



World Para Taekwondo Newsletter

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Veracruz, Mexico to host World Championships



The much-anticipated event is just five months away!

Paralympic champions in K44 class expected to headline a star-studded field as Para Poomsae and Kyorugi events are set to take place for the first time in a World Para Taekwondo Championships since Pandemic

The long wait is over!

The World Taekwondo has announced the host city for the World Para Taekwondo Championships set to take place from 21-24 September 2023.

Veracruz, the port city in the Gulf of Mexico will host the 10th edition of the prestigious meet that will include Para Poomsae and Kyorugi for the fifth time in the history of the sport. In fact, it will be the first time, that Para Poomsae and Kyorugi events will be held together at a World Championships since the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Para Poomsae event will take place on September 21 while the Kyorugi event will be held the next three days with the creme de la creme of Para Taekwondo, including the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic winners, expected to fight for the top honours at the World Trade Centre, Veracruz.

The three-day of Kyorugi event is expected to witness high-quality matches with the likes of **Nathan Torquato** of Brazil, Mongolia's **Bolor-Erdene Ganbatyn**, **Mahmut Bozteke** from Turkey, Denmark's **Lisa Gjessing**, Peru's **Leonor Angelica Espinoza Carranza** and Brazilian **Debora Mendez** among others would be out to display their exceptional skills and technique to excel in K44 class.

Not just this, the field is also expected to include the promising names that taken the Para Taekwondo fraternity by storm that include - Cuba's **Lilisbet Rodriguez Rivero** and Nepal's **Shrijana Ghising** to name a few.

The home challenge is likely to be led by **Juan Diego García López**, the Tokyo 2020 gold medalist and 2019 champion who would be aiming to defend his title besides motivating his younger compatriots at the big stage.

World Para Taekwondo chair **Chakir Chelbat** said: "We are very happy to announce that Veracruz in Mexico will host the next edition of the Para World Taekwondo Championships. This will be the first that the World Championships will be staged in a Pan American city. With the success of the players in that region, we are sure that hosting the World Championships will be yet another milestone for the Taekwondo fraternity in the continent.

"We have been in regular contact with the Mexican Federation and are very happy with the keenness of the local federation in staging the event with all arrangements and facilities in place. I am sure the players and officials will have a memorable time in Veracruz this September."

Mexico Taekwondo Federation president **Francisco Raymundo González Pinedo** too shared his excitement to host this big event.

"It's a great honour for Mexico and the Mexican Taekwondo Federation to get the chance of hosting this prestigious championship. This event will not just be an opportunity for our Para Taekwondo stars to mesmerise their home fans but will provide the newcomers a big stage to enhance their skills. We are taking all kind of advises from World Taekwondo officials and hope to be prepared to welcome the Para Taekwondo players from all over the world to Veracruz."

¡Nos vemos en Veracruz!



'My biggest dream is to win Parapan Am Games'



Cuban rising star Lilisbet Rodriguez Rivero aims to better her Lima 2019 bronze medal show with a gold medal at Santiago 2023 and qualify for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

Lilisbet Rodriguez Rivero's biggest dream is to be a Parapan American Games champion.

In her first Parapan American Games in Lima 2019, Rivero finished with a bronze medal in the 49 kg division, K44 classification, one of her significant performances in her career.

Having already qualified for this year's Parapan Am Games in Santiago – winning at the qualifying tournament held in Rio last month - to be held in November, the athlete from Granma province in Cuba is already eyeing for the yellow medal this time.

"I am super happy and excited to meet this goal of qualifying for the Santiago de Chile Parapan American Games 2023," said Rivero in an interview with World Taekwondo.

"My biggest dream is to be a Parapan American champion and represent my country for the first time in a Paralympic Games and climb to the top of the podium.

"Santiago 2023 will be a highly competitive tournament where I will have the opportunity to represent my country with the aim of beating all my opponents and improving my results in relation to Lima 2019," added the Cuban athlete who rose to prominence after she shocked Peruvian Paralympic champion Angélica Espinosa in Pam Am Series III last year.

