

sportability news

getting ready to roll

Welcome to
sport**ability**

Norfolk
Sportability
Youth Games

Special
Olympics

Learn to
play Boccia



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sportability
norfolk disability sports forum

 
LOTTERY FUNDED

are you ready?

Welcome to **sportability**.
By way of an introduction,
here's a little bit about who
we are and what we do...



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sportability is an exciting new project to increase the range of sport and physical activity opportunities for disabled people in Norfolk.

Our objectives over the next four years are six-fold:

- To provide disability sport opportunities to schools and local communities;
- To attain inclusiveness in mainstream sports clubs;
- To increase the number of coaches with disability awareness training;
- To offer funding information for disability sport events and clubs;
- To provide information, advice and support to disabled people across the county;
- To create and develop links with new and existing activities, events and competitions.

There are many projects already underway,

while our flagship event, the Norfolk Sportability Youth Games, taking place for the first time in June of this year.

This newsletter is aimed at providing you with an insight into what we're done recently, what we're aiming to do over the coming months, and to provide you with information and resources to help you get the most out of (and put more into) disability sport around the county.

If you have anything you wish to contribute to the newsletter, be it entire articles, or just information about a forthcoming event, then please contact Disability Sports Co-ordinator Jen White on 01603 727888 or at jen.white@norfolk.gov.uk, and we'll do our best to accomodate you.

We hope you enjoy reading **sportability** News.

dive in

A ten-session Swimability course has just started in Norwich for those keen to learn to swim and for those looking to improve their basics.

The lessons will be delivered by the UEA City of Norwich Swimming Club, and all teachers are experienced, fully qualified and have relevant child protection training.

It costs £20 for the ten lesson course, which includes all necessary equipment. All you need is a swimsuit and towel!

The sessions are running on Monday nights at Colman Road Middle School swimming pool, South Park Avenue, starting at either 5.00pm or 6.00pm and lasting one hour each.

For more information about the Swimability sessions, contact Janet Baker at Norwich City Council Sports Development Unit on 01603 212112 or janetbaker@norwich.gov.uk



winter warmers

Norfolk Athletics Development Officer Paul Evans is running an athletics club for disabled kids over the winter.

Training takes place at Earlham High School, Norwich, between 6.00 - 7.00pm, on Monday nights and are based around running, jumping and throwing in a friendly environment.

The coaching is open to kids of all abilities aged between 8 and 16 years old, and while all athletic equipment is provided, participants will need to wear sports clothing and trainers and bring drinks and suitable all-weather protection.

You can contact Paul for more details at Norfolk Sports Alliance on 01603 727889 or at paul.evans@norfolk.gov.uk



court in the act

Following on from the success of the tennis at the Youth Games, sportability, Norwich City Council and East Anglia Tennis and Squash Club have decided to ensure that tennis coaching for young people with a disability continues.

As such, a new weekly coaching session has been launched where young people can get expert coaching on a variety of tennis skills and match play from fully qualified and experienced coaches.

The sessions are taking place between 5.00 - 7.00pm on Wednesday nights at the East Anglia Tennis and Squash Club on Lime Tree Road, Norwich. Cost is £3 per session, or £20 for each ten-week term.

For further details, contact Jon Osborne (Norwich City Council) on 01603 212123 or Derek Perry (East Anglia Tennis & Squash Club) on 01603 453532



lawn life with wndis

West Norfolk Disability Information Service in King's Lynn has been holding try-it-out croquet sessions at Downham Croquet Club over the summer.

The sessions saw about 100 people turning out to have a go – often for the first time.

A selection of mallets of different lengths, weights and grips, and with interchangeable heads and handles was available, and along with these the group experimented with a Bradshaw Buggy (a wheelchair developed for bowls) which proved very effective.

The upshot of the trials is that all the groups are keen to return next year for another bash, with some individuals already joining the Downham club.

