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Inclusivity is one of our country’s greatest strengths. As a nation, we must continue to champion diversity and acceptance in all aspects of our culture, including in sport.

At the Paralympic Foundation of Canada, we believe that by creating more opportunities for Canadians with a disability to be active in sport, we can inspire an inclusive nation.

Whether we’re ensuring accessible sport programs exist in communities across the country or providing up-and-coming Para athletes with the tools and resources they need to reach their full potential, we’re getting there with your help. When we see Canadian Para athletes represent our country on the world stage, we know – and they know – your support is behind them.

Thanks to this support, in 2019 we were able to strengthen the Paralympic Movement, including granting $1 million for Next Generation athlete programs, ensuring Canada’s Para sport system will remain strong for years to come.

In the past year, we felt the support from many parts of the country. Our friends held fundraisers in our honour, from Canada Day barbecues in Calgary to 60th birthday party cinq à septs in Montréal. Our ParaTough Cup series returned to four cities and gave hundreds of Canadians the chance to try Para sport for an afternoon, all while raising more than $370,000 to support the Paralympic Movement. At the Parapan American Games in Lima, Peru, visiting friends, family members and fans celebrated Para sport and cheered on the 151 Canadian Para athletes, pilots and guides who worked so hard to make it to the Games.

Thank you for being part of these Para sport moments this year. Here’s to sharing many more for years to come.

Jim Westlake
BOARD CHAIR

Dean Brokop
DIRECTOR
Finding the right facility was critical for Mississauga, Ontario’s Cruisers Sports for the Physically Disabled to be able to grow their track program.

But once they found the right location — which took nearly a year to find an accessible location that fit their needs — being able to cover costs was another challenge. Thanks in part to funding from the Paralympic Sport Development Fund, Cruisers now has a suitable home for the Para track program at Iceland Arena in Mississauga.

“We had to have something that we could hop in at any time, any day, any hour, where it has a locked door because the equipment is quite expensive,” said Lisa Myers, director of Para athletics at Cruisers Sports. “We had to ensure it was accessible and large enough to grow into as we start to get more and more people involved in the track program.”

The Para athletics program is one of a number of sports Cruisers offers, providing much-needed opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in organized sports such as boccia, Para ice hockey, and wheelchair basketball at both the recreational and competitive levels. Today it is one of the largest community-based Para sport programs in the country.

Previously, most of its indoor Para track programming was run out of coach Ken Thom’s basement, which had a bonus of no rental fee but was limiting in size and accessibility. Sadly Thom, who was a driving force behind the success of Cruisers, passed away suddenly in 2017 and a new solution was eventually needed.

Cruisers received a grant from the 2019-2020 Paralympic Sport Development Fund, an annual granting program run by the Canadian Paralympic Committee and supported by the Paralympic Foundation of Canada. The fund supports development initiatives by Para sport organizations. Cruisers put the funds towards facility fees and running have-a-go days for people to try out Para athletics.

“We’ve had an overwhelming response to our track and field program,” said Myers. “Right now I have more people interested in track than I do functional racing chairs, so it’s been really exciting for me because we have all these people who are super interested, and we now have the space where we can get people in throughout the season.”
When a Para ice hockey try-it session was held for the first time in Prince George, BC a couple of years ago, it was clear there was a demand for the sport. That's where a local community organization called Northern Adapted Sports Association (NASA) came in. The only problem was Para ice hockey equipment can be quite expensive.

“We had a year where we borrowed equipment from BC Hockey, they sent it up from the island, and we got a little bit of ice time,” said Rob Stiles, program coordinator at NASA. “The major issue was the equipment came in November and they needed it all back in January. So we had a few sessions, about 20 people out each time, and we were just getting to the point where people could move around on the sleds, and then we had to send all the equipment back.”

And of course, it’s not just sleds that are needed to run programming. Equipment needs also include things like sticks, helmets, and elbow pads, and NASA wanted to make sure to have all this available for anyone who wanted to participate.

But this past year, Northern Adapted Sports Association received $10,000 of funding from the Paralympic Sport Development Fund, a Canadian Paralympic Committee grant that supports Para sport development programs. They now have 20 sleds and all the gear required, dedicated for use in Prince George.
For Canadian Para athletes, the journey to the Paralympic Games begins close to home. Before they can win medals, Canadians with a disability first need the opportunity to choose sport. They need access to the tools and resources that will allow them to expand their potential in a sport they love.

Through the Paralympic Foundation of Canada’s ImagiNation initiative, funds are raised to support five key areas for the “Next Generation” of Para athletes: coaching, training environments, equipment, health and wellness initiatives, and sport science.

