Bardfield Makes First Paralympic Finals, Earns 6th in Air Rifle Event

Stetson Bardfield (Colorado Springs, Colorado) finished 6th in the R5 Mixed 10m Air Rifle Prone SH2 finals Tuesday morning at Tokyo’s Asaka Shooting Range. He is the first Team USA athlete to qualify for a shooting finals event at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games with a score of 635.6.

In his only event of the Paralympic Games, Bardfield steadily kept a top-10 lead throughout the competition, and his last twenty shots were 10.6 or higher.

Moving onto the finals, Bardfield came out of the gate strong with the second highest score after the first 10-shots series, but a 10.0 and a 10.2 in the first elimination series would come back to haunt him in the next elimination. He secured his 6th place finish after the third elimination series.

“This has been absolutely incredible. The lights are incredibly bright, but it was a lot of fun,” said Bardfield when asked about his finals experience. “I fought hard, and I intend on coming back to Paris and hopefully I can take my gold medal there.”

After an additional International Paralympic Committee (IPC) quota was awarded to the USA Shooting Team, Bardfield was named the seventh member of the Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 Team.

“I've had so many ups and downs and lots of times where I didn’t know if I was going to make it here,” said Bardfield. “I’m just so grateful to be here now. It was hard fought training to get here and now that I’m here, well, I’m just happy.”

When asked how he handled both the qualification and finals events, Bardfield added, “Believe in yourself. When I was shooting both my match and my finals, my biggest thing was I realized I needed to believe in myself when I'm shooting, and that helped a lot.

Teammates Jaz Almlie-Ryan (Houston, Texas) and McKenna Geer (Arlington, Washington) finished 16th and 34th in the event respectively.