In addition, WNDiS is also looking to submit a bid to Awards for All for a grant to purchase a Bradshaw Buggy for the Downham club (the one used for the taster sessions was borrowed for the duration from Lynnsport), so the future looks rosy.

For more information about WNDiS or Downham Croquet Club, contact Jonathan Toye on 01553 776177 or e-mail jt@wndis.org.uk



where can i ifi?

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) was established in 2001 after research highlighted that the fitness industry was failing to meet the needs of disabled people.

The IFI, which is funded by a Sport England Lottery Fund grant, works with fitness facilities across the country to provide inclusive fitness opportunities catering for both disabled and non-disabled people.

The scheme concentrates on five main areas, including ensuring that facilities related to fitness are accessible, that the majority of disabled people are able to access a full body workout, and that staff understand the needs of disabled people and work with an inclusive culture.

There are IFI-approved facilities in Norfolk at the Norman Centre (Norwich), Lynnsport (King's Lynn) and Splash Leisure Centre (Sheringham), so why not take advantage and see what they have to offer?

Contact the Norman Centre on 01603 408140, Lynnsport on 01533 818001 or Splash on 01263 825675 for more information, or visit the IFI website at www.inclusivefitness.org

group therapy

Aimed at young disabled aged between 16 and 25ish, the Norfolk Young People's Development Group is looking for new members.

If you are keen on making new friends, setting up a network for young people, talking through 'Blurb Chat', visiting new places, establishing your rights in the community, making your own choices, and, most importantly, having fun, then get in touch.

For more information, call Neil Howard on 01603 662618, text to 07742914404 or e-mail nypdg@norfolk.gov.uk



anyone on the ball city

Football in the Community recently took part in Norwich City FC's first Disability Awareness Week.

As part of the week, FITC put on a coaching session at the UEA involving 60 players with a variety of disabilities to raise awareness that anybody can take part in coaching and matches.

The week ended with the new Norwich City MLD Football Team and a group of Deaf Players taking part in a half-time demonstration match during the Norwich City v Reading fixture at Carrow Road, highlighting to the thousands of people watching what can be achieved.



games for a laugh



This year saw the popular Norfolk Youth Games morph into something altogether more special - the first county-wide disability multi-sport event

As sprints go it wasn't exactly close. The winner streaked through ten metres ahead of the runner-up with the rest of the field so strung out that the distance between last and next to last was substantially larger.

What made this particular 100 metres race different from most was that there was as much enthusiasm for, as well as from, the last competitor as for the first. Far from downhearted, the last runner turned towards the crowd as he approached the finishing line and, with a delighted smile which broadcast to all his sense of achievement, milked an ovation which was all his.

There were any number of such moments which might be cited to encapsulate why the first Norfolk Sport Ability Games were considered a soaraway success by all involved.

And all of them backed the case for the defence against accusations that the title of the event - specifically aimed at children with disabilities - is yet another case of political correctness gone mad.

In fact, the title perfectly summed up the tone of a day in which the emphasis was on applauding what every one of the 150 or so competitors could do rather than to emphasise what they can't.

So this was one disabled sports games where the athletes were not divided and subdivided into levels of disability. Here they all took part together.

And, while there were gold, silver and bronze medals to distribute when it was all over, the main purpose was to give children who would otherwise never have had the chance to participate in competitive sport, a taste of what makes taking part so special - one which might hook them for life.

One of the best testimonies came from one of the youngsters who is already firmly set on the sporting life.

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"I get to a lot of events all over the country, but I've not been to one quite like this. It's an amazing event."

Paralympic gold medalist Danny Crates

Having been called into the Great Britain squad for the learning disabilities world championships in the Czech Republic later this year, Stephanie Bird was unquestionably among the most talented athletes on show.

"The whole thing was such good fun," said the Lowestoft teenager whose is already targeting a place in Britain's 2008 team for the Beijing Paralympics. "But the main thing was the friendship and feeling part of one big team."

Stephanie and her Ability Games 'team-mates' had the perfect role model there to inspire them.

