

British Open Para TT

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Players arrive this week in Sheffield for the largest international table tennis event in Great Britain in 2011.

And it's free – so come along and watch many of the world's leading Para TT players prior to them playing in the Paralympic Games next September – just a year away now!

The British Open Para Table Tennis Factor 40 event has attracted over 320 entries from 44 countries making it one of the largest events of its kind this year worldwide, Factor 40 events are the ITTF Para TT major annual events in that there is only a maximum of five in the world each year; they are ranked in importance just below the Regional Championships such as the Europeans.

Play at the English Institute of Sport, Sheffield, starts on Wednesday September 14th and ends on Saturday September 17th. On the first three days play starts at 9am and goes on to 9pm or more; on the Saturday it should end about 5pm.

There will be play for 10 different classes for both men and women; these are based on the grading of the disability with five wheelchair and five standing classes.

British interest is high with 26 players entered including the British Para TT World Class Programme squad whose main training base is at the EIS, Sheffield. During this season over 30 medals – including five golds – have been won in ITTF Para TT events by British players – and it is hoped that this tally will increase in Sheffield.

Current British players in the top 10 in the world in their class include Will Bayley, Jane Campbell, Robert Davies, Kim Daybell, Sue Gilroy MBE, Sara Head, Paul Karabardak and Dave Wetherill.

Two young players – Aaron McKibbin and Ross Wilson – come fresh from winning gold and silver in the singles at the recent Brazilian Open before together they took team gold in Class 8.

Organised by BTTAD (the British Table Tennis Association for people with Disabilities) supported by UK Sport Major Events and working with MLS Contracts Ltd, Sheffield City Council, ITTF Para TT, the English Table Tennis Association and other partners, the British Open is an unparalleled opportunity to see some great table tennis.

Results will be on the website –

www.britishopenparatabletennis.com

It is hoped there will be features on the ETTA website during and after the event.

Mike Smith Secretary BTTAD

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