

# Diverse Aspects of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games

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## 1. Introduction

The Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games took place under extremely difficult conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as was also the case for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games being organised just a few weeks before the Paralympic Games.

The following article focusses on a variety of aspects in this context through the perspective of a researcher from Germany.

In reports and comments by researchers, sport and media experts – on various occasions – reference was made to the “International Stoke Mandeville Games in Tokyo 1964”, where the term “Paralympic” was already used.

Given the significance of this event in 1964 one chapter is headlined “A historical look back”. The following chapters give an insight into similarities and differences regarding the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics seen through the lens of the author.

The central aspects of this article include facts, impressions and special issues related to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. For many decades, there have been close relations between youth sport in Germany and Japan. Already in 1964 a German delegation of young people participated in a youth camp (see: Horn/Mevert 1965).

In keeping this tradition, a German Olympic Youth Camp – in close cooperation with Japanese partners – was organised during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it could not be held in Tokyo, but was held in Frankfurt, Germany, and it included young people with disabilities. Given the significance of this event, one chapter is dedicated to this unique youth camp, because it can also serve as an innovative concept to be realised on the occasion of future Olympic and

Paralympic Games in order to activate and motivate young people to get involved in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Looking at the future developments of the Paralympic Games from a broader perspective, not only are “lessons learned” from the 2020 Tokyo Games being presented, but also other movements and events for persons with disabilities are being put into a bigger picture.

Closing comments highlight the enormous complexity and challenges that existed in hosting the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games and it was only possible to carry out the events because of the outstanding efforts made by thousands of people in Tokyo, in Japan and internationally. It was only thanks to these remarkable contributions of all these persons involved that the athletes were given the opportunity to compete at unforgettable Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## 2. A historical look back

In many reports in Germany on the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics reference was made to the “World Games of the Paralysed” – at that time using the term “International Stoke Mandeville Games Tokyo 1964”. It is interesting to note that the term “Paralympic” was used in a written form like on this poster (fig. 1).

Just like at the first games for athletes with a spinal cord injury in Rome 1960, the number of participants in Tokyo was relatively small – 370 male and female athletes



Fig. 1: Poster PARALYMPIC TOKYO 1964

from 22 countries. Dr Ludwig Guttmann gave a report on “the 1964 International Stoke Mandeville Games for the Paralysed in Tokyo” (see: Guttmann 1965, 58-61) and focussed on medical aspects, e.g. if and how persons with paraplegia can tolerate long-distance flights and are challenged by the problem of acclimatisation. When summarising medical incidents he mentioned only two cases, one being a pulmonary infection in a tetraplegic person and a British female athlete who broke an ankle, but was even able to compete in archery with her leg in plaster and won a silver medal.

The 1964 Tokyo Paralympic Games included the following sports: archery, athletics, darts, snooker, swimming, table tennis, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair fencing and weightlifting.

Concerning media coverage, many documents highlighted that a large number of reporters covered the Games, not staying at a Media Village but in the Athletes' Village.

It is very interesting to compare reports such as the above mentioned article on the Tokyo 1964 Games written by Guttmann with those published on the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, e.g. regarding the impact of climate on the performance of athletes. This issue was also discussed regarding athletes participating in the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games and a number of seminars and workshops had been organised in Germany in order to share information and knowledge.

Another interesting fact is that one day after the Closing Ceremony of the Tokyo 1964 Games 480 athletes from across Japan and from West Germany, the only team from outside Japan, came together in Tokyo for an unofficial event – known in Japan as “the second part of the Paralympics” (see: <https://olympics.com/en/news/1964-tokyo-paralympics-part-ii>). There were 36 sporting events and athletes with hearing, visual and physical impairments took part. In the Paralympics only athletes with a spinal cord injury could participate, therefore this was a unique opportunity for persons with other kinds of disabilities to compete. The person who had taken the initiative to bring the Paralympics to Tokyo was an orthopedic surgeon Yutaka Nakamura. He had met Ludwig Guttmann in England at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital and was impressed by the approach of Guttmann to include physical activity in the rehabilitative process. He then introduced this concept in his work in Japan – a true pioneer in sport for persons with a disability. More detailed information can be found here: Scruton (1998), Guttmann (1976), Bailey (2007), Westermann (2014), Wedemeyer-Kolwe (2011).

