

Newsletter Issue 5 Spring 2008



Welcome to the Mencap Sport quarterly Newsletter. In each issue, we will bring you all the latest news and competition information.

Paralympic dreams are being crushed due to a lack of funding says Mencap

Today, Mencap launches a new campaign highlighting the lack of support for elite athletes with a learning disability.

As a consequence of the Paralympic Games ban, athletes with a learning disability have not been able to access the programmes that are designed to support and foster talent.

Mencap is committed to ensuring that athletes have the opportunity to compete at the London 2012 Paralympics. We are confident that the current ban on participation will be lifted in time, but athletes must also be given the best possible chance to train and prepare for the Games.

Despite being amongst the best in the world, athletes with a learning disability have had to raise their own funds to train, compete and perform at the highest level. This amounts to many thousands of pounds each year.

Clare Ryan is one of England's best female athletes, but her mum told us "We raise money through fundraising events like raffles and auctions. We have to rely on other people's money, which just isn't ideal at all. We are trying our best, but at times it's simply not enough. Athletes with a learning disability shouldn't be charity cases – it's like we have stepped back in time by 50 years."

Mencap wants the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to work with the governing bodies of sport to make funding available immediately in order for athletes to be fully trained to compete in London 2012.

For more information visit www.mencap.org.uk/paralympics

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Campaigns News



UK School Games

The UK School Games (UKSG) is a competitive event for elite young athletes of school age from across the UK.

Mencap Sport has continued to work with the Youth Sport Trust, National Governing Bodies of Sport and central government to ensure that athletes with a learning disability have an opportunity to participate and compete in the Games at the earliest opportunity.

Swimming, athletics and table tennis are the first three sports working to ensure there are clear pathways for young people with learning disabilities to allow them to qualify for future UK School Games.

The first outcome of this work will be the inclusion of a competitive exhibition event in table tennis for athletes with a learning disability in the 2008 UKSG. This is being managed by the National Governing Body for Table Tennis in each country.

Inclusion in 2008 represents a great success for Mencap Sport and the Mencap Campaign's department and we look forward to the summer's competition.

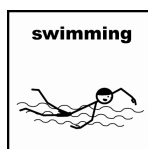
Paralympic campaign



In February, INAS and IPC established a joint working group – a proposal put forward by Mencap some time ago – to look specifically at what needs to happen to allow athletes with a learning disability to compete in the London 2012 Paralympics.

This is fantastic news and we will continue to support INAS and IPC as much as possible.

Sports News



Geneva Swimming

Each year, Mencap supports a number of Mencap/Gateway club members to go to Geneva to take part in a swimming competition. You don't have to be the best swimmer, as we take people of all abilities.

But you do need to take part in the 3rd British Learning Disability Swimming Championships and Festival which takes place in Sheffield on July 12th and 13th.

For more information visit www.mencap.org.uk/sport or call 01924 234912

Mencap Sport gets a new look

From April, Mencap has a fresh, new and exciting look. You may have noticed Mencap Sport's new logo at the top of the page, and you can find our new website at www.mencap.org.uk/sport which is clearer and contains more information.



Summer events programme confirmed

Athletes with a learning disability have a huge programme of sports events to choose from, as the disability sport programme grows each year.

Locally, you can contact your county sport partnership to find out what activities and opportunities are going on in your area. A County Sport Partnership is a partnership of clubs, national governing bodies and local authorities in your area so are ideally placed to know what's going on locally.

Contact details for County Sport Partnerships can be found on the Mencap Sport website.

Regionally, Disability Sport Events have a larger programme than ever before, with swimming, athletics, boccia and multi-sports events taking place across the country.



And nationally, Mencap Sport and Disability Sport Events will be delivering more than 12 competitions in a range of sports – you can find more details in the calendar at the end of this newsletter.

There has never been a better time to get involved in disability sport, and there are more opportunities than ever before.



Geneva Football

Mencap Sport also supports a number of Mencap/Gateway club members to take part in a football event. This year's team was selected at trials in Warwick in February and the team will travel to Geneva in June. The players selected are:

Kenneth Littler
Clifford Reid
Tim Johnston
Alan Hicks
Jamie Jones

Mark Knights
Tony Dowsett
Robert Thomas
Daniel Boughton
Stephen Pace

Cecil Gee
Carl Crooks
Dean Wright
Damian Kiley
Ian McHugh

Coaching Framework Launched

Sports coach UK has unveiled its plans for creating a world-leading coaching system in the UK by 2016.

