



An Analytical Historical Study of the Most Important Iraqi Paralympic Table Tennis Results Achieved Globally for the Period (2023-2025)

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Abstract

The Paralympic Games are considered the third global sporting event after the Olympic Games and the second World Cup for football, as the Paralympic Games are not sports competitions, but are the embodiment of the spirit of humanity, and the research aims to 1- Analyze and know the most important results of Iraqi Paralympic table tennis achieved globally for the period (2023-2025). 2- Analyzing and knowing the most important factors that contributed to achieving the achievement The historical-analytical method was used, the study population: they are all Iraqi players participating in the Arab, international and Paralympic championships. The study sample: It was selected in a deliberate way and included the medalists accredited in the Arab, international and Paralympic countries. The most important conclusions 1- The Iraqi table tennis achieved an achievement and a historic leap from qualifying from the quarter-finals in Nafsat 2021 to the gold and dominating the throne of the game in Paris 2024, which confirms the efficiency of the training programs of the training staff in technical, psychological and tactical preparation, winning and deciding the result, and the most important recommendations came to provide material and technical support for equipment and artificial sports limbs and the development of sports talents to ensure the continuation of the Achievement

Keywords: Analytical Historical, Table Tennis, Paralympics.

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Introduction

Today, sports are the first important global event for all countries of the world, and in the modern era, sports have taken a prominent position, especially as it has become multi-role, as it is no longer limited to being a physical activity only, but has become one of the most important tools affecting global and international policies, as international festivals such as the Olympic Games and world championships in all sports are considered to have a vital impact, such as building roads and forming rings that connect countries to each other, as sports have been used. As a tool to strengthen the national and international image

(Sakran, 2024, p. 250) The Paralympic Games are the third global sporting event after the Olympic Games and the second FIFA World Cup, as the Paralympic Games are not sports competitions, but are the embodiment of the spirit of humanity

The Paralympic Games are the main component of the competitions, and due to the importance of the event, the list of sports has been expanded and more inclusive for people with disabilities, for half of this segment of society, and to integrate and rehabilitate them and change the reality of most of them, as for the Paralympic Games, since its establishment in the first session in 1960, it has been limited to (8) games with the participation of (23) countries and (400) athletes, and today the number of games participating in the last session in 2024 is (22) games and the participation of (169) countries and the number of participating athletes is (4463). (Najm et al., 2025, pp. 193-194)

Table tennis is one of the most popular sports in the world, and it has been included in the Olympic Games since 1988. Similarly, Paralympic table tennis is the third largest Paralympic sport in terms of the number of athletes, and is practiced in more than 100 countries (International Paralympic Committee [IPC], n.d.) that was officially included in the Summer Paralympics program in 1960.

Table tennis is one of the central federations of the Iraqi Paralympic Committee, which was established in 2003 after being linked to the Iraqi National Olympic Committee as a federation, which is the Al-Majd Sports Federation for Paralympics (Elias, 2020).

The reason for using the 2021-2024 time period is due to the Iraqi Paralympic team's first participation in the Tokyo Games in 2021.

The problem of the study is highlighted by the lack of information about this sport in academic research and central libraries in Iraqi universities, and the importance of this study lies in the fact that it is the first Iraqi study according to the researcher's knowledge that studies the development of the Iraqi Paralympic table tennis game during the research period from 2023 to 2025 and its participation in the Arab, international and Paralympic countries.



Study Objectives

- 1- Analyzing and knowing the most important results of the Iraqi Paralympic table tennis achieved globally for the period (2023-2025).
- 2- Analyzing and knowing the most important factors that contributed to achieving achievement

Methodology

This study is based on the historical-analytical method .

Study Population

They are all Iraqi athletes participating in Arab, World and Paralympic Championships.

Study sample

It was deliberately selected and included the medalists accredited in the Arab and international and Paralympic countries.

Data Collection Tools

Official Records of the Paralympic Committee.

Iraqi Paralympic Committee records, international participation files and ITTF reports.

Approved Paralympic databases.

