

# Newsletter Issue 8 Winter 2009



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

## Athletes to miss out on sport funding

In the Autumn issue we reported on the progress being made to re-instate athletes with a learning disability in Paralympic competition.



The International Paralympic Committee and INAS (the International Federation for learning disability sport) had released a statement which said that significant progress was being made and a decision on the London Games in 2012 was expected in November 2009.

We also reported that Mencap had been calling on government and sports organisations to make funding available to support talented athletes with a learning disability, which has not been available since the ban was imposed in 2000.

However, a series of announcements about the allocation of sport funding to British athletes in December determined that athletes will not receive any support until the decision in November.

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### Mencap Sport Staff

**National Sport Manager:** Nick Parr  
**National Administrator:** Kathy Anstey

### Mencap Sport Volunteers:

#### **Mencap Sport Athletics:**

Paul Burns  
Di Freeman  
Christine Galloway  
John Wootton  
Kathy Collins  
John Matthews  
Stephanie Johnston  
Michael Coltherd  
Marie Dixon  
Greg Simmons  
Ian Eaton  
Verona Elder  
John Pirie  
Vic Collins  
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Margaret Smith  
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Ian Nolan

#### **Mencap Sport Swimming:**

Carol Halpin  
Steve Critchley  
Francis Dart  
Gemma Ripley  
Mark Thomas  
Beryl Horton  
Stephen Meanwell

#### **Mencap Sport Table Tennis:**

Wendy Beech  
Dennis Beech  
Mick Vesey  
Kevin Watt  
Gail Bromley  
John Stoneley

#### **Mencap Sport Football:**

Pete McLaughlin  
Mark Summers  
Pete Bickers

#### **Classification Officer**

Vesna Cramer

#### **UKSA Representatives:**

Karon Nicol  
Nick Parr

## Funding campaign Continued from Page 1...

Mencap is extremely hopeful that the ban from Paralympic competition will be lifted in November, but is concerned that without the financial support enjoyed by other 2012 hopefuls, athletes with a learning disability may not be ready to compete.

A number of English athletes have already withdrawn from major competitions in 2009, as they cannot afford to enter.

Kathy Collins, who supports her two sons Neill and Tony who were both selected to compete at the INAS European Cross Country Championships said *“the lads train so hard and fully deserve their selection, but it is simply impossible for us to keep finding the money needed for them to represent their country”*.



Each time an athlete misses an event, their ranking will drop, which will have a knock-on effect on Paralympic qualification.

In recent years, the UK government have committed unprecedented sums of money into sport, and support for the nations top athletes. The benefit of this was clearly seen in Beijing when GB finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the Olympic Games and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Paralympic Games – far ahead of expectations.

In December, a series of announcements showed how the £46m awarded for preparation for the 2012 Paralympics will be used, however, none of this funding will be available to support athletes with a learning disability until the ban is lifted.

Mencap Sport has supported talented athletes in England since the exclusion began, but is also excluded from the money given to disability sport provision in the UK. Mencap Sports costs are covered entirely by sponsorship, fundraising and donations from the athletes themselves.

Nick Parr, National Sport Manager explained “We fully expect the ban from Paralympic Competition to be lifted in November. It would be a huge disappointment if after all our efforts, athletes still cannot fulfil their Paralympic dreams because funding was not made available now”.

Mencap has estimated that just £30k is needed to support Paralympic hopefuls until the decision in November – a small amount that could make a huge difference.

## 2009 preview

2009 will be an important year for sport for people with a learning disability, and there has never been a better time to get involved.

In November, a decision is due regarding the 2012 Paralympic Games, but before then, the 2nd INAS Global Games takes place in Liberec in the Czech Republic.

The Global Games are a 10-day long event featuring World Championship events in Athletics, Basketball, Cycling, Futsal, Swimming, Table Tennis, and Tennis, as well as demonstration events in Indoor Rowing and Judo. The event takes place between 5-14th July and around 30 English athletes are expected to compete.

Also representing us internationally will be teams from Mencap who will compete in the Geneva Football competition in May and Swimming in October. Athletes/players will be identified at the annual football trials in February or the Festival of Swimming in August, organised by Mencap Sport

Mencap Sport will also be organising the annual Open National Athletics Championships, which this year return to our Southern venue in Watford, and the Open National Table Tennis Championships which will once again take place in Crewe. The 5 a'side Football competition returns to Leeds in June, whilst towards the end of the year, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Open National Cross Country Championships are expected to take place in November.

More locally, there will be more events than ever before for athletes with a learning disability. To find out what's happening in your area, then log-on to your local county sports partnership, or find their phone number in the phone book.

If it's a particular sport you are interested in then try contacting the sports governing body. Mencap Sport can give you all the contacts you need.

