PARALYMPIANS COMPETING IN THE OLYMPIC GAMES AND THE POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PARALYMPIC GAMES

ATLETAS PARALÍMPICOS QUE COMPETIEM NOS JOGOS OLÍMPICOS E AS IMPLICAÇÕES POTENCIAIS PARA OS JOGOS PARALÍMPICOS

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Abstract. The 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, held in Rio de Janeiro, reignited public interest and discussion around Paralympic athletes attempting to qualify for, and compete at, the Olympic Games. That Paralympians have sought to compete at the Olympic Games is, however, not new. This paper looks at the largely unrecognised and often underreported history of Paralympians competing at the Olympic Games and addresses why it is that Paralympians may wish to compete at the Olympic Games. To do this we use historical examples, but also look at the contemporary cases of 3 such athletes: Jason Smyth, Alan Fonteles Cardoso and Markus Rehm. The paper also explores whether or not with advances in medical and prosthetic technologies, as well as potentially increased income and funding, we can expect to see more Paralympians attempting to crossover and compete in the Olympic Games in the future. The methodology used is one of qualitative case studies. The research question was: "What can be learned from the media coverage of Smyth, Oliveira and Rehm's attempts to qualify for the Olympic Games?" We identify the type of editorial (political, social, cultural, sportive, educational, economic or gossip column); whether or not pictures were used (type of approach - sportive, personal or disability) and the narrative interpretations. We argue that how newspapers choose to report on the aims of Paralympians wishing to compete in the Olympics and the level of coverage that they receive it important. This level of depth of coverage suggests both positive and negative implications for the Paralympic Games, should this trend of athletes wishing to crossover continue.

Keywords: paralympic games; paralympians; disability; sport.

Resumo. Os Jogos Olímpicos e Paralímpicos de 2016 realizados no Rio de Janeiro, reencararam o interesse público e levaram a tona a discussão em torno dos atletas paralímpicos que buscam se qualificar e competir para os Jogos Olímpicos. O assunto não é novidade no que se trata do interesse de atletas paralímpicos em competir nos Jogos Olímpicos. Este artigo olha com profundidade na discussão e evidências históricas com base em reportagens jornalísticas dos atletas paralímpicos que queriam competir nos Jogos Olímpicos Rio 2016 e apresenta outros casos de paralímpicos ao longo da história que fizeram parte dos Jogos Olímpicos. Foram avaliados os casos dos atletas Paralímpicos: Jason Smyth, Alan Fonteles Cardoso e Markus Rehm. A metodologia utilizada neste artigo é uma análise qualitativa dos casos tratados pela mídia brasileira a respeito dos atletas. A questão da pesquisa foi: "o que pode ser aprendido com a cobertura da mídia nas tentativas de Smyth, Oliveira e Rehm para se qualificar para os Jogos Olímpicos?". Identificamos o tipo de coluna editorial (política, social, cultural, esportiva, educacional, econômica e fofoca). Foram observadas também as imagens usadas e o tipo de abordagem sobre a fotografia apresentada, qualificando-as como foco: esportivo, pessoal ou sobre a deficiência - e, realizou-se uma leitura das interpretações narrativas de acordo com a importância dada. Como conclusão, entedeu-se que esse nível de profundidade de cobertura, sugere implicações tanto positivas quanto negativas para os Jogos paraolímpicos, quando tende-se a colocar os Jogos Olímpicos em evidência mediante aos atletas.

Palavras-chave: jogos paraolímpicos; pessoas com deficiências; jogos olímpicos.

INTRODUCTION

The revival of the Olympic Games formally began in 1894. Prior to this the establishment of physical education as an independent lesson in the education system and an interest in Ancient Greece were elements that supported the revival of the Olympic Games in the late nineteenth century (Koulouri, 2006). At this time though, the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport was not a topic that received any serious attention.