Danny Crates had his sights set on playing rugby for England when he lost his right arm in a car crash in his early 20s. Grudgingly, he accepted he would never play at Twickenham – but having only one arm didn't stop him playing club rugby again before switching to athletics with spectacular results, culminating in an 800m Paralympic gold last year.

Crates was clearly impressed by the waves of enthusiasm which greeted him – and his precious Athens medal – as he toured around the wide range of events.

As patron of the event, he had no doubt that the organisers, with backing from Sport England and the Norfolk County Council, were right to take the bold decision to abandon the traditional Norfolk Youth Games in favour of a championship for youngsters with disabilities.

Norfolk Sports Services manager Keith Sutton explained that, although over 800 children took part in the Youth Games, only 45 of them were disabled and the competitive needs of most of the rest were already well catered for within their own sports.

Apart from a full range of athletics disciplines, sports on offer included tennis, zone hockey, some very competitive swimming and a series of demonstration sports – basketball, archery, 'new age' curling, table tennis and boccia.

"It's an amazing event," said Crates. "I get to a lot of events all over the country but I've not been to one quite like this, specifically aimed at allowing children with disabilities to participate in sport. So far as I know it is unique."

"Disability sport has changed so much. It now offers the potential of a career. I am a professional athlete, something which simply could not have been possible 15 or 20 years ago."

"Come 2012, or even 2008, some of these children could be our Paralympic athletes – and for some of them that might never happen if it was not for today."

[Many thanks to David Thorpe and the Eastern Daily Press for allowing us to reproduce this article.](#)



special something...

Glasgow recently staged the Special Olympics Summer Games, and sportability's Jen White was there

2500 participating athletes, almost 1000 coaches and 3000 families, friends and supporters descended on Scotland's largest city at the beginning of July for the 7th Special Olympics Summer Games.

The Games, held every four years, and the first to be staged in Scotland, opened with a glittering Ceremony on 2nd July at Celtic Park, a spectacle of lights, music, dramatics. It included a procession of the athletes, reading of the Special Olympics oath and the lighting of the flame.

Nineteen teams from throughout Great Britain took part, with ten from England, one from Wales and eight from Scotland. Athletes competed in 23 sports including first time sports of judo, kayaking and motorised activity training programme.

Special Olympics is a year-round international programme of sports training and competition for all persons with a learning disability. Founded in 1968 it's mission is "to give athletes with learning disabilities



continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community."

More than one million Special Olympics athletes train all year round in 25,000 communities in 153 countries around the world for sports competitions modelled on the Olympic Games and held annually at each organisational level.

International summer and winter Games are held alternatively every two years, with the next gathering scheduled for Shanghai in 2007, and event made all the more significant since the International Olympic Committee's 1998 granting of official recognition.

Special Olympics is founded on the belief that people with a learning disability can, with proper coaching and encouragement, learn, enjoy and benefit from participation in individual and team sports, adapted as necessary to meet their needs.

