

'Inspirational' champ Adam helping to break down barriers

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Adam Thompson shows off his skills to delegates

European mixed-doubles champion Adam Thompson has taken on a new role inspiring people to take up sport and overcome perceived barriers to achieve their true potential, whatever their goals are in life.

Thompson, from Sale, gave a table tennis demonstration before answering questions from the audience at last week's Learning Disability Today Conference at Hillsborough Stadium, Sheffield.

The former Inas European mixed-doubles champion and World singles bronze medallist was a guest speaker at the event as part of his new ambassador role in the UK Sports Association's *My Sport, My Voice!* project.

Thanks to funding from Spirit of 2012, a trust set up to sustain the spirit and opportunities from the London 2012 Games, *My Sport, My Voice!* is raising the profile of the UK's elite athletes with learning disability by providing a platform to showcase their sporting achievements and inspire others to succeed.

Thompson said: "*My Sport, My Voice!* is about engaging with people to share our experiences and to inspire them to join in. I am delighted to be an ambassador for the project because I believe that I can voice the opinions of people with a learning disability and also be a positive role model for people."

And Thompson certainly did inspire people who attending his workshop with 23 out of 26 audience members who completed a conference feedback survey saying that his demonstration and Q&A had been inspiring.



Adam answers questions from the delegates

Tracey McCillen, Chief Executive at the UK Sports Association said: "We are thrilled Adam is one of our 13 Athlete Ambassadors. He has competed in table tennis at the highest level and he has some incredible experiences to share, both in and out of the sporting arena.

"*My Sport, My Voice!* provides a platform for our Athlete Ambassadors to share those experiences, to inspire others and to raise the profile of athletes with learning disability. The athletes are at the very centre of the project and are enjoying having their voices heard."

Barry Horne, Chief Executive for the English Federation of Disability Sport, said: "We're delighted to support *My Sport, My Voice!* and all its ambassadors. As well as raising awareness of talented athletes with learning disability, the programme is challenging negative public perceptions regarding disability.

"Adam is playing a central role in changing mind sets and enabling more disabled people to have a voice in sport and physical activity."

Thompson will be taking part in more community events across the UK until June 2016. Any local organisations, including schools and colleges, that would like to host Thompson for a workshop, should visit

www.uksportsassociation.org/mysportmyvoice.

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