The 20th century presented great improvements in attitudes to disability in sport. National and international sport federations emerged focused on generalized types of disabilities '(e.g., deaf and hearing impaired, blind and visually impaired) to mobility disabilities (e.g., spinal injury, amputees, and neurological related disabilities) to intellectual disabilities' (Fay and Wolff, 2009). Meantime, the first competition created exclusively for deaf people, the International Silent Games held in Paris 1924 represented the opportunity to increase the coverage and conversation around sport and disabilities (Depauw and Gavron, 2009).

At the end of the World War Two, a rehabilitation programme involving sport was the ideal treatment promoted by Ludwig Guttmann in the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in the UK. 'In essence, Guttmann believed that sport was a pathway that might help even severely disabled people to live a healthier, happier life, to gain confidence and self-esteem and to achieve a degree of independence' (Gold and Gold, 2007, p.134). Therefore, the Paralympic Games trace their origins to the creation of the Stoke Mandeville Games that acquired an international dimension (Gold and Gold, 2007; Brittain, 2012).

The Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games attracts thousands of people, sponsors, athletes. However, the main difference between the two events is the level of the coverage by the media, which impacts directly to the exclusion and stereotyping (Hardin, 2007). The lack of coverage of the Paralympics and Paralympians has been identified in mainstream channels and media. Lack of coverage of sports events with disabled participants often means that sports fans are unaware of or not interested in these events (DePauw, 1997). In this sense, based on the pursuit of fame and sponsorship income, Paralympian athletes may be motivated to compete in the Olympic Games. Therefore, the aim of this study was to identify the degree to which Brazilian media covered the case study Paralympians wishing to compete in the Olympics. This will give a contemporary grasp of the implications of such attempts and the likelihood of the trend growing.

THE HISTORY OF PARALYMPIANS AT THE OLYMPICS

Cases of athletes with disabilities competing at the Olympic Games are not unusual. Looking through the history of athletes with disabilities, it is possible to see that they started competing in a very wide range of sporting events, such as gymnastics, equestrian, archery, fencing, water polo, athletics and so many others (Brittain, 2014). The first achievement of an amputee athlete competing with non-disabled people was in 1904 Summer Olympics. The German-American George Eyser impressed the public with his performance in gymnastics where he won three gold medals, two silvers and one bronze in a single day (Mataruna, 2006). However, Eyser was not the only athlete that competed using a leg prosthesis. From the St. Louis Games in 1904 up to the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games, 28 disabled athletes have competed in the Olympic Games. These are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Athletes with disabilities that competed in the Olympic Games.

Name	Olympic games	Paralympic games
George Eyser (USA)	1904- St Louis	---
Donald Gollan (GBR)	1928 Amsterdam	---
Carlo Orlandi (ITA)	1928 Amsterdam	---
	1928-Amsterdam	---
Olivér Halassy (HUN)	1932 - Los Angeles	---
	1948 London	---
	1952 Helsinki	---
Károly Takács (HUN)	1956 Melbourne	---
	1952 Helsinki	---
Lis Hartel (DEN)	1956 Melbourne	---
	1956 Melbourne	---
	1960 Rome	---
	1964 Tokyo	---
Harold V. Connolly (USA)	1968 Mexico	---
		1980 Arnhem
		1988 Seoul
Neroli Fairhall (NZL)	1984 Los Angeles	2000 Sydney

