



DEAF UK ATHLETICS



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WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Exclusion of Deaf Athletes from the disability World Class Performance Plan (WCPP)



By DUKA

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1. Aim

The aim, of this report, is to explore, define and understand the differences between the Deaflympics, Paralympics and why there is currently 3 Games.

The main focus, of this report, will be on deaf /hearing impaired (HI) athletes. The main sport will be athletics.

2. Understanding Deaf, Disability, Hearing and Impaired Definitions

The following definitions are as described in the Compact Oxford English Dictionary of Current English Second Edition (Publication Date 12th June 2003).

Deaf adjective. 1 without the faculty of hearing or having impaired hearing. 2 (deaf to) unwilling to listen or respond to.

- Phrases fall on deaf ears be ignored. Turn a deaf ear refuse to listen or respond.
- Derivates deafness noun.
- Origin Old English.

Disability noun (pl. disabilities). 1 a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities. 2 a disadvantage or handicap.

Hearing noun. 1 the faculty of perceiving sounds. 2 the range within which sounds may be heard; earshot. 3 an opportunity to state one's case: a fair hearing. 4 an act of listening to evidence, especially a trial before a judge without a jury.

Impaired adjective. Having a disability of a specified kind: hearing-impaired.

Many deaf or hearing impaired people do not class themselves as 'disabled' only as 'deaf'. This is because they do not consider deafness to be a physical impairment, for example, like an amputee who has a missing limb.

Also deaf people tend to refer to themselves as being deaf and not hearing-impaired (HI). HI is mainly used, as our research has shown, by Disability Development Officers, Local Authority Sports Development Officers and School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers, but not by the deaf population themselves.

3(a) WCPP – Founding

In January 2001, the World Class Potential Plan (WCPP) was made public. The aim of the WCPP was to offer England's future athletics stars, over the next 10 years, with stepping stones from the cradle to the podium. The Plan is financed by Sport England, as well as from the Lottery Fund, and is currently supporting a total of 129 young athletes who are likely to take part in the Olympics or Paralympics.

Prospective Deaflympics athletes are sadly excluded, and there is no alternative funding budget specifically for the elite deaf athlete who has already achieved World Class Standard either as medallist at major events such as the European Athletics Championships or the Deaflympics or European or World Record Holders. The deaf athletes themselves and the general deaf population has found this to be unfair political practice, demoralising, and discriminatory.

3(b) WCPP – Benefits

Benefits, for the athlete, include:

- Access to facilities including High Performance Centres
- Cost of necessities including equipment, medical services, physiotherapy and competition travel
- Modes support towards personal sporting costs
- Sports Science support

Benefits, for the athlete's personal coach, include:

- Receiving will significant benefits form the programme

Since November 2003, for athletes aged 16 to 23, this support of framework has been going through a trial.

On the full programme, there are 99 athletes. All these athletes are receiving benefits and include help with purchasing equipment and costs of overseas preparation camps. 43 of these athletes have been identified as premium performances and have the extra advantage of receiving extra assistance for themselves and their coach.

A further 30 have links to the UK Athletics Performance Centres around the country. These athletes are able to receive help with injury prevention and treatment. All of the 99 athletes are able to use the Performance Centres' facilities as well as the professional expertise based here.

4. WCPP – Membership

To get an allegeable place on the programme, UK Athletics will monitor the athlete's performance and then will recognise whether the athlete has met the required standard.

There is always the possibility of some performances going unnoticed. There will be a chance for such athletes, their parents, coaches or teachers to identify exceptional performances themselves by means of the regional performance structure.

Due to organisational and funding restrictions, deaf athletes are not part of UK:A's infrastructure. This means that as a direct result of policies, deaf and HI athletes are automatically omitted from the WCPP and restricted from membership despite many of the deaf athletes being world class performers in their events.

5. Exclusion of Deaf Athletes

Unfortunately, deaf athletes are excluded from being part of the WCPP programme – whatever their world ranking, performance level or efforts. Why is this?

