them know that everything is possible if you truly desire something.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport is my life. Swimming has always been my passion, benefiting my mental and physical health. I met my wife and friends through sport, and it connects me to everyone I care about.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

As an athlete, I know the importance of voicing our challenges, not just at big events but anytime we need to express ourselves or seek help.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

To support athletes, we must ensure they feel heard and valued. By sharing experiences, we can understand their challenges and unite as a community to overcome them.

3.8 OMARA DURAND ELIAS

Country/Territory: Cuba

Date of Birth: 26/11/1991

Sport: Para Athletics

Discipline: 100 meters, 200 meters, 400 meters, T12

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 8 Gold medals in Tokyo 2020, Rio 2016 and London 2012, 4th and 6th place in Beijing 2008

World Championship: 11 Gold medals in 2019, 2017, 2015 and 2011

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

To represent the athletes of my country, Latin America and the world, carry the voice of the athletes and collaborate and promote development projects of the Paralympic Movement in the world.

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

On the IPC Athletes Council, I'll share my Paralympic experience, showing that physical limitations don't hinder sports participation, enhancing life quality and social integration.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Having become a leading athlete has led me to have others feel respect for me, has led me to be an icon in Paralympic sports, has led me to have everyone follow me and to be an example to other athletes and the Paralympic Movement.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has been the most beautiful way to feel fulfilled. It has allowed me to be included in society, live unforgettable moments, socialize and be a good person.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The voice of the athletes is important to me because the center, the essence and the priority in the Paralympic Movement are the athletes.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes Council can better support Paralympians by gaining prominence in the IPC, highlighting their realities, especially in less developed countries with fewer opportunities.

3.9 LUCA ANNA EKLER

Country/Territory: Hungary

Date of Birth: 28/10/1998

Sport: Para Athletics

Discipline : Long Jump T38, 100m T38, 200m T38, 400m T38

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Gold medal in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: Two Gold medals in 2024 and 2023

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

As athletes, we aim for equal acceptance. We're human. My mission is to raise awareness for Para athletes. I hope my achievements inspire others, giving me strength and gratitude for my journey.

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

I'm not just an athlete; I'm also a coach. I train others to understand Para sports, especially Para Athletics. Key skills: decisiveness, conflict management, teaching, and mentoring.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Para sports fuel my passion, letting me do what I love. I strive to be my best, pushing higher daily, and inspiring others to realize they can achieve more than they think with hard work.

How has sport impacted your life?

The Paralympic Movement and Para Athletics helped me accept who I am. It makes me feel whole. Athletics taught me how to be myself, believe in my dreams, and good things will happen to me if I work hard.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

It's crucial to connect all stakeholders, amplifying Para athletes' voices. I aim to advocate and represent everyone, regardless of age, disability, or nationality.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

One of the main tasks is to represent the athletes' voice, ideas, needs toward to the IPC, NPCs, collaborating with them, discussing with them, and organizing together several events.

3.10 DANIEL CHAN HO YUEN

Country/Territory: Hong Kong, China

Date of Birth: 17/01/1985

Sport: Para Badminton

Discipline: WH2

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Bronze medal in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: 1 Silver and 7 Bronze medals in 2022, 2019, 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011

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

To foster a fair, inclusive Para sport world, we must improve ranking and classification systems. Para athletes' voices are key for advocacy. I aim to join the IPC Athletes Council to support this mission..

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

For 8 years, I've been on the Para badminton Athletes Commission, improving systems and sharing updates. As a BWF integrity ambassador and business owner, I promote inclusion, diversity, and integrity in sports.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

As Hong Kong's first wheelchair badminton player, I love pioneering and leading. Building from scratch fulfils me. After receiving help during my hospital stay, I aim to support others as an athlete leader.

How has sport impacted your life?

Badminton is my religion. It gave me confidence and self-worth during dark times. As an athlete, I gained admiration, got married, built a business, won a Paralympic medal, and became a role model.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Para athletes are key stakeholders in para sports. Their voices shape better tournaments, ranking systems, and classification policies. They also help make sports more competitive, inclusive, and valuable. Every voice matters.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

We must listen to athletes and ensure their voices reach the IPC and IFs. Regular updates and meetings are essential. Frequent contact with athlete councils and onsite tournament visits helps us support athletes and improve systems.

3.11 AYAO SEVERIN KANSA

Country/Territory: Togo

Date of Birth: 27/11/1997

Sport: Para Athletics

Discipline: High Jump, MS-MD-XD

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: N/A

World Championship: N/A

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

I wanted to do Paralympic sport for a long time. Now it's done! I want to be part of this council to allow all these athletes in the world who are waiting to have the same chance as me.

