

## Wheelchair Fencing

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Husband and wife team Rodrigo and Cris Capuski specialized in photographing dogs for most of their career. Since working with iStock over the past several years, Renata Simões, senior content manager for Latin America, has encouraged the couple to expand their portfolio to people and lifestyle, with great success. Earlier this spring, they discussed a sports shoot with the goal of bringing visibility to athletes who are often overlooked.

*“The idea came about because of the upcoming Olympic games and all the trends and research we’ve seen from Getty Images and the [‘Disability Collection’](#). There’s a gap between the media and reality when it comes to people with disabilities. Although nearly one in five people have a disability, just two percent of publicly available imagery depicts their lives.”*

Since Rodrigo and Cris didn’t know any athletes, they made a casting post on Instagram where they ended up meeting a trainer for Paralympic athletes and then connecting with two of her fencing students, Carminha and Moacir. The fencers were initially surprised by the photographers’ inquiry, then grateful for the opportunity to tell their visual story: “it is difficult for people to be interested in us,” said one of them, “they never look to us for anything.”

For everyone involved, it was essential to move beyond one-dimensional stereotypes, so the athletes guided the photographers through the shoot to maintain authenticity and convey the realities of their training. By the end of the experience, Rodrigo and Cris felt they had gained an education in Paralympic sports, the humans behind them, and the importance of being seen and represented.

*“I think our greatest learning was to become aware of how much people with disabilities miss being included and respected. They were some of the most enjoyable models to work with in our career. We know many people are dedicated to sports, compete in championships, and chase their dreams. Placing athletes like Carminha and Moacir as protagonists in our photo and video production focused on strength and determination just reinforces the resilience of the Paralympic community.”*

People say that sports can build bridges and that is what this shoot provided. When beautiful stories are discovered and can be shared with the world through the lenses of our contributors, that keeps us moving the world (and sport) with visuals.