It is interesting to note that in over 100 years of history of the Olympic Games there have been athletes with disabilities competing in the Games (see: Deutsche Olympische Gesellschaft 1971; Chatziefstathiou/Garcia/Séguin 2020; Legg/Fay/Wolff/Hums 2014). Examples are:

Ray C. Ewry, an athlete with poliomyelitis who won gold medals in the Olympic Games in 1900 in Paris, 1904 in St. Louis and 1908 in London.

Marla Runyan, a visually impaired athlete, who participated in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona and in 1996 in Atlanta.

Natalya Partyka, an arm amputated athlete, competed in all Olympic Games from 2000 in Sydney to 2016 in Rio de Janeiro.

Oscar Pistorius, a double amputated athlete, who competed in 2012 in London in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. There have also been other athletes with disabilities who participated in Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Prior to the Tokyo Olympic Games the German athlete Markus Rehm had made strong efforts to be eligible for participation in the Olympic Games. Due to a wakeboard accident at the age of 14 he lost one leg below the knee and is using a prosthesis. At the 2012 Paralympics in London and 2016 Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro he had won gold medals. In Germany, he is a well-known athlete who has the strong will to become an Olympic athlete. In June 2021 at the European Championships in Poland he made a world-record jump of 8.62 m. With this jump he was even better than the Greek longjumper Miltiadis Tentoglou who won the gold medal with 8.41 m at the Tokyo Olympics. However, Rehm had not been successful with his efforts to participate in the Olympics due to decisions that were made by World Athletics and confirmed by the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS), published on 23 July 2021. This verdict closed the door for him to compete in the Olympic Games in Tokyo. In interviews he stated that he was extremely disappointed and that it was a missed opportunity to set a sign for inclusion.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – UNCRPD (see: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>) was adopted in 2006 and entered into force in 2008. The Convention includes an article related to sport. Article 30 focusses on “Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport” and calls for action of

member states to ensure participation of persons with a disability in sport at all levels, either in disability – specific or mainstream recreational, leisure and sporting activities. In Germany, the discussions about the participation of Markus Rehm in the Tokyo Olympics made in some cases reference to the UNCRPD. In general, however, it has to be emphasised that the implementation of the Convention in German society is focussing on inclusion in broader terms and is high on the political agenda, including sport at all levels.

### 3. Facts, Comments and Impressions – The 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo

In reports and comments prior to the Games, various controversial issues were discussed after the postponement in 2020. Should the Olympic and Paralympic Games take place in 2021 under the serious COVID-19 pandemic situation? Both from the IOC and IPC leadership, it was emphasised how important it was to carry out both Games.

IOC President Dr Thomas Bach put the athletes in the centre and argued that it is very important for the athletes that the Olympic Games take place and that it is the task for the media to spread the news worldwide.

IOC President Dr Bach explained at the Opening Ceremony why the Olympic Games should take place:

“This is the unifying power of sport. This is the message of solidarity, the message of peace and the message of resilience. This gives all of us hope for our further journey together.” He highlighted the outstanding efforts made by the Japanese people, the Japanese authorities and the Organising Committee and expressed deep gratitude. He addressed all the Olympic athletes, including those of the Refugee Olympic Team and he emphasised the need to stand together. That is why the IOC had adapted the Olympic motto to our times: “Faster, Higher, Stronger –Together” (see: IOC <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/ioc-president-s-speech-tokyo-2020-opening-ceremony>).

IPC President Andrew Parsons also emphasised why the Games should take place at the Opening Ceremony of the Paralympic Games:

“Many doubted this day would happen. Many thought it impossible. But thanks to the efforts of many, the most transformative sport event on Earth is about to begin. ... We thank our hosts for trusting we can deliver safe Games for the athletes and the officials, but also for Japanese society. From the bottom of my heart, arigato

Japan! Arigato, Tokyo.” (see: IPC <https://paralympic.org/news/ipc-president-andrew-parsons-tokyo-2020-opening-ceremony-speech>)

He stressed the goal to change the entire world and announced the launch of the WeThe15, an initiative which was spearheaded by the IPC and the International Disability Alliance, which aims to bring a positive change in the lives of 1.2 billion people with disabilities which make up 15% of the world's population.

