

BPA HISTORY

The 1988 Paralympic Games in Seoul proved to be a catalyst for change. An ad hoc multi-disability committee organised Britain's participation in these games but it was later decided that a more permanent structure was needed to undertake such a vast organisational task.

Representatives of the seven national disability sports organizations (NDSO's) each gave £250 of their own money to set up the British Paralympic Association as a company limited by guarantee in March 1989. In August 1989 the Minister for Sport's Review Group on Sport for People with Disabilities published its findings, proposing that BPA take on a wider international and elite sport role. Charity registration followed in November 1989. Sports Council backing – with a £4000 set up grant and annual funding of £25000 for four years – gave a financial starting point, and in September 1989 BPA's first office was opened in Bromley, manned by General Secretary, Barry Schofield, and just one staff member. British Telecom sponsored the office and seconded the staff member, and as BPA expanded, BT continued to sponsor office space, moving the team to Croydon when their Bromley HQ closed.

BPA Structure

The National Paralympic Committee is comprised of NGB's, NDSO's, Disability Sports Specific and Home Country Sports organisations. They debate and recommend policy to the General Purposes Committee, the quadrennially elected Trustees/Directors who plan, refine and implement policies and future strategy for BPA.

Over the next four years the BPA hired its office team and with the help of personal donations, such as the £250,000 covenanted by businessman Peter Beckwith and ongoing sponsorship from corporate backers such as BT, Royal Mail and Racal it raised in excess of £1 million. For the first six years of its existence, an annual conference open to athletes, administrators and coaches took place as part of the democratic process of consulting with as wide a variety of parties as possible, but this forum was eventually discontinued as limited unrestricted funding meant that BPA could no longer afford to host them.

During this period BPA also worked closely with BOA to develop selection standards and Games working practices. Within a short space of time it became recognised by the UK government, IPC and the European Commission as representing the interests of athletes at Paralympic level. Its membership grew to encompass National Governing Bodies of Sport, National Disability Sports Organisations, Disability specific sports and Home Country sports organisations.

The Winter Paralympic Games in Tignes and the Summer Paralympic Games in Barcelona 1992 were the first Games fully coordinated by BPA and initial funding for elite training programmes was provided via the BPA from a variety of sources including the Paralympic Trust (set up with a grant of £500,000 from the UK Government and

administered by BPA), the Sports Council, the Foundation for Sport and the Art and Corporate Sponsors.

Inevitably perhaps, there have been some areas of conflict between those who wished to drive the Association in a new and totally sports specific direction and those who felt that the bedrock should remain within the already established network of disability organisations. As in all things a marriage of the two proved the best route to progress. The need for integration with the national governing bodies of sport in order to attract lottery funding proved somewhat of a catalyst in the situation.

On the International scene BPA quickly became recognised by the International Paralympic Committee as the contact address for disability sport in this country and began to voice its opinions. For the BPA to become the sole representative of Britain on the IPC however, proved a slower and more contentious process which is now handled by an international committee of BPA.

With success and recognition from UK Government and the media, came increased demands on the BPA to raise even more money to support athlete's preparation for Atlanta in 1996 and Nagano in 1998.

British Paralympians again rose to the challenge in 1996, despite the grueling Atlanta Conditions, winning 122 medals, but the decline of Great Britain in the Olympic arena a few weeks earlier had already prompted calls for a new, and strategic approach to elite sport. Thus in 1997 the lottery funded World Class performance Programme with the sole purpose of winning medals on the world stage.

Direct lottery funding for BPA meant the appointment of a Sports Technical Director to assist individual sports with their world class performance plans, to liaise with sports councils and governing bodies and to lay the foundations for integration into mainstream sport for Paralympic athletes. By the time the Games took place in Sydney, 16 of the 18 summer Paralympic sports were in receipt of lottery funding.

It was expected that this funding would have more impact for Athens 2004 than Sydney but in the event British Paralympians exceeded even their own expectations finishing second in the medal table with an outstanding total of 131 medals, and second only to host country Australia.