		1984 NY / Stoke Mandeville
Sonja Vettenburg (BEL)	1992 Barcelona	1988 Seoul
		1988 Seoul
		1992 Barcelona
		1996 Atlanta
		2000 Sydney
Paola Fantato (ITA)	1996 Atlanta	2004 Athens
	2000 Sydney	1992 Barcelona
Marla Runyan (USA)	2004 Athens	1996 Atlanta
	2008 Beijing	2000 Sydney
		2004 Athens
	2012 London	2008 Beijing
		2012 London
Natalia Partyka (POL)	2016 Rio de Janeiro	2016 Ro de Janeiro
		2004 Athens
		2008 Beijing
Natalie du Toit (RSA)	2008 Beijing	2012 London
		2012 London
Assunta Legnante (ITA)	2008 Beijing	2016 Rio de Janeiro
		2004 Athens
		2008 Beijing
Oscar Pistorius (RSA)	2012 London	2012 London
		1992 Barcelona
		1996 Atlanta
		2000 Sydney
		2004 Athens
		2008 Beijing
Pál Szekeres (HUN)	1988 Seoul	2012 London
	1988 Calgary	2006 Torino
	1992 Aubertiville	2010 Vancouver
Orazio Fagone (ITA)	1994 Lillehammer	---
	1992 Barcelona	
	1996 Atlanta	
Ilke Wyludda (GER)	2000 Sydney	2012 London
	2004 Athens	---
	2008 Beijing	---
Im Dong-Hyun (KOR)	2012 London	---
	1960 Rome	---
	1964 Tokyo	---
	1968 Mexico City	---
	1972 Munich	---
Ildikó Újlaky-Rejtő (HUN)	1976 Montreal	---
	1984 Los Angeles	---
Jeff Float (USA)	2000 Sydney	---
Terence Parkin (RSA)	2004 Athens	---
Frank Bartolillo (AUS)	2004 Athens	---
	2008 Beijing	---
Chris Colwill (USA)	2012 London	---
	2012 London	---
David Smith (USA)	2016 Rio de Janeiro	---
		2012 London
Zahra Nemat (IRI)	2016 Rio de Janeiro	2016 Rio de Janeiro
Melissa Tapper (AUS)	2016 Rio de Janeiro	2016 Rio de Janeiro
Sandra Paović (CRO)	2008 Beijing	2016 Rio de Janeiro

		2012 London
Pepo Puch (AUS)	2004 Athens	2016 Rio de Janeiro

Sources: IOC (2016), IPC (2016), Brittain (2016), Mataruna (2006) and SR OS (2016).

Both sexes have seen athletes with disabilities competing in the Olympic Games. For instance, Lis Hartel, who was the first female rider for an Olympic Equestrian team won the first medal in 1952 despite her disability. After she contracted polio and became entirely paralyzed, her equestrian career served a dual purpose as the focus of her rehabilitation programme and a conduit for her competitive desires. It is, however, worth remembering that even before the discussion about sport for rehabilitation and the creation of the pioneering Stoke Mandeville Games in 1948 that some athletes competed equally in different sports with able-bodied athletes (IOC, 2016).

Oscar Pistorius competed at both the 2012 London Olympic Games and the Paralympic edition the same year and is, perhaps, is the most well-known case of an athlete who achieved the qualification for both Games. He defended the idea of the Olympic Creed shared by USA TEAM (2016), that 'the most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.'

As mentioned Jones and Wilson (2009:126) 'The Pistorius case has attracted plenty of media attention, but has also prompted debate within the academic fields (Edwards, 2008; Van Hilvoorde & Landeweerd, 2008).' Pistorius has double below-the-knee amputations. Despite his disability, he presented a great performance in the 100m, 200m and 400m. The opportunity to participate in both Games increased both the research and debate around a possible unfair advantages that prostheses could bring. Previously, specialist and the public opinion emphasised that certain prosthetics could enhance performance,

> His prosthetics and their ingenious designers and manufacturers are primarily responsible for his athletic ability. Pistorius himself, it could be argued, is simply exploiting the technology to turn moderate ability into athletic excellence. In response to such claims, Edwards (2008) invokes what Loland (2002) called the "natural" lottery issue. Natural predispositions, including one's genotype, may provide the most significant and systematic advantage for an athlete in any given competition (Jones and Wilson, 2009, p.128)