Here are some impressions from Olympic athletes of Team Germany attending the Opening Ceremony:

Very emotional comments were given by the two German flag bearers, by springboard diver Patrick Hausding and beach volleyball player Laura Ludwig. They both said that a dream had come true. The IOC had announced prior to the Tokyo Games that each NOC was invited to select one female and one male athlete to jointly carry their flag during the Opening Ceremony. This initiative of the IOC received very positive reactions from German athletes as well as from the general public. Team Germany athletes expressed satisfaction that they could participate in the Games being fully aware of the difficult situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are some impressions from Paralympics athletes of Team Germany attending the Opening Ceremony. Paralympic athletes from Germany were very excited that they were able to compete in Tokyo. The German team at the Opening Ceremony had two flag bearers – like in the Olympics – and these were paracyclist Michael Teuber and wheelchair basketball player Mareike Müller.

German media focussed a lot on the members of the Paralympic Refugee Team. Here is one example:

A member of this team was Anas Al Kahlifa, a refugee from Syria, who came to Germany in 2016 and now lives in Germany. Since 2018, after an accident at work, he has been sitting in a wheelchair. During his first training in paracanoeing his coach told him that he would make it to Tokyo. In a newspaper interview he said with a smile: “I was confused. I didn't know... what is this Tokyo and why should I go there?” (see: Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 23 August 2021). But he started to train hard and finally qualified for the Paralympic Refugee Team in Tokyo where he competed at the Sea Forest Waterway in two races. It is remarkable that Paralympic athletes like him received great attention from the media and the general public which continued

during and after the Games.

In comparing the Olympic and Paralympic Games it is impressive that in the Olympic Games, five new sports were included: Baseball/softball, Karate, Sport climbing, Surfing and Skateboarding. And in the Paralympic Games, two new sports were part of the programme: Para-badminton and Para-taekwondo.

The media coverage in Germany for both the Olympic and the Paralympic Games was quite extensive. TV sport reporters were accompanied by former Olympic and Paralympic athletes respectively. For the Olympic Games Britta Heidemann, a gold medallist in fencing, served as an expert, whereas for the Paralympic Games Matthias Berg, a Paralympic gold medallist in skiing and athletics, Heinrich Popow, a Paralympic athlete and gold medallist in sprint, and Kirsten Bruhn, a Paralympic gold medallist in swimming, were involved as experts. This was an excellent way of sharing knowledge about different sports and disciplines, including information from the inside.

Regarding the COVID-19 situation during the Olympic and Paralympic Games – from a German perspective – a comparison between the situation during the Olympic and Paralympic Games shows clear differences: the situation during the Olympic Games was more challenging due to the fact that we had one athlete (cyclist) who tested positive at the beginning of the Games and could not compete. One staff member of the German Modern Pentathlon team tested positive on the last day of the Games and had to stay in quarantine in Japan.

In the German Paralympic team we had no COVID 19 cases.

#### 4. Competitions and Medals – Expectations, Disappointments, Surprises

In both the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games we encountered very emotional stories of athletes, who shared their experiences at the Games.

Here are some examples:

At the Olympic Games it was absolutely surprising that Jonathan Hilbert won the silver medal in the men's 50km race walk. He was fully overwhelmed by winning this medal and said immediately after the race: "This is also for you, Anna." Every day for hours he had communicated with his girlfriend in Germany who strongly encouraged and inspired him.

At the Paralympic Games many athletes shared their Paralympic special moments,

such as Edina Müller, the paracanoeing gold medallist, who was accompanied by her two-year old son.

Very emotional reactions were also shown by Markus Rehm, the outstanding Paralympic athlete mentioned above, with high ambitions to also participate in the Olympic Games in the future.

In summary, it can be said that the athletes were very thankful that the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games took place – despite the lack of audience due to the pandemic.

