



## GB squad look for Paralympic pointers in Slovenia

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World champion Will Bayley and European champion Rob Davies head a 16-strong GB squad that will compete in the IPTT Slovenia Open next week (May 4-7).

With nearly all the world's top players set to take part including a strong Chinese team, the tournament will provide a valuable opportunity for the GB players to test themselves against the competition ahead of the Paralympic Games in Rio in September.

Bayley, 28, silver medallist in London 2012, is currently world ranked No 1 in men's class 7 but is looking to put a below-par performance in February's Italian Open behind him.

"I can't wait to play the best players in the world in my class," said Bayley. "For us all to be at a competition is really exciting and I see it as a great opportunity for me.

"Training has been great since Italy; I have improved on things and also played many (able bodied) league matches and been successful which has given me great confidence coming in to these massive competitions. I have given it everything in the training hall since Italy – there is no stone left unturned. I'm totally ready to play in Slovenia and can't wait to get started."

Davies, 31, is also world ranked No 1 in men's class 1 and will be making his first international appearance since successfully defending his European crown last October.

"It should be a great tournament," said the Welshman. "Obviously I want to do well and keep a good seeding for Rio but as long as I perform in September that's all that really counts.

"I'm pretty happy, to be honest, we've had brilliant preparation and it's more a case of keeping my body together at the moment."

Eleven of the 12 GB athletes selected for Rio will compete in Slovenia including London 2012 bronze medallist Paul Davies, who will be returning to competition after nearly two years out through injury.

“Getting back to full fitness has been a challenge,” admits Davies, “but I have missed competing so much as I love being under pressure and the atmosphere of the competition hall. Rio is obviously my main focus this year; my progress is on target so Slovenia will be a good chance to see where I am against the best in the world.”

GB Performance Director Gorazd Vecko said: “The Slovenia Open is always one of the most competitive tournaments of the season and this year it will be stronger than ever. We are preparing the players to peak in September so the results in Slovenia, and in Slovakia the following week, will not necessarily have a bearing on what happens in Rio but it will give us an idea of the progress we are making and what we need to work on over the next four months.”

**The full GB squad for Slovenia is:**

Will Bayley – men’s class 7 (Tunbridge Wells/Sheffield)  
Jane Campbell – women’s class 3 (London)  
Paul Davies – men’s class 1 (North Cornelly)  
Rob Davies – men’s class 1 (Brecon)  
Kim Daybell – men’s class 10 (Sheffield/Leeds)  
Ashley Facey Thompson – men’s class 9 (London)  
Sara Head – women’s class 3 (Beddau)  
Jack Hunter-Spivey – men’s class 5 (Liverpool/Sheffield)  
Paul Karabardak – men’s class 6 (Swansea)  
Aaron McKibbin – men’s class 8 (London/Sheffield)  
Martin Perry – men’s class 6 (Paisley/Sheffield)  
Felicity Pickard – women’s class 6 (Burnley)  
Megan Shackleton – women’s class 4 (Todmorden)  
Billy Shilton – men’s class 8 (Stonehouse/Sheffield)  
David Wetherill – men’s class 6 (Torpoint)  
Ross Wilson – men’s class 8 (Minster/Sheffield)

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