

Toyota SASAPD National Championships

PRESS RELEASE

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TOYOTA
Official Sponsor

Excitement is building for the 2021 Toyota SASAPD National Championships which begin tomorrow in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape.

The competition will take place from 23-26 April 2021, beginning with the opening ceremony at Westbourne oval.

The championships have historically provided the country's top athletes with disabilities a birthplace for their dreams and in this Paralympic year, the games will also be the centre of excellence.

The multi-sport competition will feature boccia, goalball, judo, powerlifting and athletics. The athletics meeting is internationally sanctioned and is the largest event of its calibre in Southern Africa this year, providing track and field athletes from the region with the opportunity to secure their seat on the plane to Tokyo. International athletes from neighbouring Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia have also entered.

This will be the first year the Toyota SASAPD National Championships will be closed to spectators due to strict COVID-19 protocols.

The 2020 National championships, scheduled to take place between the 21-26 March in Nelson Mandela Bay, had to be cancelled 6 days before the event after President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a national state of disaster to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the launch of the 2021 event, Head of the local organising committee in Nelson Mandela Bay, Jean Miggels said "COVID hit us very hard two weeks before the games and with so much uncertainty we didn't know if we will have a games this year, but the LOC just kept on with the arrangements hoping, encouraging one another that things will get better this year so that our athletes will be able to compete."

President of SASAPD, Moekie Grobbelaar thanked all the stakeholders for remaining on board with the organisation's premier event despite the uncertainty, "To all the sponsors who came on board for this year's event: Toyota South Africa being the main sponsor, this competition would not be held on a yearly basis if it were not for your contribution. The national championships is not just another tournament, it is the birthplace of dreams. This year the playing field will be much smaller than previous years due to COVID-19 but that will not mean a lack of competition."

Headline sponsor, Toyota SA, is backing the event for the second year and say, "We have seen so many examples of people achieving the impossible at the Paralympics and also at the Toyota SASAPD National Championships. We are excited to part of the SASAPD partnership."

The opening (23 April 2021) and closing (26 April 2021) ceremony together with the athletics (24-26 April 2021) competition will take place at the Westbourne oval. Powerlifting

will take place at Cape Recife School (26 April 2021). The venue for Goalball (24-26 April 2021) and Judo (24 April 2021) is the Fairview Indoor Centre. The competition for Boccia (24-26 April 2021) takes place at Pearson high school.

The event is open to registered media. Media enquiries at media@sasapd.org.za

Notes for editors:

The 2021 Toyota SASAPD National Championships are sponsored by Toyota SA, Thirsti, Fusion and TransFire in partnership with Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

SASAPD (South African Sports Association for the Physically Disabled) is a member federation of SASCOC (South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee) which is the country's NPC (National Paralympic Committee) and a member of CPISRA, IBSA and IWAS. SASAPD is the national controlling body of sport and classification, sport that fall under its jurisdiction, for persons who have visual or physical impairments which complies with eligibility requirements as defined by the National Paralympic Committee. (IPC Classification Code, 2015). The first SASAPD National championships took place in 1962 and is an annual event featuring different sport codes under the jurisdiction of the federation.

Toyota, an international partner to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, says "The games for this year are scheduled to kick off on the 23rd of July – 8 August. Another exciting period will be the Paralympic Games, scheduled to start on 24 August – 5 September 2021. As the Worldwide Official Mobility Partner of the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee, Toyota shares the vision to inspire people to push onward – past their finish line, past their impossible."

#BirthplaceOfDreams #StartYourImpossible

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