Edwards (2008) argues that Pistorius' prostheses present an advantage because his abilities were produced by the science and technology rather than nature's gifts. According to the author is difficult to conclude if Pistorius has a particular advantage. Although, the science could prove that these athletes may receive some benefits, morally it may be different. Edwards (2008) states that "What is most relevant is his athletic ability, not his physical constitution" (2008, p. 115). Pistorius demonstrated that his abilities can be compared with able-bodied athletes and results indicated his potential to compete in both events. It's clear that the perception about fairness or unfairness is not only about the use of technology but it involves the merits of victory and moral sense in the sport (Carr, 1999). Parallel to this debate, technology is improving every day and we must take into account the possibilities for future innovation that could benefit the prosthesis users (Rojo, 2013). An agreement about what is fair and unfair will benefit the development for the future of rules and conventions in sport.

Dyer (2015) comments, correctly, that changes or the introduction of technology or equipment can affect how a sport is played or influence performance. In his systematic review about the Pistorius case he found the advantages of the technology mentioned by different authors as:

- The use of assistive technology in able-bodied sport.
- Access and parity of sports equipment.
- The introduction of safety equipment in sport.
- 'Re-skilling' a sport through the use of new technology.
- 'De-skilling' a sport through the use of new technology.
- Governing body oversight issues.

The influence of technology here mirrors other facets of human society and, indeed, the same ethical and philosophical concerns have been raised many times before around performance and doping. The challenge here is around how to promote inclusion of disabled athletes in this situation. The athlete uses the technology to compensate for their disability, not to make him better than other athletes. Often too,

participation in sport is consequence of rehabilitation and/or sport programmes with physical, mental and social facets. Social inclusion is a right for all people. 'Inclusion is not a strategy to help people fit into the systems and structures which exist in our societies; it is about transforming those systems and structures to make it better for everyone' (Müller-Schoell, 2015)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the article 1, says that all person born free and has equal in dignity and rights (UN, 1948). In this case the athletes with disabilities or not, if achieve the classification criteria should be free to choose the right to participation or not in the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

> In 1904 Olympics were an example of rights and responsibilities because people who had the ability to compete had the right to participate, athletes had the responsibility to abed by the rules and the St. Louis Olympic Committee had the responsibility to graciously welcome the world (Workman, 2014)

According the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as seen in the article 9, 'to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life (...)'. The countries part of the United Nations agreed 'to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability' (Article 4, UN, 2006). Furthermore, in the case of youth athletes with disabilities that want to attend a regular events designated to able body people, this kind of action goes against the Article 30, incise 5, letter d, where it is possible to find that the countries part of UN should 'to ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities'. Clearly, then this is an issue of rights as well as of sporting principle.

WHY BECOME OLYMPIANS? WHY THIS IS A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE

For Greek and Romans in the Ancient World, sport and spectacle has a strong connection, as evidenced by the fanfare of the Ancient Games (Kyle, 2007: 9-18). The Olympic Games are now the largest, 'regularly scheduled international gathering in the world, and as such they constitute a major political showplace' (Kalbli, Gita, Osvath, 2008). The Games attract many spectators, a massive number of the competitors and the attention of thousands of people around the world that come together to watch these games (Yildiz and Cekic, 2015). However, nowadays, the sport event is a good marketing opportunity for companies and for the athletes. The media covers the event and the athletes are often propelled, to various degrees, to celebrity status (Jones and Schumann, 2000). It is not news that companies invest massively in athlete's celebrity profile through advertising or sponsorship (Koo, Ruihley, Dittmore, 2012). Nonetheless, Paralympic athletes can be motivated to participate in both games as an opportunity to increase their celebrity status, income and employment. Pistorius is a case of a successful athlete that earned a lot of money with advertising and stayed in the spotlight. An athlete's career can be lucrative, however 'the careers of most athletes are relatively short because of injury, age, and relentless competition from other athletes' (Kasper, 2001). According to Haiachi et al. (2016) the sporting career for people with disability in Brazil are filled with obstacles such as low financial support, pressure to obtain financial results, psychological pressures and values that are based on obtaining results at any cost. Lack of investment in the beginning of careers or long-term financial planning for after is common which makes people search for alternate job opportunities and ways to earn money (Kasper, 2001).