134 athletes and 3 guides were part of the Paralympic Team Germany. The age of the athletes ranged from 16 years to 66 years. The youngest athlete in the German team was Lise Petersen, who participated in javelin throw and ranked in 7<sup>th</sup> place. The oldest athlete of the German team – and of the Tokyo Paralympic Games – was a 66-year-old female athlete, Heidemarie Dresing, who participated in dressage in her first Paralympic Games, and she ranked in 4<sup>th</sup> place in individual freestyle and 7<sup>th</sup> in team competition.

Several athletes from the Paralympic Team Germany met great expectations, e.g. Markus Rehm in long jump, or even exceeded expectations like Valentin Baus in table tennis, Denise Schindler in cycling, Verena Schott in swimming, Thomas Schmidberger in table tennis, Leon Schäfer in long jump, Martin Schulz in triathlon, Frances Hermann in javelin throw, Felix Streng in the 100m, Annika Zeyen in handbiking, Jana Majunke in cycling, Natascha Hiltrup in shooting, Taliso Engel in swimming, Elena Krawzow in swimming, Irmgard Bensusan in swimming, Johannes Floors in the 400m and Edina Müller in paracanoeing. These are just some examples of medal winners of the German team. Some athletes competed as favourites, like Markus Rehm, and others reached a personal best and won a medal.

In some sports where expectations had been high, however, in some cases athletes were very disappointed about their results, e.g. in goalball, in wheelchair basketball to name but a few.

Currently, the process of analysing all results of the German Paralympic team continues.

Comparisons are also made with the progress and results of other teams in order to find out more about training opportunities, coaches training, talent identification and talent development (TID). International comparative studies have been carried out during the past years (see: Radtke/Doll-Tepper 2014; Paralympics Australia 2021;

Hutzler, Y./Higgs, C. 2016).

Some media reports focussed on personal tragedies and less on sport performance of the athletes. However, in general, it can be stated that the media in Germany, both TV and online and printed newspapers, provided objective and factual information complemented by personal stories.

In this context a special initiative, a “Paralympics Newspaper” in Berlin, needs to be mentioned. Since the Paralympic Games 2004 in Athens, the Berlin newspaper “Der Tagesspiegel” together with the “German Social Accident Insurance” publish a “Paralympics Newspaper” where young people with and without disabilities contribute to the contents by writing articles, producing pictures, etc. At previous Paralympic Games the team worked on-site. However, for the Tokyo Paralympic Games this was not possible, so they had to work from home in Berlin. The Paralympics Newspaper on 24 August 2021 included a welcome message of Chancellor Angela Merkel, who was over many years closely linked to this very special media initiative.

From the German perspective not all expectations were met at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games (see table 1).

**Table 1: Talley tables**

Olympic Games	Paralympic Games
Top 10	Top 12
1 USA	1 China
2 China	2 UK
3 Japan	3 USA
4 UK	4 Russian PC
5 ROC	5 The Netherlands
6 Australia	6 Ukraine
7 The Netherlands	7 Brazil
8 France	8 Australia
9 Germany	9 Italy
10 Italy	10 Azerbaijan
	11 Japan
	12 Germany

Compared to the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympic Games where Germany was ranked in 5<sup>th</sup> place, and the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games where Germany ranked in 6<sup>th</sup> place, it is clear that there existed some disappointment.

Each National Olympic Committee and National Paralympic Committee analyses in

detail the performances of the athletes and the results of the Tokyo Games, and compares them with those of previous Games. From a German perspective, the rankings at previous Olympic and Paralympic Games were clearly better than these in Tokyo, which is now leading to a critical reflection of the German high performance approach and system, both with regard to the Olympic and Paralympic athletes. It can be assumed that similar measures are being taken in other Olympic and Paralympic Committees in view of the next Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2024 in Paris and beyond.

## 5. Special Issues

In the following section, some special issues are addressed which were discussed in Germany:

### – Female athletes, pregnancy and bringing babies to the Games

At previous Olympic and Paralympic Games there was very little – if at all – mention about athletes being pregnant or having small children.

