

## **The Hertz Corporation Sponsors Charlotte Athlete in the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games**

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The Hertz Corporation, the world's largest car rental company and a leading construction and industrial equipment rental company, announces its sponsorship of Patrick Akutekwe, a two time Olympian and one time world champion in powerlifting, at the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games.

A native of Nigeria, Akutekwe is an Instant Return Representative at Hertz' Charlotte, North Carolina airport location. Akutekwe began his powerlifting career in 1990. He captured the World Championship with The International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Games in England, 1995 and captured a Bronze medal at the Atlanta Paralympic games in 1996. He has been awarded the Medal of Honor by the President of Nigeria and won the Sportsmanship Award of 1996 by the Wheelchair Sports Federation of South Carolina.

"Patrick's motto is 'honesty and hardwork'," commented Mike Gravel, Division Vice President, Southeast Region for Hertz. "These trademarks are not only inherent in his work for Hertz, but also in his drive to succeed at the Paralympics. We're proud to have such an outstanding individual employed at Hertz and are pleased to have the opportunity to sponsor Patrick at the Paralympics."

The Paralympic Games formally began in 1976 with the first games held in Sweden. The Paralympics are recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and governed by the International Paralympic Committee, a member of the IOC. Today, the Paralympics are elite sports events for athletes from six different disability groups. There are 26 Paralympic sports with 19 events having Olympic analogous sports. The games emphasize participants' athletic achievements and provide world-class competition for disabled athletes at the highest level. Much like Olympians, Paralympians compete against the best disabled athletes in world for gold, silver and bronze medals. More than 4000 athletes will participate in the Sydney Paralympic games.

The Hertz Corporation operates from approximately 6,500 locations in more than 140 countries, and has a fleet of 525,000 vehicles.

SOURCE: Hertz Corporation

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