

Trio honoured to be baton-bearers

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Posted On: June 13, 2014



Mike Smith with the Queen's Baton
(picture courtesy of Shirley Pickering)

Three members of the table tennis family have told of their pride at taking part in the Queen's Baton Relay.

Table Tennis England director Mike Smith and young players Simon Price and Johnny Pemberton were baton bearers as the Commonwealth Games symbol made its way around England as part of the countdown to Glasgow 2014.

Mike was involved in the celebrations in his home city of Leicester, while Simon and Jonny took part in the pageant in Oxford.

Simon, 16, was nominated to take part in the worldwide relay for his volunteer work at Kidlington Forum Table Tennis Club near Oxford.

He said: "It's a day I'll never forget. I am just amazed. It was a really incredible day.

"I can't wait to watch the Games now, especially when I have been really involved with it."

Johnny, 33, from Oxford, was nominated to carry the baton for his volunteering work with the table tennis initiative Ping! Oxford.

He said: "It was amazing to be part of the day."

Mike said of his part in the relay: "It was an honour and a privilege to be chosen to represent my city. It was quite something to feel that you had in your hand the baton which had been around the world.

"The hope is that the Commonwealth Games will inspire people to participate in all sports, in the same way the Olympics and Paralympics did."



Simon Price (picture courtesy of Marc West)

England is the 69th of 70 Commonwealth countries to take part in the relay, which begins its final leg in host nation Scotland on Saturday.

The Commonwealth Games begin on July 23rd.

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By Paul Stimpson (June 13th, 2014)

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