Recently interviews have been conducted in order to identify the challenges female athletes are facing regarding pregnancy and a sporting career at the highest level. Several examples both at the Olympic and Paralympic Games indicated that there are more and more top athletes who are mothers. However, the situation at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games was very special due to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context it is interesting to follow the reports of Olympic athletes Mandy Bujold, Alison Felix and Helen Glover. Paralympic athletes also participated in the Tokyo Games bringing with them their baby, such as the above mentioned Edina Müller. However, they could not stay together at the village, but in a hotel outside.

### – Mental health problems of Olympic and Paralympic athletes

The issue of mental health problems of elite athletes has been discussed for some time and has been the focus of research in recent years (see: Kühnle 2019). During the Tokyo Olympic Games two prominent athletes Simone Biles, the famous gymnast from the USA, and Naomi Osaka, the outstanding tennis player from Japan, were facing enormous pressure because of high expectations which they felt they could not fulfil.

Because of their enormous popularity these two individuals contributed to making

this issue public, a situation that might be shared by other top athletes as well. In the context of the Paralympic Games in Tokyo it was announced that two German athletes could not travel to Tokyo because of mental health problems.

In some cases – based on interviews and reports – there might also be a connection to misbehaviour of persons in contact with the athletes. This is an extremely sensitive issue and has led in Germany to a decision that all sport organisations had to commit themselves to implementing a plan towards fighting physical, sexual and psychological harassment and abuse (see: DOSB-Stufenmodell 2020).

At this point, comments of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo can be summarised. Despite the enormous challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was an overwhelming positive response from the athletes that they were very happy that the Games could take place with all the support from the people in Japan. Their contribution was highly respected and appreciated.

Particularly highlighted were the opening and the closing ceremonies – athletes were very emotionally touched and very impressed. Many of them said that these Games were extremely special and unforgettable.

In the context of the Olympic and Paralympic Games some discussions focussed on the idea of organising both Games together.

As early as in the 1990's, this issue was already addressed at the first VISTA conference of the IPC held in Jasper, Canada in 1993, by Doll-Tepper and von Selzam (see: Doll-Tepper/von Selzam 1994).

Reflecting the development of the Olympic and Paralympic Movement in recent decades, it remains to be seen if the IOC and the IPC and their respective member organisations will put this topic on the agenda of their upcoming joint meetings.

In the following section some selected themes and topics regarding the Paralympics will be presented based on reports and observations shared by athletes, coaches, sports officials and the media.

#### – Classification

Since the beginning of the Paralympic Games classification has been one of the most controversial issues. It is therefore not a surprise that also prior to and during the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, classification was discussed from different points of view. The IPC and the respective disability sport federations, like CP-ISRA, IBSA,

IWAS and VIRTUS are involved in setting up the rules and regulations as well as their implementation. The main purpose of classification is to ensure fair competitions between people of different types and degrees of disability. In reports of German media, issues related to classification were raised. However, given the fact that TV stations had invited former Paralympic athletes, detailed information was given by them to the general public and provided explanations.

#### – Participation of athletes with an intellectual disability/VIRTUS

In 1986 INAS-FMH, an international sport organisation for athletes with an intellectual disability, was founded, which joined the IPC in 1989, when the IPC was established. INAS-FMH was from the start a separate organisation from Special Olympics following a different approach and philosophy. During the Sydney Paralympic Games 2000 athletes from Spain won the gold medal in basketball, announcing at their return home that they did not have an intellectual disability. As a result, athletes with an intellectual disability were not eligible for participation until the 2012 Paralympic Games in London. INAS-FMH changed the name of the organisation to INAS-FID in 1994, and after another name change in 2020, the organisation is now called VIRTUS: World Intellectual Impairment Sport. 63 medal events of athletes with an intellectual disability were included in the Tokyo Paralympic Games in three sports: athletics, swimming and table tennis. 161 athletes representing VIRTUS competed in these Games. Amongst the medal winners were athletes from Brazil, Australia, Russian Paralympic Committee, Japan, Spain, Great Britain, Ecuador, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and France. However, no athlete with an intellectual disability was sent to Tokyo from the German Paralympic Committee.

The next VIRTUS Global Games are scheduled for 4-10 June 2023 in Vichy, France, in the same year and month when the Special Olympics World Games 17-24 June 2023 will be held in Berlin, Germany.

