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## **CLARK TAKES EUROPEAN BRONZE AND QUALIFIES OLYMPIC PLACE**

Edinburgh's Sarah Clark has qualified an Olympic place for Great Britain in the Women's -63kg weight category after winning a bronze medal on the second day of the European Championships in Bucharest.

The result marks the end of a remarkable season for the 26 year old, seeing her rise dramatically to the challenge of Olympic qualification. The Scottish Commonwealth silver medallist did not start the year as the British favorite to qualify the category through the European qualifying tournaments. In fact, she had never taken a European A Tournament medal until she won silver at the prestigious Paris Super A Tournament in February, considered one of the toughest judo tournaments in the world.

Clark's silver medal win in Paris saw her lead the British assault on qualifying the -63kg place, and was followed by a silver medal in Rome before heading to the European Championships. Her bronze medal today means she has ended the season ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Europe, comfortably inside the top five ranking required for Athens.

Despite the outcome, the day in Bucharest didn't start well for Clark, losing to the eventual winner Sara Alvarez of Spain in her first fight. However, she comfortably won the repechage round, a second chance to compete for the bronze medal, beating Noa Laor of Israel and former European Champion Lucie Decosse of France. The win against Decosse was even more significant as Clark had lost when they had met previously in the final of the Paris Super A Tournament.

In the fight for the bronze medal Clark beat another strong contender, 2000 Olympic bronze medallist, Ylenia Scapin of Italy.

Clark's medal win is the second for Great Britain so far at the Championships, following a silver medal and Olympic qualification from Sophie Cox in the -57kg weight category yesterday.

Also on Saturday, Euan Burton, also from Edinburgh, narrowly missed out on qualifying the Great Britain place in the Men's -81kg weight category. With a bronze medal being good enough to achieve a required ranking place, Burton who had performed well to win his pool, could not hold on against Spain's Ricardo Echarto getting caught out in golden score time.

**The Team GB Judo Squad will be announced at a press conference in London on 20<sup>th</sup> May. Please contact Emma Reed for further information.**

**Contacts:**



## MEDIA RELEASE



t: 01509 631 692  
f: 01509 631 690  
e: [emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk](mailto:emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk)

Emma Reed  
Public Relations Officer  
British Judo Association  
Tel: 01509 631 692  
Mobile: 07702 882951  
[emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk](mailto:emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk)



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