

Athletes with an amputation know that behind them is the dedication, passion and expertise of a great prosthetist

Submitted by: Media Safari

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Ottobock technical service team for the London 2012 Paralympic Games (<http://passion.ottobock.com/>) includes 50 prosthetists

Unique to Paralympic sport

(<http://paralympic-press.ottobock.com/en/home/equipment/equipment-used-in-paralympic-sport/>), every amputee has a prosthetist, whose role is as vital as the coach. Responsible for the function and comfort of the prosthetics, a prosthetist's role is a vital, caring and often challenging one. German Sprinter Heinrich Popow took home a gold medal on day nine of competition in the Men's 100m - T42. Jens Northemann, his prosthetist from Ottobock Healthcare has spoken about the relationship between technician and athlete.

"There is a lot of trust required between an athlete and a prosthetists", said Tino Hartmann, Prosthetist at Ottobock Healthcare. "It is a real collaboration. I am required to constantly adjust the fit of Heinrich's leg depending on his running technique, fitness and changes to his residual limb as a result of diet and training. We spend hours looking at video footage to ensure that the leg enables him to perform to his best and is comfortable. We have been working together for five years and to see him cross the finish line first filled me with such pride and passion, it really is a dream come true."

Australian Cameron Ward is the prosthetist for silver medallist, Scott Reardon. "You develop a strong emotional relationship with your athletes as you see them continue to push boundaries. Our role as prosthetist is a behind-the-scene one, we are never thanked on the podium, but like a rider without a horse or a racing driver without a car, an amputee can't compete without prosthetics. It's our job to make sure the socket fits perfectly, the knee is aligned and athlete can compete to their best – it's an honour."

German Tino Hartmann and Australian Cameron Ward are two of 80 technicians working for Ottobock Healthcare as part of the Prosthetic, Orthotic and Wheelchair Technical Service Team. Tino is also responsible for prosthetic education and training around the world as part of Ottobock's commitment to increasing the standard of prosthetic care.

"Our technicians are the heart of our operation and the passion, knowledge and care they bring to the role is unique," said Professor Hans George Naeder, CEO Ottobock Healthcare. "We are proud of the great work they do, not only on the international stage here at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, but also in their day-to-day lives supporting amputees around the world. Ottobock has been providing this service to Paralympic athletes since 1988 and we look forward to continuing our role supporting athlete's success on and off the field of play for many years to come."

Ottobock Healthcare (http://www.ottobock.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/ob_uk_en/hs.xsl/2580.html), Official Prosthetic, Orthotic and Wheelchair Technical Service Provider to the 2012 Paralympic Games, working behind the scenes in a 6,500 ft² workshop in the Paralympic Village and nine other workshops next to the field of play at nine competition venues. Ottobock is supporting all 4,200 competing athletes with a team

of 80 expert prosthetists, orthotists and wheelchair technicians, including 12 welders, who have all volunteered their services. The team of technicians come from 18 countries and speak 14 languages. Today alone, 158 repairs were carried out for 110 athletes.

Athletes competing at the London 2012 Paralympic Games can all have their equipment checked and repaired by Ottobock experts before or during competition. Like the services provided by mechanics during a pit-stop in motor racing, Ottobock's technical service team are located next to the field of play responsible for the repair and maintenance of equipment used by Paralympians and getting athletes back into the competition as fast as possible.

Technical service by the numbers:

Total repairs:

Day 9: 158; Total to date: 2,740

Number of repairs per type:

Orthotic:

Day 9: 13; Total to date:168

Prosthetic:

Day 9: 23; Total to date: 359

Wheelchair:

Day 9:122; Total to date: 2,091

Number of athletes serviced:

Day 9: 110; Total to date:1,863

Nationality of athletes serviced: 124

Picture caption: (Further images available on request)

German Sprinter Heinrich Popow took home a gold medal on day nine of competition in the Men's 100m - T42.

Heinrich Popow celebrates with prosthetist Tino Hartmann and Research and Development team member Jens Northemann from Ottobock Healthcare

About Ottobock Healthcare (<http://paralympic-press.ottobock.com/en/home/about/>)

Ottobock is a world leading supplier of high quality, innovative and practical solutions that restore human mobility and help people to rediscover personal independence. Ottobock Healthcare is part of the Ottobock global group of companies established in the UK in 1976. Its wide product range includes high quality prosthetic and orthotic components, wheelchairs, rehabilitation and mobility products available through the country's leading clinics and dealers. With a highly motivated and skilled team of professionals offering expert advice, product sales, service and support, Ottobock solutions enhance the physical comfort, confidence and mobility of the individual. Ottobock aims to achieve the best possible outcome for its customers, combining the latest technology with cutting-edge products and services.

Ottobock is also the Official Prosthetic, Orthotic and Wheelchair Technical Service Provider of the 2012 Paralympic Games. It has been supporting people with disabilities to participate in sports and recreation for more than three decades, and has been a Partner of the Paralympic Games since 1988. Ottobock has been

an official 'Worldwide Partner of the Paralympic Movement' since 2005. www.ottobock.co.uk
(<http://www.ottobock.co.uk>)

For further press information and images, or to book a behind the scenes tour of the Ottobock workshop in the Paralympic Village please contact:

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