> "I am very proud and happy that I will compete at the Olympic Games for a third consecutive time. I hope that this shows all disabled athletes that impossible is nothing (…) I think that it's awesome that the Paralympic athletes are breaking down barriers and getting to participate in the Olympics," (Natalia Partyka, 2016).

In this interview for the Reuters Agency, Natalia Partyka from Poland (competing in table tennis) expresses that athletes with disability competing in the Olympics represent good examples of overcome barriers and inspiration. Based on her ability, she was allowed to compete in 2008, 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games. The selection of the athletes who get to compete 'depends on the eligibility and classification systems that are applied within a given sport governance system' (Fay and Wolff, 2009 p.245). The desire

to compete in the Olympic Games, the ability to overcome the disability and the eligibility to compete can be considered the main criteria to participate in both events.

Pierre di Coubertin comments about Egalitarianism in the perspective of the "athletic exercise practice does not iron out inequalities in social conditions but it does place relationship on an equal footing. In this respect, form is likely more important than content" (Müller, 2000:214). The principle of sport for all, sport participation and also of the principle of equality used for sports can be adopted to include and justify why people with a disability should be able to compete in the Olympic Games. There are, after all, clear and numerous precedents, as shown in table 1. Nonetheless, the terminology coined by Müller (2000:708) used in ceremonies to emphasise 'mens sana in corpore sano' and to extol 'the best' and 'the noblest' of them all by Coubertin, remains in our collective imagination.

The issues around performance take on a more pressing manner after the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. Chase (2016) reported that 'four 1,500-meter runners in the T13 class at the Paralympics (a category for the visually impaired) all ran faster in their final than the time that won American Matthew Centrowitz (time 3:50.00) the gold medal at the Summer Olympics in Rio'. This shows that the performance levels of disabled athletes are undoubtedly rising.

Table 2. Finals times for the Paralympic athletes T13 – visual disabilities.

Medal	Name	Country	Final Time
Gold	Abdellatif Baka	Algeria	3:48.29 WR
Silver	Tamiru Demisse	Ethiopia	3:48.59
Bronze	Henry Kirwa	Kenya	3:49.59
4th place	Fouad Baka,	Algeria	3:49.84

Source: IPC, 2016.

Nonetheless, an issue about citius, altius et fortius appear in the Paralympic scenario, even with these rising standards. The Economist (2016) mentioned a critical observation of better performance of people with disabilities in the Games. The author reflected that 'Paralympic records were set in a sixth of the swimming events, and nearly a quarter of the athletics disciplines. Centrowitz won the first gold for an American in the event competition in the last 108 years'. According Mohdin (2016) his time was the same of the fourth place in 1932 Berlin Olympics and he could not achieve any medals in the last sixteen editions of Olympic Games. However, in the Paralympics the first place achieved the world record for any people. This has led to Chase (2016) questioning whether or not the visually impaired runners are really at an Olympic level?

METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes the case study methodology (Stake 1994, 1995; Yin 2014) to understand the complex phenomena within their context of the three case study athletes: Jason Smyth, Alan Fonteles and Markus Rehm. Yin (2014) argues that case of study method include the preparation for data collection, collection of evidence, analysis and the report of study. 'The purpose of case study is not to represent the world, but to represent the case ... the utility of case research to practitioners and policy makers is in its extension of experience' (Stake; 1994: 245). Baxter and Jack (2008: 545) suggest that case study approach should be considered when: 'the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions. Therefore, our research question is based on: How the media are covering the desire of the three athlete's cases?