## 6. A Special Event: German Olympic Youth Camp Tokyo 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the German Olympic Youth Camp – which was normally organised during the Olympic Summer and Winter Games – could not take place in Tokyo as it was originally planned. The German Olympic Youth camp has a

very long tradition and was already organised on the occasion of the Olympic Games in 1964 in Tokyo. Since 1967 there has existed a formal cooperation between the “German Sport Youth” and the Japanese Sport Youth.

Ever since that time both organisations worked together, which in 1974 led to the so-called “simultaneous exchange of the German and Japanese Sport Youth”, a programme bringing together German and Japanese youth. More than 10,000 young people from Germany and Japan have participated in this intercultural exchange so far.

Based on these close relations it was planned to organise the German Olympic Youth Camp together with their Japanese counterparts, the Japan Junior Sport Clubs Association (JJSA), as a German-Japanese Youth Camp in Tokyo.

Preparations in Germany were carried out by the “German Sport Youth” which is part of the “German Olympic Sports Confederation” – the umbrella sport organisation in Germany – and the “German Olympic Academy” which focusses on activities related to the Olympic Movement and produces teaching material for primary and secondary schools prior to Olympic and Paralympic Games, entitled: “Olympia is calling: Join in”. Here is an example of the cover of the teaching material:

42 young people met in Frankfurt from 29 July to 5 August 2021 in the camp - from Japan, 30 young people attended the programme.

This included a variety of sporting activities, workshops and a digital intercultural exchange. One key topic which was addressed by both groups was sustainability.



Fig. 2: Teaching material “Olympia is calling: Join in” by the German Olympic Academy



Fig. 3: German Olympic Youth Camp in cooperation with JJSA

Despite the geographical distance, young people experienced interactively insights into the Olympic Movement, and got an impression of the culture and traditions of the other country. Part of the German group were three young persons with a disability who shared their experiences as young athletes with a disability, thus making a connection to the Paralympic Games. In addition, lectures and workshops were offered by representatives of the sport organisations highlighting developments and activities in the area of “Sport and Inclusion”, a topic which is one of the key themes in sport and in society in general.

## 7. Future of the Paralympics

The focus is now placed on the next Paralympic Games in 2022 in Beijing, in 2024 in Paris and beyond.

Currently, preparations are moving quickly for the upcoming Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing in February and March 2022.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation, strict rules and regulations will apply for all athletes, coaches, team officials as well as for the members of the organising committee and other staff. It is important that “lessons learned” at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games will serve as a blueprint for the next Games. Also, athletes in winter sports have experienced competitions and qualifications during the past months which were organised under severe health restrictions.

From a German perspective, preparations for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games are well underway. The current relationship between the IOC and the IPC

seems to be functioning well. Regarding the next Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2024 in Paris, it can be observed that enormous efforts are being made by the organisers to closely link the Olympic Games to the Paralympic Games.

Due to the fact that I had an opportunity to follow the media for some time in France during the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, it was very impressive how much media coverage existed on TV. Similar to the television broadcasting in Germany, Paralympic athletes were involved sharing explanations about classification, different kinds of disabilities, and rules of sport disciplines to name but a few.

Regarding the preparations for Paris 2024, many initiatives exist which indicate the ambition of the organisers to give Para athletes even more visibility and recognition.

Tony Estanguet, President of the Paris 2024 Organising Committee, said that Paris 2024 is convinced that sport can be a powerful driver of social inclusion, self-acceptance and openness to others. He expressed this in the context of officially submitting a request for the creation of Paralympic emojis (see: Mackay 2021).

It has been announced that the organising committee plans to make the city of Paris a big Olympic and Paralympic Park. Efforts are also being made to engage with the general public and to implement a school-based programme with an Olympic and Paralympic week which will be organised every year. It has also been announced that the organisers wish to reach out to cities and regions all over France and not just to the cities where the competitions will take place. This initiative has already started under the label “Terre de Jeux”. It is also planned to take the opening ceremony out of the Stade de France and on to the streets. One of main goals is to ensure accessibility to venues and events for people with disabilities based on common standards. Following up on the reports and announcements being made by the organisers of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it is evident that they try to break new ground.

