

World Champion Jawad “super excited” for Tokyo challenge

World Champion and Paralympic Medallist Ali Jawad is “super excited” for the challenge of competing in his fourth Paralympic Games having been selected as a part of a five strong Tokyo 2020 squad. Jawad will be competing in the men’s up to 59kg class.

Speaking on the announcement Jawad said: “After a rollercoaster journey since Rio 2016, I'm super excited for the challenges of Tokyo and I'm determined to deliver a performance for the hard work that me and my team have applied in the face of a challenging and competitive environment”.

Originally born in Lebanon, Jawad’s talent for powerlifting was discovered back in 2005 when he was just 16 years old growing up in Tottenham, London.

A friend persuaded him to go to the gym across the road from his school, where he was spotted by the owner who was a former national powerlifting coach and within 18 months, he was competing at the 2008 Paralympic Games.

Jawad won junior gold at the 2007 Powerlifting European Championships in Greece and became World Junior Champion at the 2008 championships in the United States.

On the eve of his Paralympic debut at Beijing in 2008, Jawad fell ill. He still competed, finishing ninth, but he was later diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease. He continued to train and finished fifth on his Commonwealth Games debut at Delhi.

He narrowly missed out on the podium at the London 2012 Paralympics but was rewarded with gold medal success and a world record at the Asian Open Championships in Kuala Lumpur, followed by another gold and world record at the 2014 IPC World Championships in Dubai, lifting 190kg.

That year he also won bronze for Team England at the Commonwealth Games setting another world record of 194kg in his category in a competition which was scored via a bodyweight formula that enabled lifters from different weight groups to compete side by side.

In 2015 Jawad’s winning run continued, winning another gold medal in the -65kg class at the IPC Powerlifting European Championships in Eger, Hungary, to ensure that he was selected to Paralympics GB as reigning World and European Champion.

Competing in his third Games at Rio 2016, Jawad won his first ever Paralympic medal after securing silver in the men’s -59kg category, lifting a best of 190kg to finish second.

After an 18-month period out of action battling Chron’s Disease he returned at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and won bronze in a stunning comeback and then secured another European title the following month at Beck Sur Mur in France.

He won silver at Ready Steady Tokyo in 2019 which was a test event held in the same venue as the upcoming Paralympic Games and secured his Tokyo qualification spot with a stunning performance at the Tbilisi World Cup where he won silver lifting 170kg.

British Weight Lifting would like to wish Ali and the rest of the team all the best of luck as they prepare for Tokyo.