

# ALL ROADS LEAD TO PARIS

## Swimmers to have overseas training camps as preparation for Paralympics intensifies

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It is full steam ahead for national swimmers such as Yip Pin Xiu and Toh Wei Soong, as they step up preparations for the Aug 28-Sept 8 Paralympics in Paris.

Overseas training camps in places such as Japan and Thailand have been lined up in the next five months.

Yip will also participate in the European Open Championships in Portugal in April, before the pair shape up at May's Citi Para Swimming World Series Singapore.

Speaking after the National Para Swimming Championships at OCBC Aquatic Centre on March 23, five-gold Paralympian Yip revealed that preparations are intensifying for the Paris Games.

The 32-year-old, who will be defending her S2 50m and 100m backstroke titles and also qualified for the S3 100m freestyle, said: "We really stepped up training this year, it's been a lot more intense and focused on areas I need to improve on, and I'm excited to race in Paris."

"I'll have a training camp in Thailand in early April, with a few more before Paris comes around. These

camps are to create the best environment possible, where everyone is together and focused."

Toh, who will compete in the S7 50m and 400m freestyle, 100m backstroke and 50m butterfly in Paris, said that he and his team are fine-tuning details which can help improve his timings.

The 25-year-old, who missed out on a bronze in the S7 50m fly by 0.16sec in Tokyo in 2021, said: "I have a few camps lined up. I'm travelling a lot the next few months."

"The plan is just to (focus on) the last few specific things we need to get right to achieve my goals at Paris, which is a podium finish."

Toh said he was "lucky and thankful" for a training camp in Japan from May to July, adding: "The facilities are great and we've seen



Yip Pin Xiu has a training camp in Thailand, while Toh Wei Soong will be in Japan leading up to Paris 2024.

terrific results from our experiences there... It's very conducive for high-performance sports."

After claiming three gold medals at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games (APG) in 2023, he told himself he can attain better timings.

He said: "I went to Australia for a training camp earlier this year with

coach Ang Peng Siong, and I worked with Australian physiotherapist Roger Fitzgerald and high-performance manager Stewart Briggs...

"I'm glad to say that I'm really shaping up to where I need to be for Paris."

Sophie Soon will be joining the pair in Paris, competing in the SB12 100m breaststroke. She was absent from the nationals, focusing on the European Open instead.

At the nationals, Toh clocked 1min 18.50sec in the S7 100m backstroke, more than three seconds behind his 1:14.99 Hangzhou effort.

He also achieved 31.38sec in the S7 50m butterfly and 30.66 in the 50m freestyle, compared to the 30.49 and 28.81 timings at the APG.

However, he is not too worried,

adding that the focus was to refine what he has been working on.

Yip swam 1:07.01 in the S2 50m backstroke and 5:13.63 in the 200m freestyle, which she will not race in Paris.

Although her timings were seconds off her own national marks, she and her team are happy with the results being similar to training times, as they were just part of her preparations.

Meanwhile, seven national records were broken at the nationals. Three were achieved by Rachel Yong, in the women's SB7 50m breaststroke, S8 50m and 100m freestyle. Jareth Wong rewrote the men's SB9 50m and 100m breaststroke marks.

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