

TABLE TENNIS IN THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT



Table Tennis was included in the First Paralympic Games in Rome 1960.
35 participants, 20 men, 15 women.

First World Championships was held in Assen, Netherlands
226 players from 35 countries

In Tokyo 2020,
280 players took part, 174 men and 106 women players from 54 countries.

European Championships in Sheffield, England.
260 players, 184 men and 76 women players from 27 countries.



Timeline Para Table Tennis



Key Facts European Para Table Tennis

- European Championships are played **every second year**
- Championships are played in **11 different single classes**:
 - 5 wheelchair classes
 - 5 standing
 - 1 class for players with intellectual impairment
- In the World Ranking there are around **400 players** (from Europe from 30 European Countries).
- The most successful European Countries have been 



HOW TO BUILD A HIGH- PERFORMANCE PARA TABLE TENNIS PROGRAMME: LEARNINGS FROM GREAT BRITAIN

Karen Tonge OBE



British Table Tennis for People with Disabilities was a registered charity

BTTAD was formed as the National Governing Body for elite Disability Table Tennis then recognised by UK Sport

Table Tennis is one of the traditional Paralympic sports originating at Stoke Mandeville, GB and has been included in the Paralympic Games since the inaugural Games in Rome 1960. Standing players were included for the first time in 1976 in Toronto and athletes with cerebral palsy for the first time in 1980 in Netherlands. **THE GB PARA TABLE TENNIS TEAM** of 7 men and 4 women returned from Beijing 2008 without a medal.

With the next Paralympics set to be in London.....



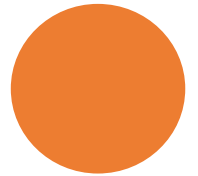
Review took place as to potential for 2012, 2016

- Athletes were self-funded many combining work with TT
- One of the GB Para TT coaches died prior to Beijing.

UK Sport invited application for National Lottery Funding for 4 year cycle for London 2012.

Recruitment of a Performance Director was key to future developments.

Gorazd Vecko, who took over the team in 2009, has created a positive and dynamic team environment designed to enable players to realise their potential and achieve at the highest level. The team were based at the English Institute of Sport (EIS) in Sheffield, where players train for six hours a day, five days a week....on the table and in the fitness centre.



The way forward at the beginning

Changing the culture

- The underlying ethos for **Para-Table Tennis** is now exemplified by the “your journey, our family” motto. A **family structure** was established which reflects the striving done by the sport to create a group in the WCP who trust, respect and care for each other. This ethos is further detailed in the values of the sport:-
 - 1) Belief
 - 2) Respect
 - 3) Discipline
 - 4) Togetherness
 - 5) Trust

The Athletes

- Winning mentality was key
- 13 athletes were deselected in the first year 2010 as they showed no possibility of medalling in the future.
- Not easy process but crucial for an elite organisation
- Connections with other countries for International and Domestic Camps
- Smaller team of performance athletes that the coaching team of 3 can focus on in 2010 Max of 12 athletes from 20 who were unsuccessful

The road to London 2012

- **NEW STRUCTURE BTTAD 2009-2012**
- There was now to be a three-tier structure of athletes
- **Performance Squad** - this consists of 14 athletes with the potential to medal at World and Paralympic level who are funded by UK Sport and train full time to prepare for international competitions
- **Pathway Squad** - this consisted of between **10-12 athletes** who are competing in international competitions and working towards a place on the Performance Squad

Development Squad this consists of between 10-12 athletes who are considered to have the potential to become GB players

The majority of the players in the Pathway and Development Squads were under the age of 15, providing the team with huge potential for the Paralympic Games in 2016, 2020 and beyond.

Players have to warrant moving upwards. If targets are agreed and if not met they leave the squad^{dd}.

LONDON 2012 Paralympic Games 29 August - 9 September



Four medals were achieved in 2012. (1 SILVER; 3 BRONZE) GB Para TT squads best Games for over 20 years having under delivered in Beijing. But encouragingly it was also one of the youngest squads in London made up of **9 men and 4 women**.