Official reports of the Arab and international Paralympic Committees

Statistics issued by Paralympic sports federations

Personal Interviews

Iraqi Paralympic Committee

(Al-Itabi et al., 2021.p385) indicates that the Iraqi Paralympic Committee was established on April 9, 2003. The Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences at the University of Baghdad witnessed the first meeting of the Interim Committee for the Management of Sport for Persons with Disabilities in Iraq, chaired by Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor Al-Samarrai, and in the presence of the member of the Interim Board, Dr. Faleh Francis. At that meeting, it was agreed to form an interim body for the management of disabled sports. Dr. Muzaffar Abdullah Shafiq was appointed as the coordinator between the Interim Authority for the Management of Disabled Sports and the Interim Authority for the Management of State Sports. The Interim Authority for the Management of the Disabled consists of: Qahtan Tayeh Al-Nuaimi, Dr. Dhari Touma, Fakher Al-Jamali, Khaled Rashak, Dr. Aqeel Hamid, Alaa Al-Din Moussa Al-Roudhan, Haider Amin, Siham Hassan, Dr. Karim Abis, and Mohammed Salman Tawfiq. Mohamed Majeed, Asaad Ismail,



Hassan Reza, Dr. Abdulaziz Nayef, Abdulkarim Abdel Hussein, Abdulkarim Baqer, Samir Ali Latif, Qassem Shanshil, and Hadi Abdel Karim. October 9, 2003 is considered a historic day in the record of the Iraqi Paralympic Committee. The first elections were held for the ten federations, which in turn formed the organizational structure of the Paralympic Committee: weightlifting, athletics, sitting volleyball, fencing, chair swimming, target ball for the blind, table tennis, tennis, and games for the deaf and dumb. At that time, the Executive Bureau of the Iraqi Paralympic Committee was elected for the first time, which included Qahtan Tayeh Al-Nuaimi as president, and Fakhir Al-Jamali as Secretary General, Hani Abdul Majeed as First Vice-President, Khaled Rashaj as Second Deputy, Abdul Karim Baqer as Financial Secretary, Dr. Aqeel Hamid as Executive Director, Siham Hassan in charge of Women's Sports, Mazhir Ghanem as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, Nawfal Abdul Sattar and Kawthar Hussain as members of the Board of Directors, Dr. Zuhair Saudi as representative of the Ministry of Health, Mr. Mahmoud as representative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and Dr. Faleh Francis as Coordinator with the Interim Sports Administration in Iraq.

Table Tennis Rankings

Paralympic table tennis players are divided into 11 categories of competition, according to their abilities. Wheelchair players compete in Categories 1 to 5 (C1-C5), standing players in Categories 6 to 10, and Players with Intellectual Disabilities in Category 11. Players in Categories C1 and C2 have the worst physical disabilities, including players with quadriplegia, while wheelchair players in Category C5 have the best physical abilities (International Paralympic Committee [IPC], 2025).

Najm et al., 2025, p. 196 indicates that table tennis was part of the Paralympic Games program Since the inaugural Games in 1960. With 10 countries participating in eleven competitions and involving 10 players and 15 female players, the sport of Paralympic table tennis is a popular event at the Summer Paralympic Games, where athletes with physical and mental disabilities participate. There are 11 player classifications (category) Classes 1 to 5 compete in a wheelchair, and classes 6 to 10 compete in a stand.

Results

Table 1. Shows the Arab results of the Iraqi Paralympic table tennis

| | Name of Competitions | Competition History | Country (venue) | Achievements | | |
|---|--|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | | | Gold | Silver | Bronze |
| 1 | National Club International Championship | 2023 | Jordan | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| 2 | West Asian Championship | 2024 | United Arab Emirates Sharjah | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | Egypt International Championship | 2024 | Egypt | 1 | | 1 |
| 4 | National Club Championship | 2024 | Jordan | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| 5 | Oman International Championship | 2025 | Jordan | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| 6 | Egypt Championship | 2025 | Egypt | | | 2 |
| 7 | Asian Youth Games Championship | 2025 | United Arab Emirates | 3 | | 1 |

Table 2. Shows the results achieved globally for Iraqi Paralympic table tennis

| | Competition Name | Competition History | Country (venue) | Achievements | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | | | Gold | Silver | Bronze |
| 1 | Taiwan Championship | 2023 | Taiwan | 1 | | 1 |
| 2 | Korea | 2023 | South Korea | 1 | | 1 |
| 3 | Asian Games / Hanzhou | 2023 | China Hangzhou City | | | 1 |
| 4 | Slovenia Championship | 2024 | Slovenia | | 1 | |

| | Competition Name | Competition History | Country (venue) | Achievements | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | | | Gold | Silver | Bronze |
| 5 | Nigeria Championship | 2024 | Nigeria | 6 | 2 | 7 |
| 6 | World Youth Championship | 2024 | Slovenia Laško City | 4 | | 1 |
| 7 | Montenegro Championship in Montenegro | 2025 | Montenegro | | | 1 |
| 8 | Slovenia Championship | 2025 | Slovenia | | | 1 |
| 9 | Zone Championship in China | 2025 | China | 1 | | |

