



UK SPORTS ASSOCIATION For People with Learning Disability

NEWS RELEASE

- For Immediate Release -

BRITISH GOLD AND SILVER FOR TABLE TENNIS DYNAMIC DUOS!



Silver Medallists Smith & Bromley in action

British mixed doubles strike gold at the INAS-FID European Table Tennis Championships in Spain last week. Top British players, Victoria Bromley (Wolverhampton) and Adam Thompson (Cheshire) demonstrated their superior play when they beat their key rivals France in one of the most exciting and action packed finals of the tournament.

Playing 5 tough games, the British pair finally pushed France to their limit taking the 5th in a convincing 11-9. Bromley paired with team mate Jacqueline Smith (Essex) proved to be a powerful combination winning silver in a gruelling 5 game match against the strong French team.

Solid performances from Jeffrey Jarvis (Leicestershire), Simon Green (Buckinghamshire), Duncan Feltham (Dorset) and gold medallist Adam Thompson saw the mens team steam through the quarter finals against Austria, but loosing in the semi final to the eventual match winners Spain. Neil Handley (Lancashire) and Alistair Feltham (Dorset) managed their anxieties convincingly throughout the singles first round, but were beaten in the knockouts.

“This is an absolutely marvellous result”, comments Dennis Beech, GB Team Manager. “It can only get better. It was just so emotional hearing our National Anthem for the first time. Every Game was incredibly close and France has always been our biggest rivals. We really are on the brink of bringing home more medals and by the Global Games I think we will be ready to do that”.



Gold Medallists Thompson & Bromley

Tracey McCillen, National Director, UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability said “This is the first time our British Table Tennis players have reached the podium and we are very proud. It demonstrates the hard work and commitment not only of these talented players, but of Dennis, Wendy and Head Coach Mick Vesey. Now that we’re on the podium, you can rest assured we’ll be back for more!”

The INAS-FID European Table Tennis Championships for plays with intellectual disability were hosted by FEDDI in Valencia, Spain during 20th – 26th October and are run under INAS-FID and ITTA regulations. The event was attended by players from Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary, France, Hong Kong, China and Japan.

The ban on athletes with intellectual disability competing in the Paralympic Games, imposed after the Sydney 2000 Games continues. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Sports Federation (INAS-FID) in their statement of September 2008, indicated progress has been made between the parties and a decision on whether athletes will be admitted to the London 2012 Games will be made in November 2009.

The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA), working with its members and other organisations across the UK, has been leading a campaign since 2001 for the ban to be lifted. UKSA continues to urge Government to address the lack of funding for athletes across the UK and the UK Sports Association itself as a result of the continued IPC ban and to ensure that this group of athletes are re-admitted in time for full participation in London 2012.

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. The Great Britain Team is selected and managed by The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability.
2. The Team comprised Team Manager Dennis Beech (Cheshire), Head Coach Mick Vesey (Worksop), Team Support Wendy Beech (Cheshire), players Adam Thompson (Cheshire), Jeffrey Jarvis (Leicestershire), Neil Handley (Lancashire), Simon Green (Buckinghamshire), Duncan Feltham (Dorset), Alistair Feltham (Dorset), Jacqueline Smith (Essex), Victoria Bromley (Wolverhampton) and escorts Beryl Jarvis and Sheena Feltham.
3. The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) is the disability specific National Governing Body in the UK for sport and people with learning disability.

It is a national umbrella charity that co-ordinates and promotes sport and recreation for all people with learning disability across the UK. UKSA is recognised by UK Sport and is the official Great Britain member of the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability (INAS-FID), a member of IPC.

4. INAS-FID, the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability. Founded in 1986, is a member of the International Paralympic Committee and is the body responsible for the international competition for athletes with intellectual disability. This event is run under the auspices of the European region See www.inas-europe.org
5. The ban on athletes with learning disability was imposed by the IPC following an incident at the Sydney Paralympic Games in 2000 when a group of adult non-disabled athletes infiltrated the Spanish learning disability basketball team. The IPC banned every athlete with learning disability across the world from competing at future Paralympics and IPC sanctioned competitions as a result. This has had the additional impact of funding being stopped across the UK and some athletes not having the financial means to continue in their sport. UKSA has since Sydney 2000 been working with the British Paralympic Association, INAS-FID and other agencies including RADAR and the Equality & Human Rights Commission to have the ban removed.
6. Learning Disability is a term used in the UK, with intellectual disability being used internationally. Both refer to the same group of athletes.