

## Canada scores at Disabled Olympics in the United States

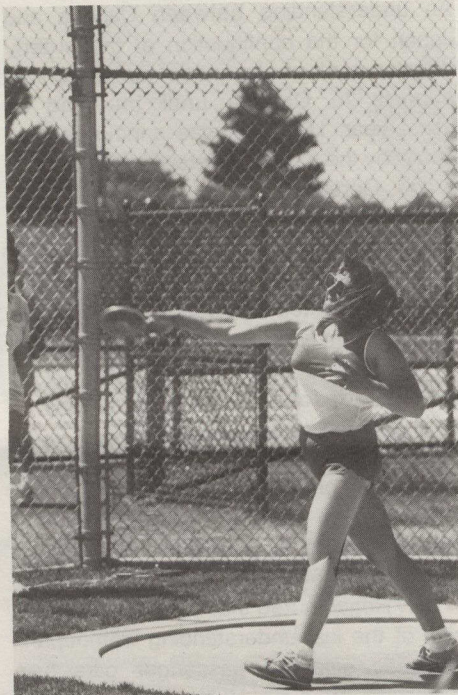
With a medal count of 149 (48 gold, 52 silver, 49 bronze), Canadian athletes finished third in a field of 54 countries at the third International Games for the Physically Disabled, held in Uniondale, New York, from June 17 to 29. Our blind, amputee and cerebral palsy athletes trailed only the United States and Britain in the standings.

The Disabled Games are held every four years, usually in the same country as the able-bodied Olympic Games. The first Disabled Games took place in Toronto in 1976; in 1980 they were held in Arnhem, Holland, because of some difficulty of staging them in the USSR.

Ordinarily they include wheelchair, blind, amputee, and cerebral palsy athletes. This year, however, the wheelchair games are being held separately in Stoke-Mandeville, England, where disabled sport was born as a form of rehabilitative therapy during the Second World War.

Disabled athletes generally practise sports similar to those enjoyed by able-bodied athletes. In some sports, particularly shooting and archery, they compete in world-class able-bodied events as well.

Competitors are divided into classes by the degree of disability (level of paralysis or amputation, degree of blindness, etc.), and the rules of the sport are modified accordingly, but never more than necessary. In blind track events, for example, the totally blind runners in the short (100-metre) events run toward a caller who modifies his chant to tell the runner if he is straying out of his proper lane. In longer distance events, the athlete is tied by the wrist or elbow to a



*Stefania Balta of Toronto, gold medallist in amputee shot put and discus.*

sighted guide runner, who must himself be a good athlete.

Standards of performance in disabled sport are improving each year, and Canadian athletes at Uniondale met tougher competition than they did four years ago, when our blind and amputee athletes placed first in their categories at Arnhem. Nonetheless, Stefania Balta of Toronto was able to keep her gold medals in amputee shot put and discus, ahead of Australian and American rivals.



*Goalball, played by blind athletes, is a game in which teams, three-a-side, are guided only by the sound of a bell inside a medicine ball. The Canadian women's team won a silver medal.*

## Goalball

Some of the events are designed specifically around the disability of the athletes that participate in them. Goalball, played by blind athletes, is a game of tactic and reflex, played in total silence in a space the size of a volleyball court. Soccer nets stretch across the width of the court and the players, three-a-side, are spaced across the net with a neutral zone between the two sides. All are blindfolded to remove any vestige of sight. At the whistle, the server drives a heavy medicine ball across the court — it must never leave the floor and the defenders must stop it any way they can, guided only by the sound of a bell inside the ball. The Canadian women's team, won a silver medal in this sport, losing in the final match to the world champion American team.

A significant new element was added to these Games when it was announced that, for the first time, disabled events would be featured as a demonstration sport at the Los Angeles Olympics from July 28 to August 12, 1984. Among the wheelchair racers who qualified for this ground-breaking event were five Canadians — Rick Hansen of Vancouver, Andre Viger of Windsor, Mel Fitzgerald of St. John's, Angela Ieriti of Toronto, and Debbie Kostelyk of Edmonton.

Following the Los Angeles Games, Rick Hansen will begin to work on his next project — a round-the-world wheelchair expedition to publicize Vancouver's Expo 86.

## Videotex system for education

A computer-assisted system for education on Telidon (CASE-T), developed by the University of Guelph and Tayson Information Technology Inc. of Toronto, was announced recently. CASE-T enables teachers and trainers to develop their own online instructional or information system on terminals in their own offices. Graphics, written information and branching logical paths are possible; students may access the packages created by their instructors from any terminal or microcomputer with a NAPLPS decoder.

Features of CASE-T include record-keeping and provision for electronic mail so that students can communicate with their instructors. An instructor can design a test that selects questions drawn randomly from a master list. The package is capable of handling as many as 50 local users, although it would normally be used by about 20 teachers and a manager to supervise organization of individual data bases created by instructors or users of the system.