

Blind Veterans UK nominee named finalist for 2017 Soldiering On Awards

Monday 27 February, 2017

Former British Army soldier Mark Threadgold has been named a finalist in the Sporting Excellence category of the 2017 Soldiering On Awards.

A former Royal Corps of Signals electronics engineer, Threadgold was one of 46 finalists in ten categories honoured at a House of Lords reception on 9 February. The evening was hosted by Awards patron, the Rt Hon Earl Howe PC, and celebrated individuals and organisations for their inspirational and outstanding achievements in support of the Armed Forces Community.

"The Soldiering On Awards recognise the amazing contribution that former members of the Armed Forces – and animal partners – continue to make to society and also those individuals, charities and groups in the wider community who support their journey," said Earl Howe. "We believe that we are all part of one community and are stronger together supporting each other."

Put forward for the Award by Blind Veterans UK, the nomination read:

"Following a tragic accident, Mark lost his sight completely and had to leave his 15-year career in the Army. Using sport to regain his confidence, Mark has taken part in the Great South Run and set his first world record as fastest blind circumnavigator of the Isle of Wight in a rigid inflatable boat. Mark pushed himself further still and set another world record for deepest scuba dive and closed-circuit rebreather dive by a blind person, and in 2016 cycled more than 150 miles from Brighton to Paris in three days."

Chief Executive of Blind Veterans UK, Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB, said: "With his many and amazing feats in the sporting world, Mark provides a fantastic example of what can still be accomplished after sight loss. His sporting achievements are an inspiration, not just to every other blind veteran, but to all of us."

Finalists were nominated by members of the public and more than 40 charities and not-for-profit organisations either representing or associated with the wider Armed Forces Community. Winners are selected by a distinguished Independent Judges Panel, co-chaired by General the Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL and Debra Allcock Tyler, Chief Executive of the Directory of Social Change.

This year's winners will be announced at the 2017 Soldiering On Awards on Friday, 24 March at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge Hotel, London.

The Soldiering On Through Life Trust encourages support for the UK's Armed Forces Community by nationally recognising the achievements of groups or individuals supporting this Community through the annual **Soldiering On Awards**.

Soldiering On Awards: National Recognition for the Armed Forces Community.

For highlights of the 2016 Soldiering On Awards visit: www.soldieringon.org

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