“The guidelines issued by UK Sport regarding World Class Performance Plan funding indicates that support through the programme is limited to athletes who have the potential and opportunity to represent Great Britain at the Paralympic Games. My understanding of the current athletics programme is that athletes who have a hearing impairment are ineligible to compete in the Games and therefore cannot be funded through the World Class performance Plan. The inclusion of deaf athletes in the WCPP therefore would seem to be conditional on them being eligible for the Games – which is an issue that the deaf international organisation needs to take up with the International Paralympic Committee. I am sorry to say therefore that unless this situation changes there is little I am able to do. My role as the person responsible for the WCPP is quite clear and in addition the lottery currently provides the programme with its sole source of income and with that comes the conditions I have described.”

UK:A Technical Director – Disability Athletics 2/3/04

Can UK Sport review the above conditions? Is there anything that deaf athletes can do to enable DCMS to review the above conditions? Or do deaf athletes have to miss out on equal support bestowed to their fellow athletes who are not deaf? If government plans are fixed; can there not be alternative plans and budget established to benefit this segment of the UK population that is fast developing and establishing itself as a force in world sports?

If the answer to the above is ‘no’, it’s unfortunate that there will be those current world class deaf athletes that will consider their involvement in sports as a result of excessive financial burden upon them, their family, friends and associates in their determination to be the best in the world in their chosen sports. Not only will they lose out, but their clubs and consequently, the country will suffer as a result of shortage of talents to represent them.

6. Deaflympics – Founding

Before 1924, there had never been a disabled people's Games - regardless of whether for the deaf and HI or for the disabled people. In 1924 the very first games, called The Silent Games, were held.

In 1924 the Games were held in Paris, France and organised by the Comité International des Sports des Sourds, CISS (The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf). The addition of the Winter Games was in 1949. The International Olympic Games (IOC) is responsible for the Deaflympics.

The Deaflympics are among the world's fastest growing sporting events. Over the last decade, the Summer Games had seen a dramatic increase in the number of participating athletes. The 1924 Deaflympics saw 145 athletes from 9 European nations taking part. In 2001 in Rome, Italy, 2,405 athletes from 71 countries participated.

Melbourne, Australia, in January 2005 was host to the 20th Summer Games. More than 3,000 deaf athletes and officials from 75 nations participated.

In Seefeld, Austria, the first Winter Games were held in 1949. 33 athletes from 5 nations participated. The 15th Winter Games were held in 2003 and hosted by Sundsvall, Sweden. There were 253 participating athletes from 22 countries.

Salt Lake City, Utah, United States, in 2007, will put on the 16th Winter Games. There is an expected estimation of approximately 300 athletes from 20 nations qualifying. Even the Deaflympics have a longer history than the Commonwealth Games!

Today, there are 94 national deaf sports federations who are affiliated to the Deaflympics. The necessity of these separate deaf Games are not just evident in the number of participating athletes but also in their communication needs.

The Deaflympics provide the HI with comfortable, friendly and familiar surroundings where they do not feel isolated yet at the same giving them the experience of competing and the opportunity to socialise as well as having enjoyment and fun.

The Summer and Winter Deaflympics consist of various sports. See table below on next page.

7. Deaflympics/Paralympics – Sports

Table 1. Deaflympics/Paralympics Summer and Winter sports compared

Deaflympics Summer Sports	Paralympics Summer Sports	Deaflympics Winter Sports	Paralympics Winter Sports
1. Athletics	Archery	Alpine Skiing	Alpine Skiing Biathlon
2. Badminton	Athletics	Cross Country Skiing	Cross Country
3. Basketball	Boccia	Ice Hockey	Sledge Hockey
4. Beach Volleyball	Cycling	Sledge Hockey	
5. Bowling	Equestrian	Snowboard	
6. Cycling	Fencing		
7. Football	Football		
8. Handball	Goalball		
9. Judo	Judo		
10. Karate	Powerlifting		
11. Orienteering	Sailing		
12. Shooting	Shooting		
13. Swimming	Standing Volleyball		
14. Table Tennis	Swimming		
15. Tennis	Table Tennis		
16. Volleyball	Tennis		
17. Water Polo	Wheelchair Basketball		
18. Wrestling	Wheelchair Rugby		



8. Deaflympics – Classifications

In the Deaflympics, classification refers to who is allowed to compete. To be eligible for participation, the pre-requisites for the athlete are:

- ☺ They have to be deaf, defined as a hearing loss of at least 55Db in the better ear (3 tone frequency average of 500, 1,000 and 2,000 Hertz, ANSI 1969 standard).
- ☺ They have to be citizen of a nation member of the Deaflympics.
- ☺ They are restricted from using not hearing aids or external cochlear implant aids during any Deaflympics event.

