

Hall of Champions honour for Wilson

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Posted On: April 26, 2019

World and Commonwealth champion Ross Wilson received another honour today when he was inducted into the English Institute of Sport Sheffield's Hall of Champions.

The 23 year old from Minster in Kent, who lives and trains in Sheffield, joins a host of sporting stars emblazoned upon the famous wall at EIS Sheffield including Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill and Anthony Joshua OBE as well as his fellow British Para Table Tennis Team members Will Bayley MBE and Rob Davies MBE, who became Paralympic champions in Rio 2016.

In October 2018, Wilson claimed the men's class 8 world title in Celje, Slovenia beating double Paralympic champion Zhao Shuai from China in the final, six months after winning the men's class 6-10 Commonwealth title on Australia's Gold Coast. In his short but illustrious career he has also won Paralympic team bronze medals in both London and Rio and taken European medals in 2011, 2015 and 2017 despite a series of injuries that kept him out of competition for two years following London 2012.

"It's brilliant," said Wilson. "I walk through these halls every day so to be on the wall with so many fantastic athletes is something I'll be proud of forever. We work so hard and for so many hours and I couldn't do it without all of the support of people at the EISS – the support staff, coaches and everyone involved. Seeing my photo on the wall with all of the champions at the EISS is going to motivate me even more and hopefully I can add a few more major titles."

British Para Table Tennis Performance Director Gorazd Vecko has watched Wilson grow from talented teenager to world champion.

"Ross totally deserves this honour," said Vecko. "We knew the talent was there for a long time and that he would get to where he is now – to be the world champion and to have the chance to take a singles medal in the Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

"When we set up the new programme in 2009 I was very happy that Ross was finally diagnosed in 2010 and he could start to play Para table tennis for Great Britain. In London 2012 he lost in the semi-finals of the singles 3-2 to Zhao, who was the best player of the time. This is the closest he has come so far in the singles at a Paralympics but we know he has a huge talent and he was a very important part of winning bronze medals in the team event in London and Rio.

"I am very happy for Ross. He is a really hard-working athlete and has put aside his personal life to dedicate himself to the sport. He is a great athlete and a great role model for Para table tennis and I really admire him and what he has done in his career. This is not the finish for Ross – there will be a lot more major titles in the future for him."

Paul Hudson, head of sport and leisure at SIV, which operates the English Institute of Sport Sheffield, said: "We're delighted that Ross has received deserved recognition for his career achievements to date. At 23, he's achieved so much but still has so much more to offer, and I'm excited to see where his career will take him next."

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