Table 3. Shows the results achieved in the Iraqi Paralympic Table Tennis Olympics

| | Competition Name | Competition History | Country (venue) | Achievement |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Tokyo Paralympics | 2021 | Japan | Qualifying for the quarter-finals |
| 2 | Paris Paralympics | 2024 | France | Historic Gold |

Discussion

By looking at Table (1), it is noted that the readings in the competitions record an upward path in the results, which reveals the progress in the technical performance of the Iraqi Paralympic team in the Arab world, and the results can be understood and discussed through several axes: First, the recording of competitive excellence in the Jordanian championships from 2023-2025. Therefore, the Jordanian stadiums have been a good point for excellence in competitive performance, and this did not come out of thin air, as communication is in development. Performance through contact with healthy people for the purpose of developing a superior training environment to reach the highest methods of good competitive skill performance, and this was evident through the results in Table (1), in 2023, the Paralympic table tennis team achieved (4 gold, 5 silver, 1 bronze). With the continuation of participation in 2024, the gold tally in the same tournament jumped to (7 gold medals), up to 2025 in the Oman International Championship, which recorded (6 gold).



So, from four gold medals to seven medals for the Iraqi team, it reflects the level of understanding and cumulative competitive experience of the players, as well as the level of tactical and technical experience, as the players were able to know the technical mistakes due to which the team won five silver medals, and therefore in the next tournament 2024, this understanding translated into increasing the gold medals and keeping the silver and bronze, and turned them into decisive victories during consecutive tournaments.

Referring to Table (1) and following up on the Arab results in the UAE Championship, the Iraqi team is technically dominant by winning five golds and four silvers, as for the Egyptian stadiums, the achievement here is qualitatively accurate, with the Iraqi team 2025 winning two golds for the 2024 championship, one gold, so getting another gold is not an easy thing in the field of sports or competitions.

Here, we point out that the lack of loss in the final levels of the Egyptian Championship is an indicator of raising the level of psychological toughness of the participating Iraqi team and their ability to obtain gold medals under the pressure of competition for the opponent and the existing audience, and this is confirmed by (Jassim et al., 2024, p. 58) that the psychological aspect has a large part in reaching performance in less time and higher effort, and high effort does not come without a strong personality that knows the requirements of the learning stage, as psychological toughness is considered a valuable personality trait that enables the individual to Face the challenges of technical performance of difficult skills and help them achieve their goals and overcome obstacles.

From what is stated in Table (1), if we make a comparison of the competitions for the Iraqi participations, it is concluded that the Iraqi Paralympic team moved from the stage of appearance in 2023 to the stage of overwhelming victory in 2024-2025, and this success is explained to the participation and continuous contact of these teams: Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates , which made the gold harvest predominant in most of these participations.

As for referring to Table (2) of the competitions globally, it is understood that the strategic transformation of the Iraqi team from the Arab competition to competition and focus regionally and face international players and achievements in table tennis.

This can be understood through several indicators, namely the Iraqi team's ability to win a gold medal in all its participations with Asian schools in Taiwan and Korea and the Games in Hanshua.

This Asian achievement explains that the Iraqi team has moved from honorary participation to the stage of "I am here" to participate, and achieve the achievement, as the three-time international team is not an easy thing and reflects high efficiency in mental and skill preparation to face the continent's champions.



As for 2024, the year of the most quantitative and qualitative participations, as Nigeria's competitions recorded an unprecedented leap of seven gold medals and six bronze medals.

Hence, the importance of the results in Europe appears, as while the result of the medal was one silver in 2024 in Slovenia, the Iraqi team returned with a better result in this country in 2025 to rise to a higher level, which is the level of gold, and this confirms that the Iraqi team succeeded technically in preparing training programs and snatched the winning gold the following year.