Players like Will Bayley, who featured in a series of inspirational advertisements for Channel 4's TV coverage of the event and went on to win individual silver and team bronze medals, helped to raise the profile of the sport and attract sell-out crowds to the ExCel Arena in London. 13th in the Medal Table.

GB were on the way back following Beijing.

Having the right structure in place,; right people in place- to be all going towards the same goal and to be passionate



FUNDING PARIS CYCLE 2021-25

PARIS WORLD CLASS
PROGRAMME FUNDING

BRITISH PARA TABLE TENNIS

£3,772,000



- **Historical Funding**
- **Sydney**
- **£87,620**
- **Athens**
- **£187,297**
- **Beijing** SELF FUNDED ATHLETES.....
WILL BAYLEY WAS 19
- **£666,484**
- **London** NOW FUNDED TO TRAIN FULL
TIME NATIONAL LOTTERY
- **£1,145,000**
- **Rio**
- **£2,199,209**
- **Tokyo**
- **£2,704,847**

ROAD TO RIO with continued development

Coaches/support staff

These are crucial to build on London with the PD, Head Coach, and National Coach plus pt ex-para wheelchair coach based in South Wales

English Institute of Sport Staff for physio and sports psychology

Media communications part time

Governance –need to be World Class off the field of play

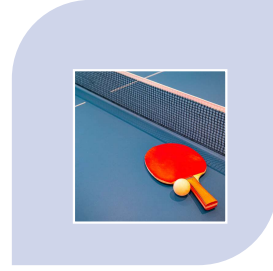
BTTAD registered to become a Limited Company Non-profit making. Committee of 3 plus executive then became a Board. In 2014 Karen was appointed acting Chairman confirmed in 2015 at AGM of membership. New Articles to meet UK Sport requirements in 2015-2018. Started to Trade as British Para Table Tennis in 2016 prior to Rio. What elite athletes can achieve not about their disability

European Para Championships 2014 start of next phase in world Class Programme

OBJECTIVES FOR WCP 2014-2016



THE GB PARA TABLE TENNIS TEAM COMPETES IN AROUND 10 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS EACH YEAR, INCLUDING ONE MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIP - EITHER A EUROPEAN (EVERY TWO YEARS) OR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (EVERY FOUR YEARS) OR A PARALYMPIC GAMES (EVERY FOUR YEARS.)



"IN 2011 WE TOOK SIX MEDALS AT THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AND WE WENT ON TO TAKE FOUR MEDALS IN LONDON



EUROPEANS seen as a stepping stone

- Gorazd Vecko has praised his young team's achievement of taking **11 medals** at the ITTF PTT European Championships in Denmark. There were some big surprises with the young Pathway players Billy Shilton and Tom Matthews taking medals in the singles as well as the team and Megan Shackleton taking a team medal. For these young players to be competing in their first major championship and taking medals is a great result.. Now with the best performance at a European Championships in history for GB with 11 medals I think we are looking good for Rio.

RIO on and off the table

BPTT Performance

- Squads in Rio made up of 10 men and 2 women
- 4th in the medal table with
- Two Golds Class 1 Rob Davies and Class 7 Will Bayley. Team 6-8 Bronze beating China. Target medals was 3-4. UK Sport review positive as also had a 4th place.

Review of Committee Structure and Partnerships

- 4 new Directors appointed with skills we needed to be an effective Board. Chairman is also the Accountable Officer as no CEO. Grew to 11 Directors by 2022.
- Developing web site and branding
- Links with other organisations.
- Training for Board to work as a team; governance; safeguarding; Chairman extra training from Institute of Directors on corporate company; and Charity/Trustee roles.
- Bidding for 4- year Tokyo cycle during 2016. What does it take to win challenge from UK Sport?

Re-branding of our training facility

Sports Hall re-branded January 2019

- undergone a transformation designed to inspire the athletes as they begin the process of qualification for 2020 this year. important that we create an environment that helps them to focus and inspires Opened by Penny Briscoe of BPA



Major Events Strategy

- Devised strategy with UK Sports
- European Para Championships 2023
- Welsh Para Open 2025
- World Para Championships 2026
- Scottish Para Open 2026
- **Annual Cultural Health Check.** Undertaken with athletes, staff and 12 stakeholders

Annual Reviews of programme so keep progressing.

