



World Para Taekwondo Newsletter

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Chile, Cuba, Dominican Rep. and Venezuela make history in Pan Am qualifier



Home athletes steal show with three quotas for Paris



Thrilling contests were underway at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic that offered nations 10 quota spot for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Four nations secured the quota spots through the qualification event for the first time.

History was made in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic when Chile, Cuba, Venezuela, and the host nation qualified for the first time for the Paralympic Games.

These nations will be taking part in the Paris 2024 Paralympics after their athletes secured qualification spots en route winning the gold medals at the Pan American Qualification tournament for the Games.

As many 24 athletes (18 men and six female) from 12 countries participated in the Paris 2024 qualification tournament which offered 10 Paralympic quota spots.

There were some exciting matches in men's events.

Argentina's **Miguel Galeano** shocked Mexico's **Ivan Torres**, the Santiago 2023 Para Pan American Games champion, 14-11 in the Men K44 -58kg final. Galeano had to overcome tough challenges of athletes from Guatemala and Brazil to help earn Argentina its second ticket for Paris.

Home favourite **Geraldo Castro** pleased the home crowd first winning over Venezuela's **Orlando Figueroa** in the semi-final and followed it up with a convincing performance against Cuba's **Marco Antoni Mayor**. Castro won the Men K44 -63kg final 29-23 to earn a slot for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

Puerto Rico's **Oscar Fontan** beat USA's newcomer **Aiden Carmody** in the semi-finals of the Men K44 -70kg to qualify for the final against the number one seed from Cuba, **Michael Suarez**.

In the final, Suarez proved too strong against Fontan winning the match 37-8 and earned Cuba's second slot for Paris at the tournament.

In Men K44 -80kg, Aruba's **Elliott Loonstra** surprised Santiago 2023 Parapan American Games champion **Andres Molina** of Costa Rica in the semi-finals and went on to face Brazil's **Claro Lopes de Oliveira** in the final.

The final turned out to be a close battle going into a golden round with the Brazilian Lopes finishing on top. In women's events, Cuba's **Lidia Montes de Oca** defeated Peru's **Laura Puntriano** in a closely fought in Women K44 +65kg final with the scores reading 13-10.

Others who secured quota places for **Julio Armando Figuereo** (DOM) - M +80kg, **Lilisbet Rodriguez** (CUB) F -47kg, **Elisabeth Geraldo** (DOM) F-52kg, **Valeria Morales** (VEN) F -57kg, **Constanza Scarlett Fuentes** (CHI) F -65kg.





Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji qualify for Paris 2024



Honiara are: **Solomon JAGIRI** (SOL, M K44 under 63kg), **Herea LOI** (PNG, M K44 under 70kg), **James Ingram GEGEU** (SOL, M K44 over 80kg), **Jeminah OTOA** (SOL, F K44 under 52kg), **Irene MAR** (FIJ, F K44 under 57kg), **Junita TONOWANE** (SOL, F K44 under 65kg), **Manega TAPARI** (PNG, F K44 over 65kg).

"Oceania Taekwondo Union is really proud to see Para Athletes from our region qualify for Paris Paralympics - this is the first time in many years that we have so many Para athletes representing the

Seven athletes from Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands will be boarding the flight to Paris after they qualified for the Paralympic Games, at the Oceania Qualification Tournament for the Paralympics held in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The Paris 2024 Games will be also the first for these nations - Solomon Islands had qualified for Tokyo 2020 but couldn't make it to the Games owing to the Pandemic.

Athletes who have qualified for the Paralympic Games in

Oceania region. We are dedicated to grow more Para athletes in our region," said an elated **Denzil Ray**, Oceania Taekwondo Union official.



Top 30 IR training camp held successfully in Santorini



A four-day Para Taekwondo training camp was held for Top 30 IRs selected for Paris 2024 in attendance of World Taekwondo President Dr. Chungwon Choue.

As we approach 100 days to go for the much-anticipated Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, a four-day Para Taekwondo camp for Top 30 International Referees selected for the upcoming Games was held in Santorini, Greece from April 24-27.

The official commencement of the camp started with a grand opening ceremony commencing at 9 am on April 24th. WT President, Dr. Choue

delivered an inspiring opening speech, setting the tone for the event. The vice Mayor of Santorini warmly welcomed all participants, emphasizing the city's support for the camp.

The aim of the camp was to build the team of the Top 30 selected International Referees for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and finetune their skills.

A series of insightful lectures were given, beginning with Paris 2024 Paralympic Games Technical Delegate **Mr. Chakir Chelbat**'s presentation on the role of Technical Delegates, CSBs and ITOs for the 2024 Paris Paralympic Games. **Mr. Mohammed Argoubi**, Paralympic Games Technical Controller, provided a comprehensive overview of Para Taekwondo competition rules, while **Mr. Usman Dildar**, Paralympic Games

Technical Controller, highlighted the International Referee Code of Conduct. The day concluded with Mr. Thomas Bosser, WT IT Director, informative session on the utilisation of technology and instant video replay in refereeing.

The camp also included various activities including comprehensive lectures to hands-on workshops and physical training, providing the referees with added invaluable skills and insights.

Mr Usman Dildar, Para Taekwondo Committee Chairman, said: “The training camp in Santorini, Greece has set a new benchmark for future training events, particularly in the development of Para Taekwondo globally. The rigorous selection process for the top 30 referees involved meticulous scrutiny from thousands worldwide. Only 15 male and 15 female referees emerged, showcasing their exceptional skills and dedication.”

“This collaborative effort promises a brighter future for the sport, fostering international cooperation and friendship. Gratitude to all partners, sponsors, and participants for their unwavering commitment, ensuring the success of this ground-breaking event. Together, we advance the standards of Taekwondo worldwide, paving the way for inclusivity and excellence”.

