

*Dwarf Sports Association UK
Official Journal*



ReachOut

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Autumn 2014

Patrons: Eleanor Simmonds O.B.E & Matthew Whorwood Charity No 1041961



Autumn 2014 Edition



DSA Sailing and Canoeing Day

On 26th July 2014, DSAuk held the National Sailing and Canoeing Day at Rother Valley Country Park in Sheffield.

The weather was absolutely glorious and it was one of the hottest days of the year. The water sports on offer gave welcome relief from the sun...as did the ice cream van!

Rother Valley Country Park was again a fabulous location for the event and DSA set up camp on the grassed area next to the car park and visitors centre.

Rother Valley ran the sailing activity which was great fun for everyone. The fabulous weather did result in a lack of wind though! Yet again, the volunteers from the Canoe Club kindly provided Canoes, Kayaks and instructors. Rocky, Dale, Ivan and their team provided great entertainment and good fun for everyone who took part.

It was great to see lots of people braving the hot weather for a go in the Zorb.

Lunch was a delicious Hog Roast followed by cakes, flapjack and sweets. There was plenty left and many people managed to fit in seconds or take a tray of pulled pork home.

The raffle was drawn in the afternoon and a huge £112 was raised and thank you to everyone who kindly donated prizes.

Overall, the day was very much enjoyed by all and we hope to see you all there again next year!



National Boccia League Finals

The National Boccia League Finals were held at Ponds Forge Leisure Centre in Sheffield. The top teams from each regional league compete against each other, in this contest there were 15 teams competing of which DSA West Midlands was one.

During the day there were two competitions running side by side, The National Boccia League Finals and the Super League Finals, where the top six teams in England play against each other.

After registering we noted down our opponents and court numbers. We were in Pool A and were to meet Bexley Dodgers on court 4 followed by Stockport on court 6. The venue was split in to ten courts with court 1 being the practice court. When we arrived, there were many other teams preparing, practicing and discussing games. At 9:30am, the first matches were called out and the competition began.

As our first match was scheduled for 10:50am we were able to watch our opponents playing each other in their first match. We were able to identify our team tactics and went to court 1 to practice. This gave us the opportunity to get used to the floor and try out the different balls available. After practicing, we decided which balls would suit our style of play and we were then called for our first match.

Unfortunately, our third team member was ill and since teams normally play with two balls each, six in total, it was up to our opponents to decide how many balls they would allow us to play with.

Bexley Dodgers, our first opponents, agreed to allow us to play the full six balls, thus we played with three each, however when playing Stockport we were limited to four balls in total, two balls each. In our first match against Bexley Dodgers, we scored in all six ends and we won with a final score of 8-0. Our second match was much more difficult and Stockport showed great pinpoint precision with the majority of their balls. We were able to score in only one end and the final score was 9-1. This meant that we were 2nd in our pool.



Stockport won the first match in pool A 7-7 (tie break 1-0) and progressed to the semi-finals. After lunch we found out we were in the playoff for 7th and 8th place and for this match we played Romford Roadrunners. We were able to win two ends, however, lost 8 – 4 overall. This result placed us in 8th position out of total of 15.

In the remainder of the competition, the Bronze playoff was a contest between Jigsaw Jaguars and Irwin Smashers. Irwin Smashers won the Bronze medal, with a score line of 5-4. The final match was between Team Spirit and our Pool A opponents Stockport. Stockport were winning up to the final end, but Team Spirit managed to win the Gold medal with the score line being 8-6 and so Stockport took the Silver medal.

Attending the day was a great experience, we played against a variety of players with differing abilities within the teams. Some players threw or tossed the ball, some players rolled the ball and some players were ramp players, so we had the opportunity to play against all of these different styles. It was also an opportunity to watch skillful players and observe many differing team styles and tactics. We learned more about the different rules and regulations and how they are implemented in National tournaments and it was good to see Boccia played at a high level. It would be great if a DSA team could get to the final again and hopefully compete for a medal.



Para-Badminton

International Tournament

The first ever Para-badminton International held in England took place in Loughborough over three days late in June. It was held at the university and was a BWF sanctioned international event. The entry was open to all countries with no restriction on the numbers in each class.

Badminton England organised and delivered an excellent event with mats for all the standing classes and electronic scoreboards on every court. The court surrounds were carpeted and there were umpires for every game with full line judging for the finals.

