



Dwarf Sports Association UK
Official Journal



ReachOut

Issue 61
Winter 2013

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

**DSAuk would like to wish all
our members and supporters
A Very Merry Christmas**



Boccia and Badminton 2013



Wow well what a weekend the DSA's annual Boccia and Badminton Tournament was. There was a huge entry the best that we've seen for quite a few years and we saw some amazing games in all the age groups and in both sports.

The weekend took place later in the year than usual because of the World Dwarf Games in August but this did not dampen the spirits of any of the athletes and 56 people entered the event.

The group matches for both sports were played on Saturday and there were some amazing performances. In the Boccia the open class was dominated by James Coyle-King who proved hard to beat all weekend

and the masters class was as competitive as always with Liz Holland, Arthur Dean and Ange DenUil all putting in some amazing performances. The strategies being used varied greatly from player to player making it hard to see who would come out on top but all of these experienced players showed a mastery of the game that had to be admired.

Through some clever scheduling we managed to include a pairs competition and just like the Badminton doubles event the pairs were selected by the organisers to give developing players a fair game. The afternoon was rounded off with the team groups being played leaving a few group games and finals for Sunday.

The entry for the Badminton had a healthy junior section in 2013 and the level of play was noticeably improved since 2012. It was clear that the practice that a lot of younger players put in was paying off. Daniel Allen and Matt Topping being two of the most improved players with Thomas Vogt also showing a great affinity with the game. There were some very close match's and the doubles event delivered some edge of the seat three set finals which were very exciting to watch. Many



of these young players are ready to make a step into the junior league of the four nations and the entry for the Scottish leg in February looks like being very healthy, so we'll be looking forward to more amazing games in the junior groups in Glasgow in the new year.

The ladies doubles in the open class was particularly exciting with every match going to three sets there were some amazing racket skills on show and the medal positions went right down to the last match to decide who would win the gold medal which was finally secured by Kim Dean and Lucy Wilkinson.

To follow the ladies doubles was an amazing ladies singles final that had the whole of the sports hall mesmerised as Kim Dean and Lucy Wilkinson played one of the best games of the weekend it was so close that nobody could predict what the outcome would be after an amazing display of the fastest racket sport on the planet Kim did defeat Lucy to win the ladies singles event.

For the first time at a DSA badminton tournament we were able to run an under 10's competition and all the young players that entered had a really good time playing each other and learning about the game. First time player and a talent to watch out for Amy Rose Thompson was the overall winner but she was closely followed by Savannah Troughton-Webb and Amelia Hall. We would hope to make the under 10's group a permanent part of the tournament and we look forward to welcoming more young players in 2014.



In the open men's event it was great to see the welcome return of Lee Hill after his break from sport while he had an operation. Lee made a real splash as he proved that he had lost none of his skills and made his way through the group stages and all the way to the final where he met up with experienced player Paul Doling. Paul being one of the most improved players during 2013 this was to be a real challenge to both players, and in an amazing comeback to form Lee won to pick up the gold medal, welcome back Lee and we look forward to seeing you at more DSA events during the next year.

The Boccia finals drew the weekend to an end with many of the final places coming down to just the last couple of points. The open teams competition came down to one point for the bronze medal decider. The masters team of Liz Holland, Pete Bonner and Donna Bonner proved to feature in many of the medal games as they all won medals in the singles event then all went on to medal in the pairs and only Pete didn't medal in the team event. Making Donna and Liz the masters players to beat in 2013.



In the masters pairs it was married couples winning gold and silver with Penny and Arthur Dean winning the gold medal closely followed by Pete and Donna Bonner, with April Barrett and Liz Holland receiving the bronze medal only a few points separated all three pairs. In the open pairs James Coyle -king partnered with Karl Sadil were invincible in 2013 proving to be very hard to beat, followed by another husband and wife team of Paul and

Randika Doling and in a very close play off for the bronze medal Jack Shephard and Lucy Wilkinson picked up the third place in Lucy's first boccia pairs competition. Another notable medal win was that of Carys Coppen and Charlie Wauthier who won the gold medal in the junior pairs Charlie at the ripe old age of 3 and also having a great weekend in Boccia as well as Badminton was Amy Rose Thompson who won a bronze in the junior pairs division.