Rivero reflected on her career's biggest win ever, the win over Espinosa calling it a "special one" as the victory has come after a long time.

"It was a close fight; and the victory came as a surprise. It was one of my great competitive goals in my first international tournament after having spent more than two years without training due to Covid 19 plus the time I was on maternity leave. So that win was special."

The 26-year-old would definitely want to take a leaf out of that victory as she prepares for the season ahead that has important events like the World Championships and the Parapan American Games.

"This year 2023 is of great importance in my sports career and I want to give my best in all the competitions to qualify for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

"I am working at improving myself on various aspect of my game including physical, theoretical, psychological and tactical capacities that will allow me to prepare in all the techniques used in Para Taekwondo," said the Para Taekwondoin who already having her sights set on the Paris 2024.

Apart from focusing on the game, Rivero is devoting time in upbringing her son Isaias and continuing her studies - bachelor's degree in physical culture and sports at University of Granma.

"But I am focused to do well in Para Taekwondo and hope to become an athlete with maturity and experiences that will allow me to get to many more podiums in international competitions," she concluded.



Education



Recent Courses

Training and Classification courses

If international events are important part of athletes sporting career, classification is the first step in their Paralympic journey.

And World Taekwondo is facilitating to provide opportunity and platform to the players to attain their classification beside offering training courses for classifiers either physical or online.

In the past few months, there have been several classification courses where many athletes were classified besides classifiers were trained.

On the sidelines of the European Taekwondo President Cup, held 02-03 February, World Taekwondo team of classifiers managed to classify more than 30 athletes. The classifiers team was led by Dr. Halim Jebali, Medical classifier, and Master Damian Duffy who was the Technical classifier.

Another online Classification course was also conducted on March 9 and 10, while there were an out of competition course in South Korea last month.

"I am very happy with the outcome of the courses. The participants were also excited to get classified which will open the gates to international competitions. It's an important milestone for these young athletes as they look to make a mark in several important events lined-up this year and next. We are also happy to see the number of female athletes classified in both the events and we wish them best wishes in their Para Taekwondo journey," said Hadwah Abdelmatloub Moawad, Chair Para Classification Committee, World Taekwondo.

"There have been also several important training sessions held for the classifiers and everyone are happy with the outcome."



Calendar



2023

(Provisional calendar subject to change)

- Virtus Global Games (TBC) - June 9 - Vichy, France

(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

- 2023 European Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G2) - June 30 - Montargis, France
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 Solidarity Center Para Taekwondo Open (G1) - July 1 - Montargis, France
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level I required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 Oceania Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G4/G2) - July 7 - Brisbane, Australia
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 WT President's Cup Oceania Para Taekwondo (G2) - July 8 - Brisbane, Australia
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 Australia Para Taekwondo Open (G1) - July 9 - Brisbane, Australia
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 European Para Championships (EPC Multisport event) (G2) - Aug. 13-16 - Rotterdam, Netherlands
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
REGISTRATIONS OPEN
- 2023 World Para Taekwondo Open Challenge (G4) - Aug. 21-22 - Chuncheon, Korea
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- 2023 Paris World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix (G6) - Aug. 30 - Paris, France
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- 2023 8th Asian Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G2) - Sept. 10 - Beirut, Lebanon
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- 2023 10th World Para Taekwondo Championships (G14) - Sept. 21-24 - Veracruz, Mexico
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

For the full, updated 2023 calendar, please click [HERE](#).



Around the World



The process to glory continues!

Nepal Para Taekwondo player Shrijana Ghising is leaving no stone unturned to achieve success in the upcoming season that include her first Asian Para Games, the Hangzhou 2022 Games this October.

Ghising, who took the world by storm becoming the nation's first-ever international champion at last year's season-ending Para Grand Prix Finals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, has shown glimpses of her talent at the Bahrain 2021 Asian Youth Para Games where she took a silver medal.

She went on to claim another silver medal at the Para 4th WT President's Cup Asian Region Taekwondo Championships on March 14, 2022, in Tehran, Iran.

She has now set her sights in the gold medal at the the Hangzhou 2022 Games.