World Class Performance

- Work with Chairman to prepare Submission for next funding cycle
- Additional Staff National Pathway Manager; Pt and the fulltime additional coach; identify the best available
- Changing the whole training structure to have the right connection of coach and player
- To plan to have strong pathway programme on side with development to make the next Will Bayley for when he finishes,
- Effective Leadership is key in the Sports Hall and in the Board room.
- Making the right decisions about which tournaments we will take which players. Some will self- fund one competition a year usually at an EU event; to ensure qualification for others if they have enter an event in South America /Thailand etc
- Athletes are given every year targets to meet to be selected for the Major Competition in the year.
- We have Performance Athletes Agreements which are signed.
- Selection Policies are in place and in the public domain.
- *"The whole team was supported by the Chairman about all performance decisions."* **Gorazd Vecko**

Covid and Tokyo

Mental Health of Players

- EIS Venue closed over night
- Weekly meetings on line
- Tables and robots delivered
- Weekly news updates
- 1-1 meetings on line
- Kim Daybell as a doctor returns to London hospital covid ward
- Afterwards small camps in Lasko
- Para weekend events round clubs

Tokyo

- Difficult with Chairman and some personnel not permitted to travel
- Difficult situation for media staff
- 2 silver and 5 bronze medals **total 7 medals** best results; and Rio Gold Class 1 could not travel.
- Next event Worlds in Spain 2022

World Paras Spain 2022

Rapid run of events following covid

- *A strong squad of 13 British athletes including world No 1 and former Paralympic champion Will Bayley, reigning world champion Ross Wilson and Commonwealth champions Jack Hunter-Spivey and Joshua Stacey will compete in the 2022 World Para Table Tennis Championships taking place in Granada, Spain with 10 medals including three golds*

BPTT Performance Director Gorazd Vecko was able to reflect on the most successful World Championships ever for the British team

Celebrating National Lottery Day



European Para Championships Sheffield

A big first and challenge for home event

- Issues of dealing with family and friends. Having private space so not distracted . Protecting PD and coaches



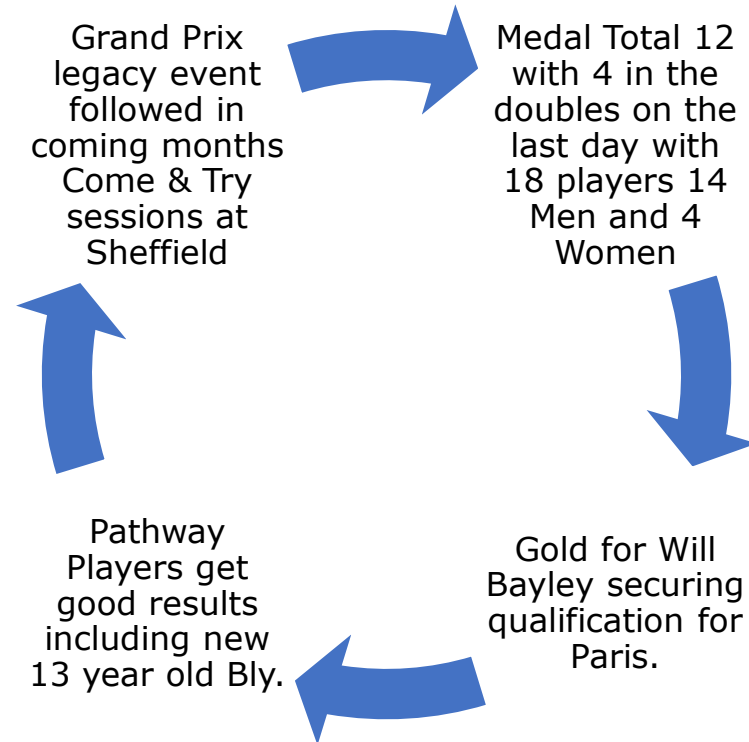
New pathway athletes progress

Grand Prix legacy event followed in coming months
Come & Try sessions at Sheffield

Medal Total 12 with 4 in the doubles on the last day with 18 players 14 Men and 4 Women

Pathway Players get good results including new 13 year old Bly.

