



MODEL OF INTEGRATION: UCI PARA-CYCLING

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Sport independence and model of governance

2011 – Integration is now “in”.

In the past 10 years significant steps have been made to integrate para-sports into the overall world sporting stage. Para-sports is benefiting from better media coverage, new partners, and new sponsors. Its recognition throughout the world of international sport is greater than ever and the recognition/meaning of the movement has never been higher. In fact, there is a reduction of barriers: for example, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace partnered with SportAccord for a social responsibility project. We, as participants, builders, athletes, organisers, volunteers and structures need to surf on that wave and ensure the viability, the development, the growth and the explosion of the Paralympic movement.

In 2003, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) officially included in its constitution and mission a direction to encourage and support integration of sports:

“To promote the self-governance of each Paralympic sport either as an integral part of the international sport movement for able-bodied athletes, or as an independent sport organization, whilst at all times safeguarding and preserving its own identity”¹.

At this point in time, there are different situations in the world of international para-sports. There are para-sports with a counterpart, such as cycling, tennis or judo; there are specific sports with no counterpart as they have been created specifically for persons with a disability, such as goalball and boccia; or there are sports with a counterpart but which cannot easily be integrated such as wheelchair rugby or wheelchair basketball.

As a result of these different situations, different models of governance are emerging. In the actual sport system there are three (3) models;

- 1) International Federation (IF) Sports (integrated or an independent sport organization)
 - Archery, Cycling, Equestrian, Rowing, Sailing, Table Tennis, Sitting Volleyball, Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Curling, Wheelchair Rugby, Wheelchair Tennis

¹ IPC Constitution and Mission, Handbook 1.1

http://www.paralympic.org/export/sites/default/IPC/IPC_Handbook/Section_1/Sec_i_chapter_1.1_Paralympic_Vision_and_Mission.pdf (consulted: 15.01.2011)

- 2) International Organisation of Sport for Disabled (IOSD) - (CPISRA, IBSA, IWAS, INAS-FID)
 - Boccia, Football 7-a-side, Football 5-a-side, Goalball, Judo, Wheelchair Fencing
- 3) IPC Sports
 - Alpine Skiing, Athletics, Biathlon, Cross-Country Skiing, Ice Sledge Hockey, Powerlifting, Shooting, Swimming, Wheelchair Dance Sport

Each of the existing para-sports and any future ones will choose a model of governance according to its situation that is in compliance with its reality, needs, mission and vision.

History of para-cycling integration

Since 1994, the UCI Disability Committee has cooperated closely with the IPC Cycling and joint meetings have been held at least once each year. This has ensured that, where possible, the technical regulations of the UCI have been used in all IPC sanctioned competitions including the 1988 and 1992 Paralympic Games. The IPC Cycling Committee was elected every four years during the Cycling Sport Assembly at the Paralympic Games. The purpose of that Committee was to develop and oversee IPC cycling competitions within the policies and wishes of the Sport Assembly (the cycling nations) and the IPC Executive.

From 1997, there was a period of stagnation within IPC Cycling and many changes needed to be made. In 1999, Tony Yorke was elected as Chairman of IPC Cycling at an Extraordinary Sport Assembly held during the Open European Cycling Championships. From that point, the UCI Committee and the IPC Cycling Committee have effectively worked as a single committee with common goals. A great deal of progress was made.

At the Sydney 2000 Cycling Sport Assembly, a complete re-write of IPC Cycling Rules was approved, together with an endorsement for the continued use of UCI Technical Regulations for all IPC Cycling Competitions. The Sport Assembly also approved the IPC Cycling plan to seek close collaboration with the UCI, with a view to the incorporation of regulations for Cyclists with Disabilities into the UCI Technical Regulations.

In March 2001 during a joint meeting of IPC Cycling and UCI Disability Committee it was agreed that both instances would work closely together for their mutual benefit. Their proposition to create an "Agreement of Cooperation" and a 4-year Disability Cycling Development Plan for integration was approved by the UCI Management Committee. Ideally, the first signature would be at the Opening of the new UCI World Cycling Centre in April 2002. From that moment, the UCI dedicated a part time staff resource to follow the different steps of the joint committee towards the integration process.

In 2006, the UCI hosted the last IPC Cycling World Championships in Aigle, Switzerland, together with the last IPC Cycling Sport Forum where the official motion of change of governance was presented and accepted:

“The IPC Cycling Sports Forum recommends to the IPC Governing Board to approve the transfer of governance of IPC Cycling from the IPC to the UCI, based on mutually agreed “Terms and Conditions”.”

