


**Von:** Christoph Ettlstorfer <christoph.ettlstorfer@jku.at>  
**Betreff:** sports for athletes with severe disability  
**Datum:** 14. Jänner 2008 12:24:27 GMT+01:00  
**An:** Philip Craven <philip.craven@paralympic.org>  
**Kopie:** <tonyyorke@btinternet.com>, "Alfred kaiblinger" <kaitri@inode.at>, "David Grevemberg" <david.grevemberg@paralympic.org>, <lbarbeau@fqsc.net>

 1 Anhang, 4,3 MB



Dear Sir Philip Craven!

About half a year ago I send some emails concerning the cancelation of events at paralympics for athletes with severe disability. I also sent emails to Louis Barbeau who spent some time to answer my mails which I appreciate very much. But since this issue does not only concern cycling I come back to you. I will focus on handcycling and track for wheelchair athletes since I know this best but it also concerns other sports and disabilities.

At recent paralympics events for T51 athletes in track events of athletics were deleted. For Beijing there were some events for T52s canceled. In handcycling there was never a class similar to T51s at IPC worldchampionships and paralympics although there were 7 athletes of this category at the worldchampionships of the world handcycling federation WHF in Italy. For division A2 (division A for IPC/UCI) there were 15 athletes at those events. For some reason there were only six at the UCI worldchampionship 2007 in Bordeaux.

For Beijing there will be only one event instead of two. So it is very likely that countrys will send LC racers or para handcyclists (division B and C) since those racers have at least two events. Louis Barbeau told me that countrys would send athletes of division A since those have a better chance to win a medal because of the small field. This was obviously not the case in Bordeaux and so there is no reason to expect that for Beijing. So it is very likely that this event will be canceled, and then there is no quad event for handcycling anymore at paralympics.

It is very disappointing that an organisation which claims to organize sport for disabled athletes deletes events for athletes with severe disability instead of supporting those. Race organizers of able bodied events have classes for those athletes, but there is no place for them at paralympics.

So I ask you to stop this development and support sports for athletes with severe disability again like IPC did with the brochure some years ago. Also people with severe disability need role models for picking up sport for their health. If a quad only sees paras in sports he will never believe that he also can exercise, not necessarily for competing but at least for health and mastering every day life.

Sincerely

Dr. Christoph Ettlstorfer

[www.ettlstorfer.com](http://www.ettlstorfer.com)



[ipc\\_brochure.pdf \(4,3 MB\)](#)

Am 01.06.2007 um 12:56 schrieb Philip Craven:

Christoph,

Firstly, apologies for this relatively late reply. I have been checking on the facts and confirm to you that a far more detailed explanation of the situation will be sent to you by David Grevemberg, IPC Sports Director in the next few days. I am also aware that you have been in contact with Louis Barbeau of UCI on this issue.

I can understand your concern and your decision to write to me as an athlete. I encourage this approach when you believe things are wrong. I hope the detailed explanation that will be sent to you will confirm that every avenue has been explored in order to arrive at the Paracycling programme in Beijing that will be fairest for all competing cyclists.

Best regards.

Philip Craven

Sir Philip Craven MBE  
President

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Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games: 6-17 September 2008

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From: Christoph Etzlstorfer [<mailto:christoph.etslstorfer@jku.at>]  
Sent: Fri 25/05/2007 10:31  
To: Philip Craven  
Cc: [tonyvorke@btinternet.com](mailto:tonyvorke@btinternet.com); Alfred kaiblinger  
Subject: handcycling for athletes with severe disability

Dear Sir Phil Mc Craven!

I am sending this email to you as president of IPC. Actually I have sent it several weeks ago (April 17th) but either my email or your reply got lost, so I am going to send it again. If you already replied, could you please resend that email.

I have been an athlete in wheelchair sports (track and field, handcycling, wheelchair rugby) for the last 25 years and I competed in six paralympic games and won medals there. In that span of time I witnessed several changes in classification. Usually these changes were good and in the interest of the sport and the athletes. Several times it affected the chances of the severe disabled athletes since their classes were deleted or not even installed as necessary as in handcycling (there is only one instead of two).

So I considered it a great idea when the IPC introduced a campaign to support sports for severe disabled athletes. There was even made a brochure, and I had the honor to be one of the testimonials there. You probably know that brochure, and you can find it attached to this email.

But what is the reality? The reality is that for the Paralympics in Beijing again several classes for severe disabled athletes were scratched. There are fewer classes in track and field now without any chance for the affected athletes to compete at that level. In Cycling

the Cycling Committee of the IPC made a proposal that would have secured events for severe disabled athletes and women for handcycling while reducing the number of events. Unfortunately this proposal was ignored and replaced by a regulation that destroys chances of competition for severe disabled athletes for men and women. The second technical delegate for the cycling events for Beijing (Alfred Kaiblinger, an expert for cycling) resigned because of that.

Let me explain the details. In handcycling there are two events, the road race and the time trial. Those events are held for three classes, where HCA is the class for quadriplegics, the most severe disabled athletes. For division HCA there will be only a time trial in Beijing, but no road race. This is especially strange since the athletes will be there for the time trial, and the course for the road race has to be there for the other classes. Even if the slots for HCA are allocated by the ring fenced system it is only one event. But what will very likely happen with only one event? NPCs will send athletes for HCB and HCC, the less disabled athletes, since those have two events. They will hardly send athletes of HCA for only one event. So this one is in jeopardy of getting deleted from the program of Beijing and, as far as I can judge from experience, never again be held at Paralympics. This would be for a sport that is rapidly growing and attracting more athletes every year. And to give you an idea about the performances in that class I tell you that the average speeds for races are at about 30 km/h, that converts to 19 mph.

This is only one issue from handcycling. There are others too for other sports but handcycling I know best. So I ask you to do everything possible to prevent this development since it means that only athletes who were lucky enough not to contract a severe disability are able to compete at the highest level. This would further mean that there are not role models anymore for persons who recently contracted severe disability who would never believe that they also can go in for sports, neither for competition nor for recreation and health.

Sincerely yours

Dr. Christoph Ettlstorfer

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