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

I have a background in project management, leadership, administration and I am a computer scientist capable of managing a database. These are some of my skills that I can put at your service.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

For me, a leader is someone who knows how to listen, someone who knows how to lead a group of people and someone who sets a good example for those who follow him.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has allowed me to discover many other talents thanks to the training offered by the federations. I am currently independent thanks to sport so I would say that sport is my life.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

We are athletes with disabilities with specific needs. It is important for us that these needs are known and taken into account to allow our development.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can better support athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement by being the ideal intermediary between athletes and the IPC so that the goal of the Olympic Movement is achieved.

3.12 VLADYSLAVA KRAVCHENKO

Country/Territory: Malta

Date of Birth: 18/07/1991

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: 50 backstroke, 50 butterfly, 100 breaststroke

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 7th in Tokyo 2020, 6th and 7th in Rio 2016

World Championship: 9th, 11th and 12th in 2015 and 16th 2023

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

My motivation to run for the Athletes' Council is to represent athletes from countries where Para sport is currently underdeveloped and to support IPC's strategic objective of driving impact through Para sport in developing regions.

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

With almost ten years of professional corporate experience and academic background in Sport Management, Politics & International Development, I bring a strong skill set to advocate for effective and sustainable Para sport policies.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

To me being an Athlete Leader means using sport as a platform to drive positive social change and to empower others to do the same.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has shaped my character, brought lifelong friendships and memories, and showed me that through self-discipline, passion, and commitment you can achieve anything you set your mind to.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Athletes' voice is crucial as it ensures that the perspectives of those directly involved in sport are considered in decision-making processes, leading to more democratic, effective, and athlete-centred organisations.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Council can help strengthen the Paralympic movement by promoting transparency and collaboration and ensuring that as many athletes' voices as possible are captured and represented within the IPC.

3.13 HUSNAH BIRAMAHIIRE KUKUNDAKWE

Country/Territory: Uganda

Date of Birth: 25/03/2007

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: 100m Breaststroke, 100m Freestyle, 50m Freestyle, 200m Individual Medley, 100m Butterfly

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Participation in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: Participation in Manchester 2023

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

I aim to promote inclusivity and diversity in the IPC as an African representative. I'll use my platform to advocate for disability sport awareness globally and empower athletes to pursue academics alongside sports.

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

As an active listener, I effectively convey athlete concerns. My communication skills foster transparency with the IPC. Being a quick thinker, I actively participate in solution discussions.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

As an athlete leader, I influence the para sports community, model discipline, and hard work. I am a beacon of hope, conveying athlete challenges to the IPC, and fostering a supportive, celebratory community.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport transformed me from a shy girl hiding her disability to a confident, outgoing one proud of it. It boosted my self-worth, inspiring me to dream big and work hard to turn those dreams into reality.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Athletes' voices are crucial as they are the heart of the IPC. Unresolved challenges can disrupt games, so effective communication and implementation of solutions are essential.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can support athletes by promoting transparency with the IPC and involving them in decision-making. As athletes, council members can suggest solutions to global challenges, supporting the Paralympic movement.

3.14 LEOMON MORENO DA SILVA

Country/Territory: Brazil

Date of Birth: 21/08/1993

Sport: Goalball

Discipline: B1**Sports Career:**

Paralympic Games: Gold medal in Tokyo 2020, Bronze medal in Rio 2016, Silver medal in London 2012

World Championship: Gold medals in 2022, 2018 and 2014

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

Being a leader means listening to everyone involved in the movement, representing them collectively, and prioritizing the collective interest over personal or private interests.

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

I've naturally become a leader in every goalball team I've joined. Currently, I'm part of the NPC Brazil Athlete Committee and the NPC Brazil Athletes Council, where I serve as president.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

The role of the Athletes' Leader is to represent their peers within the discussions at the IPC, focusing on the knowledge that we have in our sporting life in a way that can contribute to the growth of the Paralympic Movement.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has shaped my life since birth, influencing me as an athlete and in my social, emotional, and family life. I've achieved much with clubs and national teams, found my wife, and had positive experiences with the NPC Brazil Athletes' Council and Board of Directors. Sport shapes my reflections and mentality, proving its power as a social tool.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

It is important to improve sport as a tool for personal transformation and development, as well as enabling athletes to represent their nation with pride and strength.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

It's about supporting the promotion of athletes' protagonism within our own Movement and going beyond it as well.

