



World Para Taekwondo Newsletter

August 2021 | Issue #14

It's Time!!



Para Taekwondo to Make Long-Awaited Paralympic Debut

Here we go!

After a long wait – made agonisingly longer after the COVID-19 postponement – the arrival of Para Taekwondo at the Paralympic Games is here!

73 athletes representing 38 committees are now just weeks away from competing in the Para movement's first full-contact sport – and winning Para Taekwondo's first Paralympic medals!

Some have high hopes resting on them.

Denmark's four-time world champion **Lisa Gjessing**, Mexico's teenage reigning champion **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez**, and Peru's Parapan Am Games hero **Angelica Espinoza** have all been named flagbearers for their countries – a major recognition for an athlete competing in a sport that has never before appeared at the Paralympic Games.

Others will have their entire nations watching, as athletes like **Elliot Loonstra** of Aruba and **Solomon Jagiri** of the Solomon Islands could be their countries' only athletes competing.

While all competing athletes will be looking to claim Para Taekwondo's first Paralympic medals, some will be looking to break even further ground. Several athletes will be looking to claim their countries' first-ever Paralympic medals!

Besides Jagiri, and Loonstra, Costa Rica's **Andres Molina**, Libya's **Mohamed Abidar**, Nepal's **Palesha Goverdhan**, and Senegal's **Ibrahima Seye** could all become the answer to trivia questions in their respective countries.

Then there's **Parfait Hakizimana** – the Burundian refugee that has spent years living and honing his craft in a dusty refugee camp in Rwanda. Hakizimana will be aiming to claim the Refugee Paralympic Team's first-ever medal.

Our athletes have been waiting a long time for their chances to claim Paralympic history.

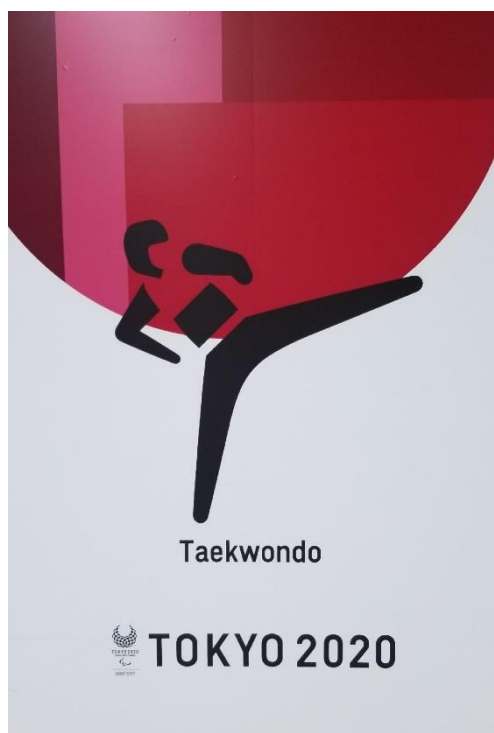
By the time our next issue comes out – we'll finally have Para Taekwondo's first Paralympic champions!

Good luck to everyone competing at Tokyo 2020!

Here's a list of athletes competing at Tokyo 2020:

-49 kg	-58 kg	+58 kg
TBD	Silvana Cardoso (BRA)	Janine Watson (AUS)
<u>Royal Fatiliyeva (AZE)</u>	<u>Yujie Li (CHN)</u>	<u>Aynur Mammadova (AZE)</u>
<u>Aruna (IND)</u>	<u>Lisa Gjessing (DEN)</u>	<u>Debora Menezes (BRA)</u>
<u>Soukaina Essabbar (MAR)</u>	<u>Salma Ali (EGY)</u>	<u>Laura Schiel (FRA)</u>
<u>Enkhtuya Khurelbaatar (MGL)</u>	<u>Beth Munro (GBR)</u>	<u>Amy Truesdale (GBR)</u>
<u>Angelica Espinosa (PER)</u>	<u>Shauna Kay Hines (JAM)</u>	<u>Shahab Rayekeh (IRI)</u>
<u>Anna Poddubskaja (RPC)</u>	<u>Kamilya Dosmalova (KAZ)</u>	<u>Shoko Ota (JPN)</u>
<u>Danijela Jovanovic (SRB)</u>	<u>Palesha Goverdhan (NEP)</u>	<u>Rajae Akermach (MAR)</u>
<u>Khwansuda Phuangkittha (THA)</u>	<u>Jeminah Otoa (SOL)</u>	<u>Daniela Martinez (MEX)</u>
<u>Meryem Betul Cavdar (TUR)</u>	<u>Marija Micev (SRB)</u>	<u>Seyma Emeksiz Bacaksiz (TUR)</u>
<u>Vika Marchuk (UKR)</u>	<u>Gamze Gurdal (TUR)</u>	<u>Yuliya Lypetska (UKR)</u>
<u>Ziyodakhon Isakova (UZB)</u>	<u>Brianna Salinaro (USA)</u>	<u>Gulionoy Naimova (UZB)</u>

