



World Para Taekwondo Newsletter

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Saudi Arabia to Host Debut Para Grand Prix Finals



2022 Para Grand Prix Finals Preview

Para Taekwondo will make its inaugural appearance at World Taekwondo's prestigious year-end Grand Prix Finals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in December. Here is your guide to all the action.

Para athletes will join their able-bodied teammates at the Grand Prix Finals for the first time this month in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Eight of the world's top fighters in each weight category aim to become Para Taekwondo's first Para Grand Prix Finals champions.

After a Paralympic Games, World Championships, and three Para Grands Prix over the last 15 months, some familiar names have already become Paris 2024 Paralympic medal favourites.

Here is a weight category-by-weight category look at the inaugural Para Grand Prix Finals.

-58 kg

Since moving to the new weight categories and 'Super K44' Sport Class in late 2021 two fighters have dominated the -58 kg category – Israel's reigning world champion **Asaf Yasur** and Turkiye's reigning European champion **Ali Can Ozcan**. The two met in the finals at two of the three Para Grands Prix this year,

as well at last year's world championships, with Yasur winning three titles to Ozcan's one. The 2021 World Championship final between the rivals was 2021's most entertaining fight, while their battle at the Manchester Para GP final could lay claim to that title for 2022. Other fighters to watch include France's four-time world champion **Bopha Kong**, Uzbekistan's **Sanjarbek Mukhtorov**, and Azerbaijan's up-and-coming Sabir **Zeynalov**, who stunned Ozcan at the Paris Para GP to claim silver. All three medaled at two of the three Para GPs.

-63 kg

It's been quite the year for Turkiye's **Mahmut Bozteke**. The Paralympic and World Championship bronze medalist is one of just four fighters with a perfect Para Grand Prix Series record, going a sparkling 9-0 against the -63 kg division's best. To retain his 'undisputed' title, he'll have to get by Brazil's reigning Paralympic champion **Nathan Torquato** for the third time in four Para GPs this year, as well as Mongolia's five-time reigning world champion **Bolor-Erdene Ganbat**, who has yet to win a Para GP. Also watch out for Italy's **Antonino Bossolo**, who has two Para GP medals to go along with his 2021 World Championship silver.



-70 kg

It will be wide open in the -70 kg division Para Grand Prix Final with both Mexico's reigning Paralympic champion **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez** and Iran's reigning world champion **Mehdi Pourrahnama** not participating. That means that for the first time in the Para Grand Prix Series the -70 kg category will see a new champion, as Garcia Lopez was able to get by each opponent in the first three events. Watch for Turkiye's top-seeded **Fatih Celik**, Azerbaijan's **Imamaddin Khalilov**, and Japan's **Shunsuke Kudo**, who have all won multiple Para GP medals in 2022, as well as Argentina's Paralympic bronze medallist **Juan Samorano**.

-80 kg

It looks to be a question of experienced veteran versus up-and-coming phenom in the -80 kg group. Kazakhstan's No. 1-ranked **Nurlan Dombayev** will look to win his first Para Grand Prix Series event by getting by Uzbekistan's **Asad Toshtemirov**, who has dropped just a single fight in the three Para GP events on his way to two gold medals and a bronze. Of course, Iran's **Alireza Bakht** – who won the inaugural Para GP gold, and Great Britain's European champion and World Championship runner-up **Joe Lane** will have other ideas.

+80 kg

The big story in the +80 kg division is that the USA's 'undisputed' Para Grand Prix champion **Evan Medell** will not be participating. In his absence, we could see a repeat of the nail-biting 2021 World Championship final between Iran's **Hamed Haghshenas** and Croatia's **Ivan Mikulic**. Haghshenas won his first world championship by edging the 2015 world champion and Tokyo 2020 Paralympic runner-up by superiority. Kazakhstan's Paralympian **Nyshan Omirali** also looks for a strong end to the season after nearly stunning Medell in the Manchester Para GP final.