Performance Services

Over the past 13 years BPA's role in the provision of support services and extended training opportunities to elite athletes has grown immensely. The provision of lottery funding to the majority of Paralympic sports has allowed BPA to develop Performance Services to enhance and assist squad's own programmes. This has also permitted them to concentrate fully on its remit of funding and coordinating Games preparation and participation.

In 1997, the post of General Secretary to the Association passed from Barry Schofield to Jane Swan but on her departure to UK Sport early in 2001 the position was changed to Chief Executive with a new incumbent, Philip Lane at the helm. A new style of leadership but still with the intention of keeping Great Britain at the forefront of Paralympic success.

GB RESULTS AT THE GAMES

Seoul 1988 Medal Table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Position
USA	92	91	85	268	1
GERMANY (FRG)	77	64	48	189	2
GREAT BRITAIN	62	66	51	179	3
CANADA	54	42	57	153	4
FRANCE	45	48	49	142	5
SWEDEN	42	38	22	102	6
KOREA	40	35	19	94	7
HOLLAND	30	23	29	82	8
DENMARK	25	18	22	65	9
AUSTRALIA	23	34	37	94	10

Barcelona 1992 Medal Table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Position
USA	76	52	48	176	1
GERMANY	61	50	60	171	2
GREAT BRITAIN	40	47	41	128	3
FRANCE	36	36	33	105	4
SPAIN	34	31	42	107	5
CANADA	28	21	26	75	6
AUSTRALIA	24	27	25	76	7
UNIFIED TEAM	17	14	15	46	8
HOLLAND	13	15	11	39	9
NORWAY	13	13	7	33	10

Atlanta 1996 Medal Table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Position
USA	46	46	65	157	1
AUSTRALIA	42	37	27	106	2
GERMANY	40	58	51	149	3

GREAT BRITAIN	39	42	41	122	4
SPAIN	39	31	36	106	5
FRANCE	35	29	31	95	6
CANADA	24	21	24	95	7
HOLLAND	17	11	17	45	8
CHINA	16	13	10	39	9
JAPAN	14	10	12	36	10

Atlanta 1996 GB medals by sport

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
ARCHERY	0	1	1	2
ATHLETICS	12	14	16	42
BASKETBALL	0	1	0	1
BOCCIA	0	1	0	1
LAWN BOWLS	6	3	2	11
EQUESTRIAN	3	3	2	8
JUDO	1	0	2	3
POWERLIFTING	0	0	1	1
SHOOTING	1	1	0	2
SWIMMING	16	17	15	48
TABLE TENNIS	0	1	2	3

Sydney 2000 Medal Table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Position
AUSTRALIA	63	39	47	149	1
GREAT BRITAIN	41	43	47	131	2
SPAIN	39	30	38	107	3
CANADA	38	33	25	96	4
USA	36	39	34	109	5
CHINA	34	22	16	72	6
FRANCE	30	28	28	86	7
POLAND	19	22	12	53	8
KOREA	18	7	7	32	9
GERMANY	15	42	38	95	10

Sydney 2000 GB medals by sport

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
ARCHERY	1	2	0	3
ATHLETICS	16	14	18	48
BOCCIA	1	0	0	1
CYCLING	0	2	0	2
EQUESTRIAN	5	0	2	7
JUDO	0	0	1	1

POWERLIFTING	2	0	1	3
SHOOTING	1	0	1	2
SWIMMING	15	24	23	62
TABLE TENNIS	0	1	1	2

Tignes/Albertville 1992 GB Medallists - Richard Burt won 1 silver and 1 bronze medal in alpine. Matthew Stockford won 3 bronze medals.

Lillehammer 1994 GB medallists - In alpine, Richard Burt won 2 bronze, James Barker won 1 bronze, Matthew Stockford won 1 bronze and in cross country, Peter Young won 1 bronze medal.

Nagano 1998 - Great Britain won no medals at these Winter Games.

Salt Lake City 2002 - Great Britain won no medals at these Winter Games