Leaving the final event of the weekend which is always the Peter Sugden Trophy. This is played between the three winners of the three age groups

in the Boccia singles tournament. This is played in a round robin group and this year was contested by Thomas Vogt, Liz Holland and James Coyle-king. Three extremely close games were played and watched by all the spectators and players James Coyle-king played a clean sweep over the three games to win the trophy for the second year running which closed out a very successful weekend for James who featured in the medals in all the boccia events and in the badminton singles and doubles too.

The only thing left to report on was the fun we had on Saturday night supplied by Sally Smith who organised a marvellous fun evening of entertainment featuring Bingo in the bar area which raised money for the DSA and made for a very enjoyable evening. The Boccia and Badminton weekend is great fun and is a good introduction to either or both of these popular sports, if you've never been before put it on your diary for 2014 you'll enjoy it!



Tribute in memory of Ruth Smith



It is with great fondness that we remember Ruth Smith. Sadly and unexpectedly Ruth passed away at the end of November Aged 22.

Ruth and her family were part of the DAA from its formation back in 1994. She loved coming and taking part in all the events. At a very young age she loved winning medals and taking them into school. She was very proud to be a member of DSA and encouraged other families to join too.

Ruth was a great skier in the North West Region and was thrilled to go away with the region to Austria and then Italy. She was part of close group of friends within the North West Region that would go on and achieve many things.

Ruth overcame illness to finally follow her dream, which was to go to University and last September, that dream then became a reality and she enrolled into Falmouth University on a Media Studies and performing arts course. She loved taking days out to visit her beloved St Ives where she had many holidays with family and friends in previous years. Ruth believed in herself and who she was, she would have no hesitation in standing up for her rights. She had a great future ahead of her, but unfortunately that was brought to a sudden end. Ruth's memory will live on within the DSAuk. She is now with all our other lovely DSAuk friends in heaven no doubt forming an association up there!

Our thoughts and prayers are with Lyn, Dave and Phil at this very sad time.



DSA Athlete Profile

1. **What is your classification?**
Short Stature 6 (SS6)
2. **What is your job or profession?**
At the moment I am in full time badminton training
3. **What is your sporting background?**
I have always played Badminton
4. **How old are you?**
23 years old
5. **What are your favourite sports?**
Badminton and Rugby
6. **What are your personal bests or greatest achievements?**
Twice World BWF Champion and twice European Champion in men's singles
7. **What is your favourite TV programme?**
Love/Hate (Irish Crime Drama)
8. **What's your favourite food?**
Spaghetti Bolognese
9. **What are your sporting ambitions?**
To have badminton accepted into the Paralympics and to qualify to compete
10. **What are your hobbies?**
I like to go fishing, Hanging out with friends and family, also being in good company.

Niall McVeigh



DSE Short Course Swimming Gala

On the weekend of the 24th and 25th November 2013, 7 members of the DSA competed in the National Short Course Swimming Championships at Ponds Forge International Sports Centre in Sheffield. All the DSA's swimmers had obtained qualifying times in previous swimming competitions and had travelled to Sheffield to compete against the country's best swimmers in this multi classification event.

The youngest DSA swimmer was Leo McCrae, who was competing in this senior event for his very first time at 10 years of age. Leo came home with 2 bronze medals and 2 excellent PB's from the weekend's events, quite an achievement for his first ever national gala. It was also the first national senior event for 12 year old Charlotte McGuinness who obtained personal bests in 3 events over the weekend, a fantastic performance and a good foundation to move in to her next national gala.