Pan Am:

Peru's Celis to make history

For the first time in the history of the country, Peru will have a representative at the Virtus Global Games, which will be held in Vichy, France from June 4 to 10, 2023.

Para athlete Sandra Celis will be competing in the Para Poomsae competition.

The Federación Deportiva Peruvian stressed how important the Virtus Global Games are for high quality performance for people with an intellectual impairment.

Not only this development has filled the Peruvian Paraspport community, especially the athletes who have put in a lot of effort with their coaches, with great joy, it will open pathways for Peruvian Para Taekwondo enthusiasts.





Parfait Hakizimana

How Taekwondo can peace the world and erase cultural barrier?

in the camp. We have broadened our horizons thanks to Taekwondo training and competitions; we are now modern individuals who give back to society".

Meanwhile, Zakia Khudadadi, originary from Afghanistan, has started taekwondo in a gym that had bullet holes in the walls, so the word taekwondo means a lot to her.

Here is her message: "Taekwondo can grow anywhere in the world, no matter whether the world faces wars, violence, inequality, gender discrimination, racism, because the message of taekwondo has always been unity, solidarity, justice, support, encouragement and peace".

"Regardless of culture, creed, ethnicity or origin, taekwondo has succeeded in transforming human beings confronted with dramatic situations, into beings who mark history".

Both Hakizimana and Khudadadi, two high performers refugee parataekwondo athletes, living in Rwanda and France, were delivering this precious message on how taekwondo can peace the world and erase cultural barriers worldwide, on the occasion of International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

Europe:

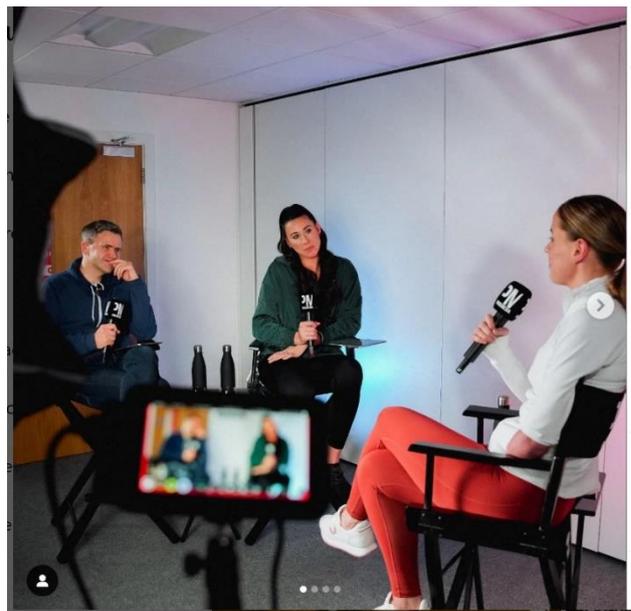
Munro in Podcast debut

Great Britain's Para Taekwondo star Beth Munro continues to inspire!

Munro, who went on to win her Paralympics silver at the 2020 Tokyo Games just six months after taking up the sport, features in the latest episode of The Scouse Code podcast.

The Paralympic silver medallist and European champion joins British Taekwondo star Bianca Walkden to share mental toughness, confidence and a positive attitude are key to success in life!

Munro also dedicate the episode to the late Anthony Hughes MBE, the late Paralympic athlete and revered coach, saying that he was the driving force behind her Paralympic journey. "He was a legend and a great man," she says while paying tribute to Hughes.



Refugee:

Taekwondo means peace and hope for Hakizimana and Zakia

Parfait Hakizimana, who had to flee the civil war in Burundi and migrate to Rwanda, joined the first-ever Refugee Paralympic Team in Tokyo.

For him, Taekwondo resembles "peace" and "eradication of barriers of all kinds".

"Taekwondo serves as a means of social cohesion in addition to being a sport.

"Since I started training in Taekwondo, I have felt peace and have newly found hope. My Taekwondo teammate and I, have participated in friendly competitions with other Taekwondo practitioners from around the world, and they have brightened our days. This is a present we give to our refugee friends

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World Taekwondo | worldtaekwondo.org | para_tkd@worldtaekwondo.org