And finally, Mencap members should start to benefit from even more sport, as our regional sports grants programme is designed to fund new events throughout 2009 specifically for Mencap members.

Whether you are new to sport, or an experienced athlete, there are loads of opportunities to get active in 2009!

For the full calendar of events, see the last page of this newsletter.



# Award for Mencap Sport Athletics

In 2007, Mencap Sport won the nPower Governing Body of the Year award for its contribution to sport for people with a learning disability.



18 months on, the efforts of our volunteers have been recognised again, as the Mencap Sport Athletics group picked up the 'Volunteer of the Year' award at the annual Mencap Staff and Volunteer Awards.

The group were recognised for the work they do to support gifted and talented athletes to progress to international competition, but most particularly for their efforts to organise the 2008 INAS Open European Athletics Championships in Manchester last June.

The event attracted more than 150 top-level athletes with a learning disability from 17 nations, including entries in the Open section from as far afield as South Africa, Thailand and Australia.



The event was a fantastic example of the partnerships built by Mencap Sport, as Manchester City Council and volunteers from the Mencap Sport Athletics group worked together over a period of 15 months to fundraise, organise and stage the event.

Paul Burns, who led the Organising Committee collected the award along with Head Throws Coach Christine Galloway at a ceremony in Birmingham (pictured with Mencap CEO Mark Goldring). Paul was delighted with the award and thanked all the volunteers involved in the event and Mencap Sport.



Since being launched in 2005, Mencap Sport Athletics have supported more than 60 athletes on its Gifted and Talented Programme, of which more than 20 have already gone onto represent Great Britain in International Competition.

# Update on UK (National) Classification for athletes with a learning disability.



On 1<sup>st</sup> January, new rules came into effect for UK (National) Classification for athletes with a learning disability.

Athletes in England who already hold a National Classification should by now have received a letter explaining what they need to do.

In 2009, the only events for which a UK Classification will be required are:

- DSE Junior Swimming Championships – March
- British Learning Disability Swimming Championships (elite section) – August
- DSE Short Course Swimming Championships - November

In 2010, you will also need a UK Classification to take part in:

- Mencap Sport Open National Athletics Championships - June
- Mencap Sport Open National Table Tennis Championships - October

Athletes are advised to begin the process of application well ahead of the competition in which they want to participate to avoid disappointment.

To help athletes gather the evidence required for classification, we are introducing a series of Classification Assessment Days. Dates in 2009 include:

- January 31<sup>st</sup> - Wakefield
- March – tbc
- September – tbc

These changes do not affect anyone holding an international/INAS registration card.

For more information, including a guide to classification and the new classification application forms, visit the [Mencap Sport website](http://www.mencap.org.uk).

This information is for people who live in England. If you live in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland then please contact the UK Sports Association on 0207 490 3057

## Office Volunteer wanted

Mencap Sport is looking for someone to help out at its busy national office in Wakefield. If you have good administration and computer skills and are able to spare approximately 2-3 days per week, then we would like to hear from you.



Tasks will include answering telephone enquiries, inputting database and spreadsheet information, as well as assisting with everyday administrative office tasks.

## Deadline for Regional Grants Scheme

In the summer, Mencap Sport received a grant from the Renton Foundation to support a series of sport and leisure events across the country for Mencap members.



The scheme launched on 1<sup>st</sup> November and applications are open to affiliated Mencap groups. You can apply for grants of up to £750 which must be used to stage a sports event or competition for Mencap members in your area.

Applications must be received no later than 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 and the event must take place before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

We are looking for exciting projects that can become annual events. Mencap Sport will work with you to advise you, but the project must be managed locally.



For more information, visit [the Mencap Sport website](#) or call the Mencap Sport office for an application pack.

## Grants for Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire County Council are offering grants to athletes or clubs based in the Nottinghamshire area. Further details are available on their [website](#).



# Ashley School take honours in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cross Country Championships

On Saturday 29th November, athletes with a learning disability joined more than 200 runners in Chelmsford, Essex, as they participated in the Essex Cross Country League fixture.



The fixture doubled as the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Learning Disability Championships, and it was young athletes from Ashley School in Lowestoft who took the team honours with wins in both the Boys and Girls Under 15 races. Broomhall Bank School also achieved team honours with a win in the Girls Under 17 category.

Though the entry was small, the event is expected to grow, and for some, may already provide the step into the national training squad.

Full results are available on the [Mencap Sport website](#).

## Mencap Sport Training

One of the biggest barriers to the inclusion of people with a learning disability in sport and leisure is the lack of training and education available to sports organisation, coaches, staff and volunteers.



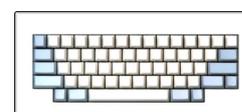
Mencap Sport training has been developed to help overcome this barrier.

