



Nine GB athletes certain of Paralympic qualification

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Paralympic champions Will Bayley (men's class 7) and Rob Davies (men's class 1) and world champion Ross Wilson (men's class 8) are among nine British players confirmed by the ITTF as qualified for the Paralympic Games in Tokyo next year by virtue of their world ranking at the end of March 2020 or their status as regional champion.

With nine players, Britain is second only to France (11) in the list of European countries with the most players qualified at this point and joint sixth in the world with Poland, behind China (26), Korea (16), Australia (11), France and Brazil (10).

Megan Shackleton (women's class 4), Tom Matthews (men's class 1) and Joshua Stacey (men's class 9) have all qualified for their first Paralympic Games and the list also includes three-time Paralympians Paul Karabardak and David Wetherill (men's class 6) and London and Rio team bronze medallist Aaron McKibbin (men's class 8).

Jack Hunter-Spivey is currently first alternate in men's class 5 and together with Sue Gilroy (women's class 4), Fliss Pickard (women's class 6), Martin Perry (men's class 6), Billy Shilton (men's class 8), Ashley Facey Thompson (men's class 9) and Kim Daybell (men's class 10) can still qualify for Tokyo if further world ranking spots become available or they win their class at the World Qualification Tournament in Slovenia next April. BPTT can also apply for wild cards for athletes not already qualified.

Selection of the nine players for the Paralympic Games still has to be confirmed by the British Paralympic Association and the full team for Tokyo will not be announced until the end of April/beginning of May 2021.

"We have to be pleased to have nine players already qualified," said BPTT Performance Director Gorazd Vecko, "and congratulations to Megan Shackleton, Tom Matthews and Joshua Stacey who have qualified for their first Paralympic Games which is a great achievement.

"The qualification criteria for Tokyo is even tougher than in previous years and to have the second highest number of players already qualified in Europe and the sixth in the world is something we should be proud of and demonstrates the success of our programme."

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