-61 kg	-75 kg	+75 kg
<u>Imamaddin Khalilov (AZE)</u>	<u>Juan Samorano (ARG)</u>	<u>Elliot Loonstra (ARU)</u>
<u>Nathan Torquato (BRA)</u>	<u>Abulfaz Abuzarli (AZE)</u>	<u>Andres Molina (CRC)</u>
<u>Mohamed Elzayat (EGY)</u>	<u>Mehdi Pourrahnama (IRI)</u>	<u>Ivan Mikulic (CRO)</u>
<u>Alejandro Vidal Alvarez (ESP)</u>	<u>Jeonghun Joo (KOR)</u>	<u>Matt Bush (GBR)</u>
<u>Bopha Kong (FRA)</u>	<u>Shunsuke Kudo (JPN)</u>	<u>Asghar Aziziaghdam (IRI)</u>
<u>Antonino Bossolo (ITA)</u>	<u>Nurlan Dombayev (KAZ)</u>	<u>Nyshan Omirali (KAZ)</u>
<u>Mitsuya Tanaka (JPN)</u>	<u>Juan Diego Garcia Lopez (MEX)</u>	<u>Mohamed Abidar (LBA)</u>
<u>Bolor-Erdene Ganbat (MGL)</u>	<u>Allain Ganapin (PHI)</u>	<u>Rachid Ismaili Alaoui (MAR)</u>
<u>Daniil Sidorov (RPC)</u>	<u>Magomedzagir Isaldibirov (RPC)</u>	<u>Francisco Pedroza (MEX)</u>
<u>Parfait Hakizimana (RPT)</u>	<u>Ibrahima Seye (SEN)</u>	<u>Zainutdin Ataev (RPC)</u>
<u>Solomon Jagiri (SOL)</u>	<u>Fatih Celik (TUR)</u>	<u>Mehmet Yakut (TUR)</u>
<u>Mahmut Bozteke (TUR)</u>	<u>Anton Shvets (UKR)</u>	<u>Evan Medell (USA)</u>
<u>Zukhriddin Tokhirov (UZB)</u>		



2021 European Championships First Step to Paris 2024



Istanbul, Turkey to Host First Tournament with New Weight Categories

Mere weeks after Tokyo 2020, the Para Taekwondo world comes together for the first event in the Paris 2024 qualification cycle, which will feature the sport's new weight categories!

No sooner than Para Taekwondo crowns its first Paralympic champions than the rest of our athletes set out on the journey to dethrone them.

First up – the 2021 European Open championships in Istanbul, Turkey on 23 September.

It will be the first opportunity for athletes to collect ranking points that will help them qualify for Paris 2024 – now just three years away!

As a G4 / G2 event, European athletes will have the chance to earn twice as many ranking points as their non-European opponents. It also means that non-European fighters will have the chance to deny their European rivals the chance to jump up the rankings.

The 2021 European Open championships will be the first tournament to feature Para Taekwondo's new weight categories.

Athletes will be able to transfer their previous ranking points to their new category and the European championships will be the first chance to see just how the new divisions may shape up.

All athletes must be reclassified before competing. Classification will take place on 21-22 September.

The tournament will also utilise the single five-minute round format.

For additional rules and requirements, including COVID-19 protocols to be used at the event, please see the event guide at <https://worldtkd.simplycompete.com/.../11ebf5e2-6625.../1>.

For more information, please contact the Turkish Taekwondo Federation at taekwondo@gsb.gov.tr.



**UPCOMING COURSES
REGISTRATIONS OPEN NOW!**



Now is the time to get your coaches and classifiers certified!

Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II is required to coach at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games and 2021 European Championships!

If you have any questions about the trainings or registration, please contact the World Para Taekwondo office ASAP.

