



Fiona's prowess as a tandem pilot has won her one silver medal thus far, and she hopes for more in future
(Picture: Kenneth Hutchison)

Ellon PC takes silver in paracycling

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AN ELLON police officer has received a silver medal after competing at the Para-Cycling Track World Championships in Italy earlier this month.

PC Fiona Duncan cycles as tandem pilot for athlete Lora Turnham, who is visually impaired, and the pair's efforts at Montichiari bring them a step closer to participating in the 2012 Paralympics. The duo posted the fastest tandem pursuit time in qualification, and came sixth in the kilometre time trial, achieving a personal best time in the process.

With a total medal tally of 18 (9 gold, 8 silver and 1 bronze) the British team ranked first in the medal standings.

Fiona, who is a member of Ythan Cycle Club, told the Times that she was inspired to take up tandem cycling after a talk from world champion Neil Fachie at the Club Dinner.

"I enquired about how pilots were re-

cruited, and went through a lot of intensive training," said Fiona. "The qualification process began late last year, and involved lots of hard work before I was selected to compete in Italy."

"The level of competition was extremely high, as you would expect at World Championship level, and to come away with a medal of any colour was fantastic for Lora and I, especially as we are a new pairing. To achieve personal best times in both events, and narrowly miss a World Title in our first competitive outing, I'd say bodes well for the future."

She added that she and Lora worked well together, and that teamwork was vital in tandem cycling.

"Both cyclists have to be able to cycle at the same speed, and need to be of around the same ability. Lora is an athlete, and it's my job is to facilitate her performance on the track. We had only known each other for about five weeks before the event in Italy, so it's great that we work so well together."

Lead Coach Chris Furber praised the efforts of the cyclists involved, and said: "Performances from this event are a massive boost for the team, gaining us vital qualification points towards places in London. The standard of the competition has really moved on since Beijing in 2008, and being in a medal mix row means we are well placed for medal prospects in 2012."

Fiona says that she and Lora will continue working together, and will be taking to the road over the course of summer, including a trip to Sydney to participate in the UCI Para-cycling Road World Cup on May 4, 5 and 6. The World Cup acts as a qualifying series for the 2011 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championships being staged in Denmark from 8 to 11 September.

"I'd really like to thank Grampian Police for being flexible," said Fiona. "They've been absolutely fantastic in supporting me. I'd also like to thank everyone at the Ythan Cycle Club for their messages of support."

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