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Jana is mobile again – PARAVAN has brought the para-athlete back on the road.

Mobility is the basis for performance. Thanks to a PARAVAN rental vehicle, Jana can pursue her studies and top-level sports independently.

Jana has been mobile for four years, but recently, she no longer had the strength to safely and comfortably drive her VW T5. For three years, the top-level Paralympic table tennis player has combined her competitive sport with a degree in medical technology at two different locations. Individual mobility is essential for this.



*Back on the road with PARAVAN technology! Jana Spiegel now has the freedom she needs for her studies and top-level sports.
Photo: Paravan*

Instead of standstill, individual mobility solutions.

A quick solution was needed, and it was found in the form of a PARAVAN rental vehicle. This vehicle will serve as an important temporary solution for the 22-year-old until her own car is approved and adapted. The Chrysler Pacifica is equipped with the Space Drive driving and steering system, featuring joystick steering on the right and joystick acceleration and braking on the left. Individually adapted brackets ensure a secure hold. Jana can now drive her wheelchair right up to the steering wheel. "It works really well now," she says happily after taking intensive driving lessons and passing a successful TÜV inspection.

Her previous VW T5 was not equipped with an electronic driving and steering system, which made transferring increasingly difficult. In February, her fifteen-year-old car was out of commission for a long time. After that, she could hardly drive it on her own except for short distances. Most of the time, her family had to accompany her to training sessions and competitions. A muscle disease put Jana in a wheelchair in 2015,

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and she has become increasingly dependent on it since then. She discovered table tennis five years ago during an inclusive training day in Stuttgart. "Thanks to my car, I can drive to training sessions and competitions on my own. Without it, many things would be impossible or difficult," reports the medical technology student.

"Now I can sit down," Jana said with relief. However, she had to wait before she could drive the new vehicle out of the yard. Everything had to be adjusted precisely, like a tailor-made suit. "Every little detail counts," she says in retrospect. In particular, the position of her arms and the adjustment of the individual joysticks required precise work. "I put my hand on it and need very little force. I'm excited to see how it feels on long journeys."

It will be a while before she can hit the road in her own vehicle – she has applied for a Mercedes V-Class. For now, she drives her active wheelchair right up to the steering wheel. A restraint system customized just for her ensures her safety and stability while driving. She needs space, too. When she travels to competitions or training courses, she has her sports wheelchair on board and her 24-hour assistant accompanies her.

On the road to success – mobile and sporty at the forefront.

Jana is also on the road to success in sports. In 2025, she became the German champion in her competition class. She celebrated three international tournament victories, won the national rankings, and took second place in the Second Bundesliga with her team. She is currently ranked fifth in the world and continues to climb.

For Jana, one thing is certain: "Mobility is the basis for everything. It's important to me to do what I can myself." Spontaneity is indispensable to her in everyday life and competitive sports, so a driving service was out of the question. At the same time, she is grateful for and fascinated by what is technically possible today and how PARAVAN implements these solutions. She expects to drive around 4,000 kilometers per month with the rental vehicle. Her first big trip took her to Düsseldorf for the national team training camp.

After a month, Jana's assessment is positive. "I'm delighted that I can simply drive my wheelchair into the car and set off," she says. "Being able to drive independently again is a real gift, offering me more mobility and improving my quality of life." She has now driven over 4,000 kilometers. A special moment for her was when the Space Drive system was discussed in a lecture. "It was a great feeling to sit there and know that I was using this exact system – and that, thanks to this invention, I can drive to university."



They work together to find the optimal solution. PARAVAN technicians are tailoring the Space Drive system to precisely meet Jana's needs. Photo: Paravan

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*Technology that Moves: Thanks to joystick controls and special mounts, Jana can drive independently again.
Photo: Paravan*



Technology meets precision with special mounts, a docking station, and electronic controls that make the vehicle a perfect fit for Jana. Photo: Paravan



On the Road to Success: Jana Späth is ranked fifth in the world. Mobility is the foundation of her athletic achievements. Photo by Hannes Doessler.

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About Paravan GmbH:

PARAVAN GmbH is the global market leader in customized vehicle solutions for the disabled people. About 160 employees at the Pfronstetten Aichelau and Heidelberg sites develop and produce customized vehicle conversions, electric wheelchairs and even specialized driver training. PARAVAN pursues a holistic approach with its "one-stop shop" concept. The technological highlight is Space Drive, an intelligent digital control system based on the drive-by-wire principle. Thanks to the active redundancy of the servo motors, it is completely fail-safe and the first to be approved for road use. This innovation enables severely disabled people, some of whom have no arms or legs, to drive independently and safely. It is not possible for these drivers to simply take control of the steering wheel. Over the past 20 years, Space Drive has been proven on more than one billion kilometers of roads worldwide and is used by numerous industrial customers for test vehicles in the field of autonomous driving. The system is available as a retrofit kit with an open interface for all known vehicle types. www.paravan.com