3.15 TANIA NADARAJAH

Country/Territory: Great Britain

Date of Birth: 26/08/1980

Sport: Para Archery

Discipline: Recurve Women Open and Recurve Mixed Team

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 5th and 17th in Rio 2016

World Championship: 6th and 17th in 2015, 17th in 2019

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

I would like to contribute to the Paralympic Movement's growth and success. Athlete voices are crucial for its progress, and I want to advocate on behalf of current, future and retired athletes.

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

With over 14 years communications experience, I will use my skills to help the Athletes' Council reach new audiences. I can also help athletes connect to better marketing to increase their influence.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being an athlete leader means advocating for the rights of fellow athletes, creating an inclusive environment and driving positive change within the Paralympic Movement, for everyone's benefit.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport turned my life around after tragedy, taking me on the most unexpected and incredible journey. The rewards and fulfilment I have found from my sport cannot be measured.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Athletes are central to the Paralympic movement. As someone who has lived the challenges and triumphs of sport, I understand the importance of having our voices heard.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

By representing the athlete voice with fairness and authenticity throughout the whole sporting journey, from the early start through to retirement and beyond.

3.16 ZAHRA NEMATI

Country/Territory: Iran

Date of Birth: 30/04/1985

Sport: Para Archery

Discipline: Para Archery, W1

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Gold medals in Tokyo 2020, Rio 2016 and London 2012

World Championship: Gold medals in 2017, 2015, 2011, 2010, Silver medal in 2020, Bronze medal in 2010

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

I have been eager to help all the paralympic athletes, specially to the developing countries, women & highly impaired people with the need of awareness, training & support, throughout my lifetime.

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

Interaction with the elite Sports features. Facilitating rules for the presence of different layers of society in sports professional & amatory activities. Review & report of outcomes to improve sports disciplines.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Athletes represent societal progress, influencing humanity, culture, and sociality. Sport transcends physical activity, with athletes impacting many areas. Regardless of ability, gender, or language, everyone can positively impact our world.

How has sport impacted your life?

As a professional archer for over a decade, I've faced many challenges. Sports have greatly impacted my life, elevating me socially and internationally. I feel it's my duty to help others enter the professional world.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Due to social, professional, and humanitarian issues, all athletes need to be heard by sports managers and policymakers. I feel responsible for helping improve athletes' standing.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

Collaboration between the council, sports policymakers, and federations can improve athletes' wealth and qualifications, enhancing the efficiency and quality of tournaments economically, culturally, and socially..

3.17 SHERIF OSMAN

Country/Territory: Egypt

Date of Birth: 15/09/1982

Sport: Para Powerlifting

Discipline: N/A

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Silver medal in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: Gold medal in Georgia 2021

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

As a nominee for the IPC Athletes' Council, my multifaceted expertise would greatly benefit the council's mission. My experience as a powerlifter, advocate, leader, and global representative makes me a strong candidate.

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

What I have stated previously

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

An athlete leader is a role model, motivator, and advocate on and off the field. They inspire, uphold ethics, value teamwork, communicate well, engage with the community, learn continuously, and show resilience.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has profoundly shaped my life, teaching resilience, discipline, and teamwork. The lessons and experiences have enriched my personal growth, relationships, career, and overall well-being.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The Athletes' voice is crucial as it champions rights, drives change, fosters accountability, promotes unity, embraces diversity, and spurs innovation, creating a more ethical and impactful sports landscape.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council shapes the athlete experience, advocates for rights, and boosts the Paralympic Movement's success. It empowers athletes, strengthens the IPC, and promotes inclusion, diversity, and excellence.

3.18 BENJAMIN PRITCHARD

Country/Territory: Great Britain

Date of Birth: 15/03/1992

Sport: Para Rowing

Discipline: Single Scull (PR1 M1X)

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 5th in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: Bronze medals in 2023 and 2022, 4th in 2019

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

A 2016 cycling accident led to my disability. The Paralympic Family gave me belonging. I aim to join the Athletes' Council to drive change and ensure those with disabilities have a voice in sports.