The results of the achievements in the World Youth Championship in Slovenia 2024, which was represented in obtaining a gold medal and four silver medals, formed a strategic support to ensure the permanence of Iraqi excellence in international forums, and this achievement is presented as a technical indication of the success of the preparation programs in building a solid base capable of achievement at the highest levels, and at the same time, the ability to snatch silver. The championship in China and Montenegro's gold medal in 2025 reflect a high degree of flexibility in the distribution of technical and physical effort across a competitive geography far apart and in close periods of time. This upward pattern practically embodies the concept of survival management at the top of the competitive pyramid as players have managed to maintain their competitive readiness for a long time.

When the nine findings in the global table are analysed, it is clear that the Iraqi presence has gone beyond the qualitative constraints of the areas of competition, with qualitative achievements distributed among East Asia, Africa, and Central Europe. The number of Gold Medals (13 Gold Medals in the Global Table) is a statistical indicator of the efficiency of the strategy and training methods that prioritize the quality of performance and the ability to resolve final disputes.

From the above in tables (1) and (2), it is worth noting that the most results are through the champion player and the great achievement of Iraq 2024 Paris Paralympic gold is the player Najla Imad, as it is mentioned (Fayyad, 2024) that the champion Najla Imad at the beginning of her career in the sport of table tennis, those close to her warned her that the disability will exhaust her and frustrate her hopes, but this young Iraqi woman who survived the explosion that deprived her of her legs and arm insisted on pursuing her ambition and now hopes to win a gold medal, especially after qualifying for the Paralympic Games in Paris.

She did not stop at these participations or compete in local championships, she participated in the Paralympic Games in Tokyo at the age of 16, where she competed in her first participation with Russian Maliak Alieva, and lost in the first match (1-3), then faced Korea's Lee Konwoo, and also lost to her with the same result (1-3), but this increased her strength and determination to challenge to compete in other tournaments.



In 2016, she finished third in the Jordan Championship and participated in the Asian Championship in the UAE in 2017, the Thailand International Championships in 2018, and the 2019 Championships in Egypt. She participated twice and won first and second place, as well as participation in Jordan and Poland, in China she won first place, and in Spain in 2020 she won first place.

It is worth mentioning that after her participation in the Thailand International Championship in 2018 (handicap category) and obtaining the third place, the president of the Table Tennis Federation for the Paralympics, Samir Al-Kurdi, decided to turn her into playing standing and with prosthetics.

Referring to Table (3), which appears in the results of the 2021 tournament held in Tokyo, in which the Iraqi team players qualified, which is considered the stage of consolidating the foot for this stage of competitions technically by reaching the quarter-finals through the player Najla Imad, which was the cornerstone on which the subsequent results were built. (Al Jazeera Net, 2022) indicates that the athlete Najla Imad participated in the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, which took place in the summer of 2021 after a short preparatory period that did not exceed 40 days in Baghdad, and she was the only qualifier from Iraq and the youngest participant. In her first participation, Najla faced female players who were invincible to her experience and age, as she met in her first participation with Russian Alieva Maliak, who plays under the flag of the Russian Paralympic Committee. After her defeat in this first match, Najla continued her journey to face Korea's Lee Kono, but she was not lucky, although her participation in itself was a victory for her and the Iraqis.

In the 2024 Paris Olympics, the performance moved from the stage of competition to the stage of achievement and excellence, as Iraq was officially crowned with the gold in table tennis with absolute sovereignty

When comparing the 2021-2024 edition, we find that the superiority was not born of chance, but rather the result of the accumulation of experiences that started from the quarter-finals of 2021 and ended with the gold in 2024. This result indicates the superiority of the technical staff in addressing the previous skill lapses and turning them into strengths that enabled the player to climb the Paralympic podium for the first time in the history of the game.

Conclusions

1. Iraqi table tennis has achieved an achievement and a historic leap, from qualifying from the quarter-finals in 2021 to the gold medal and dominating the throne of the game in Paris 2024, which confirms the efficiency of the training programs of the coaching staff in technical, psychological and tactical preparation, and winning and deciding the result.



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2- Psychological toughness is the decisive factor that the players were able to turn the helm of harsh physical challenges into a motivation to win, which was clearly embodied in the ability of the champion Najla Emad to climb the world and Paralympic gold podiums.

Recommendations

- 1- The necessity of adopting psychological sports counseling programs as a permanent main pillar in the camps of the national teams, as it is the likely factor to maintain skill stability under the pressure of international competitions.
- 2- Providing material and technical support for equipment and prosthetic sports limbs and developing sports talents to ensure the continuation of achievement



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