Hopefully, the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic will be successful so that the plans can become reality. Concerning the future of the Paralympic Movement including the Paralympic Games, it is noteworthy that new directions have started in Tokyo with the launch of the WeThe15, which might develop a unique momentum as a global movement that goes far beyond sports and is directed towards social change and the creation of more opportunities for persons with disabilities in all parts of the world. These innovative developments are closely connected to issues of Paralympic

legacies which have been addressed by researchers for several years (see: Legg/Gilbert 2011).

In discussing historical and current developments of the Paralympic Movement and Paralympic Games, it is also important to focus on international sport events for persons with disabilities which are linked to international organisations.

#### – The Deaflympics

Already established in 1924 in Paris, the “Comité des Sports des Sourds” (CISS) held their first Summer Games there and started to organise Winter Games in 1949 in Seefeld, Austria. CISS changed their French acronym into “International Committee for the Deaf” (ICSD). Every four years, Summer and Winter Games are held, including many of the Olympic Sports. Their logo symbolises strong bonds between deaf people using their own form of communication, sign language. When in 1989 the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) was established, the ICSD joined the IPC. However, they decided to leave the organisation in 1995, because they wanted to keep their own Games and not to be absorbed.

Until today, ICSD keeps Summer and Winter Deaflympics as events of their own.

#### – The Special Olympics

The Special Olympics Movement started in the 1960's in the United States. It was founded by Eunice Kennedy-Shriver to encourage persons with intellectual disabilities to practise sport and take part in competition. The first Special Olympics Games were held in 1969 in Chicago. Since then the Special Olympics Movement has grown tremendously, and the Special Olympics World Games are now one of the biggest sport events worldwide. The last Special Olympics World Winter Games were held in 2017 in Austria with 2700 athletes participating in 27 events (9 sports).

Abu Dhabi hosted the last Special Olympics World Summer Games in 2019 with more than 7000 athletes participating. Currently, preparations are underway for the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2021, which had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic to January 2023. The host city will be Kazan in

Russia. The next Special Olympics World Summer Games will be organised in Berlin, Germany in 2023 with a strong focus on inclusion (see: Special Olympics World Games Berlin 2023: <https://www.berlin2023.org>).

#### – Invictus Games

The first Invictus Games were held in 2014 in London based on the initiative of the Invictus Games Foundation and the Duke of Sussex, who had visited the Warrior Games in the United States of America in 2012. Participants are wounded, injured and sick servicemen and servicewomen. Following the Games in London, Orlando, USA (2016), Toronto, Canada (2017), and Sydney, Australia (2018) were hosts of the Invictus Games. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the next Games had to be postponed and are now being planned to be in The Hague, The Netherlands, in 2022 and in Düsseldorf, Germany, in 2023. It remains to be seen in which way these Games will develop and if they will stay separate from the IPC and the Paralympic Movement.

It is interesting to note that several organisations have been established over the past decades offering sport competitions for persons with different kinds of disabilities, in events only for persons with a disability. The Special Olympics Movement – during the past years – has taken a different approach and offers sport competition for athletes with intellectual disabilities only and competitions in so-called “unified sports”, for athletes with and without disabilities. In this context, it needs to be emphasised that the sport structures differ a lot from country to country and that some of the above mentioned organisations are part of the National Olympic Committees/National Olympic and Sport Confederations or are separate bodies besides the national sport organisations (see: Doll-Tepper/Tiemann 2021).

## 8. Closing Comments

Never before in history had Olympic and Paralympic Games been organised under such serious conditions and circumstances as the 2020 Tokyo Games due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Already in 2020, the decision had to be taken to postpone both Games to 2021. Discussions continued at local, national and international levels

regarding the meaningfulness and justifiability of organising such mega sports events under pandemic conditions. Discussions included very controversial positions in Japan, in Germany and worldwide. Finally, the decision was taken to carry out both Games under strict health rules and regulations.

From a retrospective view it can be stated that this decision was perceived in a positive way by the Olympic and Paralympic athletes and by their respective international bodies, the IOC and the IPC.