Sport at all levels depends upon high quality coaches, and the framework explains how the UK will enhance both the quantity and quality of coaches over the next 8 years.

Mencap Sport is keen to investigate how people with a learning disability will be given greater opportunities to become coaches, and how coaches will be better supported to work with athletes with a learning disability.

More information about the framework, and sportscoachUK, can be found at www.sportscoachuk.org

Open European Athletics Championships come to Manchester

In June, Mencap Sport in partnership with Manchester City Council will host the INAS Open European Athletics Championships. The event will be the largest international athletics event for athletes with a learning disability in many years, and we are looking for spectators and volunteers to join us at the event.



More than 15 countries and 150 athletes will make the event a celebration of athletics, and for details of how to get involved, please visit the Mencap Sport website or call the national office.

Mencap Sport is delighted to announce that the North West Development Agency, and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities have both agreed support for the event.

Mencap Sport publish paper on the future of the UK National Registration system

Classification in disability sport is a way of ensuring that competition is fair. It ensures that athletes with a physical disability compete against other people with a similar disability.

Classification in learning disability sport is managed by the UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability.

Following the feedback we received from English athletes, parents and sports professionals about the problems they were experiencing trying to get a classification, Mencap Sport trialled a new system in partnership with Loughborough University.

The pilot was extremely successful, and a paper has been published explaining how the current system of athlete classification (sometimes called registration) can be improved. Mencap Sport is currently awaiting feedback from UKSA and other parties about how the system will develop.

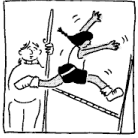
Success for Dan at DSE Junior Swimming Championships

In March, Disability Sport Events (DSE) held the Nationwide National Junior Swimming Championship at Ponds Forge in Sheffield. With over 200 entrants, three world, six European and numerous British records were broken.



The weekend belonged to Ben Procter from Cornwall. Ben, a member of the Mencap Sport training squad achieved two world records in the 50m and 100m Butterfly in new times of 27.85secs and 1min 02.03.

Ben moved from Oldham to Truro, Cornwall in September last year to concentrate on his training. He is now a member of the swim academy in the South West region.



Success in World Indoor Athletics Cross Country Championships

Andrew Kaar from the West Midlands was England's sole representative at the recent Indoor Athletics Championships which were held in Estonia in March.

Despite travel problems, Andrew managed a Personal Best at the INAS World Indoor Athletics in Estonia winning a bronze medal in the 800m in a time of 2.03.2.

Inclusive Fitness Initiative



inclusive fitness

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) is a national programme that supports the fitness industry to become more inclusive, catering for the needs of disabled and non-disabled people alike.

Through a range of projects and products the initiative supports gym and fitness facilities to increase participation by disabled people.

The IFI was launched in 1998 after research by the Gary Jelen Sports Foundation discovered that a lack of suitable equipment and poor staff awareness of disabled people's needs was stopping many disabled people visiting gyms.

In 2006, Sport England conducted the largest ever survey into sport and leisure participation which showed that only 8.8% of disabled people are physically active compared to 21% of the adult population. The IFI, through its network of accredited facilities, is helping to address this.

There are more than 180 sites already accredited, with a further 200 following over the next few months. You can find your local site by visiting www.inclusivefitness.org. Each site has accessible gym equipment, and has committed to ensuring that staff are trained to support people with disabilities.

Many can also offer advice and ideas on how to get more involved in sport and leisure.

Mencap Sport Website



The Mencap Sport website is the best place to stay up to date with news, information, events, competitions and opportunities in sport. It has recently been updated with Mencap's new corporate identity and we will continue to add new information.

You can visit the site at www.mencap.org.uk/sport

Mencap Sport Email News



Sometimes we send out information about events and competitions by email. If you would like to be added to the mailing list then email us at sport@mencap.org.uk putting the words 'mailing list' in the subject line.

