



Umpire Ben in the spotlight for table tennis

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Young umpire Ben Johnson represented the sport of table tennis as he gave the officials' oath at the 2015 Sainsbury's School Games opening ceremony.

Ben, from Grantham, was on stage at the Manchester Arena – in front of thousands of competitors, officials and spectators – alongside fellow table tennis umpires Alex Mercer, Karen Tonge MBE and Sheila Walshe.

He read the oath, in which he promised on behalf of all officials at the multi-sport event to uphold the rules and act impartially.

The 14-year-old, who qualified as an umpire six months ago, said: "It was bright under the spotlight. I stumbled a little bit when I caught eye contact with someone in the front row, but I kept on going.

"I was nervous but I'm glad I did it."

The Games, at which 1,600 young athletes will compete in 12 sports, were declared open by GB sprint sensation Dina Asher-Smith, fresh from competing at the World Athletics Championships, and triple world swimming champion Adam Peaty.

Ben has been umpiring some exciting matches in the first two sessions of play and he added: "I'd really like to do this event again. I haven't been here a day yet and I'm loving it."

[Click here to see Ben's speech](#)

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