

# Liam wins Uni of Derby award

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Derbyshire table tennis star Liam Pitchford named University of Derby Sportsperson of the Year



Laura Pitchford, collecting the trophy on behalf of Liam, from Professor John Coyne the Vice Chancellor of the University of Derby.

Derbyshire table tennis star Liam Pitchford has been named University of Derby Sportsperson of the Year at the Derbyshire Sports Awards.

Liam competed at his first Commonwealth Games in India last October, winning a bronze in the doubles with partner Andrew Baggaley and a silver medal in the team event – with Liam defeating the world No.17 to give England a vital start.

He also won a silver medal in the doubles at the English National Championships and a bronze medal in the team event at the European Youth Championships in July, and made headlines again a few weeks ago when he competed at the European Championships in Poland, where he beat five players ranked in the top 100 in the world, including the Belarusian Vladimir Samsonov ranked world No.9.

18-year-old Liam, from Chesterfield, was announced as the winner of the University of Derby Sportsperson of the Year title during a ceremony at The Roundhouse in Derby, which was attended by 300 people.

Professor John Coyne, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Derby, presented the trophy to Liam's sister, Laura Pitchford, as Liam is currently in Bahrain competing at the World Junior Championships.

The evening saw trophies awarded in 12 categories, as the county's best and brightest sporting stars, coaches and volunteers gathered with other invited guests to celebrate another year of sporting success in Derbyshire and recognise the efforts of those involved in sport at grassroots level.

Olympic mascot 'Wenlock' made a guest appearance at the awards, and guests also enjoyed a performance by Derbyshire Tenor Thomas Spencer-Wortley and an exhibition of ceramic flower installations by London 2012 Cultural Olympiad artist Paul Cummins.

Other awards presented on the night included the Derby Telegraph Service to Sport Award, which was presented to Daryl Hone, from the Colin Deaton Table Tennis Club in Chesterfield, by Peter Green, Sports Editor of the Derby Telegraph.



Daryl Hone with Peter Green, Sports Editor, Derby Telegraph (left)

Daryl has been involved in table tennis in Chesterfield for more than 30 years. He is responsible for setting up the venues, taking the registers and running the many league teams. He has been league secretary for 15 years and is on the Chesterfield and Derbyshire table tennis committees. When Colin Deaton died in 2006 Daryl took on the role of player mentor. In 2010 Daryl was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour and has had to deal with many difficult symptoms and undergone radiotherapy. However during this time he has never missed one evening at the club.

There was another win for table tennis as Phil Vickers, from Draycott and Long Eaton Table Tennis Club, was named the Derby College Coach of the Year.

Phil has been coaching for 33 years, drawing on his own experiences as a top level competitor who reached No.25 in the England junior rankings and No.42 in the senior men's rankings. Each table tennis season Phil plans

and runs more than 160 two-hour coaching sessions, providing coaching for players aged 7 to 18 of all levels and abilities, as well as additional one-to-one sessions with some of his top-level players – which include his daughter, Emma, who he has guided to several national titles and is currently ranked England No.6 senior.

Last November Phil also became the first volunteer coach in the East Midlands to achieve the new UKCC Level 3 table tennis coaching award, and he uses his experience to mentor other coaches at the club towards their UKCC Level 1 and Level 2 awards.



Phil Vickers (left) with Paul Bowen, Sports Department Team Manager at Derby College

Selected winners of the 2011 Derbyshire Sports Awards are:

#### **University of Derby Sportsperson of the Year**

Winner: Liam Pitchford (Chesterfield/NE Derbyshire – Table Tennis)

Runners-up: Anya Colley (Erewash – Jet-Skiing)

Annie Last (Derbyshire Dales – Cross Country Mountain Biking)

#### **Derby College Coach of the Year**

Winner: Phil Vickers (Erewash – Table Tennis)

Runners-up: Kevin Brown (South Derbyshire – Rugby)

Dave Cartawick (Chesterfield/NE Derbyshire – Kickboxing)

#### **Derby Telegraph Service to Sport Award**

Winner: Daryl Hone (Chesterfield/NE Derbyshire – Table Tennis)

Runner-up: Gillian Lockwood (Derbyshire Dales – Various Sports)

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