



Project: deAf DigitAl PlaTform+ ADAPT

O.5 - 36 Manual activities videos creation

O5.7 - WRITING OF 1 MANUAL ACTIVITY TEXT

History of Deaf Sports

Deaf people can play any sport they want for competition, for self-enjoyment, to attain excellence, for the development of skills, or some combination of these. Sports has a long history in the deaf community. In general, Deaf athletes do not compete in the Olympics and Paralympics, there is no category for deaf athletes. The Deaf people have their own Olympics called Deaflympics.

Let's see a brief history of deaf sports

- The first international sport competition for deaf people, known as the **International Silent Games**, were held in **1924** in Paris, France, from 10 to 17 August 1924, as an equivalent to the Olympic Games for deaf athletes. They were the brainchild of Eugène Rubens-Alcais, himself deaf and President of the French Deaf Sports Federation. At a time when societies everywhere viewed deaf people as intellectually inferior, linguistically impoverished, Monsieur Rubens-Alcais envisioned the international sports event as the best answer. Antoine Dresse, a young deaf Belgian, was instrumental in helping him accomplish his dream. **The Silent Games** were the first ever for any group of people with disabilities. 148 sportsmen from 9 European countries took part in the first games.

After the initial Paris Games, deaf sporting leaders established the **International Committee of Silent Sports**, CISS, which was later renamed **The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf**, ICSD.

- The most recent name, the "**Deaflympics**," was formally adopted in 2001. **ICSD** provides the essence of Olympism for the deaf population, with its own motto: "Equal through sports". Only deaf and hard of hearing athletes can compete in the Summer or Winter Deaflympics, World Championships, Regional Championships, and other ICSD-sanctioned



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competitions. To qualify for the games, athletes must have a hearing loss of at least 55 db in their "better ear". Hearing aids, cochlear implants and the like are not allowed to be used in competition, to place all athletes on the same level. The Deaflympics are held every four years, apart from a break for World War II.

Today, the number of national federations in the ICSD membership has reached 113.

- **The first Winter Games** were held in Austria, in **1949**, with 33 athletes from five countries. The Winter Deaflympic Games have been hosted by 16 cities in 11 countries. The last winter games were held in Sondrio Province, Italy in 2019 with 461 athletes from 34 countries.
- **The first games outside of Europe** were the Summer Games held in Washington DC in the United States, in 1965

ICSD includes four regional confederations – the Asia Pacific Deaf Sports Confederation, the European Deaf Sports Organization, the Pan American Deaf Sports Organization and the Confederation of African Deaf Sports:

- **Confederation of African Deaf Sports (CADS)** was founded in 1977.
- **The “European Deaf Sport Organisation”** was founded in France in 1983. Previous to the foundation of the EDSO in 1983 there were already European Championships of the Deaf since 1967
- **Asia Pacific Deaf Sports Confederation (APDSC)** .The first sporting event in the Asia and Pacific region took place in 1984. Asia Pacific Deaf Sports Confederation (APDSC) was formed in 1988. In 1992, APDSC changed the name from Asia Pacific Deaf Soccer Championships to **Asia Pacific Games for the Deaf** and changing it from biennial to every four years.
- **Pan American Deaf Sports Organization (PANAMDES)** was founded in 1999.

The logo of Deaflympics designed in 2003 by graphic design artist [Ralph Fernandez](#), is a positive and powerful symbol of the international deaf sports community. The logo incorporates the four colors of the national flags of the world. The red, blue, yellow and green represent the four regional confederations – the Asia Pacific Deaf Sports Confederation, the European Deaf Sports Organization, the Pan American Deaf Sports Organization and the Confederation of African Deaf Sports.



Some representative deaf athletes during history:

William “Dummy” Hoy - In 1888, he became the first Deaf professional baseball player. He is also acknowledged for introducing the umpire hand signals into the game

In 1928, **Carlo Orlandi** was the first known Deaf athlete to participate in the Olympics. Orlandi won a gold medal in boxing for Italy.

Bonnie Ryan Sloan -is an American former NFL player who was the first of three deaf football players in National Football League history.

Derrick Coleman - professional football player in the NFL. Derrick was the first deaf offensive player in the NFL.

Terence Parkin- deaf swimmer from Zimbabwe. In the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Terrence was a silver medalist for the 200m breaststroke.. Terrence has a total of 33 gold medals from the Deaflympics Games and currently holds the record of most medals in Deaflympics history. He is considered to be the most successful Deaflympic athlete since the games’ inception in 1924

Mario D’Agata- Italian professional boxer, who was a deaf world champion in boxing.

Ashley Fiolek- *professional motocross racer*, Ashley Fiolek won the world motocross championship three times by the time she was 21. She is Deaf and communicates with American Sign Language.

Curtis Pride- is a former professional baseball player within the MLB franchise. After his retirement in 2008, he became the head coach for baseball at Gallaudet University. In 2016, he was named MLB’s Ambassador for inclusion.

Heidi Zimmer is a Deaf-Blind mountaineer. She competed in the women’s high jump at the Deaflympics in 1969 and 1973. She won an Olympic bronze medal in high jump in the 1969. In 1991, Heidi became the first deaf woman to reach the top of Mount McKinley. She has reached the top of three of the Seven Summits and would like to be the first woman with disabilities to complete all Seven Summits.