

Will Hardy

Gateshead & Whickham Swim Team

For the first time in 2017, World [Para Swimming](#) (*Formerly IPC*) have introduced a World Series Competition

Bringing together some of the biggest competitions on the global calendar, the World Series will take in five countries across Europe and the Americas between March-July. Venues include Copenhagen, Sao Paulo, Sheffield, Indianapolis and Berlin

Here the world's best athletes get the chance to compete before they head to Mexico City for the 2017 World [Para Swimming](#) Championships.

Competing at Sheffield's Ponds Forge international pool Gateshead and Whickham Swim Team athlete, Will Hardy produced several outstanding performances during the four-day tournament.

19-year-old Will who has been out of action for 13 months following shoulder surgery has steadily been improving his performances

As this world class competition progressed he certainly proved he was back on the scene with personal best performances each day including a place in a final in his less favored shorter event 50m Butterfly

Competing as a S6 classification Hardy saved his best until the last day of competition

Swimming in the heats of the 400m freestyle the GAW Swim Team athlete took early control and dominated his S6 rivals Zach Shattuck USA and Matthew Harding GB. Applying even more sustained pressure throughout the race the produced a 7 secs life time best performance and a fast time of 5.53.73 earning a well-deserved place in the GB Final.

Ranked 9th going into the final Hardy with the most severe S6 classification of all the athletes was in no mood to be happy with just making the numbers up.

As expected the S8/S9/S10 athletes stormed off into the lead but with determination and effort of the tough North East athlete raised his game again producing an outstanding swim of 5.50.78, winning Gold and an S6 classification 400 freestyle top 4 World Ranking for 2017.

Will, who trains with the GAW Performance Group is a shining example to what can be achieved with a positive attitude and hard work ethic.

Head Coach Ken Nesworthy who coached local Great Britain athlete Josef Craig to S7 400 Freestyle Gold Medal world record London Olympics 2012 cannot emphasize enough the importance of the consistent hard work required to reach the top. Every country has standards but the GB para swim team is the hardest in the world to break into and this is why we are so successful at major games.



