

## **Dylan Alcott, Wheelchair Tennis Player**

Today, I would like to introduce Mr Dylan Alcott OAM, a wheelchair tennis player who competes in the quad division. Dylan has achieved the Golden Slam (winning all four major tennis titles plus the Olympics or Paralympics in the same calendar year) after winning gold at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games last year, and the US Open held shortly after.

In December 2021, I invited Dylan to my residence amidst his busy schedule to celebrate his Golden Slam milestone. On the day, I provided Japanese food for him to enjoy in a relaxed atmosphere.

Residing in Melbourne, Dylan drove himself to my residence. He quickly assembled and hopped on his wheelchair outside of the driver's seat, and quickly appeared at the entrance. He also showed me the gold medal which he won at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games – the medal of significant weight and honour, only given to the world's best athletes. I remember being deeply touched to see Dylan holding up this medal during the medal ceremony. It seemed to me that he was proud of his medal as remembering various things until then. In fact, the person who handed Dylan the gold medal was Ms KOBAYASHI Maki, the then Executive Director of Communications and Engagement of Tokyo 2020 – who was on secondment to the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also happens to be my colleague. When I told Dylan about her, he smiled and replied that he remembers her, and that he was very happy at that moment.



Dylan is also working hard to support young athletes. I feel that he is very dedicated to becoming a good role model for children, giving them hopes and courage. When the men's doubles quad final at Tokyo 2020 had to be paused briefly due to sudden rain, the scene where Dylan was helping the volunteers wipe the wet tennis court with a towel was aired worldwide.

Dylan has announced he will retire from tennis this year. After his retirement, I would like to invite him to my residence again to enjoy his favourite food - Japanese food. I hope that he will continue to be a link between Japan and Australia.

SHIMADA Junji

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