

# npower Disability Sports Awards celebrates Young Athletes



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The npower Midlands Disability Sports Awards 2009 were well attended as twenty of the region's paralympians, along with Sports Minister, Gerry Sutcliffe MP, were at Aston Villa FC to celebrate the achievements of disabled athletes from across the West Midlands.



Warwickshire Cricket Club won the [npower](#) Partnership Award for its development work extending access to the sport to players with physical and learning disabilities. Aston Villa Disability Football Club was the Sports Club of the Year and Team of the Year were wheelchair basketball's Wolverhampton Rhinos.

Sprinter and Bath University student, Katrina Hart from Redditch, took home the trophy for Female Sports Personality of the Year award. Katrina is in her first year of her degree in Sports Performance; she was nominated for her achievements in Beijing, despite a hamstring injury.

Luke Sugg, from Winyates Green, was narrowly beaten to the Male Sports Personality of the Year title by wheelchair racing silver medallist, Mickey Bushell from Telford. Sherbourne Fields School PE teacher, Luned Lewis, from Coventry, was presented with the prestigious Ambassador of Disability Sport award for her lifelong support of disability sport and young athletes.

Swimmer Francesca O'Connor from Kidderminster won the Young Female Achiever of the Year title. Penn Hall School, in Wolverhampton, won the School of the Year Award for its amazing sporting successes. Penn Hall's participation rates at regional and national sporting events are the highest of any school in the West Midlands and it is one of only a few special schools to offer accredited PE courses and Sports Leadership Awards to its students.

Kevin Rodgers, community involvement executive for awards sponsor, npower, who was on the judging panel commented: "Every year the quality of the nominees is higher and higher; the judging panel had its work cut out to make the right decisions. The winners are worthy of their awards but it should be noted that some exceptional organisations didn't make the short list due to the high standards of the judging criteria."

The event was organised by the English Federation of Disability Sports. Dennis Hodgkins, regional development manager at the EFDS said he was delighted with the support from both the Minister and the paralympic athletes and, "For youngsters like Francesca, having the opportunity to meet their heroes is an occasion never forgotten. The likes of Nyree Lewis, Lee Pearson and Sinclair Thomas are wonderful role models to, and motivators of, young athletes who will be future international sports stars. It was a tremendous occasion."

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**About [npower](#):**

Npower, sponsors of the 2009 [npower Ashes Series](#), is one of Britain's largest electricity suppliers and supplies gas, electricity and related services to 6.6 million customers across the UK.

RWE npower has been awarded the prestigious [CommunityMark](#) from Business in the Community (BITC). npower is the only utility business, amongst 21 other companies in the UK, to receive this accolade. The CommunityMark is a new BITC standard which has been created to recognise companies that are good investors in local communities and who have brought about real and positive changes.

The [npower Active](#) programme, which is run in partnership with the English Federation of Disability Sport, has been awarded a prestigious 'Silver Big Tick' by Business in the Community.

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