There were nineteen countries in attendance with the dwarf class (SS6) having competitors from Scotland, India, Poland, Hong Kong, China and England. It was brilliant to see two people from Hong Kong and Poland who had not attended these events before and the players from the DSA soon befriended the new competitors.

The tournament opened with the singles matches and from the first game it was clear that Yim from



Hong Kong was very competent. In his first match he played Jack Shephard. It was a very close three set match and Yim won with only a four point lead. He then went on to another three set match against Krysten Coombs to get into the quarter finals - brilliant for a first international tournament. In the other group stages, Isaak Dalglish won against the Indian and Polish players making his way through the group and into the quarter finals, as did Rachel Choong and Andrew Martin. All the played games right through to the semi finals were really good matches resulting in a final with Andrew Martin vs. Kyrsten Coombs which was held on the Sunday.

DSA member Bobby Laing from the Scottish squad played fantastically winning all his group matches, he played very professionally and is a future talent to keep an eye on. I'm sure he'll be playing for his country for some time to come.

The doubles tournament was played as a single round robin group with some interesting new partnerships. Andrew Martin was paired with Isaak Dalglish and Bobby Laing playing with Yim from Hong Kong, while Mark from India and Jednaki Grzegorz from Poland also paired up for the first time.

There were some really close matches with some reaching three sets. A particularly exciting match between Rebecca Bedford and Rachel Choong resulted in the ladies winning in the final two games with just a few points separating them from Mark and Jednaki.

The doubles tournament was dominated by Jack Shephard and Krysten Coombs. Having played together since the World Dwarf Games they have developed as a doubles pairing and this week winning every game in two straight sets. After winning the silver medal in Germany last November, this time they took the Gold Medal and were rewarded with a world No 1 ranking.

The finals day arrived and the first match on court was an exhibition mixed doubles match for the dwarf class. The well established pairing of Rachel Choong and Andrew Martin played text book mixed Badminton beating Jack Shephard and Rebecca Bedford in two games. Jack and Rebecca said they were pleased to gain more points than ever before in a match against Andrew and Rachel and they were looking forward to playing them again soon.





DSA Challenge 100

Will your family meet the 'DSA Challenge 100' and raise £100 for DSAuk?

We are all delighted that we have seen phenomenal growth in our membership numbers over the past few years.

We are excited about the future for the association and are committed to providing quality national events for you to enjoy.

We need your help to boost our main funds to ensure that we are able to continue to provide fun and enjoyable events for years to come.

The challenge is on!

We are challenging every family within our membership to 'Do Something Amazing' and raise just £100 for DSAuk.

We would love to hear your fundraising stories and will publish them all on Facebook and www.dsauk.org.

We're here to support you every step of the way so have placed a downloadable fundraising pack on www.dsauk.org. This contains sponsorship forms and plenty of ideas, hints and tips.

If you need any more advice, we're always here to talk to you so give us a call on 01246 296485.

Good Luck!



First Newcastle Achondroplasia Symposium

The 1st Achondroplasia Symposium is being held on 20th and 21st September in Newcastle.

Dr Michael Wright would like to invite all members of DSAuk to attend.

This is an exciting event where doctors and healthcare professionals meet to discuss services for people with Achondroplasia. The views of DSAuk members are essential for this project.

Please confirm your attendance by emailing tim.shephard@dsauk.org. For more information please call the office on 01246 296485 or visit www.dsauk.org.

Athletics Update

The Liverpool challenge disability club meets every Friday evening at Wavertree athletics club, Liverpool. We are a pan disability club with about 16 members with disabilities such as dwarfism and cerebral palsy. We also have siblings that train with us and compete at main stream events. We are primarily a throws club but do have a track coach so can do both.

Over the years many people have come through the club and competed not only at national level but international and Paralympic level too—some staying in close contact and one in particular still paying subscriptions to help the club along .

As coaches we have been privileged to be able to coach lots of different ages and abilities. We have had adult injured soldiers and visually impaired youngsters training alongside each other. We welcome everyone at the club but more importantly so do all of our members, we believe the club provides a safe environment for youngsters in particular, to develop not only athletic techniques and fitness, but perhaps more importantly self confidence.

