

For immediate release

Personal bests achieved at life changing wheelchair sports event



Last week 115 disabled children came together at Stoke Mandeville Stadium in Buckinghamshire for the annual WheelPower National Junior Games. They travelled to the Birthplace of the Paralympic Movement alongside parents, carers and school groups from right across the UK to take part in this life changing sports event which returned to the calendar for the first time following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hosted by WheelPower, the national charity for wheelchair sport, this week long event provides new and exciting opportunities to discover and try 15 different wheelchair sports, that this year included basketball, tennis, powerchair football, boccia, fencing and canoeing.

Supported by a fantastic group of volunteers and coaches from the various governing bodies the event was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who took part. Young disabled people like 17 year old Ayden from Surrey who had a week to remember. "I've been in a wheelchair for a year and I never thought I would be able to do all of these different types of sport and activities, and the Junior Games has shown me that I can actually do everything a walking person can do. Sport makes me feel independent and freeing, so finding out about this event has been life changing. My mum said hasn't seen me this happy since 2018."

Sue from High Wycombe is mum to 10 year old Orla who has Cerebral Palsy. She continues, "It's been emotional and amazing event to be involved in. To see all these children doing their best across all these different sports has been fantastic and so inspiring for Orla. After this week she is going to take away so much more awareness of what can be achieved, which will be great for Orla in the future. I would highly recommend coming along next year. Thank you WheelPower."

Transforming lives through sport

WheelPower, Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Guttman Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, HP21 9PP
Tel: 01296 395995 Email: info@wheelpower.org.uk www.wheelpower.org.uk

Royal Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB, OM, AK, QSO, PC, ADC

Patrons: Ade Adepitan MBE, David Barnett, Annabelle Christie, Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE, Paddy Hopkirk MBE, Roger Jefcoate CBE DL, The Countess of Westmorland

President: The Hon. Mrs Mark Vestey Life Vice President: Kevan Baker OBE

Vice Presidents: Ann Cutcliffe OBE, Dennis Guttman FRCP, Sally Haynes MBE, Glyn Hibbert, Mark Jarrad, Rod Jones, Eva Loeffler OBE, Baroness Masham, David Skinner

Chairman: Rob Wilson Chief Executive: Martin McElhatton

Charity registration number: 265498 The British Wheelchair Sports Foundation Limited (WheelPower) registered office: as above Company registration number: 01059490

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Latest research from Activity Alliance shows that disabled people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic so the return of events such as the WheelPower National Junior Games are now of even greater importance, to provide opportunities to be more active and play sport, and help to improve health and wellbeing of disabled people across the United Kingdom.

Martin McElhatton WheelPower Chief Executive.

“After the last few years, it was emotional to see our National Junior Games back at Stoke Mandeville Stadium and I can honestly say that it made me so very proud. When we measure the impact of sport and physical activity it is vital that we see the wider impact on the disabled person, their family and their lives and it has been lovely to hear so much positivity about the Games from them all. WheelPower would like to say a huge thanks to all involved, our wonderful volunteers, the sports associations and governing bodies and donors including our new partner The Kentown Wizard Foundation.”

Margaret Ingram CEO of The Kentown Wizard Foundation:

"This is an extraordinary event which enables young disabled people to discover a passion for sport in an inclusive and welcoming environment. After two very difficult years, the return of the National Junior Games is a cause for celebration and we are proud to offer our support. The ethos of the Games to “Achieve Your Personal Best” aligns very closely to our own ethos and we hope that for the young people who attend, the benefits are long lasting and maybe even life changing. Above all, we hope they all had a lot of fun."

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Please feel free to use the attached images with credit to WheelPower.

WheelPower

WheelPower have been providing opportunities in sport for people with physical impairments for over 70 years. Based in Stoke Mandeville, the home of the Paralympic movement, WheelPower is at the heart of wheelchair sport. From first-timers to Paralympic medallists, we support and promote participation at all levels. We have seen how playing sport can enrich lives, offering tremendous physical and psychological benefits, whatever your age or ability.

While sport can develop confidence and improve your health, it's also a great way to put a smile on the faces of those taking part. Each year, WheelPower supports over 62,099 disabled people to participate in sport and activity across the country. Join us in this mission as a participant, supporter or volunteer and together we can help transform lives through sport.

For more information visit www.wheelpower.org.uk

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The National Junior Games

The Games have been taking place since the 1980s and over these years thousands of children and young disabled people have discovered their passion for sport, supporting them to live a healthier and more active lives as a result. This extraordinary event has also played a pivotal role in the development of many Paralympics GB stars, such as Alfie Hewett (tennis) Jess Stretton (archery), Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and David Weir (athletics) who all took part in the Games on their way to sporting success.

The Kentown Wizard Foundation

The Kentown Wizard Foundation is based in Blackpool and was set up by philanthropist Kenneth Townsley in 2015. The Foundation's mission is to have a positive impact on the lives of children and young adults with serious, life-limiting conditions and disabilities. They do this, by making grants to UK registered charities whose aims and values are closely aligned with their own and to date, have successfully gifted over £17,000,000.

For more information visit - www.kentownwizard.org

Social media: WheelPower can be found on all channels so please do tag us into your posts using the following: [@wheelchairsport](https://www.facebook.com/wheelchairsport) (Facebook) [@wheelpower](https://twitter.com/wheelpower) (twitter) [@wheelpower_official](https://www.instagram.com/wheelpower_official) (Instagram)

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