-47 kg

It's anyone's guess who will be named the -47 kg Para Grand Prix champion in the most competitive women's weight category. Three different fighters have already won Para Grand Prix gold and with Peru's Paralympic champion **Angelica Espinoza** and Thailand's two-time reigning world champion **Khwansuda Phuangkitcha** out, it should be a wild ride to Para Grand Prix Final gold. Mexico's resurgent **Claudia Romero** and Mongolia's 2017 world champion **Enkhtuya Khurelbaatar** look to have the edge after winning gold at the Manchester and Paris Para GPs, respectively. But don't count out Ukraine's six-time world champion **Vika Marchuk**, Uzbekistan's Paralympian **Ziyadakhon Isakova**, or Turkiye's **Nurcihan Ekinci** either, as all have won multiple Para GP medals already. Tokyo 2020 star Zakia Khodadadi will also attempt to become the first refugee athlete to win a Grand Prix Finals medal.



-52 kg

It's been a year to remember for Turkey's Paralympic runner-up **Meryem Cavdar**. The two-time European champion remains the last "undisputed" Para Grand Prix champion after winning gold at all three -52 kg events. She'll have to watch out for Mexico's resurgent **Jessica Garcia**, who won silver at all three Grands Prix but managed to get by the Turkish superstar in the European championship final earlier this year. Other fighters to watch include the Brazilian pair of **Maria Machado Stumpf** and **Christiane Nascimento**, who have a combined five Para Grand Prix bronze medals between them, Egypt's Paralympian **Salma Ali**, and Nepal's Asian Youth Para Games runner-up **Shrijana Ghising**.

-57 kg

It's a two-headed race at the top of the -57 kg weight category, with everyone looking to catch up to Brazil's reigning world champion **Silvana Cardoso** and Turkey's reigning European champion **Gamze Gurdal**. The pair met at the 2021 World Championship final and all three Para Grands Prix, with Paralympic bronze medalist Cardoso winning three of the four events. A pair of Paralympians finished alongside them on every podium, including Kazakhstan's **Kamilya Dosmalova** and Serbia's **Marija Micev**. Looking to make her first mark in the Para Grand Prix Series will be Nepal's Paralympian **Palesha Goverdhan**, who won gold at last year's Asian Youth Para Games.

-65 kg

Consistency remains elusive in the difficult-to-predict -65 kg weight category. The division sports three separate Para Grand Prix Series gold medalists, as well as separate reigning Paralympic and world champions. It's been an uncharacteristic year for Denmark's legendary Paralympic champion **Lisa Gjessing**, who failed to win gold at any Para Grand Prix. The same can be said for Turkey's reigning world champion and No. 1-ranked **Secil Er**. In their place, Great Britain's European champion **Beth Munro**, as well as newcomers **Ana Carolina Silva de Moura** (Brazil) and **Djelika Diallo** (France) have stepped up. Ukraine's **Yuliya Lypetska**, who added a Para GP bronze to her 2021 world championship bronze medal, and Iran's difficult-to-beat **Rayehe Shahab** will also look to become the latest -65 kg champion.

+65 kg

Few fighters have had a run quite like Uzbekistan's **Guljonoy Naimova**. She has been practically unbeatable

since winning gold at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics last year, adding her first world championship, Asian and European championships, and a WT President's Cup (Asia) gold, and two Para Grand Prix titles. In fact, her only blemish over the last two years was to Spain's up-and-coming **Dalia Santiago** at the Paris Para Grand Prix final. A pair of former world champions will look to climb back on top in Riyadh, with Brazil's 2019 world champion **Debora Menezes** and Great Britain's 2017 world champion **Amy Truesdale** both looking for their first Para GP titles to go along with the silver and bronze medals they won at Tokyo 2020, respectively.



Groundbreaking Award for Garcia Lopez



Garcia Lopez's Award Caps Remarkable Path to Parity for Para Taekwondo

Para Taekwondo continued its remarkable path to parity with able-bodied Taekwondo this month as Mexico's Juan Diego Garcia Lopez and his coach Jannet Alegria picked up the most prestigious awards at the Pan American Taekwondo Union's Gala Awards – in competition with able-bodied athletes – to cap a stunning year for Mexico's Paralympic champion.

-- Lee Reaney for the IPC

They say that success breeds success.

For Mexico's **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez** – he has success in spades.

Mexico's Paralympic champion broke new ground this month by being named the Top Male Athlete at the PATU Gala Awards – in competition with every able-bodied and Para Taekwondo athlete in the Pan American region.

His coach **Jannet Alegria** was named the Top Female Coach at the same ceremony – also in competition with able-bodied coaches from the region.