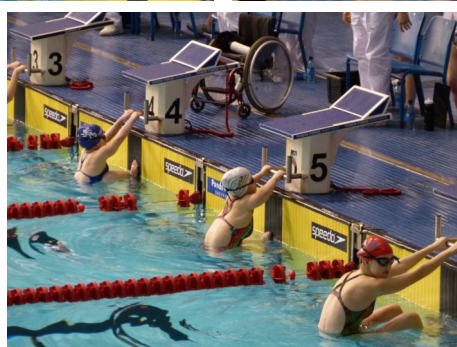
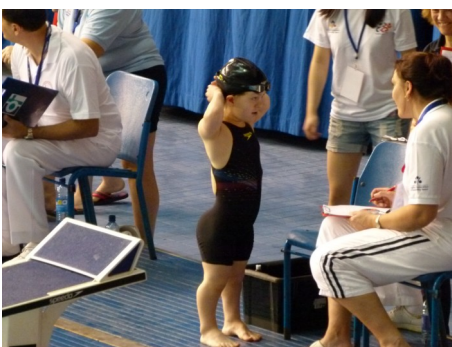
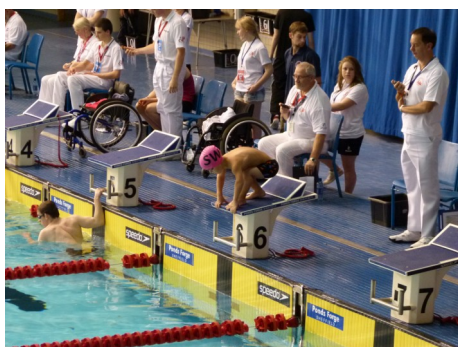
Megan Atkinson's hard work and training really paid off for her, swimming in 2 team events and 7 individual events, obtaining PB's in all her races, plus 3 silver and 2 bronze medals from her weekend's work.

Carys Coppen swam well over the weekend, knocking an amazing 3 seconds off her previous 50m butterfly time and Katie Rilett-Young impressed in all her events over the weekend, especially in the 100m freestyle where she beat paralympian Liz Johnson to take the gold medal. This one added to her others made an impressive final total of 4 gold's and 1 silver medal.

Lauren Sullivan's hard work paid off with a bronze medal in the 100m backstroke and a well deserved 9 second personal best in the 400m freestyle event.

Ellie Simmonds was competing in her first major competition since moving from Swansea to Loughborough University, breaking her own world record in the 400m freestyle event, taking the gold medal with Katie Rilett-Young second and Megan Atkinson in third place for a DSA 1-2-3. Ellie also won the gold in the 100 individual medley and a silver in the 100m breaststroke event. East Midlands team manager Mary Butler commented that her new East Midlands team member "was quite a good swimmer".

Well done to all the DSA's swimmers. If you are a keen swimmer and would like more information about getting involved in competitive swimming give the DSA office a ring for more information.



BWF Para-badminton World Championships



The week of the 5th to the 10th of November saw the Badminton World Federation (BWF) hosting the Para-badminton World Championships in Dortmund Germany. There were nearly 250 players from 38 countries competing. This was the seventh world championships and had twice the number of entries of the next biggest event ever held.

The world championships recognises each home country of the UK. So we had DSA members from three countries entered, seven from England, one from Scotland and four from Ireland. There were also dwarf players entered from Germany, India, Russia and Columbia.

The first two days were taken up with classification, team manager meetings and player warm ups. Play actually started in earnest on the Wednesday. Straight away DSA members were involved in the action and it was clear that the standard of play would be high. It was great to see Columbia competing for the first time, they had three dwarf players entered and they immediately made friends with all the other dwarf players that were entered. Just as any event involving dwarf athletes there was a high level of camaraderie and sportsmanship in all the games played even though it was at a World Championships, at the end of every match all the players from every country embraced and shook hands.

As with any sports governing body sanctioned World Championships every player is entered by the governing body for Badminton from that country. So as you would imagine just getting through the group stages is a very tough task. There were some very close match's through these initial stages and a couple of upsets one being Ollie Clarke beating Niall McVeigh in their group in a match that was so close it would have made an amazing final and at this point they were still playing just to get out of the group stages. The



ladies games were all very close with the German girls showing a great deal of improvement since the European event two years ago and Emma Farnham playing at the top of her games for Ireland. As in the singles the doubles competition was riveting during the group stages, there were so many good pairings some of who were working together as doubles pair for the first time, some who were established pairs and some who had been training together for a little while but were competing at their first major championship. In the men's doubles group stages a new pairing of Indian player Mark Dharmai and the Russian Alexandr Mekhdiev turned out to be a surprise partnership and proved very hard to beat. In the final game of the group stages they played against Jack Shephard and Krysten Coombs for a place in the semi finals with both pairings wanting that place. The first game going to Jack and Krysten 21-12, Mark and Alexandr clearly decided not to give in without a fight and the second game turned into a mammoth battle which went from point to point and into extended play ending in a 25-23 victory to Jack and Krysten with nearly every spectator in the arena glued to the action and both players emotional after such a tough match. It was clear that none of the match's would be easy for any of the doubles pairings.