Para Taekwondo ONLINE International Coach Certification Course [Level II]
(English)

- Course: 20-22 August (18:00-21:00 CET). Registration **Deadline: 15 August 23:59 CET**

[Click to Register for Para Taekwondo Courses](#)

Para Taekwondo Competition Calendar



- Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games (G20) - September 2-4 -Tokyo, Japan
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- 2021 European Open Championships (G4/G2) - September 23 - Istanbul, Turkey
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN IN GMS!! Deadline August 31, 2021
- 2021 Asian Youth Para Games (G2) - November 28 - December 7 - Bahrain
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- 2021 World Taekwondo Grand Prix Final G10 - December - TBA

Para Taekwondo Around the World

Africa:

IPC Introduces Refugee Athlete Hakizimana

Already a media sensation just weeks after being named to the Paralympic Refugee Team, Burundi's **Parfait Hakizimana** - who fights out of Rwanda - continues to have his story amplified. If you want to meet Para Taekwondo's newest Paralympic-qualified athlete, check out the IPC's 'Meet Parfait Hakizimana' on YouTube.



To view the video, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG3iBRxLy8>



IPC Names Egypt's Ali a Top Teen to Watch in Tokyo

The IPC has named Egyptian teen **Salma Ali** as one of its 'Top 10 Teen Stars Who Can Light Up Tokyo 2020', alongside Mexico's reigning world champion **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez**. Ali stormed onto the scene as a 15-year-old to claim silver at the 2019 African Open championships - her first international tournament - by stunning reigning world championship silver medalist **Marija Micev** (SRB) in the semifinal. She picked up bronze at her very next tournament - the 2019 Asian Open - by not dropping a single point until the semifinal. Too late to climb up the rankings to qualify for Tokyo 2020 through the rankings, Ali booked her Paralympics ticket at the African Qualification tournament last year. She picked up where she left off in the post-pandemic period, winning bronze at the 2021 Asian Open with a convincing 40-15 win over Paralympic-qualified **Kamilya Dosmalova** (KAZ).

To read IPC's full list of Top Teens at Tokyo 2020, including Ali and Garcia Lopez, please visit <https://www.paralympic.org/feature/ten-teen-stars-who-can-light-tokyo-2020-paralympic-games>

Asia:

Heartbreak for Afghanistan's Khudadadi After Paralympic Withdrawal Due to Taliban Takeover

It was history in the making to instant heartbreak and the potential for worse for Afghanistan's **Zakia Khudadadi** after she was forced to withdraw from the Paralympic Games due to the Taliban takeover of the country. Khudadadi was set to become Afghanistan's first female Paralympian before chaos broke out in the country, preventing her from finding a flight out just days before she was set to leave. Khudadadi was profiled by the IPC just last week, where she told the group "This is the first time a female will represent Afghanistan at the Games and I'm so happy!"

"This was history in the making", said Afghan chef de mission Arian Sadiqi about the 2016 African Open champ's participation at Tokyo 2020, "Zakia would have been a great model for the rest of the females in the country".

For the full story, check out the full article by The Guardian at <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/aug/16/zakia-khudadadis-hopes-of-becoming-first-afghan-female-paralympian-dashed>

To see the IPC post from last week, please visit <https://www.paralympic.org/feature/afghans-head-tokyo-message-hope-and-peace?fbclid=IwAR00JGtAMKTLtSIVbk-kKts0EmEMEq01t2iIRgFRFOlh5IAm0aCqbjATDs>



Shoko Ota Stars in Japanese Adidas Ads

Japan's **Shoko Ota** was already a household name before Adidas came calling. Japan's youngest-ever Paralympian when she debuted at Torino 2006, the two-time Winter Paralympics medalist carried her country's flag at the Sochi 2014 Opening Ceremony. Then, after making the switch to Para Taekwondo, she upended reigning world champion **Amy Truesdale** (GBR) on her way

to a historic bronze for Japan at the 2019 World Championships.

Adidas used footage from that famous upset in its 'Impossible is Nothing' series that highlights five Japanese Paralympians. Ota's ad also features footage of her as a child, competing as a skier, and training for Taekwondo - and has already racked up nearly 12 million views! Ota competes in the +58 kg category at Tokyo 2020 next month.

To see Ota's Adidas ad, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfliOlo1Hkc>

For more on Ota, check out her IPC feature here: https://www.paralympic.org/feature/japan-s-para-taekwondo-star-shoko-ota-soaks-pressure-smile?fbclid=IwAR1J62aleu2Q1DIbctBqXv_J2j8E2vpmf2p5XsR-TJfXAM0dbmlOOkk_nUk

Goverdhan Featured by Nepalese Sports Channel

Nepal's **Palesha Goverdhan** is on a mission to score Nepal's first-ever Paralympic medal and the national media is excited. National sportscaster Hamro Khelkud recently featured the star athlete and the video has racked up over 40,000 views! The video outlines Goverdhan's journey to the Paralympic Games, how she is preparing, and features interviews with her coaches and other federation officials.



