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Evolution of the IOC and IPC Strategic Alliance

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As the two most world-renowned multi-sport Games evolve and flourish with time, it is their contractual obligation that continues to keep them separate from one another. This paper examines the evolution of the strategic alliance between the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and International Olympic Committee (IOC) in relation to the marketing and branding agreements. Further, we examine how the IPC and the IOC's strategic alliance have evolved. In relation to this alliance, we analyze marketing and branding agreements between the IPC and IOC. These agreements regulate the sharing of resources, broadcasting and the goals of the organizations (IPC, 2012). We will draw upon the concept by Child & Faulkner of strategic alliances to examine the institutional structure, the power of control in these joint agreements. In addition we will look at Parkhe (1993), who described strategic alliances as a joint endeavor "involving flows and linkages that use resources and/or governance structures from autonomous organizations" to achieve their goals (p. 794). Furthermore, we will be noting the future implications for these Games and how these agreements influence future directions.

Pierre de Coubertin founded the modern Olympic Games in 1894. He modernized sport contests where amateur athletes had a chance to prove their skills and gain success on a large scale (IOC International, 2012). With recognition of the how large these Games could be, Coubertin also formulated the IOC that set rules and boundaries for the Olympic Games (IOC International, 2012). He envisioned the Games as a beautiful portrayal of able-bodied athletes showcased to the world as models of perfection ("History and Use"). Almost forty years later, Sir Ludwig Guttman had similar interests in mind, but to a different degree. Guttman founded the National Spinal Injuries Centre at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Great Britain in the year of 1944 (Howe, 2008). Guttman envisioned a society where athletes with disabilities could play and use sport as a form of recreation. In 1948, he founded the first international wheelchair games called the "International Stoke Mandeville Games" allowing individuals with spinal cord injuries to compete (Legg et al., 2004, p.33). This title remained until 1960. With the increase in participants and popularity the event took on a new name known as the Paralympic Games ("History", 2009).

The Olympics and Paralympics had never formerly taken place in the same city prior to 1988 in Seoul, Korea (Legg et al., 2004, p.34). As well, there had never been a winter aspect of the Paralympics until 1976 in Sweden (Mason, 2012, p.114). With the Paralympics receiving new success and recognition, according to an increase in participants from numerous countries, it was impossible not to recognize their potential. In 1983, the former IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, decided it would be best for the IOC to become more involved and connect itself with the "disabled sport movement (Legg et al., 2004, p.35). Relations between the IOC and IPC did not arise smoothly. In fact, the only way the Paralympics could officially use the word "lympics" was if they aligned themselves with the IOC ("History and Use"). This was a tool the IOC used to look equal and accepting to everyone. Through the control employed by the IOC, they were able to have the hierarchical say in what IPC was allowed to do. The signing of the first official agreement between the two bodies was only as of 2000 (Mason, 2012, p.113). This new contract allowed for closer working relations and gave the Paralympics more funding, media attention, sponsorship and an overall "boost [to] their public image" (Mason, 2002, p.117).

As noted, throughout this research, the theory of strategic alliances will be examined. Strategic alliance is "the partnership between two organizations formed in response to an essential opportunity or a threat in the environment" (Child & Faulkner, 1998, p.134). In this instance, the IOC acted in response to the growth of the Paralympics and seized the opportunity to associate itself with this organization. By linking up these two joint movements, we explore what has changed socially, structurally and culturally within these institutions. In order to address these issues, we must examine the bid books and guidelines, IOC meeting minutes, IPC handbook, IPC strategic plans and annual reports. This method of literature review will be used to critically analyze what has been noted in the agreements. It will also help discover what has been left out of the literature and future implications for strategic alliances between the movements.

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This paper will focus on the institutional changes that have been made in the contract agreements since 2000 and why. Additionally, we examine the limitations that are set over the Paralympics and what their new strategic plan will be after 2014 when it is said to change. In accordance to their alliance evolution, we will discuss what differentiates their structural alliance from their cultural alliance by examining the first agreements until present day. This allows us to further examine the power relations between the two movements and how their goals vary. It will be noted how power and politics come into play when stating how the IOC exercise their rules over the IPC. A question to be noted is that if the Olympics truly want "Sport For All", will they keep the Games parallel or plan ahead for full inclusion (Mason, 2002, p.115). Since 1904 there have been certain athletes with disabilities who have competed in the Olympics (Legg et al., 2010, p.21). This depicts that there has been a slow progression in the process of inclusion. By understanding the power differentials in the institutional structures, it will mirror the ways in which Paralympic Athletes are underrepresented in the media, marketing contracts and broadcasting rights. This research will lead us to understand how the evolving alliances and agreements between the movements impact their outcomes internally to the athletes and externally to the public.

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