

'Athletes and Abilities' goes Korean

Alexandra Lottje

Portraying the Paralympic movement, documenting the potential of people with disabilities, and introducing athletes who stand for overcoming limitations by leading an active and inclusive life – these are the prime goals of 'Athletes and Abilities' (German title: 'Paralympics Zeitung'). Since 2004, the German newspaper 'Tagesspiegel' has been publishing in cooperation with the DGUV (German Social Accident Insurance) this supplement every two years. For PyeongChang 2018, the Goethe-Institute Korea and the Korean daily 'The Hankyoreh' jointly agreed to spread and promote this positive message and produce a Korean edition of 'Athletes and Abilities'.

People with disabilities still face tremendous difficulties in Korea. Although much progress has been made in recent years, both physical and mental barriers persist which creates serious challenges to participating in all facets of society. Disabilities are still seen as deficiencies, and people with disabilities are usually not expected to fully participate in all aspects of life. The precoverage of the Paralympic Winter Games in PyeongChang 2018 has so far

reflected this social atmosphere. Public interest for the Paralympics has been low and part of the coverage has discussed the degree to which PyeongChang and the surrounding area is actually barrier free.

Considering this backdrop, the Goethe-Institute and 'The Hankyoreh' have decided to meet the need for greater public coverage regarding this event by providing an in-depth and positive coverage of the Paralympics in 2018. "If not us then who", journalists of 'The Hankyoreh' repeatedly emphasized during the first meetings, highlighting the fact that such coverage is not likely to happen without extra effort. In cooperation with the 'Tagesspiegel' and the DGUV, the Goethe-Institute Korea and 'The Hankyoreh' will thus publish a Korean edition which will be distributed with 'The Hankyoreh' on March 16th, 2018 while the Paralympics are still in progress.

'Athletes and Abilities' combines a positive coverage of parasports with promoting young journalistic talents. For each Paralympics, a team of students from Germany, English-speaking countries, and from the host country is selected and reports from the Paralympics as accredited journalists. To prepare them for the task ahead, a workshop in Berlin will take place a few months before the games. The workshop introduces the students to the worlds of journalism and parasports, gives all participants and the 'Tagesspiegel' team a chance to get to know each other, and serves as a platform to start planning the contents for two German and one English edition of 'Athletes and Abilities'. This year, two journalists from 'The Hankyoreh' will also take part to start planning the Korean edition.

The first German edition will be distributed on the day of the opening ceremony, on the 8th of March, as a supplement to the German newspapers 'Tagesspiegel/Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten', 'Handelsblatt' and 'DIE ZEIT'. Starting on March 8th, the young journalists will thereafter report directly from PyeongChang, writing articles for the English edition (March 16th) and the second German edition (March 19th/22nd). At the same time, the Goethe-Institute and 'The Hankyoreh' will be preparing the Korean edition by translating articles written by the student reporters into Korean as well as producing additional content specifically targeted at the Korean audience. Hopefully, this German-Korean cooperation will prove to be an effective way to celebrate the first Paralympics in Korea and help foster a positive image of people with disabilities in Korea.



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