From February 2015 to February 2016, two Brazilian newspapers were analysed (O Globo, Folha de São Paulo). For the Brazilian sources research we used the private robot search engine "Clipe na Web" and the Newspaper Archives provided in the websites. The choice of these newspapers is due to the average circulation (ANJ, 2015). Folha de São Paulo and O Globo are the most widely read newspapers in the country. The average daily circulation of Folha de São Paulo is 351,745 and O Globo 333,860 (ANJ, 2015). As inclusion criteria, the newspaper has to mention at least one athlete in the period of the research and be one of the 'First 10 Ranked Newspaper' in ANJ website. The newspaper EXTRA was excluded because it has the same editorial board of O Globo. All researches methods presents limitations, and in the case of the methodology applied, it can only answer the questions posed based on the data collected.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Markus Rehm

Markus Rehm is a German athlete competing in the long-jump in the disability class: F44/T44 (Rio 2016). According to the IPC (2016) the category F44/T44 is based on 'any athlete with a unilateral or a combination of lower limb impairment/s where the impairment in only one limb meets the MDC. Functional loss is seen in one foot, ankle and/or lower leg. The activity limitation in athletics is roughly comparable to that found in an athlete with one through ankle / below knee amputation'. At age 17, after an accident practicing wakeboarding he had his right leg amputated below the knee. In London 2012 Paralympic Games, Rehm won a gold medal and set a new record. He also won a bronze competing in the 4×100 m T42-46. The extraordinary performance at London motivated Rehm attempt to qualify for Rio 2016 Olympic Games. However, the IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations) created several new rules around allowing Paralympic athletes to compete as Olympians. Rehm did not manage to provide proof to the Federation that there was no advantage given to him by his prosthesis that should prevent him from competing with other athletes at the Olympic Games (Daily Mail 2016).

Two newspapers were selected from Brazil. Rehm was cited two times in O Globo, while Folha de São Paulo did not mention the athlete. We found 4 reports in Folha de São Paulo about Rehm during the Paralympic Games in September 2016 focused on the results of the competitions.

The first report that cited Rehm was on 24th October 2015. The report is in the Sport section, page 33 – "Para Athlete set up a new record". The news informed that Rehm achieved 8,40m in Doha, Qatar. With this result, he would have won the Gold medal had he competed at 2012 London Olympic Games. The first place Greg Rutherford achieved 8,31m in London. The news highlighted that the IAAF mentioned that Rehm doesn't have the opportunity to compete at Rio Olympics because he was not able to qualify his prosthesis at time. The narrative emphasised the performance of Rehm, however they did not explore the potential of the athlete becoming an Olympian. There is no photo to identify Rehm which make hard for the Brazilians readers know more about Rehm. A picture could add more information to the report and should be better managed on this case.

On 29th February 2016, the newspaper O Globo published a report about the Brazilian Olympian athlete, Fabiana Murer. The report informed the preparation of Murer to compete the long jump at Rio 2016 Olympic games. The report of one page, cited just one line about Rehm that participated in an event called 'Super Salto' (Super Jump) in Rio de Janeiro at the Museum of Tomorrow. Rehm jumped 8,24 m, while the Brazilian Mauro Vinicius jumped 8,14 m. It's clear that the report focused on Murer. However, the last paragraph cited the marks of other athletes that competed in the Super Jump event. The report has a huge photo of Murer during the competition, but is not possible to see her face. The photo emphasises her performance during the Super Salto event and revealed the ability of the athlete.

The Brazilian Media, did not put emphasis on Markus Rehm attempt to compete in the Olympic Games. Only one report cited about the athlete's case. The decision to compete in the Olympics involve other discussions that the media could broader in those reports. For instance, the decision provides many concerns by the IAAF institution and other organisations. It involves concerns of 'equity, inclusion, justice, and the very essence of the Olympic Games and their relationship with the Paralympic'(Jones and Wilson 2009).