9. Deaflympics – Paralympics Athletics

Track and field Athletics usually consist of the following events.

Deaflympics – Athletics Events Compared with Olympics and Paralympics

Table 2: The Deaflympics, Olympics and Paralympics Athletics fixture compared

Events	Deaflympics	Olympics	Paralympics
1. 100m	✓	✓	✓
2. 200m	✓	✓	✓
3. 400m	✓	✓	✓
4. 800m	✓	✓	✓
5. 1,500m	✓	✓	✓
6. 5,000m	✓	✓	X
7. 10,000m	✓	✓	✓
8. Marathon	✓	✓	✓
9. 100m Hurdles	✓	✓	X
10. 110m Hurdles	✓	✓	X
11. 400m Hurdles	✓	✓	X
12. 3,000m Steeple Chase	✓	✓	X
13. 4x100m	✓	✓	✓
14. 4x400m	✓	✓	✓
15. Javelin Throw	✓	✓	✓
16. Discus Throw	✓	✓	✓
17. Hammer Throw	✓	✓	X
18. Shot Putt Throw	✓	✓	✓
19. Long Jump	✓	✓	✓
20. Triple Jump	✓	✓	✓
21. High Jump	✓	✓	✓
22. Pole Vault	✓	✓	X
23. Decathlon	✓	✓	X
24. Heptathlon	✓	✓	X

As can be seen on, table, the Deaflympics and Olympics have similar events. Melbourne 2005 Deaflympics Games media director Susan Wright said: “The only difference from the Olympics was that flashing lights, hand signals or flags were used instead of a starting gun or whistle. In the Paralympics, the competitors are not physically able, while the athletes in the Deaflympics are physically able,” she said. “There’s a lot of guys here who represent their country at Olympic or Commonwealth Games level. “They’re elite athletes and the only disadvantage is that they can’t hear.”

Should not deaf athletes be recognised in their own right and efforts for government support to enable them to further improve to reach the same level as non deaf athletes?

I. Deaflympics – Athletics Eligibility

There is no eligibility other than those stated on page 11, section 11. Deaflympics – Classification.

II. Deaflympics – Athletics Classification

There is no classification apart from those stated on page 11, section 11. Deaflympics – Classification.

III. Deaflympics – Athletics Rules

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) rules are followed at all authorised athletics’ competitions, which includes the Deaflympics.

Individual Events

- 📄 IAAF rules are applied.

Relays

- 📄 IAAF rules are applied.

Progression to Finals – Field Events

- 📄 IAAF rules are applied.

Hearing Aids

- 📄 The use of hearing aids is strictly forbidden during the competition.