For Next Generation athletes, the support can help propel them to the world stage even faster than they imagined.

That’s what happened with Mélanie Labelle. In 2016, she sustained a spinal cord injury after she broke her neck while swing dancing. During her rehabilitation, she was introduced to wheelchair rugby when local club team, the Montreal Machines, came by her rehabilitation centre to do a demonstration of the sport. Their visit opened her eyes to wheelchair rugby and presented her with an opportunity to be active again.

With her interest in sport reignited, Mélanie joined the Machines that fall and began to practice with them on a regular basis.

Mélanie’s strong performances on the court would draw the attention of Team Canada’s coaching staff and in March 2019, just three years after her injury, she was selected as a member of the National Team Program.

This summer, Mélanie attended the Parapan American Games in Peru – her first multi-sport Games event.

“I was never expecting to represent Canada from the get-go,” she said from Lima, where the Canadian wheelchair rugby team claimed a silver medal. “My quiet dream was 2024 and to be here right now and hoping to punch a ticket to Tokyo 2020 is amazing. I’m looking to do my job out there. The experience of the sport has changed my life so much.”
RECAP: LIMA 2019
HIGHLIGHTS FROM TEAM CANADA AT THE PARAPAN AMERICAN GAMES

The Parapan American Games were first held in Mexico City in 1999 and featured 1,000 athletes from 18 countries competing in just four sports: Para athletics, Para swimming, Para table tennis, and Wheelchair basketball.

This year at the Lima 2019 Parapan American Games, a record of 1,850 athletes competed in 17 sports, two more than Toronto 2015, making it the biggest Parapan American Games to date.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM TEAM CANADA:

The Canadian Parapan Am Team took home 60 medals in total, with 114 members going home with a medal out of 151 athletes, pilots, and sport assistants.

MEDALS BY SPORT:
- Para swimming: 21 - 6 - 7 - 8
- Para cycling: 13 - 4 - 6 - 3
- Para athletics: 7 - 3 - 3 - 1
- Para badminton: 5 - 1 - 2 - 2
- Boccia: 3 - 1 - 2
- Wheelchair basketball: 2 - 1 - 1
- Goalball: 2 - 2
- Sitting volleyball: 2 - 2
- Para table tennis: 2 - 2
- Wheelchair tennis: 1 - 1
- Wheelchair rugby: 1 - 1
- Para judo: 1 - 1

Highlights from Team Canada:

The Canadian Parapan Am Team took home 60 medals in total, with 114 members going home with a medal out of 151 athletes, pilots, and sport assistants.

Medallists by province:

- Ontario: 28
- Quebec: 24
- Alberta: 4
- Manitoba: 4
- British Columbia: 28
- New Brunswick: 2
- Nova Scotia: 4
- Prince Edward Island: 1
- Saskatchewan: 4
- Manitoba: 4
- New Brunswick: 4
- Nova Scotia: 4
- Prince Edward Island: 1
- Ontario: 1
- Quebec: 1
- Manitoba: 1
- British Columbia: 1
- New Brunswick: 1
- Nova Scotia: 1
- Prince Edward Island: 1
- Ontario: 1
- Quebec: 1
- Manitoba: 1
- British Columbia: 1
- New Brunswick: 1
- Nova Scotia: 1
- Prince Edward Island: 1
- Ontario: 1
- Quebec: 1
- Manitoba: 1
- British Columbia: 1
- New Brunswick: 1
- Nova Scotia: 1
- Prince Edward Island: 1

Read on to find out how boccia's Alison Levine and wheelchair tennis' Rob Shaw made their mark in 2019 and what they have in store in Tokyo – and beyond.
In the precise sport of boccia, Canada’s Alison Levine is on target for a medal at the 2020 Paralympic Games.

A successful 2019 season culminated in October with an announcement that every athlete dreams of hearing: "World Number One".

That is exactly the news Levine received when the Boccia International Sports Federation put her at number-one in the world rankings for BC4 players. She moved to the top position after a third-place finish at the World Open stop in Brazil, becoming the first woman to ever reach the peak of the rankings in that class.

But Levine wasn’t only satisfied with her lot. She wanted to make sure her fellow Canadian BC4 players also qualified for the Paralympics in pairs. "I don’t want to go to Tokyo without my teammates."

Levine, her mentor Marco Dispaltro, and Iulian Ciobanu, fresh from a bronze at the Parapan Ams in Lima, won the gold in pairs at the World Open stop in Portugal in November to guarantee Canada’s spot in that event as well in Tokyo.

