

Press Release

Hungarian medal hopes complete last training camp in Leipzig, Germany.

Just a few days before the start of the Beijing Olympics, the Hungarian wheelchair fencing team in Leipzig is completing a final training camp before leaving for Beijing.

At the invitation of the International Association for Fencing, "Attaque d'Escrime" (Leipzig) and the "Fund for the Future of Fencing" (Moscow), seven top Hungarian athletes are preparing intensively for 5 days for their Paraolympics start in the exhibition city of Leipzig. Pal Szekeres, Veronicka Juhasz, Dani Göngyi, Susanna Krajnyak, Judit Palfi, Mato Guala and Gabor Harvath are joined by young athletes from Hungary.

"The number of Olympic, European and World Championships medals is unprecedented. They are undoubtedly one of the top favorites for Beijing at the Paralympics", said Vice President Karin Strauch. "Of course, we are pursuing several goals with this project. On the one hand, our guests will be met here by ideal conditions for preparing for Beijing. Second, we also want to break down barriers", added President Steffen Grollmisch. It is planned, say Steffen Grollmisch and Karin Strauch, that also that young fencers from the region participate in joint training in Leipzig. It's something else to fence from a wheelchair. We want to overcome the barriers of training disabled and non-disabled fencers together and at the same time increase interest in wheelchair fencing", continued Grollmisch.

In particular, Pal Szekeres will be in the focus of interest. The Olympic third in the team (foil) of 1988 in the "able-bodied" competition, has been in a wheelchair since a traffic accident which did not prevent him, however, continuing his sporting career. In Barcelona in 1992 and in Atlanta in 1996, he took gold medals at the Paralympics in the Foil, in 2000 and 2004 he added bronze to his medal collection in Sydney and Athens. "He is considered the top favorite in Beijing in the foil and saber", Steffen Grollmisch is pleased to say of the Hungarian team leader.

Seven young fencers, who have already competed at the Youth and Junior European or World Championships for Hungary and have not yet been able to celebrate many international successes, are accompanying the team and are supported by Szekeres and Co. as training partners.

"And believe me," adds Steffen Grollmisch in conclusion, "it's not that easy to land a hit against a wheelchair pro. The dynamics and the speed of movements fascinated me even back then".

The Hungarian team is looking forward to their training camp in Leipzig and is already looking forward to Beijing.