It caps a dominant four-year run that has seen the young superstar win nearly every tournament he's competed in to become, quite possibly, the most recognisable Para Taekwondo star in the world.

Now he is being recognised alongside his able-bodied colleagues.

"I was at training when they gave me the news", he told the IPC, "It is important for federations to recognise Para athletes to make us feel like part of an inclusive family – that motivates us to continue seeking to be the best".

Simply no one has been better than Garcia Lopez since he won his first world championship as a teen in early 2019. Since then, he's added Paralympic gold, Parapan Am Games gold, a pair of Pan American championships, and three Grand Prix titles.

He's lost just twice in the last four years – last-second defeats at the 2019 European Championship and 2021 World Championship.

He's also been named Mexico's Top Para Athlete for three years running. The Olympic Channel has profiled him on multiple occasions.

But don't tell the young champion he has nothing left to prove.

"I am motivated by the challenge of achieving the same results I had during the entire Tokyo 2020 qualifying cycle in the -75 kg weight category", he said, referring to the former weight categories still in use at Tokyo 2020, "Now I want to be world champion in -70 kg and Paralympic champion in -70 kg – those are my new goals".

Alongside him the whole way, bobbing and weaving from the sidelines as he kicks his way to title after title, is coach Jannet Alegria.

She says that her journey with Para sports has shaped her career.

"Para sports have been fundamental in the growth of the careers of my athletes and mine as a coach", she told the IPC, "I get emotional when I see them achieve their goals and transform their lives".



Para Taekwondo's Path to Parity

There has been plenty of opportunity for life transformation for Para Taekwondo athletes over the last 15 months.

The party was started when Para Taekwondo made its debut at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, giving athletes like Garcia Lopez the platform to showcase their incredible skill to a worldwide audience.

Turns out that Para Taekwondo's Paralympic debut was just the beginning; 2022 saw the sport make enormous strides toward parity with able-bodied Taekwondo.

The 2022 European Championships fully integrated Para Taekwondo into its event programme, showcasing Para finalists on the same programme as their able-bodied teammates in primetime on Great Britain's national broadcaster BBC.

Garcia Lopez won gold there, too, with a thrilling golden point win over Azerbaijan's Imamaddin Khalilov.

World Taekwondo then introduced Para Taekwondo to its prestige, invite-only Grand Prix Series; at first as a standalone event, and later included along with able-bodied Taekwondo.

Only the world's top fighters earn invites to each event. Garcia Lopez competed in all three Grands Prix. He won every fight while picking up three gold medals against the world's best.

In December, Para Taekwondo will be added to the Grand Prix Finals, set to be staged in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Para fighters and coaches will also participate in the year-end World Taekwondo Gala, with Para athletes and coaches eligible for year-end awards for the first-time – although in separate categories than able-bodied fighters.

PATU Gala Breaks Ground

PATU went a step further.

Not only did the organisation nominate Para fighters alongside able-bodied, but the federation also handed out two of its top awards to the Para community.

Garcia Lopez was named Top Male Athlete alongside Canada's able-bodied star Skylar Park, who was named Top Female Athlete.

Alegria was named Top Female Coach, along with Brazil's able-bodied coach Diego Guimaraes Ribeiro.

Held in the courtyard of the majestic Hospicio Cabañas in Guadalajara, Mexico, the elegant Gala Dinner officially kicked off the able-bodied World Championships. Winning the awards at home were special experiences for Garcia Lopez and Alegria.

"The ceremony was luxurious; a great experience with the best champions of World Taekwondo", said Garcia Lopez.

"The awards and recognition are the result of all the work that has been done with the Mexican Para Taekwondo team, the dedication and effort that my athletes make to improve every day", said Alegria, "That the awards were held in Mexico, and that my athlete Juan Diego and I were recognised by PATU, fills me with motivation to move to my next goals".

Both cited the commitment and dedication of the Mexican Taekwondo Federation for providing the resources that contribute to their success. As always, Garcia Lopez singled out the support of his family.

The Gala event handed out several awards, including an Appreciation Award to World Taekwondo President Dr. Chungwon Choue for "Support to Pan American Taekwondo Development". Ten members were also inducted into the PATU Hall of Fame.