10. Deaflympics – Historical GB Athletics Team Performance Statistics

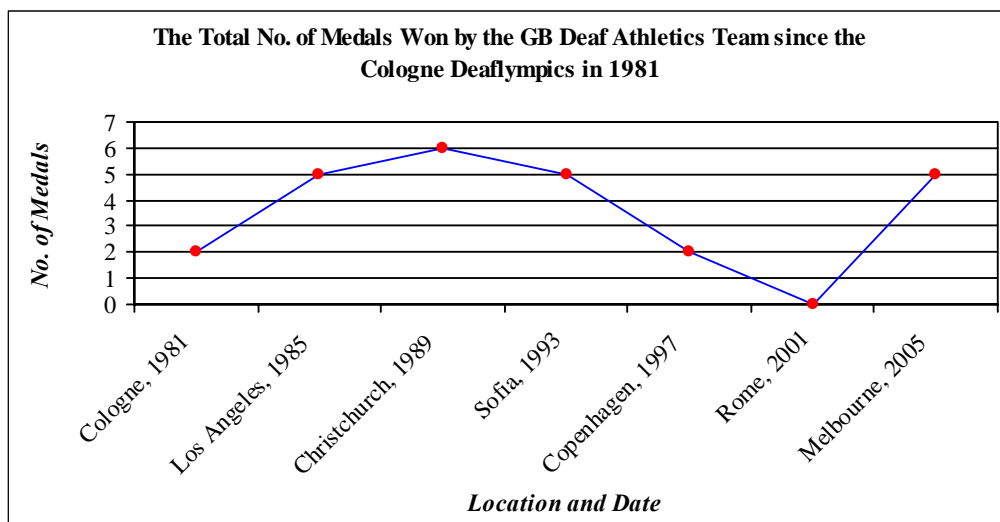
The following GB Athletics Team Medal Table shows how many Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals have been won by athletes since the Cologne Deaflympics, 1981 through to the Melbourne Deaflympics, which were recently held in January 2005. The last column of this Table shows the Total Mean or Average (Total divide by No of Athletes).

Table 3. GB Deaf Athletics Team medal table

GB Deaf Athletics Team Medal Table						
Location and Date	No of Athletes	Medals				
		Bronze	Silver	Gold	Total	Total Mean (2 dp)
Cologne, 1981	6	1	1	0	2	0.33
Los Angeles, 1985	7	1	2	2	5	0.71
Christchurch, 1989	5	1	2	3	6	1.5
Sofia, 1993	11	3	2	0	5	0.5
Copenhagen, 1997	5	0	0	2	2	0.40
Rome, 2001	1	0	0	0	0	0.00
Melbourne, 2005	6	2	1	2	5	0.83
Total	39	8	8	9	23	N/A

From statistically analysing the above table you can see that, on average, over the years the Total Number of Medals won by the GB Deaf Athletics Team has gradually decreased until the Melbourne Deaflympics in January 2005. The Following Line Graph clearly shows this.

Figure 1. Graph showing the total medals won by the GB Deaf Athletics Team since the Cologne Deaflympics in 1981



After disappointing GB Deaf Athletics results from previous Deaflympics in late 2002 Brian Kokoruwe founded Deaf UK Athletics (DUKA) with the sole purpose of trying to improve the state of Deaf Athletics as well as taking on the responsibility of the GB Deaf Athletics Team. Respectively Brian became Director and took the role of Team Manager, Coach, Talent Identification Manager and other roles.

As Figure 1, Graph showing the total medals won by the GB Deaf Athletics Team since the Cologne Deaflympics in 1981 on page 10 shows, the development within this voluntary and not-for-profit organisation has proved worthwhile. From the recent Melbourne Deaflympics the GB Deaf Athletics Team returned home with five medals, which was an improvement on the zero won in the Rome Deaflympics in 2001.

With this great result and that the 2005 Team has the second highest mean (see Figure 1. Graph showing the total medals won by the GB Deaf Athletics Team since the Cologne Deaflympics in 1981 on page 10) the outstanding success of DUKA should grow as well as the improvement within Deaf Athletics. Also the future for the GB Deaf Athletics Team in the Deaflympics in 2009 will be phenomenal...if UK-wide support is provided to the elite deaf athletes as we continue to recruit and encourage grass-roots deaf athletes to progress into internationals.

11. Paralympics –Founding

Dr Ludwig Guttmann (a distinguished neurologist) began to use sport in his work to improve the conditions of his patients. Sport was used as the fundamental component in the rehabilitation of spinal cord injured Second World War veterans at the Stoke Mandeville hospital in Aylesbury, England.

Guttmann, in 1948, set up a competition between sports clubs and other hospitals to coincide with the 1948 Olympics being held in London that year. Since then the Paralympics have developed away from the restricted participation of just the spinally injured to allow many different types of disability to participate.

Now the Summer and Winter Paralympics are the crucial international competitions for disabled world class athletes.

The Summer and Winter Paralympics consist of different sports. See table above.