During the Paralympic Games the news about the athlete covered their results and the intention to become an Olympian. Meantime, the previous reports could offer contributions to the discussion of fairness, athlete performance, advantage or disadvantage about disabled and able-bodies competition.

Jason Smyth

Smyth is a Paralympian from Northern Ireland competing in the T13 disability sport classification (Rio 2016). In August 2014, Smyth reclassified from a T13 to a T12 class due to a deterioration of his eye condition (The Irish Times 2014). At Beijing 2008, Smyth began setting records at 100 metres and 200 metres, the good results and the brilliant performances stimulated comparisons with Usain Bolt. According to the IPC (2015) Smyth is considered the fast para-athlete of all time and is thus called the "Usain Bolt of the Paralympic Games". He won 2 gold medals at the 2008 Summer Paralympic Games (100m,200m). At the 2012 London Games he achieved the same result, more two gold medals. This year, Smyth won Gold in the 100m final, but did not compete the 200m because the International Paralympic Committee decided to remove the 200m from T13 category (The Telegraph 2016).

Two reports about Smyth were found in O Globo, on 7th September 2015 and on 8th September 2015. The first report on 7th September is located in the Sport section, page 8 – "The Irish Bolt". It is a half-page report with a huge picture of Smyth competing at Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas - Rio de Janeiro. The report explains the story of the athlete, the disability that he has and emphasises the comparisons with Usain Bolt. The journalist interviewed Rehm and identified that the athlete wanted to become a football player before starting his running career. In Brazil, football is the most popular sport and 80% of the news about sport covers football (Gastaldo, 2009). On this report about Smyth, two paragraphs cover his passion for supporting Liverpool Football Club, the team that he has followed since his childhood. He also comments about two Brazilian players that he admires, Rivaldo and Ronaldo. The narrative includes many pieces of the interview with Smyth. The athlete could express his challenges, story of life and in the last paragraph leaved a message to people accept their identity. His intention to become an Olympian was not reported.

On the next day, 08 September a small report about the athlete was found. In the Sport section, page 25- "Jason Smyth won the Paralympic Challenge in Rio". A small report just to inform the result of the event held in Rio de Janeiro. There is no photo. The athlete won with the mark of 10s73c. The report is descriptive and informs the result of the female class, as well. The final message of this report emphasises the availability of Paralympic event tickets to purchase.

Folha de São Paulo did not mention about Jason Smyth in their reports and so his intention to compete in the Olympic Games was not published. It seems that the Brazilian media did not have the information of his attempt to compete at 2016 Rio Olympics. This information could be explored in further reports in the sport sections.

Alan Fonteles

Fonteles became double-below-the-knee amputee when was 21 days old. He started the relationship with sports with eight years old but using non-sport prosthesis in the north area of Brazil. He became seriously involved with sport after being inspired by the wins of Oscar Pistorius in the 2012 London Paralympic Games. Pistorius had also won the right to compete in the Olympic Games in the same edition and went on to achieve well.

Fonteles was cited two times in April 2015 in the O Globo newspaper. The reports regard his participation in the event 'Mano a Mano' that happened in Jockey Club -RJ in April 2015. Nonetheless, the athlete was not the focus of the report but it highlighted the Superstar Usain Bolt. The narrative of Bolt presents different elements such as: his life story, performance before the Games, results, expectations. Whereas, the space destined for Paralympic athletes is shorter and presents more factual, curt information.

A discussion about the desires of Fonteles to compete in the Olympic Games was explored in O Globo on 24th April 2015. However, the main focus of this report was the IPC concerns about Fonteles qualifying for the Parapan Games in Toronto 2015. He did not compete in 2014 and this affected his performance. In the report of half page, just Andrew Parsons, the Brazilian president of the Paralympic Committee was interviewed. It seems that this report was written based on an interview with Andrew Parsons about the athlete preparation for the Games. We identified that there is a lack of space for the Paralympic athletes to express their opinions in the Brazilian media.

