

SPORT

sport

Table Tennis

Stratford's Ashley Facey Thompson competes for Great Britain at the PTT Slovenia Open in Lasko this week.

But British Table Tennis Performance Director Gorazd Vecko expects one of the toughest challenges for his team ahead of the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

The 24-year-old Facey Thompson, who started playing the sport aged seven while attending Morpeth School in Bethnal Green, competed at the 2016 Rio Paralympics for Britain.

And he will compete in the men's class nine singles event in Slovenia as part of a 17-strong British squad at the event.

Vecko said: "It will be the biggest tournament in Paralympic table tennis history with more than 450 players from 48 countries.

"Almost all the top 10 players in all classes will be there and I personally think it is stronger than the World Championships last year.

"This means the tournament could be even more important than the European Championships in September for a lot of players with regards to Paralympic qualification.

"The players who are currently borderline cases for qualifying for Tokyo have a great opportunity to play a lot of matches against better ranked players.

"They can get a lot of points in Slovenia which could put them in a position to qualify for Tokyo on their world ranking.

"For the GB players that are currently ranked in the top six in the world we want to be satisfied that they are where they are by right and they can beat all the top players in the world.

"Slovenia is always the strongest international tournament we play apart from the major championship – that is why we will go out four days earlier to have a training camp with Japan, Korea and Norway so that we can be as best prepared as possible for the tournament.

"It is a big test for all of the athletes and coaches and I hope that they will have great performances and beat the players they need to beat to be top in the world."

Facey Thompson has a condition called Erb's Palsy, which affects his balance and movement.



Beagles athletes celebrate relay success.

Picture: NEB

Sprint stars help Beagles to a fabulous start to campaign with a precious YDL victory

Athletics

Beagles made a perfect start to their new Youth Development League Upper Age group match with a fine team victory in the opener on Saturday.

The composite Beagles team has the advantage of Newham's sprint skills and Basildon's excellence over the longer distances and it proved decisive in this match at Tonbridge.

Dolita Shaw was in fine sprinting form for the under-20 women where she kicked off with victory in the 100 metres in 12.68 seconds.

Shaw followed that with a win in the 200m in 26.87 and rounded off a great day by helping the sprint relay team to a win.

Jazmin Whitehead-Shakes won the B 100m and was also part of that relay team, while Zoe Thompson won the B 200m and led off the relay team.

Other results saw Myome Tonge finish fourth in the high jump, while there were plenty of points earned by the Basildon contingent.

Aleeya Sibbons also managed a sprint double in the under-17 girls' category.

Sibbons clocked 12.40 in the 100m and 25.58 in the 200m, whilst Grace Alatise and Queen Tanimowo were third and second in the B events respectively.

Tanimowo won the B triple jump, where Moyo Okenla was second in the A event, while



Beagles athletes celebrate relay success.

Picture: NEB

Gabrielle Osenwa was third in the shot where Alatise won the B string.

To round things off, Alatise, Tanimowo, Aneya Edwards and Sibbons were second in the sprint relay.

Joseph Harding was in good form for the under-17 boys as he won the 200m in 22.03 and the 100m hurdles, clocking 13.21.

Michael Onilogbo was second in the 100m in 11.16, while Malik Oshiyemi won both B sprints.

Damope Akinyemi won the B long jump, while Aaron Ashmead-Shoye was second in the triple jump and Basildon's Kenneth Ikeji won the shot, discus and hammer.

In the relays, the Beagles won

both the 4x100 and 4x400m.

For the under-20 men, Denis Jefia won the B 100m and was second in the A 200m in 23.27, while William Adeyeme took the B 200m and won the sprint hurdles.

Tim Adeniran took the 400m in 52.12, while Jerome Henry leapt 1.80 metres to win the high jump, Theo Fadayiro won the triple jump and Ramzan Mohsan was second in the shot, discus and hammer.

Lastly the 4x400m relay team also managed a win.

All in all, a great start to the season for the upper age team and with the youngsters finishing second last week, things are looking bright for the summer.

sport

Athletics

There were some magnificent medal-winning performances from Newham & Essex Beagles athletes at the British Universities and Colleges Championships in Bedford.

The BUCS Championships are always a good pointer to the up and coming athletes in the country and the Beagles in the field showed they are a force to be reckoned with.

Harry Hughes threw a stunning championship record to win the javelin, qualifying for the final in first place with a throw of 69.86metres and stretching that to a magnificent 78.63m to win the precious gold medal.

There was a brilliant Beagles gold and silver in the discus as George Armstrong and Matthew Beatty won their qualifying pools and went on to dominate the final as well.

Armstrong took gold with a throw of 55.13m, while Beatty was not far behind him with 51.90 for silver and also finished fifth in the final of the shot, throwing 14.22m.

Katie Head also picked up a medal for her efforts in the hammer, qualifying in first place in her pool with a throw of 58.22m and improving it to 58.60m in the final which earned her a silver medal.

Jack Roach missed out on a medal by a mere centimetre in the long jump.

He was first in qualifying with a leap of 7.25m and stretched that to 7.46m in the final, just finishing in fourth.

Rochelle Jones qualified for the final of the triple jump, but she could not make a mark in the final.

And so to the track where Jordan Andrew struck a fine gold in the disabled 100m, clocking 11.94 for a personal best.

He was also third in the long jump for a fine weekend, while Jayme Rossiter also managed a medal in the steeplechase.

After finishing second in his heat, he then clocked 9.17.56 in the final which was enough for third place and a bronze medal.

Emmanuel Sosanya and Chris O'Donnell both made the semis of the highly competitive 400m.

O'Donnell finished third in his heat, clocking 48.76, while Sosanya did even better, finishing second.

However, their times were not good enough to make the final.

Daniel Mees did make the final of the 800m and, after finishing second in his semi, he came home seventh in the final in 1.55.24.

Meg Rapsley made the final of the 1,500m, where she finished in 12th in 4.57.