

Grassroots Sport

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IN THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF FEATURES ON THIS YEAR'S SPORT NEWCASTLE RISING STARS OF SPORT AWARD WINNERS, WE PROFILE MORPETH PENTATHLETE ROSS CHARLTON

MODERN PENTATHLON

ROSS CHARLTON is a young man of many sporting talents – so much so he is being tipped for future Olympic glory, writes TONY HODGSON.

The 17-year-old modern pentathlete from Morpeth has already celebrated success in athletics, swimming and fencing in his burgeoning career.

He is also the reigning world champion in Laser Run – an event incorporating shooting and running – after triumphing in last year's World Championship in Budapest.

The King Edward VI School pupil is a member of Morpeth Harriers, Newcastle Pentathlon Club and Newcastle Fencing Club.

At the latter he is coached by Iain Aberdeen, who sees great days ahead for his young protégé.

He said: "There is no doubt in my mind Ross will be a future Olympian."

"He has already been nominated by Pentathlon GB to join Team GB's Gold Club in recognition of his prospective Olympic status for Paris 2024."

"The way he is progressing he can certainly get to Paris or to the 2028 Olympics, he really does have the potential."

Aberdeen added: "I have worked with Ross for a few years now and he has come on in leaps and bounds."

He was always a very good runner and a decent swimmer but the shooting did not come naturally to him at first.

"However, he worked hard to improve and learn the physical and mental side of the sport and that has paid off."

"To win the World Laser Run Championships at the first time of asking is a phenomenal achievement."

"Before that he had gone to the Europeans and not performed as well as he hoped but he learned from that and bounced back in style."

"He is the sort of lad who wants to work



Morpeth's Ross Charlton (red mask) representing Team GB at the 2019 World Pentathlon Championships in Bulgaria

Charlton tipped to be future Olympian

hard, who wants to listen and learn, and they are great attributes to have."

Charlton's coach at Morpeth Harriers Mike Bateman said: "I have worked with Ross for the past three years and have seen a huge improvement in his running in that time."

"He is such a hard worker and his attitude to training and competition is always spot on."

"Ross enjoyed a good winter of cross-country, including success at the Northumberland Schools Championships in January."

"He had been hoping to improve his performances on the track this summer but that has to be in doubt because of the virus outbreak."

"Ross is a fantastic prospect and I hope he goes on to even greater success."

In September Charlton will start to train with the senior GB squad at Bath University, combining this with a sports studies degree.

He is ranked inside the top four in Britain at under-19 level for modern pentathlon and No 1 at under-18 level.

The teenager was selected to represent Team GB in the 2019 Under-19 European Championships in Lithuania.

He qualified for the final, finishing the highest-placed British competitor in 30th.

Charlton went on to contest the Under-19 World Championships in Bulgaria, where he was 16th in the individual competition and helped GB to 10th overall.

The youngster also won the 2019 British Laser Run and British Triathlon Under-19 Championships and was second in the British Biathlon Championships.

He has also received Sports Aid funding in recognition of his achievements to date and his commitment to pentathlon.

Charlton's undoubted talents were also recognised earlier this year by Sport Newcastle, who chose him as one of the 2020 recipients of their prestigious Rising Stars of Sport Award.



Charlton after winning the Under-19 Laser Run World Championships in Hungary in 2019 (left) and (right) in cross-country action for his club Morpeth Harriers



Charlton receives his Sport Newcastle Rising Stars of Sport Award. Picture: IAN HORROCKS

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