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

I bring legal and commercial expertise to the IPC Athletes' Council. My background in governance, advocacy, and sports administration equips me to drive initiatives that benefit athletes and promote inclusion.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

As a rugby fan, Graham Henry's quote, 'You don't own the jersey, you're just the body in it,' resonates with me. It reminds me to contribute to the legacy. Being an athlete leader means stepping up, taking responsibility, and leaving a positive impact for future generations.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has always shaped who I am, teaching me life's toughest lessons and forming strong friendships. It carried me through tough times, even after my accident. I believe sport is for everyone and advocate for greater inclusion and accessibility.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The Athletes' Council shows the IPC's commitment to prioritizing athletes' voices. I am committed to being their voice, ensuring athletes are at the forefront of the IPC's considerations.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

Our Council should improve like athletes, breaking barriers and building on past foundations. Regular athlete engagement keeps us connected and responsive, driving lasting change.

3.19 CHARLES ROZOY

Country/Territory: France

Date of Birth: 04/03/1987

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: 100 Butterfly

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Gold medal in London 2012

World Championship: Silver medal in 2015, Bronze medals in 2013, 2010 and 2009, Gold medal in 2009

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

I aim to advocate for the core values of the Paralympic movement, ensuring athlete voices are heard and their rights defended. My ambition is to fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment.

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

My diverse public and private sectors expertise, my experience of political landscapes bring me a deep understanding of both the challenges and opportunities within the paralympic movement.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being an Athlete Leader means being committed to collective progress while fostering individual growth to achieve shared goals. It is listening, understanding, and advocacy for athletes rights.

How has sport impacted your life?

It has been a powerful catalyst for personal growth, teaching me resilience, discipline, and the importance of teamwork. It continues to inspiring me to empower others through its transformative power.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Every athlete deserves to be heard. Ensuring athletes have a say in decision-making processes not only empowers them but also helps create environments that foster excellence, well-being and fairness.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Council should act as a bridge for all athletes, relay athletes' concerns and feedback, proposing collective initiatives to enhance the paralympic movement. It should also play an educational role.

3.20 MARIO ERNESTO SAYES

Country/Territory: El Salvador

Date of Birth: 07/11/1999

Sport: Boccia

Discipline: BC2

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: N/A

World Championship: N/A

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

"I aim to inspire future athletes, breaking barriers and providing support, ensuring recognition and ease in pursuing their sporting dreams."

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

"Young athlete leading with inclusivity, offering solutions, opportunities, and unwavering support for all IPC athletes."

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Young ideas. An athlete who can not only lead in his own life but in that of others, becoming an example for others to follow.

How has sport impacted your life?

"Sports, my art, fosters freedom and independence, teaching me always the power of perseverance and determination."

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Because among athletes we have to defend what we believe is right for our community. Fighting to break down barriers so that more people can enjoy sports.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council supports athletes, the IPC, and the Paralympic Movement by advocating for athlete-centered policies, fostering inclusivity, and providing support.

3.21 DENISE SCHINDLER

Country/Territory: Germany

Date of Birth: 09/11/1985

Sport: Para Cycling

Discipline: Track and Road

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Bronze medal, 5th and 9th in Tokyo 2020, Silver and Bronze medals in Rio 2016, Silver medal and 4th in London 2012

World Championship: 27 medals between 2011 and 2021

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

I would like to shape the future for the Para-Athletes and to give back after I have been able to compete in the Paralympic World for more than 13 years.

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

Knowledge of the Paralympic World for more than 13 years, good communication skills, good network and understanding of associational work.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being a voice for the athletes and to work together with the institutions for an amazing future of the Paralympic World.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has changed my life for the good and made me the person I am now today. It is my passion and my driver.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Because only when we actively start to work and do something, we can make improvements.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

By building a bridge by addressing the needs of the athletes, working together, exchanging minds and ideas and developing solutions together.

3.22 FATMIR SEREMETI

Country/Territory: Sweden

Date of Birth: 10/04/1983

Sport: Goalball

Discipline: N/A

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 4th in Rio 2016, competed in London 2012, Bronze medal in Beijing 2008

World Championship: 8th in 2018, 6th in 2010, Gold medal in 2002

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

I wish to run for the IPC Athletes' Council to leverage my 20 years of experience in parasports and advocacy for accessibility. My goal is to represent and advance the interests of athletes globally.

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

I bring 20 years in parasports, 3 Paralympic Games, medals, and expertise in accessibility advocacy, business development, and promoting inclusion to the IPC Athletes' Council.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Being an Athlete Leader means advocating for inclusion, inspiring others, and leveraging my experience to support and advance the interests and well-being of all athletes in the Paralympic community.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport has profoundly impacted my life by saving me from darkness, giving me purpose, and allowing me to inspire and advocate for others, while achieving personal and professional success.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

The athletes' voice is vital to me because it ensures our needs are heard, promotes inclusion, and drives positive change, empowering us to shape the future of parasports.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council can better support athletes, the IPC, and the Paralympic Movement by advocating for resources, enhancing communication, and promoting policies that ensure fair and inclusive opportunities.

