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The Paralympics Challenge Everything We Think We Know About Sports

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If you're a sports fan, you likely watched coverage of the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano Cortina. But will you watch the Paralympics when approximately 665 athletes are expected in Italy to compete in the Para sports of alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, ice hockey, snowboarding, and wheelchair curling?

The Paralympics, so-called because they are "parallel" to the Olympics, stand alone as the globe's premier sporting event for elite athletes with disabilities. According to the International Paralympic Committee, 4,400 disabled athletes competed in the 2024 Paris Summer Games in track and field, swimming, and twenty other sports.