To view the video (in original language), please visit <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=377016083858352>



Europe:

French Taekwondo Federation Profiles Four-Time World Champ Kong

It will be full circle for France's **Bopha Kong** when he takes to the mat at Tokyo 2020. Already retired and teaching Taekwondo when Para Taekwondo made its debut in 2009, Kong is one of two world champions from that first tournament to qualify for Tokyo 2020, alongside teammate **Laura Schiel**. He has added three world titles since, including at the most recent Worlds in 2019, and has become one of the faces of the French Paralympic team. The French Taekwondo Federation last month profiled Kong's journey ahead of Tokyo 2020.

To learn more about this Para Taekwondo pioneer, read the article on Facebook by clicking here -

<https://www.facebook.com/174438030924/posts/10157982956685925/>

Croatia's Former World Champ Mikulic Featured in Ad Campaign

Para Taekwondo athletes have become TV ad stars across the world and the latest to be featured is Croatia's former world champ **Ivan Mikulic**. He stars in Croatian company Pevex's 'Sport Is The Only Thing We Can't Do Without' campaign that focuses on how people with impairments must work twice as hard to achieve sporting successes. Over 50,000 people have seen the ad, which features Mikulic sporting a brand new beard.



To see the ad for yourself, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ze6AFehZxs>



Great Britain Hosts Mexico & Aruba in Pre-Paralympics Training Camp

Great Britain hosted a pre-Paralympics training camp that featured current world champions, No. 1-ranked fighters, and seven Paralympians from three nations last month. Some of the sport's biggest stars were there, including reigning world champions **Matt Bush** (GBR) and **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez** (MEX), as well as No. 1-ranked **Amy Truesdale** (GB). Paralympic athletes from Mexico and Aruba joined their British counterparts for the training. Coming off the heels of the wildly successful UZB-AZE-KAZ co-training session

ahead of the 2021 Paralympic qualification tournaments - which saw 8 athletes qualify, these intercountry training sessions ahead of major events could become a staple of the Para Taekwondo calendar.

For more, check out the Mexican Taekwondo Federation's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/femextkdoficial>

Vika Marchuk Among Ukraine's Best

Six world championships are enough to get you noticed - even among athletes from one of the world's Paralympic powerhouses. **Vika Marchuk** was recently featured in a montage of some of Ukraine's top medal threats for Tokyo 2020 by the group Equalympic. The video shows her training ahead of trying to claim a Paralympic title to add to her six world crowns. Marchuk will be joined by former world champ **Anton Shvets** and teammate **Yuliya Lypetska** in Tokyo where the trio will try to help Ukraine match its 3rd place finish on the medal table at Rio 2016. The team was sent off at a swanky ceremony attended by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky earlier this month.



For view the Equalympic video, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/100063712801692/posts/221769516623474/>

For more on the Paralympic send-off, please see day.kiev.ua's coverage here - <https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/news/120821-ukrayinska-nacionalna-paralimpiyska-zbirna-vidpravlyavetsya-do-tokio>



Oceania:

Australia's First Taekwondo Paralympian Keeping Busy

It seems that everyone wants a piece of Australia's first and only Taekwondo Paralympian - **Janine Watson**. First, she was profiled by national broadcaster ABC's 'Tokyo Diaries', then she was featured by local newspaper Chinchilla News, and then she participated in Paralympics Australia's 'Come and Try Day' - an event she herself

participated before beginning her Para Taekwondo journey. The world champion Poomsae Taekwondo will look to add a Paralympic title in Kyorugi at Tokyo 2020.

For ABC's 'Tokyo Diaries' featuring Watson, visit <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/tokyo-diaries/series/0/video/NN2119H001S00>

For the Chinchilla News feature (subscription only), visit

https://www.couriermail.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=CMWEB_WRE170_a_FBK&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.couriermail.com.au%2Fnews%2Fqueensland%2Fchinchilla%2Fjanine-watson-chinchilla-paralympic-taekwondo-fighter-to-represent-australia-in-tokyo%2Fnews-story%2Ff7ec34be5ecf9e97b5e45a7f6f55baa5&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium&nk=a3ca6da4df216a13a6ea1c0ee637e2cd-1627725396

For more on her involvement in Paralympics Australia's 'Come and Try Day', visit

https://www.paralympic.org.au/get-involved/?fbclid=IwAR22_V3MhdqY-qaUbWqI8eIBFniFS90wUoS1qqMDNddtnmgRUGhsEcPRxcQ