Gold for Will Bayley securing qualification for Paris.



Links with Spinal Unit; NGBs; Amputees etc

ATHLETE RECRUITMENT

- Coaches visit Spinal units in England and Wales...therapy to sports progression.
- Open Days in clubs and at EIS for new players to try and find out about BPTT, its history; classification
- Players and coaches are our eyes and ears to find players with a Para disability.
- Parents still see as a stigma 'para'

SPREADING THE WORD

- Partnership meeting with Table Tennis England staff as they responsible for grassroots disability then Pathway is to BPTT
- Integration of all into TTE events and National Championships; now includes Juniors.
- TTE Grand Prix events now have wheelchair friendly table if players enter.
- Coaching Qualification course provided for WCP/Pathway players held this year

Partnerships with ETTU, Table Tennis Scotland, Disability Scotland

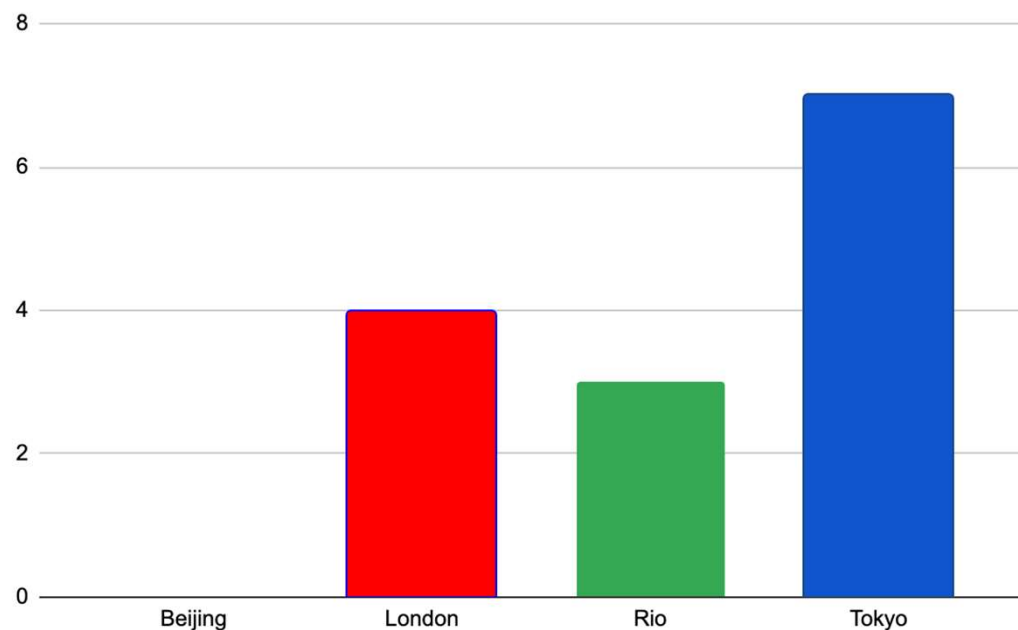
European Para Legacy Event Scotland

Involving new Regional Coaches in Para Coaching, Para Rules, classifications



Recap: Key Facts and Figures

Medals British Table tennis in Paralympic Games



- Recruitment of a Performance Director
- New Structure+ Changing the culture
- New Funding opportunities
- Partnerships and Links for Recruitment



Where are we now????

Paris Qualification

- Will Bayley Qualified at European Para Championships
- Concentration on ranking points for players going to events.
- Board Room. New Chairperson started day after EPTT as maximum terms of 4 years x 2 terms plus special extension I receive
- All policies are on BPTT web site also includes People Plan for workforce paid and voluntary. All Board positions are voluntary

Next Games LA

- Submission for next cycle funding in by 13th November.
 - Outline agreed by April 24 with confirmation following review of results from Paris.
 - Current BPTT Staff PD; Head Coach; Programme Manager; Operations Manager; 2 National Coach(one based in Cardiff); Pathway Coach; Programme Administrator
 - EIS provide Support staff who are PT
- Head of Performance Support •
Physiotherapy, Sports Psychology • Strength & Conditioning • Performance Lifestyle •
Sports Physician • Performance Analyst

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