

World-class Para field for the Nationals

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With a world champion, Paralympic champion, Commonwealth Games gold and a stack of other medals between them, the Para field for the PG Mutual Championships certainly qualifies as formidable.

Eight athletes will face off in the Standing 7-10 Singles category on day two of the tournament in Nottingham on Saturday March 2.

And there are still some tickets available to watch the likes of Rio 2016 gold medallist Will Bayley, world champion Ross Wilson and Rio medallist Aaron McKibbin – as well as the elite able-bodied athletes performing on the day.

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The PG Mutual Nationals aim to showcase the talents of Para and able-bodied athletes at the same event – and in the case of Ashley Facey Thompson, there is one athlete who will appear in both events, having earned a place via the Qualifying Tournament.

Rio Paralympian Facey Thompson said: "I played some good matches in the qualification and I'm really proud that I've qualified.

"It's a good thing for me to be there but bigger for the team to show we can compete with the top players on the able-bodied circuit and show the strength of the Paralympic side of table tennis."

Commonwealth Games silver medallist Kim Daybell qualified for the able-bodied event by virtue of his ranking but is unfortunately ruled out by work commitments as a doctor.

The man who beat him to the Commonwealth gold in Australia, Ross Wilson, will be present in Nottingham. Not only did he win that gold last year, he also claimed the Para World Championship title in a memorable 2018.

He said: "I've been playing in able-bodied domestic competitions throughout my life, so I know a lot of the players but to have Para classes at the Nationals is a really good thing as it shows what we are about and how we are improving.

"Ash and Kim have qualified for the able-bodied event as well, so it is a great that we are competing alongside the able-bodied players."

McKibbin is the defending champion in the class and he said: "It's not often that the skill of Paralympic athletes is showcased alongside able-bodied players for spectators to see in England, so this event is a great chance to watch how we play.

"I'll be looking to retain my title of national champion. It will be a tough challenge, especially when I'm up against players who are normally my team-mates and who I regularly train with, but we will all be up for it and looking to take home the title."

The Saturday also includes the early rounds of the Men's and Women's Singles and the Men's and Women's Doubles, featuring Rio Olympians and Commonwealth Games medallists – [click here to see the schedule](#).

[Click here to find out more about all the singles players at the PG Mutual Nationals](#)

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