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The road to London: The system of the Olympic qualification



Up to now only four of in total 24 teams of the Olympic Handball Tournaments - 12 men's and 12 women's teams - have booked their tickets to London: Host Great Britain (men and women), the French men (World Champion) and the Norwegian women (European Champion).

From October on the continental qualification tournaments and the Women's World Championship will decide about the next four men's and four women's

teams to go to the Olympics. Only the winner of the below-mentioned men's and women's tournaments will qualify directly for London 2012. The runners-ups of those tournaments will book their ticket for the Olympic Qualification Tournaments in April 2012 (men) and May 2012 (women).

The Asian women's qualification tournament will be played in Changzhou, China, from 12 to 21 October. In total nine teams go for the ticket to the Olympics.
Preliminary Round Group A: Kazakhstan, China, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iraq
Preliminary Round Group B: Korea, Japan, People's Republic of Korea, Qatar

The Asian men's tournament will be played in Seoul, Korea, from 23 October to 2 November. Eleven teams play in two Preliminary Round groups.
Group A: Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Kuwait
Group B: Japan, Korea, China, Kazakhstan, Oman

Nearly at the same time (15 – 24 October) the Pan-American participants (men and women) for the Olympics will be decided at the Pan-American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The Preliminary Round groups for the men's tournament:
Group A: Brazil, Chile, Canada, Venezuela
Group B: Argentina, Dominican Republic, Mexico, USA

The Preliminary Round groups for the women's tournament:
Group A: Brazil, Dominican Republic, USA, Uruguay
Group B: Argentina, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Chile

The African Olympics qualification tournaments for men and women will be played from 10 to 21 January 2012 in Rabat, Morocco.





The Men's European Championship will be staged in Serbia from 15 to 29 January 2012.

Aside the Women's World Championship (2 to 18 December 2011) in Brazil will bring major decisions for the road to London: The World Champion will qualify directly, the teams ranked 2nd to 7th book their tickets for the three Olympic Qualification Tournaments from 25 to 27 May 2012. The hosts will be the teams ranked 2nd to 4th in case they did not qualify for the Olympics directly by their continental qualifications, after the IHF conditions for hosting such a tournament are fulfilled.

The first part of the composition of the three men's Olympic Qualification Tournaments is known already due to the results of the World Championship 2011 in Sweden: Denmark, Spain and Sweden will be the hosts of those tournaments (IHF conditions for hosting such a tournament are fulfilled) – in case they do not book a direct ticket to London by becoming European Champions in January or being Silver medallist, if France will be European Champion. In this case, the third Olympic Qualification Tournament will be hosted by Croatia, Iceland will move to tournament 3, Hungary to tournament 2 and Poland (ranked 8th at WCh in Sweden) will take part in tournament 1.

The current composition of those tournaments, which will be played from 6 to 8 April 2012:

Tournament 1 (in Denmark): Denmark, Hungary, Europe 1, Africa

Tournament 2 (in Spain): Spain, Iceland, Pan-America 1, Europe 2

Tournament 3 (in Sweden): Sweden, Croatia, Asia, Pan-America 2

Due to the IHF Olympic qualification regulations approved by the IOC, Europe and Pan-America both have an additional place in those tournaments thanks to fact that the representatives of their continents were ranked best at the final ranking of the World Championship in Sweden.

The two additional continental places allocated for the three women's tournaments will be decided due to the final ranking of the World Championship in Brazil (two best continents will get an additional place).