In Germany, several surveys were carried out in order to give the athletes a voice and make their positions an integral part of important decisions in German sport.

During and after the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, discussions continued regarding the health risks for the athletes and their entourage and about health dangers for the Japanese hosts. No general final answer was given. However, certain expectations are directed towards the future of mega sports events, not only under pandemic conditions, but regarding essential requirements for the future. Key aspects for bidding and hosting mega sports events include a clear commitment of all persons and entities involved to make sure that all relevant measures are being implemented towards sustainability and the prevention of the worst impacts of climate change. The IOC and the IPC have expressed their dedication to tackle this issue and to take a lead in a global action plan.

Both organisations, the IOC and the IPC, as well as the organising committees for 2022 Beijing, 2024 Paris, 2026 Cortina d'Ampezzo and 2028 Los Angeles will be evaluated regarding keeping their promises in this respect, and it would be advisable to base their work on the knowledge and experiences of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

On a final note, regarding both Games, athletes, coaches, and other members of the German teams expressed their thankfulness and gratitude to the hosts in Tokyo and in Japan for their kindness and support in welcoming our athletes in such a respectful manner despite the unfortunate and challenging circumstances.

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## 東京2020パラリンピック競技大会の 多様な側面について

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本稿では、新型コロナウイルス感染症パンデミックのため極めて困難で挑戦的な条件・環境下で開催された東京2020パラリンピック競技大会のさまざまな側面に焦点を当てる。

東京2020オリンピック競技大会も、同様の困難な問題を抱えるなか、パラリンピックに先行して実施されたが、賛否両論を引き起こした。こうしたメガスポーツ・イベントを開催・主催することの意義や正当性について、さまざまな問題・課題が日本、ドイツをはじめ世界各国で議論された。主導組織である国際オリンピック委員会（IOC）と国際パラリンピック委員会（IPC）は、責任担当諸機関・組織と連携して、厳格な保健規則・制限の下で両競技大会を開催することを最終的に決定した。

本稿では、東京2020オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会に対する全体的な認識においてどのような側面が特に注目されたかについて、ドイツの一研究者の立場から詳細に検証する。本稿第一部では、1964年に東京で開催され、早くも「パラリンピック」という名称が使用される大会となった「第13回国際ストーク・マンデビル競技大会」に特に焦点を当てる。東京2020オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会に関しては、オリンピック選手およびパラリンピック選手の考えを考慮に入れると、特定の類似点と相違点がいくつか確認できる。オリンピックおよびパラリンピックのドイツ選手団の成績や結果に対する期待と実績などの主題を明示し、批判的に考察する。ドイツ人の視点から言えば、例えば選手のメンタルヘルスの問題、オリンピック競技大会への障がいのある選手の参加、パラリンピックスポーツにおけるクラス分けなど、スポーツ界においてのみならずメディアによっても議論された特定の問題がいくつか挙げられる。

本稿ではまた、パラリンピック・ムーブメントおよびパラリンピック競技大会にとどまらず障がい者スポーツの過去および現在の動向についても取り上げる。

さらに、ドイツと日本のスポーツ、とりわけユーススポーツにおいては、緊密な関係が存在することから、ドイツ・オリンピック・ユースキャンプ東京2020およびオリ

ピック期間中の青少年のオンライン交流について報告するとともに、パラリンピックスポーツの動向、障がい者と健常者のための包摂的なアプローチについても考察する。

東京2020オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会が終了した今、私たちは皆、どのような教訓を得たのかを自問する必要がある。東京2020と同様にパンデミックの課題に立ち向かいながら北京2022オリンピック・パラリンピック冬季競技大会に向けて、さらにはパリ2024オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会、そしてそれ以降に向けての準備が進められている。

将来のメガスポーツ・イベントの重要な側面として挙げられるのは、すべての当事者が負うべき責務として、サステナビリティ（持続可能性）、および気候変動の最悪の影響の予防を考慮し、またそれらのための対策を実施することが含まれる。来るオリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会に向けて、IOCおよびIPCは、気候変動への対応に全力で取り組み、グローバルなアクションプランにおいて先導的役割を果たすことを表明している。