12. Paralympics – Classifications

This is the method by which athletes are grouped in their sport and events to ensure that they compete fairly against other athletes with a similar degree of disability. This was originally based on medical opinion only but is now evaluated on an athlete's functional ability. In the past,

Paralympic competition has been organised within disability groups, e.g. amputees competing against amputees and spinal cord injured competing against other spinal cord injured - all classified (within their disability groups) according to the severity of their disability.

In Barcelona, athletes from all the locomotors disability groups competed - for the first time - against each other, with classes of competitions based on functional ability rather than clinical disability. The visually impaired will continue to compete separately in three classes:

- 👁️ B1 Blind
- 👁️ B2 Partially Sighted
- 👁️ B3 Visually Impaired

To be considered eligible for the Paralympics, athletes with a learning disability must have medical confirmation that their IQ rating is 75 or less and they too compete only against athletes in their own disability group.

Most competitors will have been classified many times before they even reach a Paralympic venue, and several days are set aside at the beginning of each Paralympics for further classification checks by an international panel of experienced classifiers. These efforts endeavour to create a level playing field.

13. Paralympics - Athletics

During the year of 1960 athletics became a Paralympics sport in Rome. Athletics has more events and competitors than any other sport.

Paralympics – Athletics Events

See Table 2: The Deaflympics, Olympics and Paralympics Athletics fixture compared on page 8

60m sprint was included in the Paralympics for the first time in 1964 in Tokyo. This continued to be the standard racing distance until Toronto, 1976, when 200m, 400m, 800m and 1500m events were introduced.

Paralympics – Athletics Eligibility

Athletics events are open to all athletes in all disability classes but not all events are offered to all disability classes.

Competing athletes, in athletics, with visual impairments are limited to the following disabilities.

- 😊 Amputation
- 😊 Blindness
- 😊 Cerebral Palsy
- 😊 Intellectual
- 😊 Paraplegia
- 😊 Quadriplegia

Athletes, with the following less common disabilities, are not limited to just these disabilities.

- ☺ Combinations of different disabilities
- ☺ Limited joint mobility
- ☺ Polio
- ☺ Progressive Diseases (i.e. Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy)
- ☺ Spina Bifida

Paralympics – Athletics Classification

Athletics is open to all disability groups and uses a functional classification system. A brief classification guide is as follows (prefixing F for field athletes or T for track athletes):

- For T 11-13 have visually impairments
- For T 20 have learning disabilities
- For T 31-38 have cerebral palsy
- For T 41-46 are amputees and les autres
- T 51-54 are wheelchair track athletes
- F 51-58 are wheelchair field athletes

Paralympics – Athletics Rules

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) rules are followed at all IPC authorised athletics' competitions, which include the Paralympics. In athletics athletes are classified into five categories:

- 📄 Amputees
- 📄 Blind and Partially Sighted
- 📄 Cerebral Palsy
- 📄 Intellectual Disability
- 📄 Wheelchair

For some of these categories rule modifications include:

General

- 📄 Weight of throwing implements can be different between classes.
- 📄 No changes are made to the rules for athletes with an intellectual disability.
- 📄 For an event to stay on the athletics program there must be a minimum of 4 countries and 6 athletes.

Amputees

- 📄 Athletes in track events classes 42, 43, 44 athletes must wear prosthesis when competing.
- 📄 Prosthesis is optional in all other classes (class 45 and 46).

Blind and Partially Sighted Athletes

- ❏ Blind runners (class 11) are permitted to run with a guide runner in the 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m. Each athlete is assigned two lanes, one for him/herself and one for their guide runner.
- ❏ In track events further than 400m two guides are allowed. However only one exchange of guide runner is permitted.
- ❏ Blind runners (class 11) are permitted the use of acoustical signals (voice, electronic, clapping, etc) in the 100m, long jump and triple jump. No visual modifications are permitted and spectators must be completely silent when acoustical signals are used.
- ❏ Blind competitors (class 11) must wear approved dark glasses or an appropriate substitute in all field events, and all track events up to and including the 1500m.