Cheryl Patrick, Training Officer, explained “the course helps people to look at the way they work, their policies and practices to help them become more accessible to people with a learning disability. Information about the pathways in sport, coaching techniques and classification - which can often be confusing - will help organisations to be more inclusive and welcoming to people with a learning disability”.

More information, including booking forms, can be found on the [Mencap Sport website](#).

## 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](mailto:sport@mencap.org.uk) putting the words ‘mailing list’ in the subject line.



**International Events**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
• INAS European Cross Country Championships	12-16 February	Portugal	INAS
• 1 <sup>st</sup> Cricket World Cup	tbc	Australia	INAS
• INAS World Indoor Athletics Championships	4-8 March	France	INAS
• Geneva 11 a side Football Champs (Mencap members only)	28 May – 1 June	Geneva	Mencap Sport
• INAS Open European Half Marathon	March	Rome	INAS
• 2 <sup>nd</sup> Global Games	5-14 July	Czech Republic	INAS
• Geneva Swimming Gala (Mencap members only)	October	Geneva	Mencap Sport

**National Competition Calendar**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
• Mencap/Gateway Football Trials	15 Feb	Warwick	Mencap Sport
• National Junior Swimming Championships	7-8 Mar	Sheffield	DSE
• National Special Olympics Table Tennis Championships	April	Crewe	Special Olympics
• DSE National Mini Games	8-10 May	Stoke Mandeville	DSE
• BTTAD National Table Tennis Championships	May	Sheffield	BTTAD
• British Open Long Course Swimming Champs	15-17 May	Sheffield	DSE
• Mencap National 5-a-side Football Championships	6 June	Leeds	Mencap Sport
• Grand Prix Athletics 3	6 June	Nottingham	CP Sport
• British Open Athletics Championships	13-14 June	Manchester	DSE
• Marion Smith National Netball Championships	June	tbc	England Netball
• Open National Athletics Championships	27 June	Watford	Mencap Sport
• National Junior Athletics Championships	4-5 July	Blackpool	DSE
• British Learning Disability Swimming Champ's & Festival	22-23 August	Sheffield	Mencap Sport
• UK School Games	3-6 September	South Wales	Youth Sport Trust
• National Table Tennis Grand Prix	5-6 Sep	Stoke Mandeville	DSE
• National Snooker Championships	10-11 October	tbc	DSE
• National Table Tennis Grand Prix	3-4 October	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• DSE National SC Swimming Championships	21-22 November	Sheffield	DSE
• National Cross Country	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Merseyside Open Table Tennis Championships	13 Dec	Liverpool	LCC
• Welsh National SC Swimming Championships 2007	Dec	Cardiff	Disability Sport Wales

**Regional Competition Calendar**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
• West Midlands Regional Swimming Championships	10 Jan	Rugby	DSE
• North East Regional Swimming Championships	10 January	Middlesborough	DSE
• South East Regional Swimming Gala	31 <sup>st</sup> January	Southampton	DSE
• East Regional Swimming Championships	7 February	Braintree	DSE
• North West Regional Athletics Championships	25 April	Birkenhead	DSE
• Yorkshire Regional Athletics Championships	12 May	Doncaster	DSE
• East Regional Athletics Championships	16 May	Chelmsford	DSE
• South East Regional Athletics Championships	16 May	Crawley	DSE
• West Midlands Regional Athletics Championships	17 May	Birmingham	DSE
• South West Regional Athletics Championships	20/23 May	tbc	DSE
• North East Regional Athletics Championships	22 May	Gateshead	DSE
• East Midlands Athletics Championships	6 June	Nottingham	DSE
• Yorkshire Regional Swimming Championships	June tbc		DSE
• South East Regional Swimming Gala	4 October	Guidford	DSE
• London Regional Swimming Championships	12 October	Bromley	DSE
• East Midlands Regional Swimming Championships	19 October	Gramtham	DSE
• North West Regional Swimming Gala	9 November	Birkenhead	DSE
• South West Regional Swimming Championships	tbc		DSE
• London Regional Athletics Championships	tbc		DSE

**National Mencap Squad Training Calendar**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
• Athletics Squad Day	24 January	Leeds	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	24/25 January	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Swimming Squad Day	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	28/29 March	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	23/24 May	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Day	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	27/28 June	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	19/20 September	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Trial Day	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Swimming Squad Day	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport
• Table Tennis Squad Weekend	21/22 November	Crewe	Mencap Sport
• Athletics Squad Day	tbc	tbc	Mencap Sport

More information and links to entry forms can be found at [www.mencap.org.uk/sport](http://www.mencap.org.uk/sport)

To list your event, please email us at [sport@mencap.org.uk](mailto:sport@mencap.org.uk)