

04.02.2022 – 09:44 Uhr

Preparations for the Paralympic Technical Repair Service Centers in full swing



Preparations for the Paralympic Technical Repair Service Centers in full swing

Ottobock set to open three Repair Service Centers for first time at the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Games

In just one month – on 4 March 2022 – the Winter Paralympics will be opening in China, and Ottobock's Technical Repair Service Centers are once again set to be a key meeting point for the 700 athletes attending the Games. This year, the healthtech company is setting up three full-scale Repair Service Centers for the first time – in each of the Paralympic Villages in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou.

The Paralympic athletes can come to the Centers to have their equipment maintained and repaired free of charge before and during competitions. This is a vital service, given the enormous demands placed on the equipment used in sports such as para snowboarding, biathlons and ice hockey. The forty expert technicians working in the Ottobock Repair Service Centers will also be making sure that everyday devices such as wheelchairs, prostheses and orthoses stay in good shape. They will be taking care of all the technical aspects so the athletes can focus fully on their performance and the competition.

A logistical feat

Ottobock has served as technical service partner for the Paralympic Games since 1988. Nonetheless, some of the challenges facing the experienced team at the Beijing 2022 Games are quite unique. This time, the Winter Games in Beijing are scheduled to open fewer than six months after the Summer Paralympics in Tokyo, which closed on 5 September 2021. "Due to the fact that the Summer Paralympics in Tokyo were postponed for a year, the lead time for the Winter Games preparations has been extremely short – and the logistical challenges are immense," reports Peter Franzel, Head of Global Events, Exhibitions & Sports at Ottobock. "Another challenge is the fact that the Games are being held at three different venues, namely in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou. This means we need to prepare three separate, fully equipped Technical Repair Service Centers, one for each Paralympic Village. We've never had to do this before, and it's certainly added a new element to the planning."

Yet another challenge lies in the Covid-19 playbook, a list of special pandemic-related rules aimed at preventing infections during the Games. The Paralympics will be held in closed loops around the three venues (Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou), with the sports facilities, venues and accommodation areas all being included in the respective bubbles. Athletes and officials will not be permitted to leave their bubble for the duration of the Games but will be able to move freely inside the given limits.

Growing excitement

Ottobock's preparations for China are in full swing. The headquarters in Duderstadt are providing the team in Beijing with the support they need to set up the Repair Service Centers, plan marketing activities and train nine Chinese technicians for their upcoming mission. QB Huang, Managing Director of Ottobock China, is keen to underscore the importance of paralympic sports in his country. "After the wonderful time we had with the 2008 Summer Games in Beijing, we're really proud to be hosting the Paralympics once again," he enthuses. As in the rest of the world, Ottobock has been promoting paralympic sports in China for

many years, which has included organising Running Clinics and Ski Clinics for amputees. These events aim to encourage people with disabilities to live active lives and push their boundaries.

Orthotics and prosthetics professional (O&P professional) Volker Schmidt attended the first Paralympics in Beijing back in 2008 and is now returning for the Beijing 2022 Games. He has particularly fond memories of the impressive Olympic Green, numerous exciting repair challenges and the close bond that formed between the members of the international team. "I'm really looking forward to it, even though the Games will have a totally different feel," Schmidt says. "Since it's winter sports, I expect we'll be dealing with less typical repairs like patching up sit-skis or ice-hockey sledges. And I'm sure we'll all miss having international spectators and big group events."

Patrick Mayrhofer is another man who has a special relationship with the Paralympics. He attended the last Winter Games in 2018 in South Korea as an athlete and won a silver medal for Austria in para snowboarding. This year, he'll be joining the Repair Service Center team in Zhangjiakou and coordinating the work in person. Mayrhofer has been working for Ottobock since 2013 as a trainer for upper limb prosthetics. His combined experience as a former paralympic athlete and as a prosthetics expert will stand him in good stead for his mission in China. "I completely understand what the athletes need – the technological requirements, the nerves before the events, the team spirit. It's all part of the Paralympic magic," Mayrhofer reminisces. He's particularly looking forward to seeing the "Paralympic family" again and hopes to inspire people with his own life story. "Truth be told, my own arm amputation is no big deal in everyday life. I feel like a complete person with my prosthesis, which I wear for around 15 hours every day, 365 days a year. I want to show the people who visit the Repair Service Center just how much one can do with a prosthesis. Maybe that can motivate some of them to set themselves new goals."

Invitation to a virtual tour of the Repair Service Center

At the beginning of March 2022, Ottobock will be inviting journalists to a guided virtual tour of the Paralympic Repair Service Centers. Peter Franzel and his team will be sharing glimpses into the Centers at the three clusters in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou and showing examples of repair work in progress. Please register by sending an email to press@ottobock.com.

Facts and figures

- 3 fully equipped Repair Service Centers in the Paralympic Villages in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou. Equipped with socket routers, band saws, infrared ovens, box column drills and welding apparatus
- 5 smaller Repair Service Centers at venues for prompt on-site support: para ice hockey (Beijing), para Alpine skiing (Yanqing), para biathlon, cross-country skiing and snowboarding (Zhangjiakou)
- 50-member team from 12 different countries, including 40 technical experts (O&P professionals, wheelchair experts and professional welders)
- 500 repairs predicted as a free service to athletes, regardless of the brand or manufacturer they use
- Open 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. with 24-hour emergency hotline
- Total of 22 days service

For more information on Ottobock's commitment to the Paralympics, please see www.ottobock.com.

Contact

Ottobock SE & Co. KGaA
Corporate Communications

Gesa Liss

Public Relations Manager
Corporate Communications
T +49 30 398 206 223 | M +49 151 4416 1837
gesa.liss@ottobock.com

Daniel Ernst

Public Relations Manager
Corporate Communications
T +49 55 278 481 669
daniel.ernst@ottobock.de

About Ottobock

Ottobock develops "wearable human bionics" – medical technology products for people with limited mobility in the fields of Prosthetics, Orthotics and Human Mobility (wheelchairs). Founded in 1919, the company also treats patients in its Patient Care division. Our goal: Enhancing quality of life and health economic benefits. With its Paexo exoskeletons, Ottobock has also been applying its expertise in biomechanics to applications in manufacturing since 2012. Subsidiaries in almost 60 countries offer "Made in Germany" quality worldwide and employ more than 8000 people. The international activities of the company are coordinated from the head office in Duderstadt (state of Lower Saxony). Ottobock has been supporting the Paralympic Games with technical expertise since 1988.



Athletes at the Paralympic Games can come to the Ottobock Repair Service Centers to make sure their equipment is in good shape. The pictures above show O&P professional Peter Schoenenberger servicing a ProCarve sports prosthesis at the 2018 Winter Paralympics in PyeongChang. / © Getty Images for Ottobock



Athletes at the Paralympic Games can come to the Ottobock Repair Service Centers to make sure their equipment is in good shape. The pictures above show O&P professional Peter Schoenenberger servicing a ProCarve sports prosthesis at the 2018 Winter Paralympics in PyeongChang. / © Getty Images for Ottobock



The technical experts on the Ottobock Repair Service Center team also take care of the athletes' everyday devices. This picture shows a tyre change on a wheelchair at the 2018 Winter Paralympics in PyeongChang. / © Getty Images for Ottobock



Ottobock's Beijing 2022 Repair Service Center team includes welders, O&P professionals and wheelchair experts from 12 different nations. Thanks to the free technical service they offer, athletes are able to focus completely on their athletic performance at the Games. / © Getty Images for Ottobock

Diese Meldung kann unter <https://www.presseportal.de/en/pm/32079/5138378> abgerufen werden.