Wheelchair Users

- ❏ All wheelchairs must be examined prior to the start of an event to ensure that they comply with the regulations for use of wheelchairs in competition.
- ❏ All wheelchairs are measured in the Marshalling Area to ensure that they comply with these regulations.
- ❏ In addition, the wheelchair may also be examined before the start of the event or at the conclusion of the event.
- ❏ Field competitors who use a wheelchair to throw must “fix” their wheelchair to the throwing circle so that it does not move when throwing.
- ❏ Once their wheelchair is “fixed” in place the athlete is entitled to three consecutive throws with an appropriate amount of time allotted between throws.

More information on the rules of athletics is available on International Paralympic Committee website (www.paralympics.org.uk).

14. Paralympics – Why Deaf are not Included

For the deaf to be eligible to compete in the Paralympics, the deaf have to have an additional disability. As quoted, on 17th March 2005, Pippa Del Nervo, Chief Executive, IPA.

“The deaf are not eligible for Paralympics participation unless they have an additional physical or visual impairment.

If you do have anyone eligible they would have to be nominated to us by UK Athletics. You cannot just enter the Paralympics Games.”

This brings us back, page 4, Section 5. WCPP – Membership, where it explains that deaf are not part of UK:A’s infrastructure and the reasons why.

The other main reason is that the deaf do not feel safe and secure when competing in the Paralympics but feel more at home in the Deaflympics. The next section will give you an insight into why and the reasons for this.

15. Current GB Deaf Athletes' Views

Joanne Davison, DUKA's World Deaf Hammer Record Holder and currently Deaflympics Hammer Gold Medallist told DUKA "My first Deaflympics experience was fantastic. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of mixing with other deaf/hearing impaired athletes from all over the world and winning gold medal in my debut Deaflympics was fantastic. I have been asked many times if I would rather have competed in the Paralympics or Deaflympics? My answer would be 'I like the atmosphere of the Deaflympics, communicating with other deaf people. But the Paralympics currently have more publicity, more funding, more opportunities and better assistance in terms of funding and training opportunities, so I would like to participate in the Paralympics as well, but it is not up to me. As World Record Holder for the Hammer and Deaflympics Champion, I should certainly be automatically included in the UK Athletics World Class Performance Plan, but because my only disability is my hearing impairment, I am not included. This is a huge drawback not just for me, but for ALL deaf sports men and women and I hope that DCMS will set up the process whereby UK Sport will assist UK Athletics in opening up the door for hearing impaired athletes to be part of the WCPP."

Lauren Peffers, GB double's Junior World Record Holder and the current Deaflympics, European outdoor and indoor 800m champion and Scottish under 17 800m and 1,500m champion; "I really enjoyed the my first Deaflympics. The atmosphere was superb. Its as big as the Olympics and Paralympics. If I had the chance to compete in the Paralympics, I certainly would not turn that down, but its I really like the environment of the Deaflympics where I can communicate with other athletes in sign language and the officials have deaf awareness training, as a result, I feel really relaxed amongst deaf athletes and officials"

DUKA Director, Brian Kokoruwe, thoroughly supports Joanne's comments and further added "The views of our athletes shows that deaf athletes do not have an issue regarding their participation in the Paralympics, however they do not have the power to make their decision even though their standard very well meets the selection standard set by IPC. Unfortunately, they are sadly excluded from the Paralympics through no fault of theirs and consequently they are penalised by exclusion from the WCPP. Whilst it is understandably that plans have been made 'ages ago and for a couple of years' the need to provide a tailored plan to meet the current requirement of deaf sports people need to be discussed and actioned by DCMS. The next Deaflympics is less than four years away in 2009. Unless adequate provisions are immediately put in place, the performance of the British team is likely to be very bleak"

16. Deaflympics Press coverage by the host - Australia

DeaflympicsTV Bring in a Staggering 1.1 Million Viewers Within 12 Days during the Games

Frederick, MD (February 28, 2005) - The recent Deaflympics Games, held in Melbourne, Australia, brought in a staggering 1.1 million viewers who watched DeaflympicsTV, witnessing actual footage from the Games.

