

# British Paralympics site tops sports body league tables with 100% accessibility score

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In the run-up to the 2004 Olympics, SiteMorse has released the results of its first report on the websites of UK sports bodies. Published in the form of league tables, the report, entitled "Website Testing and Ranking of Major Amateur Sports and Olympic Related Sites" revealed how the majority of sites were failing in their obligation to address basic disability access issues, even in the shadow of the imminent legislation. The top performer was the British Paralympic Association website ([www.paralympics.org.uk](http://www.paralympics.org.uk)) which was also the only one to achieve a 100% rating for accessibility.

The report highlighted that 4 out of 5 of the sites tested failed to meet even a 50% rating under SiteMorse's accessibility tests, which looked at WAI Priority 1 requirements. For some the figure was worse - a quarter (16 of the 65) of the sites tested achieved a 0% rating for accessibility.

SiteMorse's Sol Saad commented:

"Whilst the BPA outperformed other sites on the whole range of tests for errors, code, internal and external links, response times and accessibility, to top the league tables; it is depressing to see how so many others have not taken action to make their sites meet even basic compliance - even in the wake of the proven international test case against website discrimination."

Dr Mark Smith, Chief Executive of Nemisys Enterprises ([www.nemisys.uk.com](http://www.nemisys.uk.com)), which achieved the number one and three positions in the SiteMorse tables with the BPA and England Hockey ([www.englandhockey.co.uk](http://www.englandhockey.co.uk)) sites, added:

"With two million partially sighted individuals in the UK alone, web developers should view the disabled market as a valuable carrot rather than simply reacting to the stick of legislation such as the DDA and the Sydney ruling. Whether you are a commercial concern or a non-profit organisation, it makes sense to provide an inclusive service."

The Sydney ruling that Smith and Saad allude to is the landmark ruling made against SOCOG (Sydney organising committee for the Olympic Games), which ruled that their site, [www.olympics.com](http://www.olympics.com), discriminated against the visually impaired and therefore needed to be modified. SOCOG was ultimately fined for not taking the remedial action required.

SiteMorse also tested the Olympics' sites alongside those of the UK sports bodies. The results were mixed. Whilst the Athens 2004 site achieved an 89% rating for accessibility, the official site of the Olympic Movement, [www.olympics.org](http://www.olympics.org), was one of the sixteen sites to achieve a zero rating for accessibility.

Bottom overall in the tables was the British Weight Lifters' Association site. On this Smith added:

"Who has the guts to tell them? Not me!"

Ends

Information on Nemisys:

Nemisys Enterprises ([www.nemisys.uk.com](http://www.nemisys.uk.com)) is a new media and marketing consultancy which specialises in large internet projects. The company has a varied client base comprising charities, government departments and commercial organisations. Clients include the Mental Health Foundation, Winston's Wish, Dame Stephanie Shirley, Hewlett-Packard, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, British Paralympic Association, Bedfordshire County Council and the National Evaluation of the Children's Fund.

The British Paralympics Association (1st place in the tests) and England Hockey (3rd place) sites were both designed and built by Nemisys Enterprises.

Information on the SiteMorse report:

The SiteMorse tests were performed on UK sports bodies' websites on 12th July 2004. The tests were carried out at the same time to ensure controlled conditions and checked for metadata, website function; server and page download speeds, broken internal/external links, emails, html compliance, and alt image tags. The various tests were then weighted to provide rankings for website performance.

SiteMorse's web accessibility tests offer comprehensive tests for assessing page compliance for the elements of the Priority 1 & 2's (A / AA) WAI guidelines which can be tested automatically. The tests simulate 'human' internet traffic to websites and are able to test 250 pages of a site within a few seconds. Copies of the full report entitled "Website Testing and Ranking of Major Amateur Sports and Olympic Related Sites", released on 21st July 2004 are available free of charge by emailing [sport1@siteMorse.com](mailto:sport1@siteMorse.com)

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