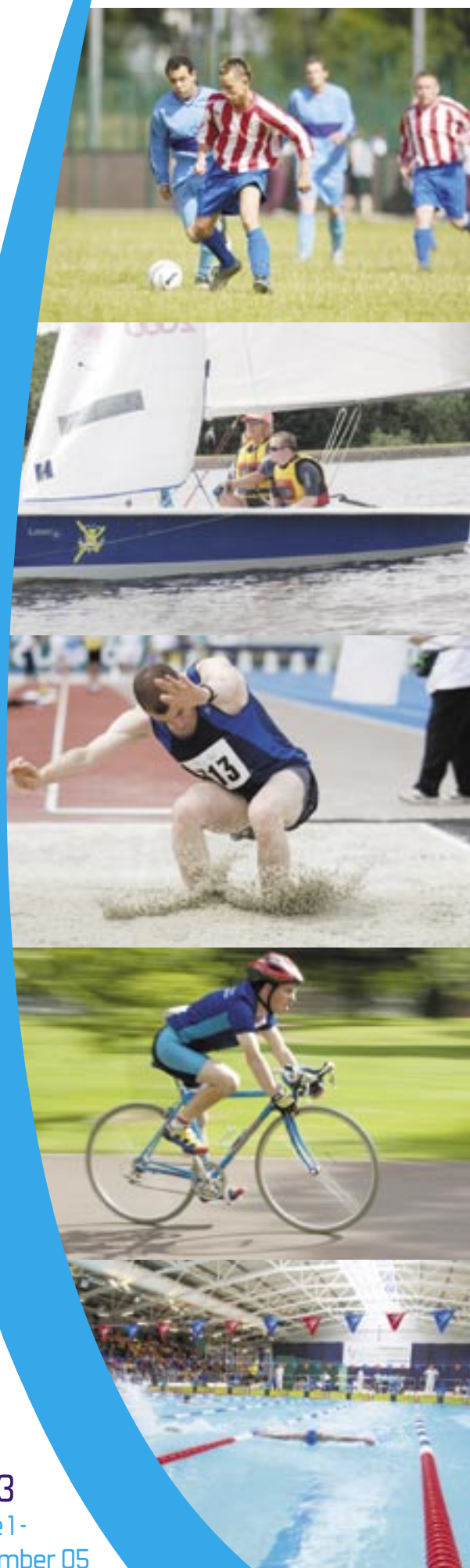
It believes that through regular sports training and competition, people with a learning disability benefit physically, mentally and socially.

All Special Olympics competition is 'banded' into groups of equal ability which allows individuals and teams the opportunity to achieve success based on their own level of ability.

After a week of competition, the Closing Ceremony took place on Friday, 8th July at Glasgow Green. After the formal march by the athletes, the lowering of the Special Olympics Flag and the extinguishing of the Flame, everyone headed off for a party to say their goodbyes and celebrate another successful and memorable event.

To read more about the Glasgow event, or for more information on Special Olympics in general, visit their website at www.specialolympicsgb.org

Thanks to Special Olympics GB for use of their pictures from Glasgow.



boccia bonus

Fancy trying something new? Then how about this twist on bowls...?

Boccia is a competitive game which can be played one-on-one, in pairs, or with teams of three. It is played on a specially marked court, usually with a hard surface, and the aim of the game is for players or teams to throw or bowl game balls so that they get them as close as possible to a special target ball.

The game begins with a player throwing the white target ball,

the jack, onto the court. Once the opponent has thrown the first game ball, and the thrower of the jack has taken their first attempt, the balls are thrown by the person or team not nearest to the jack until all the balls have been played. The referee then determines the scoring based on measurement of how near the game balls are to the jack.

This sequence is known as an end, and matches usually consist of four ends for individuals or pairs matches and six ends for teams of

three, although a deciding end is played for all in the event of a tie-break situation. Players have six balls each in individual matches, three each in pairs games and two each if playing in teams of three.

The use of chutes and ramps allow players to put their balls into play without having to manually release the ball, and players may use an assistant when using a ramp. The assistant is not allowed to view the playing court and must follow specific instructions from the player at all times.

Boccia sessions are currently running on Thursday nights at the Norman Centre on Bignold Road. The sessions start at 7.00pm and involve an hour of play in the hall followed by a 30 minute social in the bar afterwards. Anyone interested can come along on the night, but if you'd like any further information before doing so, then please contact either Jen White at sportability.

To find out more about Boccia, visit the game's governing body's website at www.bocciainternational.com.



local

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www.disabilitysportengland.org.uk

**English Sports
Association for
People with
Learning Disabilities**

08451 298992
www.esapld.co.uk

British Blind Sport

01926 424247
www.britishblindsport.org.uk

**British Amputee and
Les Autres Sports
Association**

0115 926 0220

**British Wheelchair
Sports Foundation**

01296 395995
www.britishwheelchair sports.org

Cerebral Palsy Sport

0115 925 7027 / 2620
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**British Paralympic
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020 7211 5222
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Special Olympics GB

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