Of course, just before the National games we have an influx of people wanting some last minute training, although this is very welcome, we would love parents to try to come throughout the year. Fitness is so very important as it helps long term to keep the stress off joints and back and strengthen core muscles, it also helps to maintain a healthy body weight.

Many people with disabilities ,particularly dwarfism have to undergo surgery at some point , being a good healthy weight and being generally fit does help aid a speedy recovery.

In disability sport it is particularly important to understand the ability of the individual, for example there are many forms of dwarfism that are very different and so we learn to adapt techniques to suit.

Jay and I originally got involved in the club as parents taking our son along, then we were asked to help a little—ha ha little did we know! Through our involvement in the club and DSA, we took on our coaching awards. We are now the secretary and treasurer of the club and of course the coaches.

Winter training will be starting in the next few months, this involves less throwing and a lot of circuit type training to help strengthen the core. We also focus on stretching exercises to help the group understand the importance of this for the future.

Before winter training starts we are planning to finish the year off with a parents versus athlete competition. Over the past few months quite a few of the parents have been having some cheeky throws coaching from Jay and have been getting quite competitive!

The club has a can do attitude, there is nothing our members can't do—they may just do it a little differently. If you aren't sure if this is us for you or your child then you would be very welcome to come along and have a look and chat.

Janie Clare, DSA Athletics Coach



DSA Health & Wellbeing

More with the Core Ball!



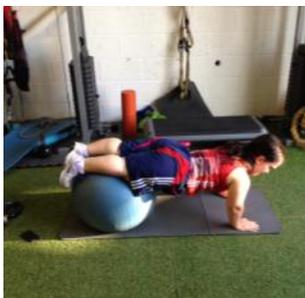
The Bridge - place your legs on the ball like this and then push through your heels to lift your bottom off the floor. Hold 10secs.



The Crawl - Start with your lower legs completely on the ball. Crawl forwards as far as you can. Then crawl back. Keep this exercise as slow as you can and try to not fall off!



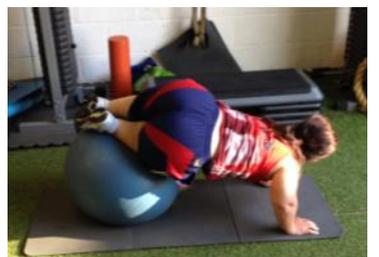
Press Ups - You can use the starting position for the crawl to do press ups. If you want to make this harder crawl out a bit further and then do a press up.



Jack-Knife - Again same starting position as for the crawl. This time tuck your knees up towards your hands and then push them away.



To make this harder as you tuck your knees bring them to your right and then to your left.



With all these exercises start with 3 sets of 10 with a 30 second break between each set. Once that is too easy do 3 sets of 20.

As with any exercise start with the easiest and work up. All these exercises should not cause pain. They will work your muscles and you may ache afterwards but they should not cause you any pain. If they do then stop immediately! If you have any questions about these exercises then contact Kim Dean - kimdeanphysio@hotmail.co.uk

Courtesy of DSA Physiotherapist Kim Dean

Jack Gambrill jumps out of a plane!

Our member, Jack Gambrill took part in a tandem free-fall skydive on 3rd September.

He completed his challenge and landed in one piece!

Well done Jack!



Daniel Allen wins a bronze medal!

On 30th and 31st August, our member Daniel Allen took part in the U15 ambulant and non-disability Championships at Bedford International Stadium.

He achieved a personal best and bronze medal in shot put by throwing 4.56m with 4kgs. He then went on to achieve a second personal in discus by throwing 13.40m with 1kg.



Well done Daniel!

Dan Shinnick rides 77 miles for DSAuk!

Dan Shinnick, father of Milly who has Achondroplasia, cycled a huge 77 miles from Birmingham to Oxford on 6th July.

Dan raised a huge £250 for DSAuk through his efforts.

Well done and thank you to Dan!





Steve Scott's Amazing cycle adventure across Europe

Day One

We've learnt minimalism and weight are key when touring, though comfort comes into play. The dwarf sport gear is great and light weight though not sure if wearing that much Lycra is legal. The range of substances used to prevent chaffing & enable comfort is enormous - no longer just Vaseline - no, for me I've '...the tingle sensation and comfort of menthol ...' to look forward to - should be Day one part two.