At just 22 years old, with as many as four Paralympic cycles to go, Garcia Lopez has already put together a Hall of Fame-worthy resume. His ground-breaking achievements will lead to a new generation of Para

athletes competing at the highest levels.
They just might not need to plow the path to parity.
So, what would he say to that next generation?
“Remember that limits are in your head!!”, he told the IPC, “You set the limits!”



World Taekwondo Attends IPC General Assembly



Para Taekwondo Committee Chair Chakir Chelbat and Para Taekwondo Director Olof Hansson represented World Taekwondo at the IPC Extraordinary General Assembly and Membership Gathering.

World Taekwondo participated in the IPC Extraordinary General Assembly on 16 November to discuss the suspension of the NPCs of Russia and Belarus. Para Taekwondo Committee Chair and Paris 2024 Technical Delegate Chakir Chelbat and World Para Taekwondo Director Olof Hansson were part of the exceptional meeting that saw IPC members vote to suspend both NPCs. The membership also voted to accept an amendment to the IPC constitution to entrust the IPC Governing Board with the authority to deal with “extraordinary circumstances” (force majeure), although accepted an amendment put forward by APSO (Association of Paralympic Sport Organisations, of which World Taekwondo is a member) to ensure that International Federations would not be bound by IPC measures under the “extraordinary circumstances” clause”.

IPC Meetings & Networking

World Taekwondo attended several IPC meetings in the following days that mainly dealt with the ongoing governance review and the composition of the IPC Governing Board. Members were briefed on the IPC’s Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2026 and looked at ways to best mentor new National Paralympic Committees. World Taekwondo also attended the APSO General Assembly.

IPC meetings offer a great opportunity for members to network, and World Taekwondo held several important informal conversations with many different stakeholders. Among the notable developments are indications that Sweden and Sri Lanka are looking to establish Para Taekwondo programmes, that Virtus is looking at hosting Para Taekwondo athletes with autism at next year’s Global Games, and that several countries around the world are interested in hosting Para Taekwondo events.

World Taekwondo also received positive feedback about the thoroughness of its LA 2028 application. An answer regarding Para Taekwondo’s status at LA 2028 is expected in January 2023.



Education



Upcoming Courses

- World Para Taekwondo Coach Level II Certification (Online) Dec 20-22, 20:00 - 23:00 CET

Calendar



2023

- 2022 World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final (G10) - December 8, 2022 - Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

2023

(Provisional calendar subject to change)

- 2023 Egypt Para Taekwondo Open (G1) - February 14, 2023 - Cairo, Egypt
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level I required for all coaches)
- Qualification Tournament for Santiago 2023 Parapan American Games (G1) - April 15-17, 2023 - Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- **2023 10th World Para Taekwondo Championships (G14) - End of April / Early May 2023**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level III required for all coaches)
- **Rome 2023 World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix (G6) - June TBC**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level III required for all coaches)
- **2023 Pan American Para Taekwondo Open Championships - Early Aug. 2023 TBC**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **European Para Championships (Multi-sport event) (G2) - Aug 13-16, 2023 - Rotterdam, Netherlands**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **2023 WT President's Cup Oceania (G2)**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **2023 Oceania Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G4/G2)**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **2023 8th Asia Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G2) - Sept. 10, 2023 - Beirut, Lebanon**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **Niger Para Taekwondo Open (G1) - Sept. 22, 2023 - Niamey, Niger**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level I required for all coaches)
- **Wuxi 2023 World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix (G6) - Sept. 2023 - TBC**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **Paris 2023 World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix (G6) - Oct. 2023 - TBC**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **2023 Africa Para Taekwondo Open Championships (G4/G2) - October 25, 2023 - Nairobi, Kenya**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games (G4) - Oct. 22-28, 2023 - Hangzhou, China**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **2023 WT President's Cup Asia (G2) - Nov. 8, 2023 - Nablus, Palestine**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)
- **Santiago 2023 Parapan American Games (G4) - Nov. 23-25, 2023 - Santiago, Chile**
(International Para Taekwondo Coach Certification Level II required for all coaches)

Around the World

Refugee:

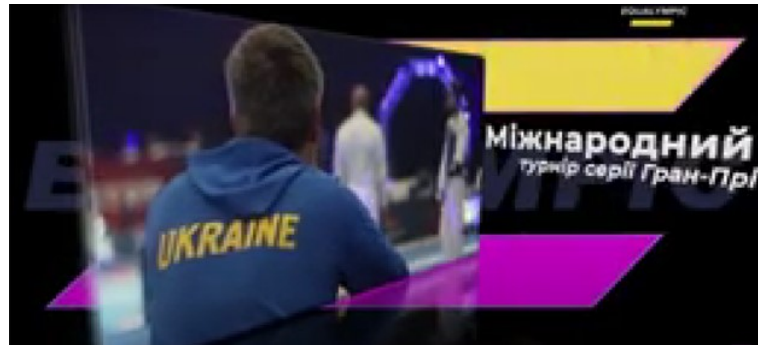
Ukrainian Team Stars on Paralympic Channel

Ukraine's Para Taekwondo team is becoming famous back home - both for the results they've earned and for the coverage they've received back home. The team, still living and training in Denmark, has been regularly featured on Ukraine's

Equalympic - the world's first and only channel dedicated solely to Para sport. In the two most recent clips, the team reflects on their year abroad and sets their goals for 2023. The latest episode is titled "The Invincible Team".

"The Ukrainian Para Taekwondo team continues to fight for the victory of Ukraine", says the latest episode description, "Look at how the team fled Ukraine, how they got back in shape, and how they returned to the international arena".

For the November episode (in Ukrainian), please click [HERE](#). For the October episode (in Ukrainian), please click [HERE](#).



Africa:

Namibia Hopes to Become Newest African Member

The African Taekwondo Union (AFTU) was in Windhoek, Namibia last month to discuss adding Namibia as its 53rd member. The AFTU was represented by Member Relations Commission Chairman **Jonathan Nnaji** and Vice-Chairman **Vinay Naicker**, who met with members of the Namibia sports federation in the hopes of establishing a World Taekwondo-accredited national association. With 10 Paralympic medals to its name, Namibia is an emerging Para sports power in Africa.

With a population of 2.5 million, the southwestern African nation won an impressive 5 medals at Rio 2016 and picked up another two at Tokyo 2020, including a silver for 2016 Paralympic champion **Ananias Shikongo** (Athletics).

For more, please click [HERE](#).

Asia:

Japan's Kudo Blogs at Para Grand Prix Experience

As part of his role as Athlete's Supervisor at his workplace Daitex, Japan's reigning Asian champion **Shunsuke Kudo** blogged about his recent experience at the Para Grand Prix in Manchester, Great Britain. Kudo spoke about

his impressions of the city, what type of food he ate, and how he performed. At the Manchester Para GP, Kudo fell to Mexico's reigning Paralympic champion **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez** in the semi-final and lamented not being able to perform better.

"The result was 3rd place - just like last time. I'm disappointed that I could not make the final", he said. "I will continue to be devoted to being able to get revenge".

To read the blog, please click [HERE](#).



Mongolian Pair Named Merited Masters of Sport

Mongolia's five-time world champion **Bolor-Erdene Ganbat** and four-time Asian champion **Enkhtuya Khurelbaatar** found another way to celebrate Mongolia's Independence Day as the star Para pair were two of eight athletes to be named Merited Masters of Sport by the Mongolian government. The title is only bestowed on athletes that have won international championships and have made "valuable contributions to the sport". Ganbat

has never been beaten at the world championships, picking up five straight titles to go along with his four Asian championships. Khurelbaatar has medaled at the last three world championships, including winning gold in 2017. The athletes will have something else to fight for in 2023 as the Mongolian government also announced that it has set aside nearly 130,000 USD to reward athletes that succeed at important world and continental championships. Para Taekwondo is one of eight sports – including three Para sports – that is eligible and the pair will have up to three events that qualify, including the World Championships, Asian Para Games, and Para Grand Prix Finals.

"On the Independence Day of Mongolia, I am happy to have been awarded the title of Mongolia's Merited Athlete", Ganbat wrote on social media after receiving the award. "Behind my fame as a 5-time world champion, this success is the result of the efforts and hard work of many people", he said, listing several names.

For more, please click [HERE](#).

