

# Coach Shaun's honoured by SIA recognition

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Shaun Newcomb at the SIA awards ceremony

Table tennis coach Shaun Newcomb says he is honoured to have received the Sports and Recreation Achievement Award at The Spinal Injuries Association Awards.

The 56-year-old was nominated by Table Tennis England Development Officer for the South West, Lisa Williams.

And he was named as the winner at the recent awards ceremony at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, in front of 200 guests and VIP presenter Susie Dent from Channel 4's Countdown.

Shaun said: "It's really good. The Spinal Injuries Association are a superb organisation and have given me a lot of support over the years.

"I hold them in high regard, so to get their award for Sports and Recreation Achievement is quite an honour."

Shaun started playing table tennis after a motorbike accident in 1976 and went on to represent Great Britain before taking up coaching. He has been a life member of the SIA since 1977.

He is currently training towards his UKCC Level 3 coaching qualification and was nominated primarily for his work with the Salisbury Spinal Unit, though he also coaches at New Milton TTC and with a Regional Disability Squad.

He said: "When someone has a spinal injury, it's a very uncertain time in their life and they appreciate someone who has been there and done that.

"It's nice to be able to help out and give them a head start, but it's also something I love doing. Coaching and seeing the youngsters coming on is as good as competing – better, in some ways. It's given me a lot of good opportunities to go to nice places and meet good people."

Lisa Williams added: "I think he deserves some recognition for what he gives back to other disabled players in our area. He's a fantastic guy who's done a lot for our sport."

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