Landed at airport at 17:30 though took an hour to sort bikes and leave. The short 10 mile cycle turned out to be 25 miles in darkness. Serbia having limited street lighting made the last 10 miles interesting as did avoiding the intermittent potholes.

First day over we sat in hotel who opened the Restaurant at 10pm just for us.

Tomorrow is 85 miles ...gulp!! And so the adventure begins.

Day two

Three things happened today that came as a shock. Firstly we left before 8:15 am. Secondly we didn't get lost and stuck to the plan, which, if you're aware of my navigators skills, you'll know this is rare.

Thirdly we planned for 85 miles and achieved 84.5 miles.

Coming out of Belgrade you realise how poor the country is and lack of rejuvenation in the city. The countryside seems to have fared better with the smaller towns and villages having more life, though a far cry from Croatia.

What this part of Serbia has in abundance and I mean loads of, is hills - some big 'uns, some long 'uns and sadly a few big long 'uns! For the cyclists amongst you these were topping 11% in places and averaging 8% for 3-5 miles, for the non cyclist just think of steep and very steep.

Personal trainers tell you to focus on something when you're doing an endurance event and forget the pain. Oddly this worked when the rain came since I forgot the painful legs and back and thought about the rain and being wet and cold. When the rain left I decided to focus on legal ways to hurt personal trainers and see if they managed to refocus whilst I was doing it. We arrived at Jagodina and there was a wedding on, so they did something amazing and we had a potential party to sneak in to. I wonder if Lycra will be allowed? Tomorrow is about 65miles but more hills - what joy.

Ulica Kneginje Milice, Pomoravski, Serbia. NB As a dwarf when someone says the ford is only knee deep you should always ask whose knees? On the subject of dwarfism ...came through on the other side of the ford only to meet a fellow peer, dwarf and new friend Vladamil. 65 miles, less than yesterday but still a real slog. The road surfaces were awful at times and the hills kept coming, giving the realisation no matter what marketing managers say, the tingle sensation doesn't prevent chaffing. Dropped in at a great roadside coffee bar outside of Nis I heartily recommend it should you ever holiday in Serbia - though if you are holidaying in Serbia you should really change your travel agent.

Day Three

Two days in a row we stuck to plan and set off early to meet the hills, the ongoing, never ending, gruelling hills. They may only have been little 'uns at 4% though they kept coming and the roads began to replicate farm tracks with occasional bits of rockery or cement thrown in. Meeting Tarmac became a blessing, I might be using the best tingling sensation cream available but it doesn't prevent bruising. We came face to face with the floods, the road in front was completely flooded.



Day Four

Today started well, up at 6:30 with Breakfast early. These were the parts that went to plan - the remainder seem to fall away, including not falling off till 9am. By 10a.m we'd had 2 punctures and climbed a 3 mile hill only to be met by a third puncture at the top and a ripped tyre. It was beginning to feel like today would be a long day.

Lunch was in Grdelica, somewhere that's not seen many tourists, or for that matter many from outside Grdelica, though there was a man in a Wolverhampton Wanders shirt. So when five pannier laden cyclists turn up, one 6 footer, two bleach blondes and one 4 ft 6 Mohican dwarf we caused a stir.

The hills weren't as bad today though the whole day did seem to be a slow incline, progressing through the Leskovac valley following the Veternica river, which was flowing the other way - well flooding the other way really. So much so we had to come off the minor road and cycle 8-10 miles on an A road along with lorries and trucks that had the skills of the French and patience of Italians drivers with the same love for cyclists as London taxis. Added to this there are two 250m tunnels through the Hisar hill. The strange thing about Serbian tunnels is they don't have lights in or on - a tad scary I can tell you.

Day Five

The day started early at 6:30 and badly with more punctures, worse we'd run out of rubber solution glue. Try explaining that in Serbian and I can tell you, you'll get funny looks. Nowhere in the whole of Vladicin stocked glue, "with adversity comes creativity" and we found a workshop that repaired tractor tyres and they vulcanised my worn out inner tubes then made some new ones - all for less than £1. Next my rear wheel spokes tore through the rim tape and punctured the tyre. Having failed to explain rubber solution to the locals, there was no way I was going to try asking for rimming tape. Mike and Paul came up with gaffer tape and as necessity is the mother of invention, we spliced thin strips together and fixed the wheel. Phew. And all this before 9:15 and less than 5 miles cycled, only another 80+ to go. The cycling today was great- a long slog at 82 miles in 31 degrees though we finally (after 282 miles) cracked the uphill struggle and headed down towards the Mediterranean.

