

Currie climber is being driven up the wall

Andrew Goodall's sporting ambitions are driving him up the wall – literally.

The 18-year-old from Currie has just achieved his biggest accolade to date when he won the European Youth speed climbing championship in Imst, Austria.

And now Andrew, who is due to study sports science at Heriot-Watt University later this year, has his sights set even higher.

He said: "Without doubt, 100 per cent, winning the final in Imst is my biggest achievement especially as it was just my fourth international event.

"The youth world championships are scheduled for South Korea in August and I'm pretty confident of being selected for that followed by the British Seniors."

With climbing included in next year's Paris Olympics will that come too soon for the boy who first climbed aged three and made a competitive debut five years later encouraged by his father, Mark, a former RAF mountain rescue crew member?

"I'll set my sights on the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028 as I should have a lot more experience by then" says Andrew who made the decision to switch from lead climbing with its more thought-out philosophy to speed climbing – a bit like going from Test cricket to Twenty:20!

To be successful it takes around six seconds to scale a wall

for which there are strict specifications but is generally 15 metres high.

As Andrew explains, though, much can go wrong.

He said: "The first thing you have to avoid is a false start but do that and you just live in the moment with little time to think.

"I was lucky enough to compete in a world cup event at Ratho and set a personal best of 6.75 seconds but I have now got that down to 6.3 seconds. In Imst I won the gold medal in 6.61.

"It is an explosive discipline and as well as gym work preparation including filming myself and exploring any way of improving.

"The reaction to my win has been tremendous, and I also have to thank Currie Community High School for their support throughout my career so far."

