



Pictured above: Lord Dholakia beats Mark Harper MP en route to the first corner.

Media Storms to Victory in Rehab UK Parliamentary Pancake Race

IT WAS ALL DOWN TO THEIR “BRILLIANT FRYING pan handling technique” according to race starter and Olympic medallist, Iwan Thomas MBE. That was the key to a team of political journalists beating off stiff competition from MPs and Lords to be crowned Rehab UK Parliamentary Pancake Race champions. The race, which took place on Pancake Tuesday in the shadow of the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, was refereed by actress Sophie Thompson, formerly of *EastEnders*, who read out the Rules of Engagement to participants.

The media team comprised BBC Political Editor Nick Robinson, Channel 4’s Political Correspondent, Cathy

Newman, ITN’s Political Correspondent Libby Wiener, and Sky News’ Political Correspondent Joey Jones. The Lords team came a close second beating the MPs and event sponsors team, British Lion Eggs. The race is organised every year by Rehab UK to raise awareness of the work it does with people with acquired brain injury.

Speaking after the event, Iwan Thomas MBE, said, “After an exciting pancake race at Westminster, I travelled back to Rehab UK’s London centre. I spent quite a while there as part of the post-race celebrations, talking with members of staff and current service users. I was very impressed with the centre and its work and with the warm and friendly feeling from staff and service users

alike. It is a fantastic service that Rehab UK is providing and I was proud to be asked to become involved in helping to promote their work.”

This year’s event focused on the launch of a new community integration service at Rehab UK’s London Brain Injury Centre, designed to help people to live as independently as possible, both socially and economically, within their own communities.

Speaking to *Rehab News*, Ian Welsh, Director of UK Services for the Rehab Group, said, “Brain injury can have a devastating impact on people, leaving them with behavioural and speech difficulties, reduced mobilisation



Pictured above: The BBC’s Political Editor Nick Robinson wins the race for the media team.

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Brain injury can have a devastating impact on people, leaving them with behavioural and speech difficulties, reduced mobilisation and varying degrees of independence. However, the development of a new service user-driven community integration service at our London Brain Injury Centre will transform lives forever.

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and varying degrees of independence. However, the development of a new service user-driven community integration service at our London Brain Injury Centre will transform lives forever. This new service is about providing an alternative to residential and centre-based services and reducing the social exclusion of people with brain injury. We do this by enabling people to take control of their lives and maximising their participation in society.

“Our teams of psychologists and community rehabilitation workers provide practical and social support to people with brain injury, supporting their personal development and activities of daily living like cooking, budgeting, shopping, travelling, and so on. We also help to enhance people’s communication and social skills, as well as their emotional and relationship development. This year, the London Brain Injury Centre aims to provide this service to 100 people and to extend it in future to include learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and young people in their late teens.”

It is anticipated that this service will be introduced at Rehab UK’s brain injury centre in Birmingham later in the year. ■