The last climb took us up 422 metres going up was a slog, going down would have been great, probably excellent, even memorable had there been any Tarmac. I mean you climb 502 metres going through each twist and turn so you expect the 3 mile up would be reciprocated with a 3 mile down - which it was, with even less Tarmac. I mean it's not difficult is it - road - Tarmac.

Day Six

As for the wardrobe, travelling light has its drawbacks though it reduces your carbon footprint and the need for mozzi spray, since even they avoid you. Had a great start today set off with not a puncture in sight. The road was good, recently refurbished - courtesy of the EU as the Greeks wanted a route through to Western Europe and it had proper Tarmac. The road was wide and plenty of room for both bikes and trucks. We managed 42 miles by 12 midday, we had a real peloton going and didn't even stop. We saw a police car parked up and was about to ask a for nearest cafe or shop when, with a bemused look he asked where we'd come from - given the last 40 miles was motorway. I only knew this since I recognised the phrase autobahn. Fortunately whilst his German was good his English was poor and he'd stopped a car for speeding so wanted to sort that. We asked what we should do - his reply translated to 'just go.' Anyway he caught us up soon after, not difficult I suppose, though he only wanted to guide us through a rather long tunnel up ahead. We left him happy as he'd pulled over a lorry for some reason. The heat hurt today as we found ourselves cycling 65 miles in 38c - mad dogs and English men springs to mind, since we didn't meet another cyclist today - though that could have been to do with it being on an abronat, which I learnt today is Macedonian for motorway.



Day Seven

A short ride compared to most days this week - a mere trifle of 50 miles, though the geography managed to put a few 10%'rs in. Hills that is. The ride felt like the last day of the Tour de France (yeah get real) it was leisurely, counting down the miles to Thessalonika we arrived at Hotel Capis with a celebration and photos to mark the end of our tour. This was slightly dampened when the hotel tried to charge us €4 for each bike, we argued against this and changed their minds, which became embarrassing when we realised we'd cancelled this hotel 3 months ago and we're in fact staying in the Hotel Zaliki 500m down the road. It's incredible how quickly you become humble when your bikes are locked in the garage below.



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You can help us reach out to more and more people.

Thank you for your help in spreading the word about DSAuk work!

**Do Something
Amazing and
help spread the
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LPA Convention & DAAA Games

The 2014 DAAA National Games took place this year at the beginning of July in the Californian sunshine, in San Diego, USA during the LPA convention. A number of DSAuk members made the journey over to the states including Tom Burton and Mike Pope. Mike takes up the story;

"On the 30th June at 11am me and Tom flew out from Heathrow, London to San Diego to attend the LPA Convention (Little People of America) and to compete in the DAAA National games (Dwarf Athletic Association of America). There were over 2000 people attending the convention and over 200 athletes competing in the games."

Tom continues; *"In the DAAA games, Mike and I competed in the discus and shot-put events and were welcomed onto one of the soccer teams - Team Revolution. Both of us flew the flag brilliantly for UK in the throws events with me winning the gold in discus and Mike winning silver. Our American friend, Tim Murray, won bronze. In shot put it was the three of us again but this time Mike won Gold, Tim won silver and I won bronze"*.

Mike said *"It was good to compete in the track and field alongside people who we have competed against previously at the World Dwarf Games as well as competing against new athletes. There was a great atmosphere among all of the competitors and it was good to compete in nice hot weather for a change"*.

On the last day of the DAAA games, Tom and Mike played in the soccer competition for Team Revolution. Tom picks up the story; *"The soccer was played as a 7-a-side event and there were about 9 teams in total, most of whom had squads numbering up to 12 players. Team Revo only had 9 players so the captain decided that Mike and I would play a major role in all of the games. The heat really took it out of us but we placed second in our group, beating 3 teams and losing to one, which led us to the medal play offs. We managed to get ourselves to the bronze medal playoff match where unfortunately we lost the game"*.

Mike added *"even before the bronze medal game had started we had nothing left in the tank as we'd already played 5 games almost back to back*

with each game lasting an hour and playing in 35 degree heat throughout the day".

Both Tom and Mike agreed that *"Being a part of team REVO was a great experience as we got to play with great athletes as well as playing alongside old friends and making new ones"*.