3.23 TAKAYUKI SUZUKI

Country/Territory: Japan

Date of Birth: 23/01/1987

Sport: Para Swimming

Discipline: Freestyle, Breaststroke, and Individual Medley

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Silver medal in Athens 2004, Gold and Bronze medals in Beijing 2008, Bronze medals in London 2012, 4th in Rio 2016, Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: 17 Bronze, Silver and Gold medals between 2006 and 2023

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

I want to be a bridge between the IPC and the athletes to promote the Paralympic Movement, especially in Asia, so that the athletes' voices reach the IPC and to improve the IPC Athletes' Council.

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

My experience and knowledge about sport management, which I have gained from the undergraduate, masters' degrees and PhD course, would help the IPC Athletes' Council to achieve its goals.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Two essential qualities of a great leader that I keep in mind are being active and a desire to learn. A driven leader is not passive and is motivated to improve the organisation or himself/herself.

How has sport impacted your life?

Through Paralympic Games, it made me realise that even disability is various in each person and taught me it is amazing to create the state as "Unity in Diversity" through sport.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

Paralympic sports should be of fairness. Only the athletes with integrity and dignity can give the inspiration to the sports. That is why a voice of the athlete is important in any situation.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Athletes' Council needs firm connections with each IF's Athletes' Council and Regional Paralympic Committee Athletes' Council for better support to the athletes by delivering more Athletes' voices as soon as these raise.

3.24 YUJIAO TAN

Country/Territory: China

Date of Birth: 04/10/1990

Sport: Para Powerlifting

Discipline: Women's up to 67kg

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: Gold medal in Tokyo 2020

World Championship: Gold medal in Dubai 2023

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

As a para powerlifter for 21 years and 3-time Paralympian, I aim to include more people with disabilities in para sports, represent athletes' concerns, and promote para powerlifting in China and globally.

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

As a para powerlifter and Beijing Sports University graduate, I understand Para athletes' needs. I aim to use my experience to support them in sports and life, leveraging resources from China for global impact.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Inspired by Para athletes, I now aim to inspire others. As a leader, I constantly learn and improve, guiding young athletes and representing their voices and concerns to achieve their goals.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sports made me brave, confident, and strong-willed. Training built my body and mind. Wins brought confidence; losses-built resilience. Competing abroad enriched my life and connected me globally. My achievements inspire others.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

To achieve IPC's vision of inclusiveness, we must hear athletes' voices, especially from underdeveloped areas. The Athletes' Council represents their needs, ensuring policies are targeted and constructive.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

The Council should ensure transparent info exchanges with Para athletes, collect advice regularly, and report to IPC. Provide training and education and increase visibility through media and public relations.

3.25 YOOMIN WON

Country/Territory: Republic of Korea

Date of Birth: 19/01/1988

Sport: Wheelchair Basketball, Nordic Skiing

Discipline: Men's Wheelchair Basketball Cross-country Skiing, Biathlon

Sports Career:

Paralympic Games: 17th in Beijing 2022, 11th in Rio 2016

World Championship: Participation between 2019 and 2024

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

I aim to contribute my 30 years as a para-athlete, recognizing progress and challenges. I aspire to advance inclusivity within the IPC Athletes' Council, leveraging my diverse experiences.

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

I am committed to listening and learning from athletes, integrating their perspectives to form a unified voice. My focus on inclusivity and collaboration will ensure diverse athlete concerns are effectively represented.

What does being an Athlete Leader mean to you?

Though I have never thought of myself as a leader, I can only do what I have learned as an athlete in helping others. Being an Athlete Leader means leading by example—communicative, accountable, offering support and advice to fellow athletes.

How has sport impacted your life?

Sport made me self-loving, confident, and healthy. It improved my physical and mental health. Being goal-oriented and disciplined, I spread positivity and learned to help others.

Why is the athletes' voice important to you?

I feel that there could be a distance between what may seem needed and what is needed. And the athletes' voices are the ones that can close that gap, in all different parts of the world.

In your view how can the IPC Athletes' Council better support the athletes, the IPC and the Paralympic Movement?

Some countries have great facilities and awareness. Developing nations need help building foundations. More nations and athletes involved will boost global awareness.