Back in May, Levine climbed to No. 2 in the world in the BC4 singles after her first career international victory at the Montreal World Open in May 2019 to set the tone for the rest of the season.

“It is definitely within my range to be at the top at the world championships and Paralympic Games,” said Levine, 29, diagnosed with idiopathic muscular dystrophy at age 12.

In her climb to the top of her sport, Levine is also making a difference off the playing field as a member of the Canadian Paralympic Athletes’ Council. On the council, she hopes to create opportunities for other athletes with severe impairments to gain their own independence just as she has.

It seems that whatever she sets her mind to, Levine achieves.
He didn’t get the same attention as Bianca Andreescu, Denis Shapovalov or Félix Auger-Aliassime but Rob Shaw made Canadian tennis history too in 2019 by becoming the first player, stand-up or wheelchair, to win a multi-sport Games medal in singles.

It happened at the 2019 Parapan American Games this past August in Lima. Shaw defeated world No. 2 David Wagner of USA, known as one of the best to ever play the game, for the gold medal 6-1, 6-3 in the quad singles tournament.

It was his first win in eight career matches against Wagner.

Shaw, ranked ninth in the world, also became the first quad tennis champion at a Parapan Am Games, with the classification making its debut in Lima. It was Shaw’s first appearance at a multi-sport Games.

“There’s just a really big tennis wave right now going through Canada,” said Shaw, 30, from North Bay, Ont., and now residing in Kelowna, B.C. “It’s definitely the biggest win so far of my career.”

While being one of the best in the world in wheelchair tennis, Shaw is also completing his PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of British Columbia Okanagan campus in Kelowna.

—— ROB SHAW

PRE-INJURY, I WAS SUPER ATHLETIC. BECAUSE OF THAT, MY IDENTITY AS A PERSON BECAME VERY ROOTED IN THAT SPORT IDENTITY: BEING IDENTIFIED AS AN ATHLETE OR BEING IDENTIFIED AS A COACH. POST-INJURY, I FELT LIKE NOT ONLY WAS I PHYSICALLY MORE DISABLED THAN I WAS BEFORE BUT I HAD LOST A PART OF WHO I WAS. I COULD NO LONGER IDENTITY WITH THAT SIDE OF ME. POST-INJURY IT WAS SUPER IMPORTANT FOR ME TO PUSH MYSELF AND SEE IF I COULD RECOVER PART OF THAT IDENTITY. I WAS ABLE TO CONNECT WITH MY FORMER SELF.

—— ROB SHAW
The 2019-2020 ParaTough Cup fuelled by Petro-Canada series returned to events in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver this year.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2019-20 ParaTough Cup series!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>November 7, 2019</td>
<td>Fasken 2</td>
<td>$104,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>November 22, 2019</td>
<td>Petro-Canada</td>
<td>$67,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>February 20, 2020</td>
<td>Hudson’s Bay Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>March 5, 2020</td>
<td>Canadian Tire 1</td>
<td>$132,000</td>
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THANKS TO PRESENTING SPONSOR PETRO-CANADA AND GOLD SPONSOR PFIZER CANADA FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF PARATOUGH CUP

— Sabira Charlesworth, Team Pfizer
PARATOUGH CUP FUELLED BY PETRO-CANADA - VANCOUVER
The Paralympic Foundation of Canada is greatly supported through financial donations from individuals and corporate partners. This year we received revenues totaling $1,211,648 from the following initiatives:

**UNRESTRICTED FUNDRAISING** includes donations made to our annual campaign and unsolicited donations that help ensure programs, equipment and people are in place to propel more Canadians with a disability all the way from their communities to the Paralympic podium.

**CIRCLE OF CHAMPIONS** donors that have pledged their multi-year support to ensure sport is accessible and available to all.

**CAUSE MARKETING** funds are derived from sales of select merchandise from Foundation supporters like Hudson’s Bay Company.

**EVENTS** includes the ParaTough Cup series and fundraisers held in our honour, that engage and entertain participants while shining a spotlight on Para sport in Canada.

**IMAGINATION FUNDS** support early athlete development and Canada’s “Next Generation” athletes. These funds will be matched by the Government of Canada, creating $10 million in opportunity for Canadians with a disability.

**IN-KIND PAYMENTS** include the value of products or services provided at no or discounted cost to the Paralympic Foundation of Canada.
Thanks to the generous gifts of individuals, corporations and foundations, the Paralympic Foundation of Canada is working to provide more Canadians with a disability the opportunity to be active in their communities and to strive for success on the world stage.

Meet the Circle of Champions

Circle of Champions members have shown their commitment to a strong Canadian Para sport system with a donation starting at $500 per year.
MEET THE TEAM

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