

Special Olympics Great Britain's

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Journey to Athens for the Special Olympics World Summer Games

180 Nations, 7000 athletes, 25 June – 4 July, Athens Greece

23 June 2011 – London – 215 Special Olympics Great Britain learning disabled athletes and volunteer coaches and staff from England, Scotland and Wales are ready to compete in the largest sporting event in the world this year – **Special Olympics World Summer Games Athens, 25 June – 4 July 2011** – after a week of training, acclimating to the heat, and experiencing the Greek culture on the Island of Skiathos.

The delegation of 215 athletes and coaches has had a whirlwind month of training, packing, and practicing Greek! A small group of athletes met with **Prime Minister David Cameron, Darren Campbell, MBE, London 2012 hopeful Beth Tweddle** and **Special Olympics President Lawrie McMenemy MBE** for some inspiration and encouragement the week before their departure for Greece. They were later feted at a celebratory send-off by the Greek Ambassador Aristides Santis at his Residence in Mayfair.

According to **Karen Trimble of Paisley**, World Summer Games five-a-side female football coach, "Out of the 8 athletes on the squad, 4 have never been to a world games and 2 have never flown before. All are feeling a mixture of excitement, fear and pride to represent Great Britain and play a sport that they love." Continues Karen, "In my opinion, the Ladies 5-a-side football team are winners *before* we leave the country."

157 athletes (SEE LINK AT BOTTOM OF RELEASE) were chosen for their dedication to sport and their qualifying scores at the Special Olympics National Summer Games in Leicester in 2009. Each team member had to fundraise £2000 to participate, much of it raised by the communities they live in.

Comments Karen Wallin, Chief Executive of Special Olympics GB, "The GB Team would never be able to attend the Games without the support of their communities, families and additional support from our key sponsors who have helped through their own fundraising efforts and donations, including; National Grid, Coca-Cola GB, Lions Clubs International, Dominos Pizza, MedicAlert, Marks & Spencer, and Betfair's Cash4Clubs."

The British squad will compete in 17 sports disciplines including: Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Bocce, Cycling, Equestrian, Football (including Unified Football), Golf, Gymnastics, Judo, Kayaking, Powerlifting, Sailing, Table Tennis, Tennis and Ten Pin Bowling. The team will be accompanied by 58 volunteer coaches and support staff.

Special Olympics GB World Summer Games Table Tennis Team

First Name	Surname	Position	Region
Ian	Bradford	Athlete	Tayside
Gail	Bromley	Coach	North West
Patrick	Cox	Athlete	East Midlands
Gwilliam	Jones	Athlete	West Midlands
Jane	McCrudden	Athlete	North West
Jennifer	Turner	Athlete	North West
Kevin	Watt	Head Coach	North West

Jane Silverman
Special Olympics Great Britain
PR Director

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