

**“To remember is to resist:”* 40 Years of Sport and Social Change, 1968-2008 Conference
University of Toronto, May 20-22, 2008 Disability Section**

Persons with disabilities are often forgotten, ignored or actively discriminated against. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was passed in December 2006 to rectify this reality, and promote advancement, inclusion and social change.

Sport includes many fundamental human rights of movement, assembly and leisure, and also facilitates peace and social mobilization (U.N. Task Force Report, 2003). These conference sessions will address Article 30.5 of the UN Convention that asks participating states to enable persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities. Measures to bring this about are expected by supporting:

- Participation of persons with disabilities in mainstream activities at all levels
- Participation in disability-specific activities (with provision on a equal basis of appropriate instruction, training and resources)
- Access to recreational and sporting venues is provided
- Children’s equal access to play, recreation, leisure and sporting activities, including those in the school system
- Access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.

Sessions will explore the shift from public policy that saw the disabled within an individualized charity/medical model evolve into the current critical disabilities perspective of the lived/embodied body within a social construct model. Policies and best practices will be examined focusing on the themes of the Convention and sessions will include the analysis of prejudices toward disability and the serious problems of discrimination faced by populations without legislative protection, recognizing there is hostility to the globalizing world, viewed as dominated by western values.

This disability section will bring together persons with disabilities from all walks of life, academics and activists, practitioners, academics and athletes, including scholars from a variety of disciplines and perspectives whose research interests include issues related to physical and mental disabilities, accessibility, healthy inclusive communities and social change; sport administrators who are part of a variety of sport organizations, and sport and policy makers at all levels of government and non-governmental organizations are also included.. Particular focus will be on the challenges of resource-poor communities in the southern-hemisphere and gender, recognizing the some people face triple discriminations of gender, disability, and poverty. The International Disability in Sport Working Group has identified the need to support research focused in these areas, and in many countries policy makers are looking for evidence-based research to support new legislation, policies and practices for greater inclusion. It is hoped that connections can be made at the conference to build upon, and to share ideas and resources within and between the networks that already exist.

These are some of our proposed sessions, and we welcome submissions of papers, posters and workshops.

Session One: The Significance of Sport in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- legislation and policy, nationally and internationally
- *cultural values and human rights* in sport: tension and unease in a globalizing world
- *individual vs. community rights*
- the challenge of *monitoring* human rights

Session Two: Persons with Disabilities, Human Rights and the Olympics, Paralympics, Special Olympics and Deaflympics

- the roles of *international organizations* (both sport and disability based) politically, socially and in policy
- *rights to play* vs. high performance sport
- the *rights of athletes* with disabilities within sport organizations
- *technology, disability and the body*: cyborg-bodies and performance enhancement
- changing *media* responses to sport and disability
- *fundraising, marketing*, disability sport and social change

Session Three: Sport as a Vehicle for Social Change for Persons with Disabilities

- comparative *sport policies and programs*: both are necessary
- *impact* of local, national and international public sport events
- community *development* through sport for all
- the role of sport and inclusion in *education*: the development of curriculum, teaching materials, educational policies and health promoting schools
- the challenge to provide access to sport, physical activity, games and leisure when there is a *lack of infrastructures and financial resources*
- sport challenging stereotypes related to '*moral blaming*' for disability
- sport role in overcoming marginalization resulting from acquired disability through *injury and/or war*
- awareness through accessibility to the *built-environment* of sport
- the inclusion of *aboriginal and remote communities* in sport
- *sport-based classification*, a shift to ability-based as a vehicle for social change
- *coaching*, performance and inclusion
- funding and the need for *evidence-based research*
- *changing research methods and approaches*: technology, collaboration and networks
- considerations related to *aging* and the inclusion of seniors with disabilities within sport

Session Four: The Challenges to Include Girls and Women in Sport, in the Context of Resource-Poor Environments

- the role of sport in overcoming *negative cultural values* about sport participation of women and girls
- the role of *education and training* for coaches and educators for girls and women in sport, recreation and play
- the *lack of support* for families, and lack of information about opportunities in sport
- the changing and *conflicting demands* of family and work related to disability and support of sport and physical activities

Session Five: Sport, Health and Wellness in Social Change

- the role of sport in *health promotion*: redefining health
- sport and disabling inactivity in the battle against what the CDC calls and an epidemic of *obesity*
- *health care providers* (doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, masseurs) and their reframing the traditional *medical model of disability*
- the reframing of *rehabilitation and disability*
- *knowledge dissemination* about sport and leisure opportunities to health care providers (CPC Paralympics 101 program and Special Olympics)
- changing perspectives about *careers* in the lives of persons with severe disabilities