Pan Am:

Brazil's Paralympians Head to Training Camp Ahead of Tokyo

Expectations are high for Brazil's three Paralympian Taekwondoists as they set off for a pre-Paralympic Games training camp in Sao Paulo. All three have medal expectations and have the bona fides to back it up. **Debora Menezes** is the reigning world champ in +58 kg, **Nathan Torquato** is ranked No. 3 in the -61 kg category, and **Silvana Fernandes** could be the hottest fighter on the circuit in 2021, picking up two titles and topping the legendary **Lisa Gjessing** (DEN) for the first time.



To learn more about Brazil's preparations, check out this article by the Brazil Taekwondo Federation:

https://cbtkd.org.br/noticias/leitura/1183/a-estrela-do-parataekwondo-no-jogos-olimpicos-de-toquio-2020?fbclid=IwAR0RiIX9UeTVCZZ2DB1xwWiNHSY_RVYNXI_OXpi_U6R0Lhma_7jHiUqdS98



Garcia Lopez Named Mexico's Flagbearer

In a passing of Mexico's Paralympic torch, teenage Taekwondo sensation **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez** was named as Mexico's flagbearer alongside 3-time Paralympic champion powerlifter Amalia Perez. Garcia Lopez, of course, is the reigning world champion and No. 1-ranked fighter in the -75 kg category. Mexico has a strong heritage at the Paralympic Games and expects to claim its 100th gold and 300th medal in Tokyo, so it's a remarkable achievement for an athlete to be named flagbearer from a sport making its Paralympic debut. "My expectations are very high", he told noticias.imer.mx, "We know that we can give a good result."

For more information, please read the article on noticias.imer.mx at <https://noticias.imer.mx/blog/amalia-perez-y-juan-diego-garcia-designados-abanderados-paralimpicos/>

Espinoza to Once Again Carry Peru's Flag

Peru is hoping to catch lightning in a bottle for a second time by naming **Angelica Espinoza** flagbearer for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. Espinoza famously won gold at her home Parapan Am Games in 2019 after carrying the host nation's flag at the Opening Ceremonies. She has lost just one fight since and is now the top-ranked fighter in the world in the -49 kg category.



Peruvian President Pedro Castillo personally delivered the flag to Espinoza at a ceremony at the Government Palace. Espinoza will lead Peru's 11 athletes - the largest Paralympic team in the country's history.

For more on the announcement, please visit <https://rpp.pe/multideportes/juegos-olimpicos/tokio-2020-angelica-espinoza-y-efrain-sotacuro-seran-los-abanderados-en-los-juegos-paralimpicos-noticia-1352558>



USA's Salinaro Hopes to Rebound From Hip Surgeries

The USA's **Brianna Salinaro** was recently profiled by Team USA in an article that looks at her preparations for Tokyo 2020 and the difficulty of competing in the sport with cerebral palsy. In a sport famous for its kicking, Salinaro's CP makes it difficult due to tightened muscles. The 2017 World Championship bronze medalist just completed two hip surgeries to repair torn cartilage and increase her mobility.

"The surgeries I've gotten over the past year are going to make me a lot better fighter", she told TeamUSA.org, "I'm here to stay and someone you should be worried about."

To read the full profile on TeamUSA.org, please visit <https://www.teamusa.org/News/2021/May/16/Tokyo-Qualifier-Brianna-Salinaro-Taking-More-Flexibility-Into-Para-Taekwondo>

IPC

The IPC featured Para Taekwondo last month as part of its 'Sport Week' series to introduce Paralympic sports ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. Three features were included during the week, including '10 Things to Know About Para Taekwondo', 'Ones to Watch', and a feature on Japan's **Shoko Ota**.

To read '10 Things to Know About Para Taekwondo', please visit <https://www.paralympic.org/news/sport-week-10-things-know-about-para-taekwondo>



To read Para Taekwondo's 'Ones to Watch' - and see the 'Ones to Watch' video - please visit <https://www.paralympic.org/news/sport-week-ones-watch-para-taekwondo>

For the feature on Shoko Ota, please visit <https://www.paralympic.org/feature/japan-s-para-taekwondo-star-shoko-ota-soaks-pressure-smile>

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Member



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Vice-Chair



Nadezhada Petrova
Ad-hoc Para Taekwondo
Poomsae Committee
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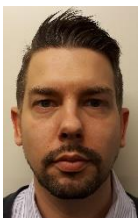
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