Uzbekistan Paper Lauds Para Success

Uzbek news agency Sports.uz revealed in the success of Uzbekistan's athletes at last month's Para Grand Prix in Manchester, Great Britain after the team brought home four medals, including two gold. Reigning Paralympic and World champion **Guljonoy Naimova** and up-and-coming **Asad Toshtemirov** both picked up their second gold medals in three Para Grands Prix. Both fighters have medaled at each event, with Naimova adding a silver in Paris and Toshtemirov a bronze in Sofia. Paralympian **Ziyoda Isakova** won silver in Manchester to add to her bronze from Sofia, while **Sanjar Mukhtorov** won his second PGP bronze medal after winning the same colour in Sofia.

For more, please click [HERE](#).



Europe:

Azerbaijan Highlights Para Grand Prix Medalists

AzerTag, the Azerbaijan State News Agency, recognised the success of its Para Taekwondo team at last month's Para Grand Prix tournament in Manchester, Great Britain. The team ended up with three medals, matching



its Para GP Series best in Paris earlier this year. The team was led by Paralympian **Imamaddin Khalilov** who won silver in the -70 kg, with teammates **Sabir Zeynalov** (-58 kg) and **Abulfaz Abuzarli** (-80 kg) taking bronze medals. Azerbaijan has now won 8 Para GP medals, and while still looking for its first Para GP champion, only four countries have won more medals in the series (Turkey – 20, Brazil – 17, Uzbekistan – 11, and Mexico – 9).

For more, please click [HERE](#).

Munro, Truesdale Meet with Great Britain's King Charles

Great Britain's Paralympic medalists **Beth Munro** and **Amy Truesdale** met with King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla at Buckingham Palace on 2 November. The pair were part of over 80 Olympic and Paralympic medalists from both Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022 to participate in a special reception held at the royal residence. Munro stunned the -58 kg division by winning Paralympic silver in just her second international tournament in memorable fashion – by beating Turkey's No. 2-seeded **Gamze Gurdal** and China's reigning world champion **Yujie Li** before falling to Denmark's Paralympic champion **Lisa Gjessing**. Truesdale managed to rebound from a tough semi-final loss to Uzbekistan's Paralympic champion **Guljonoy Naimova** to get past a stiff challenge from Iran's **Rayeh Shahab** to win Tokyo 2020 bronze.



"Thank you for a fantastic evening @buckinghampalaceroyal", Munro wrote on social media afterward, "Celebrating the great achievements of both @paralympicsgb_official and @teamgb Summer and Winter Games [athletes]".

For more, please click [HERE](#).



Italian City Launches Para Taekwondo Programme for School Students

The Italian city of Catanzaro announced a new Para Taekwondo programme designed specifically for elementary and middle school students in the region. The one-year project will select students based on their fitness and aptitude for Taekwondo. Local politicians and sports professionals were on hand to announce the project, which will see acclaimed instructors lead the youth.

Supported by the Italian National Olympic Committee, the project aims to promote all forms of social inclusion, through educational and training moments and to use sport to integrate people with impairment into the social fabric.

For more, please click [HERE](#).

Turkey Thrilled with Para Grand Prix Dominance

The Turkish Taekwondo Federation continues to be impressed with the consistent dominance its team has shown at the elite Para Grand Prix Series. For the third straight Para GP, Turkey finished on top of the medal

standings with 7 of its 10 fighters finding the podium. The team was led by 'Undisputed' Para GP champions **Mahmut Bozteke** and **Meryem Cavdar**, who have yet to lose a Para GP fight, as both added their third straight Para GP gold medals. **Gamze Gurdal** and **Alican Ozcan** added silvers for the team, while **Fatih Celik**, **Mehmet Sami Sarac**, and **Nurcihan Ekinci** added bronzes. After three Para GP tournaments, Turkey has won a remarkable 20 medals (out of 30 medal events), including 8 golds (4 silver, 8 bronze).

For more, please click [HERE](#).



Oceania:

Paralympic Medalist Watson Helps Australian Clubs Recruit Para Athletes

Tokyo 2020 bronze medalist **Janine Watson** will lead a MasterClass for Australian Taekwondo designed to assist local clubs understand how to integrate Para athletes into their Taekwondo programmes. Watson will introduce Australian clubs to Para sports, give an overview of classification impairment types, and explain Para Taekwondo's Sport Classes. She will also discuss Para Taekwondo's rapid growth and opportunities for international competition. Few athletes are better suited for the discussion, as Watson is the only Poomsae world champion who has also won a Paralympic medal in Kyorugi. This free class is set for 16 November at 19:00 local time and will mark the fourth session in Australian Taekwondo's MasterClass series.