Appreciating the support of the local authorities and the European Taekwondo Union for the success of the event, Mr. Chelbat added: “We had an amazing four days where referees were trained, guided and prepared for the upcoming Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. The camp helped to form a bond of friendship and cooperation between the referees that will be officiating together in Paris. The camp was a great success.”

The only International Referee from Oceania, **Ali Rahimi** was among the 30 referees selected to officiate at the Paralympics. For Rahimi, it was a dream come true moment to be part of the team.

“Finally, my hard work and dedication paid off, as I was selected as a Paralympic referee, which has been my lifelong dream.”

“The Paralympic training camp was an incredible learning experience. I'm grateful for every moment i spent to enhance my skills and preparing for the Paralympic Games in Paris. and now I'm very confident that I'm well ready to officiate at the Paralympics 2024.”





Busy season ahead as athletes aim for final preparation before Paris 2024



The Para Taekwondo season is getting busier with four events lined up in Pan America, Europe and Asia.

Top Para Taekwondo players including Paralympic and World champion will be in action doing their final preparation before the Paralympic Games in Paris, this August.

The action starts with the Pan Am Para Taekwondo Championships, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil on May 3,

2024 which will have 63 athletes (27 female and 36 male) from 14+1 countries in action.

Among the top names in action are: USA's **Evan Medell** (M+80 kg), the Para Pan Am Games champion, **Leonor Angelica Espinoza Carranza**, Peru's Paralympic champion, and Mexico's **Claudia Romero**, ParaPan Am Games silver medallist and winner of Taiyuan and Paris 2023 GP in 2023, and refugee athlete **Zakia Khudadadi**, European Para Championships champion, all three women competing in K44 women's -47kg.

There will be local stars too including Paralympic champion **Nathan Torquato** (M-63kg) and Worlds stars **Maria Eduarda Machado Stumpf** (W-52kg), **Silvana Mayara Cardoso Fernandes** (W-57kg) and **Debora Menezes** (W+65kg), a silver medallist at ParaPan Am Games and bronze medallist at Worlds. The action from the Pan Am Para Taekwondo Championships can be watched live [here](#).

This will be followed by Rio Para Taekwondo Open Rio de Janeiro in Brazil on May 5, 2024, contested by 48 athletes (19 female and 44 male) from 9 countries.

The focus will then move to Europe, with the European Para Taekwondo Championships in Belgrade, Serbia from May 9 to 12, 2024. The event, which will be held parallelly to the European Taekwondo

Championships. will be contested by 89 athletes (38 females and 51 men) from 23 countries + 2 refugees + AIN athletes.

The field will have Paralympic and World stars including Turkey's stars **Ali Can OZCAN** (M -58kg), European champion and bronze medallist at Worlds, **Fatih CELIK** (M-70 kg), Taiyuan and Paris 2023 champion and **Mahmut BOZTEKE** (M -63kg), winner of Taiyuan 2023 GP and Manchester 2023 GP, Italy's **Antonino Bossolo** (M-63kg), world champion and Paris 2023 GP champion, Israel's **Asaf Yasur** (M-58kg), world champion and Manchester 2023 and Taiyuan 2023 champion among others.

The women's field looks strong too with the likes of Great Britain's Paralympic stars **Amy TRUESDALE** (W+65kg), Veracruz 2023 world champion, **Beth Munro** (W -65kg), Manchester and Taiyuan 2023 GP champion and Worlds silver medallist, Turkey's **Gamze GURDAL** (W-57 kg), European champion and World silver medallist among others.

The month will culminate with the 9th Asian Para Taekwondo Open Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam on May 19, 2024 which will have 118 athletes (37 female and 81 male) from 25+1 countries.

Asian Para Games champions **Bolor-Erdene GANBAT** (M-63kg) and **Guljonoy Naimova** (W +65kg), also winner of Taiyuan and Manchester 2023 Grand Prix, will lead the star-studded field in Da Nang.

Among other players include: Azerbaijan's **Imamaddin Khalilov** (M-70kg), the world champion and European champion, Uzbekistan's world champion **Asadbek TOSHTEMIROV**, Korea's Asian Para Games champion **Jeonghun JOO** and Iran's **Alireza Bakht** (both competing in M-80kg).





Calendar



2024

- Pan Am Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G4/G2), Rio de Janeiro, May 3, 2024

(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

- Rio Para Taekwondo Open (G1), Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2024

(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level I required for all coaches)

- Asian Para Taekwondo Open Championships, Da Nang, Vietnam, May 19, 2024

(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

- World Para Taekwondo Open Challenge, Chuncheon, Korea, July 5, 2024

(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

- Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, Paris, France, Aug. 29-31, 2024

Around the World

Brazil, France athletes undergo training camp together

Ahead of a busy month that will lead to the Paralympics, Brazil hosted a six-day training camp in Sao Paulo alongside the France national team.

The camp was aimed at preparing its athletes for the Pan American Open in Rio and European Open in Serbia.

During the training, both the teams shared their experiences and trained alongside each other.

One month ago, France has hosted camp training with the national teams of Brazil and Mexico.

The training in Brazil was held in the Paralympic Training Center in Sao Paulo.



Khalilov, Shikhaliyev awarded with Sports Master titles



Games in 2028."

World and European champion Imamaddin Khalilov and 19-year-old Amin Shikhaliyev, both members of Azerbaijan Para Taekwondo national team, were awarded the title of "Sports Master of the Republic of Azerbaijan".

"This title motivates me for the next gold medals," said Khalilov, who has four gold medals in 2023 and will be a top contestant at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

Meanwhile, the promising Shikhaliyev, who also claimed the bronze medal at the 2023 European Para Championships, said: "My goal is to be a part of performing our anthem at the Paralympic

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