The LPA convention started on Independence Day, the 4th of July and continued until the 10th July. The venue for 2014 was the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel, located on the San Diego waterfront. The LPA convention attracted people from 8 different countries and offered a wide variety of events and activities including many health and educational workshops, trips to the beach, zoo and a baseball game, a surfing session, and nightly entertainment and dancing. Mike and Tom recall their experience;

"Everyone started arriving on the 4th July and all of a sudden you could feel a buzz and great atmosphere in the hotel. As it was Independence Day, there was a huge firework display in the evening which we watched from our hotel balcony".

Tom said; *"Although it wasn't organised by LPA, I had the chance to go Para-sailing with my girlfriend Jenica which was an amazing experience. Mike and I also visited Sea World and we all looked around San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter. Memories were created that will be with me forever"*

Mike adds; *"During the whole week we managed to meet so many people from around the world at the conference who we've become great friends with"*.

One thing both Tom and Mike agree on is *"We had an amazing time at the DAAA games and LPA convention. We would say to anyone who has thoughts about attending these events - Give it a go, it's definitely worth the journey and you will have a great time like we did. We hope to attend many more in the future. Bring on St Louis, Missouri in 2015"*.



Why do most kids give up sport?

Numerous kids participate in competitive sport each year but research suggests that most will stop by the age of 13—and never play them again. According to research, the number one reason kids stop competing, is that sport stopped being fun.

We all know that participating in sport leads to both physical and mental well-being.

It's worth bearing in mind a few key points about your child competing in sport.

Pre-School

Make it fun! Focus on the element of play and don't burden them with concerns about rules, competition and keeping score. Adapt games according to their abilities and use equipment that suits their coordination levels—for example, throwing a beanbag instead of a ball. Most of all get them running, kicking, throwing, catching...and laughing.



Primary School

Sports psychologists stress that parents of children aged 5-12 should not be concerned with excellence at refined sports skills such as corner kicks in Football. The key at this age is to focus on developing a sense of passion for the sport. Be aware of differing developmental levels—physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Don't make unrealistic expectations of your child. Many kids lose their passion for sport because they feel they can't live up to expectations.



Secondary School

For many kids, sport loses enjoyment and fun takes a back seat to winning. For those kids who don't want to compete at higher levels, "playing for fun" should be encouraged. Kids need to keep playing sports they enjoy, if not on school teams, then informally with friends. Not being part of a formal team does not mean failure as an athlete. It just means finding other ways to enjoy sport.

Adults

By this stage it's only usually successful athletes who take part in competitive league sports. There are so many people who love sport but can't play due to demanding academic, social and work lives. Parents need to remind kids of the fun they had with sport when they were younger and encourage participation with family and friends.



Helping your children stay connected to the sports they love will encourage them to remain physically active throughout their lives.

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£12

National Event Dates



11th/12th October 2014

DSAuk National Boccia and Badminton Tournament

This incredible weekend offers fabulous competition and great fun at Aldersley Leisure Village, Wolverhampton.

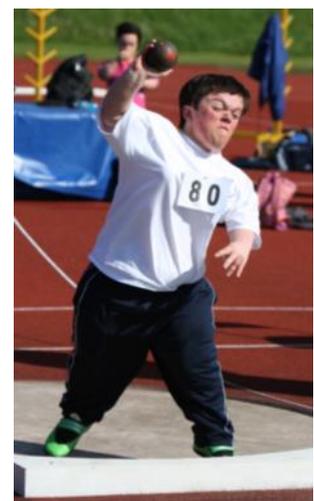
Log on to the members area of www.dsauk.org to book your place. The closing date for booking is Friday 26th September 2014.

Save The Date!

1st to 4th May 2015

The 22nd National Games

To be held in the Birmingham/Walsall/Wolverhampton area



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North West:

Penny Dean 07976 706868

North East:

Annie Morris 07595 027774

Midlands:

April Barrett 0121 454 5582

Keep up to date with what's happening at DSAuk!

Find out about loads of great regional activities and events.

Learn more about the amazing people who fundraise to support DSAuk.

Get reminders about competitions, both within DSA and Nationally.

Read interesting news stories.

Follow the 'Do Something Amazing' campaign.

Find out where you can try new sports.

And loads more!!!



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