In February 2007, at UCI headquarters, the complete transfer of governance was signed and the first UCI Para-cycling Commission was appointed by UCI President, Mr. Pat McQuaid.

What does that mean concretely?

Growth of IPC Cycling

Significant steps have been made in cycling, particularly with the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games, where athletes produced tremendous results and times. An amazing rise in the competitive standards and dedication of athletes was coupled with an outstanding increase in the professionalism of the NPC Team Officials. However, professional administrative assistance was urgently needed to sustain development and growth: it was impossible to continue to develop while relying only on the commitment of volunteers. At that point in time, we could already see the significant improvement of para-cyclists in nations where there were strong links with the National Cycling Federation. Riders were benefiting from quality coaching, better and stronger structures and excellent equipment. This provided confirmation that the strategic plan to integrate with the UCI would be in the best interests of the athletes.

Integration within UCI

One of the UCI's first commitments to athletes was to provide a special “Rainbow Jersey” and a normal UCI design of medals for the 2006 IPC Cycling's World Championships. For the successful recipients, a UCI Rainbow Jersey was a dream comes true. This dream became even truer when in 2009 the green rainbow jersey specific to para-cycling was replaced by the official white rainbow jersey (for the road race, road time trial and track events) in line with the other cycling disciplines that are part of the UCI cycling family.



The UCI had a wonderful facility at the World Cycling Centre in Aigle, backed up by around 60 staff. Para-cycling would be integrated into that large structure with all the accompanying benefits and help such as:

- Full integration into UCI Statutes;
 - Para-cycling Commission to undertake roles and responsibilities held by IPC Cycling such as quadrennial plan, submission of proposals to UCI Management Committee...
 - Workgroups to support the commission in matters related to para-cycling such as classification, materials, calendar...
- UCI Nations Forum;

- Platform and annual opportunity for exchanges of information and feedback from nations
- Rules and regulations;
 - Introduction of Title 16, regularly reviewed and updated
- National membership integration;
 - UCI and IPC agreed to jointly monitor the transfer of governance processes from National Paralympic Committee to National Cycling Federation and work together to implement this change of governance (targeted date for completion of the governance change end of 2008, after Beijing Paralympic Games.)
- Staffing and financial resources;
 - UCI continued to dedicate sufficient staffing and financial resources to administrate the growth of the discipline
 - February 2008, a full time Para-cycling Coordinator was hired.

All the main elements were present between IPC and the UCI to proceed with the integration;

- Integration was going to bring major improvements compared to the current situation (explained in details later in the text);
- Interest and commitment from both parties;
- Similar vision, values & mission;
- Both parties acknowledged that it would and will be a long process;
- Milestones were developed in collaboration;
- Political and financial goals were clearly identified, written and understood.

The process highlighted strengths and presented challenges that are normal for any integration process. Any problems encountered will evolve, change and/or disappear in due time.

Strengths	Challenges
Existing structure	Integration is a long process ...
Experience and internal resources available (ex.: legal, communication, anti-doping ...)	Development of your discipline needs to fit in with the IF structure, ie the UCI cycling family
External resources (ex.: organisers, officials ...)	There is no unique model
Extension of membership	
Sports specific expertise	

Different impacts of integration on the sport and the athlete

Paralympic Games

As for any other sports, the Games are always the goal to be reached: for the development of your sport, for the athlete's highest achievement and for the recognition that it engenders. Road Para-cycling was first added to the Paralympic Games in New York in 1984, followed by track in Atlanta in 1996. Since then, there have been significant changes in the level of the Paralympics, in the quality of the circuit and its infrastructure, to suit athletes' needs with professionalism at every step of the pyramid. The number of athletes, the number of countries represented and the number of events have significantly increased.

Place comparison from Athens to London

	Men		Women		Total
Athens	121	83,4%	24	16,6%	145
Beijing	141	75,4%	46	24,6%	187
London	155	68,9%	70	31,1%	225

Medal events comparison from Athens to London

	Athens		Beijing		London	
Men	25	80,6%	30	68,2%	27	54,0%
Women	6	19,4%	12	27,3%	19	38,0%
Mixed	0	0,0%	2	4,5%	4	8,0%
Total	31		44		50	

Para-cycling is a growing sport. As a result of the natural evolution and progression of the sport and its integration, para-cyclists tend to specialize more and more between Road and Track disciplines. This has led to a net growth of the sport and a need for more and more places within the Games structure. Commitment from the UCI Para-cycling Commission to the development of women in cycling has also proved successful and resulted in a major increase in the number of women throughout only three Paralympic cycles. Given that handcyclists and tricyclists cannot compete on the track, the UCI also looked at other possible events:

- to provide them with an interesting program
- to ensure national teams would be interested in selecting them for major events.