"We've seen such a major change over the past ten years. For the 19th Deaflympics Games, most people relied on pictures and text-based stories to keep updated with the game results," said Joel Barish, DeafNation CEO. "This time around, however, for the 20th Deaflympics Games, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of individuals choosing to view the actual footage from the Games." DeafNation is the DEAFLYMPICS' premier provider of media coverage, utilizing videostreaming technology.

"Providing this wonderful technology is a two-fold accomplishment," said Tiffany Granfors, executive director of DEAFLYMPICS. "With the availability of DeaflympicsTV, we are able to keep our athletes' family, friends, and supporters in touch on a daily basis from anywhere in the world. The second benefit is that this gives the DEAFLYMPICS enhanced exposure in the community. It also brings us up to par with other athletic organizations in media coverage, which contributes to increased awareness of deaf people's abilities."

"Using this form of media coverage is really key," Granfors added, "because it keeps the deaf community connected especially during major events like the DEAFLYMPICS. But it's also especially important for the younger viewers who may someday themselves be DEAFLYMPICS athletes. This is a fantastic way to bring today's role models to them."



17. Deaflympics Time-line

Time-line

2005

The 20th Deaflympic Summer Games held in Melbourne, Australia, in January, 2005, included over 3,000 athletes and officials from 75 countries.

2004

94 countries in CISS/Deaflympics.

2001

Received official recognition from International Olympic Committee for the new name of our Games - DEAFLYMPICS.

1999

Celebrated 75th Anniversary.

1988-1993

CISS successfully resists a move towards the incorporation of the World Games into the Paralympics. In recognition of the unique communication requirements of deaf athletes, the prohibitive costs of providing translators, the inability to accommodate the growing numbers of deaf competitors, and for a number of other reasons, CISS withdraws from the International Paralympics Committee, but retains IOC recognition and support.

1981

World Games (in Cologne, Germany), attended for the first time by an IOC President, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch. English adopted as sole language of correspondence, although the title, Comité International des Sports des Sourds, was retained in remembrance of the organization's origin.

Doping tests introduced at games.

1974

Fiftieth anniversary celebrations in Paris. CISS Museum opened in Rome.

1967

International Silent Games renamed World Silent Games to recognize their world-wide nature.

1966

CISS awarded the Olympic Cup by the International Olympic Committee for its services to sports.

1965

International Silent Games held outside of Europe for the first time, in Washington DC, the United States.

1955

International Olympic Committee recognizes CISS as an “International Federation with Olympic Standing”

1949

First Winter Games (held in Seefeld, Austria)

1939

264 athletes from 13 countries participate and Swedish prince Gustav-Adolf becomes first royal representative to attend games (held in Stockholm)

1935

The United States joins CISS as first non-European member

October, 1926

CISS statutes adopted, Brussels, Belgium

August, 1924

First International Silent Games, Paris. Deaf sporting leaders from France, Belgium, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia form CISS.

18. Deaflympics and Paralympics Pact

30 November 2004

For Immediate Release

Contact: Donalda Ammons

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Pact brings together two disabled sports organizations

Signing at Gallaudet marks partnership between DEAFLYMPICS, International Paralympic Committee

Washington, DC-Officials from the DEAFLYMPICS and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in hopes of creating a collaborative landscape in international competition.

The ceremony, held on the campus of Gallaudet University, marks a landmark agreement between two of the leading organizations in multi-disability athletics.

DEAFLYMPICS oversees of the Deaflympic Summer and Winter Games and the Deaf World Championships, while the IPC governs the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games and the multi-disability World Championships.

Thanks to this pact, deaf athletes with additional disabilities will be able to participate in various IPC events. Conversely, multi-disabled Paralympic athletes with at least 55 dB hearing loss in the better ear will be able to compete in the Deaflympic Games and the Deaf World Championships.

The agreement will provide the National Olympic Committees and the National Paralympic Committees with better awareness and understanding of DEAFLYMPICS and Paralympics as two separate organizations that manage their own quadrennial event - Deaflympic Games and Paralympic Games respectively.

