

Double Olympian Scoops First Prize at University of Birmingham

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Olympic cyclist Paul Manning will tomorrow receive a prestigious award from the University of Birmingham in recognition of his outstanding sporting achievements.

The Birmingham graduate will be the first recipient of the University's Sporting Achievement Award, a new accolade which will be presented to athletes and/or alumni who have excelled in their particular field and who have a connection with the university or the region.

The inaugural presentation of the award will take place tomorrow (Wednesday 13 June) at the University's annual Athletics Union Awards Dinner, which celebrates students' sporting success. Paul, who has a degree in Earth Sciences from Birmingham, will talk about making the transition from university student to the Olympic podium.

He said: "I'm really proud to have attended the University of Birmingham. My time there certainly changed my life by giving me the platform and confidence to pursue my sporting goals, safe in the knowledge that I had a great education from a well respected university behind me."

Zena Wooldridge, Director of Sport at University Sport Birmingham, said: "We are delighted to welcome Paul back to campus. His sporting achievements are exceptional and he is a superb example to our students of just what can be achieved with hard work and athletic ability."

Paul Manning graduated from the University of Birmingham in 1996. He has gone on to achieve success on an international level since becoming a full time cyclist, making his GB debut in 1999 when he finished 15th in the Individual Pursuits event at the World Championships.

Competing in both Track Endurance and Road events, he, has gone from strength to strength building up an impressive international record.

His first major success on the international scene came in 2000 at the World Championships in Manchester where he won silver, and later that year at the Sydney Olympics collecting bronze in the Team Pursuit.

In 2001 at the British Championships he achieved his first gold medal in the Individual Pursuit, followed by silver in the World Championships in Belgium, as well as winning the prestigious Irish Milk Ras. His success continued in 2002 with gold at the Mexico World Cup, a bronze and silver medal at the Manchester Commonwealth Games and a World Championship bronze.

In 2003 Paul won silver in the Team Pursuit at the World Championships in Stuttgart and returned from the South Africa World Cup with a silver medal and the Mexico Track Cup with a silver and bronze.

In 2004 Paul won double gold at the British Championships, bronze and gold at the Manchester Cup, yet another double gold at the Sydney World Cup and silver at the Melbourne World Championships. He then rounded things off with a silver medal at the Athens Olympics where he clocked his Team Pursuit personal best of 3:59.866.

Yet another double gold was awarded to him at the British Championships in 2005, the year he also finally clinched his first World Championship gold in Los Angeles.

In 2006 Paul received two gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Later that year, at the World Championships Paul won bronze in the Individual Pursuit and silver in the Team Pursuit.

Now undoubtedly established on the international scene Paul Manning who now lives in Stockport, Cheshire, is known as a formidable rider, who prefers to use his pursuit speed to make lone breaks, rather than get involved in sprint finishes.

Ends

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Notes to Editor:

University Sport Birmingham:

University Sport Birmingham aims to enhance the sporting experience of the University and its wider community by providing opportunities at all levels.

The University is a Centre for Excellence for many sports including athletics, squash, hockey, gymnastics and triathlon.

The University offers Sports Scholarships to support students who compete at international level of their sport. Past recipients of a Scholarship include Allison Curbishley (Athletics 400m Olympic finalist); Shelley Newman (nee Drew, Athletics discus Commonwealth Games medalist); Tom Bertram (Olympic Hockey team) and Melanie Easter (Paralympic Swimming Champion).

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