With this in mind, the team relay has been created for handcyclists based on various models already used in other UCI disciplines.

World Championships

As part of the integration process and to bring Para-cycling on a more equal footing with the other UCI disciplines, one of the first UCI commitments was to introduce an annual World Championships (except the year of the Games). In 2009, these World Championships were separated into two different events; one for road and one for track. This has brought about several



advantages:

- Athletes and nations are able to work better to develop each athlete's speciality;
- Organisation is more professional and focused as organisers are able to concentrate on just one discipline;
- The level of events has been raised;
- Events are more accessible as they are shorter and easier to promote.

Integration has also led to a higher level of organisation of UCI events. National Cycling Federations are directly involved in each World Championships and para-cycling events taking place in their country. Sometimes the NCFs take on the role of main organiser. This was the case for both the 2009 World Championships that were organised by the Italian Cycling Federation (road) and British Cycling (track).

Regional Circuits and National Championships

More than simply following the UCI rules to organise their event, organisers now have a UCI Para-cycling Commissaire present at their competition. One of the Commissaire's roles is to ensure the rules are applied but he/she also shares organisational tips, best practices, and suggests adjustments to improve the events. These Commissaires have already worked as International road and track Commissaires, and draw on their experience to ensure that athletes are treated the same as any other athlete.

Some nations have also integrated para-cycling into their National Championships. This emphasises the integration process, promotes para-cycling, raises awareness and minimises costs. However it is not mandatory to do so, as the situation is different in each country. For example, nations with a very big squad of para-cyclists tend to hold a separate event. This is due mainly to the time required to conduct the multiple sport classes that race separately on the course. If they joined the "regular" National Championships the event would become a seven-day event, which doesn't make sense for anyone.

National Paralympic Committee (NPC) and National Cycling Federation (NCF)

What has the UCI Model of integration been with regards the NCF and the NPC? Obviously, all nations that were already active in para-cycling in 2001 when the idea of integration arose were aware of the process being put in place. Some nations were already integrated (such as Canada), some of them joined the adventure spontaneously before the integration (such as Australia) and some others waited to feel a bit of pressure ...

As with any integration process, new projects and changes are always met with different reactions. Some are proactive other reactive, but the main objective is to make sure everyone is going in the same direction, at their own rhythm, so it is working and you are not leaving anyone behind.

Therefore, here are the steps that have been taken:

- 2006 Sport Forum : Vote by cycling NPCs in favour of the change of governance;
- 2006 letter to all NCF to informed them of the up-coming changes
- 2007 UCI Congress – awareness, information and promotion of the para-cycling integration to all UCI Members, 172 nations;
- 2007-08 various communication with both NPCs and NCFs;
- 2008 full time staff to coordinate para-cycling but also foresee any problems and help nations find solutions in their integration process;
- 2008 distribution on demand of a “Memorandum of agreement” that could be used as basis for discussion;
- 2009 up to now, constant follow-up with newcomers and nations that have questions or specific needs to answer.

What are the possibilities for the NPCs – NCFs? At this point in time the UCI prefers to leave room and some flexibility to ensure the process corresponds to the athletes’ needs and guarantees them a maximum of services.

- 1) Complete integration of the discipline into the National Cycling Federation structure
- 2) Collaboration agreement with the national structure of sport for persons with a disability.

If a nation decided to draw up a collaboration agreement, the following were the minimum standards to achieve:

- 1) UCI licences throughout National Cycling Federation
- 2) National cycling jersey for events which so request
- 3) Approval of all National Championships and International events in the country by the NCF to ensure their participation throughout the organizational process (promotion, commissaires, licences, insurance...)
- 4) Designation by the NCF of National and/or International Commissaires if so requested by the UCI rules and regulations
- 5) Compliance with the national/international cycling regulations
- 6) Management and supervision of the calendar by either NPCs, NCFs or both
- 7) Partnership in the organization of events (NPC and/or NCF)
- 8) If possible, partnership for infrastructure, equipment and human resources on the occasion of camps and other activities
- 9) Presence of para-cycling on the website of both structures.

These points are milestones to start with. To be completely honest, they provided a basis on which to encourage discussion. Given the lack of knowledge of para-cycling within National Cycling Federations but the strong knowledge concerning road and track, the above points encouraged the establishment of first contacts, hopefully raising awareness on both sides and creating a will to ensure progress and development.

At the end of 2008 we proceeded with a general analysis of the situation after one year of integration; taking into consideration/comparison that there were 52 nations in the para-cycling ranking and 170 NCF members of the UCI.