In 2015, Folha de São Paulo newspaper cited Fonteles two times, in March and in August. Both reports did not mention his intention or preparation to compete in the Olympics. The first report in March describes the Training Centre developed in Sao Paulo to support the athletes in the region. In August, a report discusses the success of the Brazilian athletes in the Parapan competition. Fonteles won the gold medal in the 200m for T44. There is no picture of Fonteles and the report describes the performance of disabled athletes in a very general perspective. The news is very superficial and few paragraphs were set aside to report this.

By February 2016, there is no report related to Alan Fonteles in the Folha de São Paulo. Further searches in the newspapers archives indicated that the athlete were cited 68 times from April to November 2016. We did not analyse this data due to the timeline of the research, we only researched the reports from February 2015 to February 2016. Future research may contribute to increase the discussion about this topic.

CONCLUSION

Considering the three cases in the research, we can argue that the athletes with disabilities and contemporary Paralympic issues are not widely covered at the Brazilian newspapers analysed. It is troubling that the host country of the Paralympic and Olympic Games pays scant regard to Paralympic athletes in the period analysed. Most of the data found focused on Olympic athletes utilising their celebrity status to attract consumers to read the report. The Paralympic athletes investigated were cited few times during one-year time. The newspapers did not give any depth to the discussion about their attempts to became Olympic athletes. This is the opposite of much advertising coverage on television and social media, not controlled or investigated in this research, but observed by the researchers.

The media has a tendency to reject people with disabilities based on discriminatory stereotyping regarding disability (Barnes, 1992). Beacom, French and Kendall (2016) argues that although the IPC are trying to promote the disability in the media, the print media still use a stereotypical representation of athletes with disabilities. This kind of media behaviour was found in the data analysed. According to Chang, Crossman, Taylor, & Walker (2011) the amount and type of newspaper coverage of the Paralympic Games has been incrensing through the years in different countries. Darcy, Frawley and Adair (2017) indicates that the Summer Paralympics has a cumulative TV audience of 3.8 billion people which reflects also in the social media. In London 2012, some 1.3 million tweets mentioned the word "Paralympic" (International Olympic Committee, 2015). Brittain (2017) argues that the Paralympic Games has received a good coverage in the United Kingdom promoting new concepts, ideas and values to improve the acceptance and socialisation of disability and disability sport. Researches carried out in Western countries about disability sport indicate a better coverage of disability in the media presenting a perspective about sport and performance against limitation on inability. The perspective of this kind of media behaviour should collaborate for a new framing approach in the Brazilian media.

Media is a source of knowledge and present a strong influence on the audience, based on this fact Smith, Zhou and Green (2017) point out that the narratives regarding disability reflect the cultural, educational, family values and stereotypes. Those elements cited are directly related to build audience interest and acceptance. Nonetheless, the Brazilian media have to improve their inclusive processes to increase the equality and respect differences between athletes.

A similar way to portray the disability in the media was found in the study of Khoo (2011) and Cheong, Khoo and Razman (2016) regarding the Malaysian media. The authors states that generally the coverage of disability sport is very limited in Malaysian media, and comparing to the Olympic athletes the visibility for Paralympic athletes remain lower.

Although the Paralympic Games had similarities with the Olympic Games, there are many different aspects that impact the visibility of the athletes and the income generated by the event. The numbers of competitors are different, number of sporting events, number of tickets sold for the event, number of sponsorships and so on. The pursuit of the athletes with disabilities to become Olympics are based in the needs to reach fame, generate income and improve the acceptance of the disabilities in general. There are a lot of implications for Paralympians qualify and compete in the Olympics. The debate could be explored by the media and promote ideals to avoid discrimination. For society, the fact of competing in both events may represent a better acceptance of the athlete and increase the idea of equality. Remarkably, for Paralympic athletes in this direction of better performance can we argue in the future about a unique Games or not? This question we leave for further papers and suggestion of discussion.

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