

## **Award ceremony for Paralympic Athletes of the Year organised by Messe Düsseldorf for the first time**



**A new venue and a new format: For the first time, on 24 November, the German National Paralympic Committee (DBS), will be holding the award ceremony for the *Paralympic Athlete of the Year 2018 in Düsseldorf*. The award ceremony will be jointly planned and implemented by Messe Düsseldorf and DBS. Since 2010, Messe Düsseldorf has collaborated with Deutsche Sport Marketing (DSM) in organising the German athletes' quarter, the Deutsches Haus, which included the Paralympics. After many years of partnership with DBS, the trade fair company is now moving to the next level and is again proving its expertise in organising sports-related events.**

400 guests have been invited to the ceremony on the Rhine Terrace. Thomas Urban, Secretary General of DBS, is pleased to be working with Messe Düsseldorf: "Messe Düsseldorf has had an important hand in the Deutsches Haus as a popular, bustling home for all athletes during the Paralympic Games. So it's great that we can now expand our successful collaboration with the Paralympic Athletes of the Year in 2018," says Urban.

Working for Deutsche Sport Marketing (DSM), the official marketing agency of the German Olympic Sports Association (DOSB) and the German National Paralympic Committee (DBS), Messe Düsseldorf has been organising the Deutsches Haus as a central meeting point for German athletes since Sydney 2000. This has included planning, implementing and running the German athletes' quarter. At the Winter Olympics in Vancouver 2010 the partnership was expanded to include the Paralympic Games. Werner M. Dornscheidt, Chief Executive Officer of Messe Düsseldorf GmbH, says: "Sports, integration and inclusion are part of our DNA – not just through our involvement in the Deutsches House, but also through REHACARE, our trade fair for rehabilitation, care and preventative medicine. We are proud to have expanded our activities in this area with the Paralympic Athletes of the Year."

Thomas Geisel, Mayor of Düsseldorf, is also pleased about the decision of DBS to choose the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre as a venue and Messe Düsseldorf as the organiser. "It's a great enrichment for Düsseldorf as a major sports centre that the first award ceremony for the Paralympic Athletes of the Year should be held in our city. The event will be in excellent hands. Inclusion in sports is one of our major values here in Düsseldorf, and we equally promote junior and top athletes both with and without disabilities," says the Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Messe Düsseldorf.

The work that is provided by Messe Düsseldorf includes, for example, the staging, management, decoration and disabled-friendly preparation of the Rhine Terrace. Messe Düsseldorf's own carpentry created two ramps for this purpose, one for the entrance and one for the stage. "The 12-metre ramp that leads to the stage goes right through the hall, serving as a catwalk for the winners," says Patrick Muno, head of the Events Division at Messe Düsseldorf.

Fans were invited to take part in an online vote where they could help to decide who should be honoured on the Rhine Terrace as Paralympic Athletes of the Year 2018. The following choices were available:

Female athletes:     Andrea Eskau (Nordic para-skiing and para-cycling)  
                              Anna-Lena Forster (para-Alpine skiing)  
                              Andrea Rothfuss (para-Alpine skiing)  
                              Anna Schaffelhuber (para-Alpine skiing)  
                              Denise Schindler (para-cycling)

Male athletes:        Martin Fleig (Nordic para-skiing)  
                              Makus Rehm (para-athletics)  
                              Martin Schulz (para-triathlon)  
                              Pierre Senska (para-cycling)  
                              Felix Streng (para-athletics)

Teams:                Men's national goalball team  
                              Nordic relay para-skiing  
                              Cross-country para-skiing, 4 x 2.5-km, mixed  
                              National women's wheelchair basketball team

Junior athletes: Denise Grahl (para-swimming)  
Phil Grolla (para-athletics)  
Julius Haupt (wheelchair fencing)

You can read about the backgrounds of the athletes on the German Paralympic Team at [www.deutsche-paralympische-mannschaft.de](http://www.deutsche-paralympische-mannschaft.de).

Further details of the German athletes' quarter, the Deutsches Haus, can be found at [https://www.messe-duesseldorf.de/deutsches\\_haus](https://www.messe-duesseldorf.de/deutsches_haus).

**The Messe Düsseldorf Group:**

With a revenue of around EUR 367m in 2017, the Messe Düsseldorf Group has maintained its position as one of Germany's most successful trade fair companies. Over 29,000 exhibitors presented their products to 1.34m trade visitors at the company's events in Düsseldorf this year. The Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre hosts around 50 trade fairs in five sectors of expertise: machinery, plants and equipment; the retail trade, trades and services; medicine and healthcare; lifestyle and beauty; and leisure. The trade fairs include 23 proprietary number one trade fairs currently, as well as 15 robust partner and guest events. Also, its subsidiary Düsseldorf Congress holds around 3,300 conventions, corporate events, conferences and meetings, attracting around 640,000 delegates in all. In addition, the Messe Düsseldorf Group organises 70 proprietary events, participations and contracted events in other countries and is one of the leading export platforms in the world. Moreover, Messe Düsseldorf GmbH comes first in the internationalism of its capital goods trade fairs. In 2017, Messe Düsseldorf's proprietary events in machinery, plants and equipment attracted approx. 74% international exhibitors and 73% trade visitors from other countries. In all, Düsseldorf trade fairs were attended by customers from about 180 countries. The Group runs a global network of sales offices in 140 countries (with 76 international representations) as well as competence centres in 8 countries.

**Contact:**

Dr. Andrea Gränzdörffer  
Head of Corporate Communications / Press Officer  
Phone: +49(0)211 4560 555  
Fax: +49(0)211 4560 87555  
Email: [GraenzdoerfferA@messe-dusseldorf.de](mailto:GraenzdoerfferA@messe-dusseldorf.de)