

McKibbin & Co target Polish success

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Two-time Paralympic team medallist Aaron McKibbin and Commonwealth medallists Kim Daybell and Josh Stacey are among eight British players competing in this week's PTT Polish Open in Wladyslawowo from May 30-June 1.

With every tournament this season important in the qualification race for Tokyo 2020 the entry was oversubscribed which has resulted in each country being restricted to eight players. The priority for the British Para Table Tennis Team is players who need to earn world ranking points to improve their chances of Paralympic qualification.

McKibbin, who won men's class 6-8 team bronze in both London and Rio, is hoping to build on his performance in the Slovenia Open earlier this month when he took bronze in the men's class 8 singles, beating world No 4 Ivan Mai from Ukraine along the way.

"I was very happy with Slovenia and it's given me a lot of confidence," said the 27 year old Londoner, who is based with the British squad at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield. "Since then I have just continued working hard and I'm looking forward to the competition to see what I can do. If I carry on playing at the level I was in Slovenia I believe I'll be in the mix for a singles medal.

"Having gone through qualification for London and Rio I know there are lots of ups and downs so I've learnt not to get too down about the lows and if there are highs not to get too carried away. The most important lesson I've learnt is to focus on myself, go into each competition giving my all and performing to my best. I believe I'm good enough to beat the top players in the world and if you're doing that you will qualify for Tokyo 2020."

McKibbin will play the team event as well with 20-year-old Billy Shilton, who also performed well in Slovenia, winning team bronze with McKibbin and Ross Wilson, and is looking to qualify for his first Paralympic Games.

"I would like to carry on the good work Billy and I did in Slovenia," said McKibbin. "It would be great if we could maintain the momentum for both of us and hopefully look for another team medal together as well."

The full British squad for the Polish Open is:

Kim Daybell, 26 (men's class 10)

Ashley Facey Thompson, 24 (men's class 9)

Aaron McKibbin, 27 (men's class 8)

Martin Perry, 25 (men's class 6)

Fliss Pickard, 24 (women's class 6)

Megan Shackleton, 19 (women's class 4)

Billy Shilton, 20 (men's class 8)

Josh Stacey, 19, (men's class 9)

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