



## It's GOLD for brilliant Bayley!

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Will Bayley has struck gold in the Paralympic table tennis.

That moment [@WillBayleytt](#) grabbed the [#Gold #Paralympics](#) <https://t.co/s3bZtghSXZ>

– Channel 4 (@Channel4) [September 12, 2016](#)

The London 2012 silver medallist went one better in the Class 7 singles, beating Israel Pereira Stroh of the host nation 3-1 (11-9, 5-11, 11-9, 11-4).

He celebrated by clambering on top of the table – earning a yellow card which he surely won't mind – and then hugging the umpire before leaping into the arms of performance director Gorazd Vecko.





"I just didn't know what to do [when I won]," said Bayley. "I spoke to my coach two years ago and he said if I win in Rio I will have to do a special celebration.

"When I was on match point I hadn't planned anything so I just did that. It probably looked silly. But I was so emotional. I jumped on the table so fast, I couldn't do that normally.

"It would take me ages, but that was quite good. I was scared it was going to break.

"I gave the umpire a hug because she was a bit uptight and I wanted to calm her down."

Bayley, 28, added: "Words don't do it justice, I don't know if it has sunk in yet. I was so focused, it was like a game of chess, I couldn't get emotional until the end.

"I've done it, I never thought it was possible for me, I've done the impossible.

"I never thought it was going to happen again when I lost in the final in London as table tennis is such an unpredictable sport and to get to a final in two Games is an unbelievable achievement.

"This time I thought I am not going to waste the opportunity and I have got to take it here today. It was a hard game but I played really well when it mattered and held my nerve.

"Great Britain were laughed at when I first joined the squad, now we're a force and it's great to show the world what we can do."

There were never more than two points between the players in the first game as Bayley fought back from 8-6 and 9-8 down, going on a run of three points to take it 11-9.

Stroh, who beat Bayley in the group stages, came out quickly in game 2 and opened up a 3-0 lead, prompting Bayley into an early time-out. But Stroh extended his advantage and pulled away to take the game 11-5.

Game three was another close one, Bayley's run from 2-4 to 5-4 resulting in Stroh taking his time-out. It worked as he went 7-5 up, only for Bayley to turn the tables with a run of four points. Although Stroh won the next two to make it 9-9, Bayley took the two after that and moved within a set of gold.

The first decisive move was from 2-2 to 5-2 up and after the next four points were shared, Bayley ended in style with four points on the spin to strike gold.

Our [@WillBayleytt](#) celebrates his table tennis [#gold](#) – with a bit of star support from [@JohnnyVegasReal](#) [#Rio2016](#) <https://t.co/JsUVhgmNeO>

– C4 Paralympics (@C4Paralympics) [September 12, 2016](#)



Mike Smith, on behalf of the BTTAD, said: "Will suffered such disappointment in London and has worked so hard from then to now with the great help of the coaches and support staff in Sheffield working on the Para Table Tennis World Class Programme which has been so strongly supported by UK Sport.

"Congratulations to a truly great champion – a real credit to BTTAD and Table Tennis England."

Unfortunately, Sue Gilroy was unable to add a bronze medal to Bayley's gold. The Barnsley player, who got out of the group stage for the first time in her five Paralympic appearances, was beaten 3-2 (12-14, 8-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-6) by Nada Matic of Serbia.

"I'm absolutely gutted," she said. "I followed the gameplan that we had going in but she improved as the games went on and she played better on the day.

"Fourth is the worst position to be in, particularly when you have been 2-0 up. I'm proud of what I've done but I'm gutted for my family and coaches who have helped me so much that I just couldn't get that medal."

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