MasterClass Education Series
Free education workshops for affiliated club owners

Para Taekwondo Awareness Session
How to support para-athletes at your club

“Janine Watson will present to clubs about how Para Taekwondo is gaining in popularity with more Para athletes wanting to compete”, the federation said in an advertisement, “We encourage clubs to attend this session to build their understanding of how to welcome and support Para athletes at their club[s]”.

For more information, please click [HERE](#). To register for the MasterClass, please click [HERE](#).

Pan Am:

Brazil's Paralympic Champ Torquato Visits Local School

Brazil's Paralympic champion **Nathan Torquato** knows there's more to being a champion than just winning medals. After picking up his third straight Para Grand Prix medal, the Tokyo 2020 champ visited a local school to speak about success, overcoming adversity, achieving your goals, and being your best self. The fourth-grade class had many questions and was so impressed with the young superstar that they decided to name their class after him – the 4th Grade Nathan Torquato class.



“This amazing class gave me the honour of using my name in the class nomenclature! I always say, this is worth more than any medal – to be a reference for children not only as an athlete but also as a person”, Torquato said afterward, “Thank you so much ‘4th Grade Nathan Torquato’ for giving me this amazing moment that I will never forget!”

For more, please click [HERE](#).

Mexico Celebrates Its Para Grand Prix Success



The Mexico Taekwondo Federation celebrated the success of its Para Taekwondo team at the Para Grand Prix in Manchester, as well as the results of the team throughout the 2022 Para Grand Prix Series. The team was once again led by Paralympic champion **Juan Diego Garcia Lopez**, who won his third straight Para GP gold and has yet to drop a fight in 2022. He was joined at the top of the podium by teammate **Claudia Romero**, who won her first Para GP gold medal. **Jessica Garcia** added a silver to make it three medals for Mexico in Manchester and leaving Mexico's overall medal haul through three Para GPs at 9 medals – 4 gold and 5 silver. Following her first

Para GP title, the Mexican Taekwondo Federation interviewed Romero.

For more, please click [HERE](#). To watch the interview with Romero, please click [HERE](#).

USA Taekwondo Celebrates Medell's Para Grands Prix Triumphs

After winning his third straight Para Grand Prix event in dramatic fashion in Manchester to become one of just four 'Undisputed' Para GP champions, USA Taekwondo took to social media to celebrate the success of its first true Para Taekwondo superstar – **Evan Medell**. The federation shared highlights of the event, including match footage, exclusive training clips, Medell's trademark 'ring walk', and the team celebrating his triumph. Medell edged Kazakhstan's **Nyshan Omirali** with a tense last-second score to ensure he went through the 2022 Para Grand Prix Series undefeated.

"Evan Medell's 3-peat was historical and made USA proud!", the federation wrote on Instagram, "Thank you to our coaches Adrian Gonzales and Brad DeMinck".

For more, please click [HERE](#).



Other:

Continental Union Heads Discuss Para Taekwondo with President Choue

The leaders of four continental unions were in Seoul last month to discuss plans to celebrate World Taekwondo's 50th anniversary next year and the leadership took the time to discuss the growth of

Para Taekwondo. African Taekwondo Union President **Issaka Ide** and Secretary General **Balla Dieye**; Asian Taekwondo Union President **Kyu Seok Lee** and Secretary General **Jung Heon Kim**; Oceania Taekwondo President **John Kotsifas** and Secretary General **Stuart Lee** (via video conference); and Pan American Taekwondo Union President **Juan Manuel Lopez Delgado** met with World Taekwondo President **Dr. Chungwon Choue** and Para Taekwondo Committee Chair **Chakir Chelbat** (via video conference) to discuss the 50th anniversary plans and what's in store for Para Taekwondo in 2023 – already set to be the busiest year in Para Taekwondo history.

"Today ... the Taekwondo movement is helping to strengthen society through our humanitarian and social development efforts. We never stop progressing", said President Choue in a statement, "The 50th founding anniversary next year is the perfect opportunity for us to look ahead and lay a new foundation for future generations of Taekwondoin".

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