Ethic Issues – or rather - Asking Difficult Questions

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Introduction

• Ethnographic Snapshots
• A troublesome tussle with technology
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• IPC Handbook 2012 – on equipment [technology]
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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](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYxBWIY8iYc)
Grounding our decisions

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<th>Friendship, Unity and Sportsmanship</th>
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*Empower, Inspire, Achieve*
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 –