2008 Calendar



International Events

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact</u>
• INAS World Indoor Athletics Championships	12-17 March	Estonia	INAS
• INAS-FID World Cross Country Championships	10-14 April	Poland	INAS
• Geneva Football Champs (Mencap members only)	8-12 May	Geneva	INAS
• INAS Open European Athletics Championships,	27-29 June	Manchester	INAS
• INAS European Football Championships,	20 July - 2 Aug	Manchester	INAS
• INAS European Swimming Championships	17-21 Aug	Poland	INAS
• Paralympic Games	6-17 Sep	Beijing	IPC
• INAS Open European Table Tennis Championships	20-26 October	Valencia	INAS
• INAS World Half Marathon Championships	tbc		INAS
• Geneva Swimming Gala (Mencap members only)	tbc Oct	Geneva	INAS

National Competition Calendar

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact</u>
• Welsh National SC Swimming Championships 2007	tbc		Disability Sport Wales
• Mencap/Gateway Football Trials	3 Feb	Warwick	Mencap Sport
• National Junior Swimming Championships	01-02 Mar	Sheffield	DSE
• Liverpool International Table Tennis Tournament	13-16 March	Liverpool	
• Grand Prix Athletics 1	26 April	Perivale	CP Sport
• British Open Long Course Swimming Champs	25-27 April	Sheffield	DSE
• National Special Olympics Table Tennis Championships	26-27 April	Crewe	Special Olympics
• DSE National Mini Games	9 May	Stoke Mandeville	DSE
• BTTAD Games	10-11 May	Sheffield	BTTAD
• Mencap National 5-a-side Football Championships	7 June	Leeds	Mencap Sport
• British Wheelchair Athletics Trials	10 May	Stoke Mandeville	Wheelpower
• Grand Prix Athletics 2	31 May	Nottingham	CP Sport
• British Disabled Triathlon Championships	1 June	Rotherham	British Triathlon
• British Open Athletics Championships	7-8 June	Manchester	DSE
• Grand Prix Athletics 3	14 June	Nottingham	CP Sport
• Grand Prix Athletics 4	19 July	Nottingham	CP Sport
• National Learning Disability Athletics Champs	28 June	Manchester	Mencap Sport
• National Learning Disability Netball Champs	tbc	tbc	England Netball
• National Junior Athletics Championships	05-06 July	Blackpool	DSE
• 2nd British SC Swimming Championships	12-13 July	Sheffield	Mencap Sport
• National Table Tennis Grand Prix	18-20 July	Stoke Mandeville	DSE
• Grand Prix Athletics 5	23 Aug	Gateshead	CP Sport
• UK School Games	28 Aug- 1 Sep	Bath/Bristol	Mencap Sport
• National Snooker Championships	tbc	tbc	DSE
• National Table Tennis Grand Prix	4-5 October	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• DSE National SC Swimming Championships	1-2 Nov	Sheffield	DSE
• National Cross Country	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Merseyside Open Table Tennis Championships	7 Dec	Liverpool	

Regional Competition Calendar

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact</u>
• South West Regional Swimming Championships	12 Jan		DSE
• North East Regional Swimming Championships	13 Jan		DSE
• West Midlands Regional Swimming Championships	26 Jan		DSE
• East Regional Swimming Gala	2 Feb		DSE
• South East Regional Swimming Gala	9 Feb		DSE
• North West Regional Swimming Gala	16-17 Feb		DSE
• South East Regional Athletics Championships	19 April		DSE
• North East Regional Athletics Championships	25 April		DSE
• North West Regional Athletics Championships	27 April		DSE
• Eastern Athletics Championships	17 May		DSE
• West Midlands Regional Athletics Championships	18 May		DSE
• South West Regional Athletics Championships	21 May		DSE
• East Midlands Athletics Championships	24 May		DSE

National Mencap Squad Training Calendar

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact</u>
• Athletics Squad Day	13 Jan	Manchester	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	26-27 Jan	Grantham	Mencap Sport
• Swimming Squad Day	9 Feb	Sheffield	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	15-16 March	Grantham	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	17-18 May	Grantham	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Day	24 May	Manchester	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	5-6 July	Grantham	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	13-14 Sept	Grantham	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Trial Day	20 Sept	Sheffield	Mencap Sport
• Swimming Squad Day	18 Oct	Manchester	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Day	22 Nov	Sheffield	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	8-9 Nov	Grantham	Mencap Sport

More information and links to entry forms can be found at www.mencap.org.uk/sport