



Taka Suzuki wins gold at the Paralympic Games in Tokyo

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Northumbria's sporting stars claim seven medals at Tokyo Games

Students – past and present – from Northumbria University have Taken on Tokyo in inimitable style, bringing home seven medals for their respective countries at this year's Paralympic Games.

The biggest medal haul came courtesy of Taka Suzuki, who will study for his PhD at Northumbria after completing a bachelor's degree and Masters in Sport Management at the University.

The Japanese swimmer won an astonishing five medals on home soil, including a world-record breaking gold, at this year's Paralympics.

Taka competed in five events at this year's Games, winning medals in every final, including gold in the Men's 100m Freestyle, where he set a new Paralympic world record. He also claimed two silver medals in the 50m and 200m Freestyle events and two bronze medals in the 50m Breaststroke and 150m IM event.

Taka's swimming coach, Louise Graham, who is Head of Aquatics at Northumbria University, says she is incredibly proud of the highly decorated athlete.

She said: "Taka has shown resilience and determination throughout his preparation and somehow managed to keep his composure under what must have been immense pressure, to deliver a gold medal at his home Games in Tokyo.

"Since the last Paralympics in Rio 2016 where he was disappointed to finish fourth and come home without any medals, he has delivered five world championship medals, graduated from both his undergraduate and postgraduate courses, signed up for his PhD, and split his training between Tokyo and Newcastle; all while the world has been rocked by a global pandemic.

"He is an example to us all, that if you have a goal and you commit to it, you can achieve unbelievable results."

Great Britain's Ellen Buttrick, who completed her geography degree at Northumbria in 2017, also won gold at the Paralympic Games as part of Team GB's Mixed Coxed Four rowing team.

Claire Cashmore, who completed a Masters in Leadership and Management at Northumbria, took bronze in the women's PTS5 triathlon. Claire won a silver medal in the 100m breaststroke event at the Paralympic Games in Rio 2016, but made the switch to triathlon in time for this year's Games.

Northumbria Sport Management graduate, Lyndon Longhorne, made his Paralympic debut in Tokyo and set a new British record in the 200m Freestyle

swimming heat, but missed out on a medal finishing ninth overall.

The previous month, Northumbria history graduate Bryony Pitman finished ninth in both the Women's Team and Women's Individual Archery events at the Olympic Games, in Tokyo.

Academics within the University's [Department of Sport, Exercise & Rehabilitation](#) have also been working with Great Britain's Olympic athletes to support their pursuit of Olympic medal success at this year's Games in Tokyo. Their cutting-edge research helped implement new effective, safe training practices and recovery strategies into the routines of Team GB athletes.

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: "At Northumbria we are immensely proud to have medal-winning Paralympians as part of our student body and alumni.

"Taka Suzuki's phenomenal performances in the pool at Tokyo, resulting in five Paralympic medals and a new world record, provide an inspiration for many and will continue to be celebrated here at the University.

"As well as excelling in competitive and elite sport, Northumbria has real and developing strength in our sport-related research, in our degree programmes, in our exceptional facilities, and in our work with partners.

"The success of Taka Suzuki and our former students in Tokyo are testament to the ambition and aspirations of the University as a whole."

Northumbria University celebrated success five years ago at the Paralympics in Rio, where four Northumbria students brought home an impressive six medals from the Games.

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