

Tokyo 2020 Paralympics set for August 2021

- Paralympics will take place 24 August-5 September 2021
- IPC to establish new qualification criteria
- Athletes already qualified for Tokyo 2020 remain qualified

The Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games have been rescheduled to take place between 24 August and 5 September 2021.

The dates were confirmed on Monday (30 March) by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

This decision was taken under three main considerations:

1. To protect the health of the athletes and everyone involved and to support the containment of the COVID-19 virus.
2. To safeguard the interests of the athletes and of Olympic and Paralympic sport.
3. The global international sports calendar.

These new dates give health authorities and all involved in the organisation of the Games the maximum time to deal with the constantly changing landscape and the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They will also minimise any disruption that the postponement will cause to the international sports calendar. Additionally, they will provide sufficient time to finish the qualification process. The same heat mitigation measures as planned for 2020 will be implemented.

IPC President Andrew Parsons said: "It is fantastic news that we could find new dates so quickly for the Tokyo 2020 Games. The new dates provide certainty for the athletes, reassurance for the stakeholders and something to look forward to for the whole world.

"When the Paralympic Games do take place in Tokyo next year, they will be an extra special display of humanity uniting as one, a global celebration of human resilience and a sensational showcase of sport.

"With the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games 512 days away, the priority for all those involved in the Paralympic Movement must be to focus on staying safe with their friends and family during this unprecedented and difficult time.

"Now that the dates are confirmed, the IPC will work with the International Federations to establish new qualification criteria which will fully respect those that have already qualified for the Games."

IOC President Thomas Bach said: "I want to thank the International Federations for their unanimous support and Continental Associations of National Olympic

Committees for the great partnership and their support in the consultation process over the last few days. I would also like to thank the IOC Athletes' Commission with whom we have been in constant contact.

"With this announcement, I am confident that, working together with the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Japanese government and all our stakeholders, we can master this unprecedented challenge. Humankind currently finds itself in a dark tunnel. These Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 can be a light at the end of this tunnel."

The President of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee Yoshiro Mori said: "IOC President Thomas Bach and the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee held a conference call today to discuss in detail the revised dates of the Tokyo 2020 Games. Minister for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games Hashimoto Seiko and Tokyo Governor Koike joined the call. I proposed that the Games should be hosted between July and August 2021 and I really appreciate that President Bach, having discussed this proposal with the various international sport federations and other related organisations, kindly accepted my proposal.

"A certain amount of time is required for the selection and qualification of athletes and for their training and preparation, and the consensus was that staging the rescheduled Games during summer vacation in Japan would be preferable. In terms of transportation, arranging volunteers and the provision of tickets for those in Japan and overseas, as well as allowing for the COVID-19 situation, we think that it would be better to reschedule the Games one year later than planned, in the summer of 2021.

"Notwithstanding the postponement of the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the first time in history and various other issues that have already been highlighted, the event schedule is the cornerstone of future preparations, and I am convinced that taking this decision promptly will help speed up future preparations. I would like to thank all stakeholders, including the host city Tokyo and the Government of Japan, for their hard work during this short period. The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee will continue to work hard for the success of next year's Games."

The *Governor of Tokyo*, Koike Yuriko, said: "In consideration of the global coronavirus outbreak, we need a certain timeframe before we fully prepare for the delivery of a Games that is safe and secure for the athletes and spectators.

"The preparation for the new dates will go smoothly as the dates match with the same timeframe as the original competition dates corresponding with ticketing, venue staffing, volunteers and transport.

"The athletes, volunteers, torchbearers and local municipality governments have been concerned about the situation. Since we now have concrete new dates to aim for, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government will commit all its resources and

work closely with the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, the national government, and other stakeholders to fully prepare for the delivery of a Games that is safe and secure.”

Chelsey Gotell, Chairperson of the IPC Athletes’ Council, “I think these new dates will be a huge sense of relief for the whole athlete community who will be appreciative at the speed they have been set. With more than 500 days to go until the Paralympics, athletes can mentally reset and begin thinking about their 2021 plans.

“For not though training for Tokyo is not the priority, staying safe is, and I hope all athletes, their families and their friends follow the advice of their local authorities during this difficult period for the whole world.”

The Tokyo 2020 Olympics Games will run from 23 July to 8 August 2021.

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