Legend	Status	Total
Top 30 Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	14
	In progress	7
	No because of law	2
	No Answers	7
31 to 52 Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	3
	In progress	2
	No because of law	0
	No Answers	17
Not in Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	2
	In progress	3
	No because of law	0
	No Answers	109
NF provisory affiliated	No Answers	4
	Total	170

So, if we only look at the nations where there is para-cycling, we see that 33% of them that have completed integration, 17% are in progress, 4 % have been stopped by national law and 46% haven't answered.

The same evaluation carried out two years later, including the collaboration agreement process, came up with the following results:

Legend	Status	Total
Top 30 Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	15
	Collaboration agreement	14
	No because of law	1
31 to 52 Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	6
	Collaboration agreement	16
	No because of law	0
Not in Ranking Para		
	Complete integration	3
	Collaboration agreement	12
	No because of law	0
	No Answers	100
NF provisory affiliated	No Answers	4
	Total	171

Comparisons are bringing us to a very interesting change within the top 52 nations present in the UCI Para-cycling Nations Ranking.

2008		2011	
Integration completed	33%	Integration completed	40%
In process	17%	Collaboration agreement	58%
No because of law	4%	No because of law	2%
No answers	46%		

Even if we go out of the Top 52 and look at the National Cycling Federations between 53 and 171, we find 9% of them have integrated or are in the process of collaboration.

In total, 39% of the UCI member nations are involved in para-cycling after only 3 years of integration of the discipline into the UCI cycling family.

Administration impact

Of course integration doesn't only have a direct impact on athletes, teams and performances but also on the way athletes and coaches can do their job: they are helped by a system that provides them with the basis on which they can build and evolve.

As mentioned previously, the UCI has around 64 employees, a World Cycling Center that has 27 employees and an Anti-doping Foundation of around 10 employees. The separate internal departments (IT, communication, marketing, legal ...) have a direct link to or at the least help the Para-cycling Coordinator to ensure integration and the continuation within our own structure. There is also a process of internal recognition but with time and communication things are getting better and the level of help is increasing.

Nations that have completed the integration process find that the administrative integration actually helps them save money and extend their services:

- Registration of events with the UCI are all carried out in the same way
- The registration process for athletes competing in World Championships or World Cups are the same for all disciplines
- Some camps can be carried out jointly
- Coaches that were part-time can maybe now be employed full-time by adding para-cycling to their scope of work
- The same national organisers can be used
- Trips to certain events can even be made together....

Where are we now with the integration process?

Nothing is ever perfect. Keeping that in mind helps you ensure that you stay awake and strive for improvement. Over the next few years the integration of para-cycling will face many challenges.

Athletes

- High level para-cyclists are more and more present in the cycling circuit around the world
 - Tusnad Team (UCI Continental)
 - Two below knee amputees
 - Tour du Maroc: Jesek finished 32nd in the general ranking out of 116 starters.
 - Mendrisio – 2009 UCI Road WC
 - Edouard Novak – 63rd time trial
- The UCI must now proceed with an in-depth analysis of the integration into the “regular” structure in order to provide better tools for our athletes so they can continue to develop, and to nations so they can contribute to the growth of para-cycling
- Mountain Bike is becoming more and more practiced by para-cyclists



Edouard Novak (C4-ROU) exchanging World Champions jersey with

Nations

- Integration is still a big subject of discussion with nations, and we need to ensure that newcomers will automatically proceed with integration and help others in their steps
- There are still nations facing laws that restrain their integration: work needs to be carried out in collaboration with other Federations and with IPC to solve that issue.

Events

- We need to open the door of integration even wider to organisers who are already organising road or track events; by promoting para-cycling we can ensure that the regional calendar will develop. Currently, only a few organisers have sufficient know-how in para-cycling. We need to raise awareness and pave the way for para-cyclists.
- Track events are missing ... integration with the “regular” calendar would be a huge step forward for us and for nations that could travel to events as one team. That will naturally reinforce the integration process in the nations that are still hesitating.

Marketing and communication

- Para-cycling is the fifth UCI Olympic discipline. That needs to be clearly understood by all partners, sponsors, employees, members ...
- Para-cycling events need to receive wider coverage, more attention and it is our responsibility to ensure a great and clear promotion of the discipline and the athletes
- Partners need to be found for para-cycling



Each national structure and each international sport is different. The culture, the importance of sports, the different laws and financial structures create a great diversity and wealth that we need to keep.

As actors in the movement, we need to listen, to help, to guide, to ensure that the integration process will continue and more steps will be made in this direction. This is a lot about individuals, about believers, about leaders that will make changes happen. We need to find these people to guide the process.

At the UCI, cycling is our passion and we will ensure it is well known and global.