Other stipulations of the MOU include:

- To mutually recognize and respect the autonomy of their organizations
- To cooperate in informing sports authorities of the international structures of both organizations.
- To cooperate in addressing conflicts between the affiliated organizations.

The first Deaflympic Games, known then as the International Silent Games, took place in 1924 in Paris. The first Paralympic Games took place in 1948 as a companion piece to the 1948 Summer Olympic Games in London. Paralympic events were geared toward World War II veterans with spinal cord injuries.

“This agreement illustrates our commitment to working together in sync,” Dr. Donald Ammons, interim president of Deaflympics, said. “It will ensure that these athletes have a global stage to display their sporting spirit and dedication.”

19. Conclusions

Having reviewed briefly the WCPP, the Deaflympics, Olympics and Paralympics, the major problem identified that could hinder deaf athletes' progress at the elite level is the lack of inclusion of deaf athletics within UK:A's infrastructure. For this reason, UK:A willingness to 'do more' for deaf athletes is based upon its willingness, charitable, goodwill gesture and the need to provide equality for all. This is also a good practice under the Disability Discrimination Act. These in itself whilst positive to deaf athletics in present circumstances, does not fully contain the needs that deaf athletes require to make further progress in World Class athletics performances. There is the fear factor that is playing on all deaf athletes' mind that due to unofficial support to deaf athletes by UK Athletics, the current positive developments could seize for not apparent reason and deaf athletics would return to square one where we had to run around looking for kit for competitions a few days before the championships. Until these

Barriers to Participation are sorted out and the restrictions placed on UK:A's budget are lifted, the possible participation and existence of GB Deaf Athletics team in world stage would remain unstable as it will all depend on the ability of individuals to self-fund for the privilege of representing GB and even equally vital is the ability and willingness of volunteers to continue to sacrifice their social, domestic and business activities for the privilege of providing services to GB deaf athletes.

The Deaflympics provide the HI with comfortable, friendly and familiar surroundings where they do not feel isolated yet at the same giving them the experience of competing and the opportunity to socialise as well as having enjoyment and fun. Their participation in the Deaflympics, as with those participating in the Olympics and Paralympics bring several rewards and publicity to the country.

The Olympics has become a massive event to host in time scale. Jointly hosting the Olympics, Paralympics and the Deaflympics will create a 'monster' event that is likely to take over a month to host.

Through the individual efforts of the deaf athletics team members, they have collectively brought a total of 59 (12 women and 47 men) medals to the British Deaf Athletics Team since the 1924 'Deaflympics' started. These are vital statistics that deserve to be recognized and receive support from all sections of the British public for working so hard to reach the stage of representing GB and with the huge bonus of proudly bestowing honours to Great Britain through winning medals and breaking World and European records which ensures that the British flag is proudly raised aloft nearly 60 times since the start of the Deaflympics, singing aloud and signing clearly "God save the Queen...."

20. Recommendations

It is a good thing to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Creating strong pool of grass-roots athletes can only succeed if these athletes see clearly that there is a well supported and happy elite athletes at the end of the grass-roots tunnel. Up and coming athletes need to see deaf athletes in the WCPP to encourage them to keep with the sport and see a future in it. Thus the key recommendation is that DCMS need to explore the opportunities of setting up funding avenue until that time when it becomes possibly to review the already established UK Sport plans for sports in the UK. There is already a pact that clearly sets out the need to have the Deaflympics, Paralympics and Olympics independently. Elite competitors in these Games should therefore be bestowed equality where government support is concerned. Other key additional recommendations are the need to provide additional funding to UK:A so that UK:A can include deaf athletics in its infrastructure, provide full support to elite deaf athletes and for the Ministers to be made aware of the need to include Deaflympics representative in UK Sport Management Panel. These will ensure a fully inclusive panel that benefit and bring joys to all participants, irrespective of disability!

21. Resources

A Review of the Melbourne 2005 Deaflympics Athletics by Brian Kokoruwe

BBC2 SeeHear Deaflympics Special

Compact Oxford English Dictionary of Current English Third Edition
(Publication Date 23 June 2005)

Deaf Athletes (Quotes)

Member of Paralympics Organisation (Quote)

WFD News December 2004

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