The ladies doubles pair of Rachel Choong and Rebecca Bedford played very well together. They had to play in the men's doubles competition as did the German ladies because there were not enough ladies doubles pairs to make a sanctioned world championships. That didn't stop Rachel and Rebecca who got themselves to the semi finals in style winning all their group matches in two games and only getting knocked out by the eventual silver medal winners. There were 5 ladies entered in total from three countries it would be very nice to see more ladies playing at the four nations and international events. If you enjoy badminton then you would be very welcome to come and play in the para-badminton circuit. There are around seven ladies who regularly enter and

enjoy the four nations events, why not give it a go?

The doubles final took place on the last day of the tournament between Andrew Martin partnered with Ollie Clarke and Jack Shephard who's partner was Krysten Coombs. The relatively new partnership of Jack and Krysten had a tough group in the group stages and were very pleased to make the final. Their nerves were obvious in the first game losing 21-12 to Andrew and Ollie who's experience playing at this level was evident. The match started to level out in the second game and as both pairs became more settled the second game became very exciting with neither pair being able to dominate play eventually the game ended with a victory to Andrew and Ollie 21-18 making them the World Doubles Champions 2013.

The mixed doubles was played as a round robin group and so didn't have a final on the Sunday but had been a very good competition. Irish pair Emma Farnham and Luke Irvine resplendent in their green Irish kit had a great tournament rising to a very respectable third place and giving the silver medal pair of Shephard and Bedford a real run for their money. The established England number one seed of Andrew Martin and Rachel Choong won every one of their games to win the gold medal and Andrew's second world championship win of the week.



The men's singles finals went on the featured finals court just after lunch on the Sunday afternoon, the road to the final had been a tough one as the Russian player Alexandr Mekhdiev, Ollie Clarke and Krysten Coombs from England had given both the finalists tough games that could have gone either way. This gave the final game in the men's singles event an



expectation of being a major event, and even before a shuttle had been struck there was a large crowd in the bleachers and around the court. Both players had their game plan and right from the start it was a tense and exciting encounter. Niall was athletic as ever and made a few mistakes in the early stages of the first game giving Andrew a few points lead but he can never be ruled out of any game and he put two runs of points together which gave him the first game. After a short break play resumed with another exciting and fast paced game this time Niall lead from the first few points and when he had two

runs of a few points it became very much harder for Andrew to keep up, however Andrew dug deep and fought back to close the gap but it was too much to bridge and Niall won the second game 21-18 to win the World Para-badminton men's singles title for 2013.

This just left the ladies singles event to close out the dwarf class for 2014. This final was contested between Rachel Choong and Rebecca Bedford, Emma Farnham having already won a bronze medal. Rebecca has been improving over the last year and on the weeks prior to the BWF world championships she had been working particularly hard, and as such was probably the most improved player on the England team. This is not to underestimate the skill of Rachel Choong who has been a dominant force in ladies badminton at both national and international events for the last five years. Rebecca had her work cut out and approached the match making a positive start with a plan to get a personal best performance against Rachel and she did really well losing in two games but attaining her goal of scoring the most points she ever had when playing Rachel. Rachel won her second world championship gold medal of the week and Rebecca collected her new world ranked position of number two in the world. Not a bad weeks work for both girls.

Over all the England team dwarf players won 9 of the 11 medals won by Team England, and DSA players won three medals for team Ireland.

The BWF and the para-badminton commission continue to work towards Para-badminton becoming a paralympic sport and we hope that with such amazing performances that the IPC will allow it to be part of the Paralympics for 2020. Watch this space!



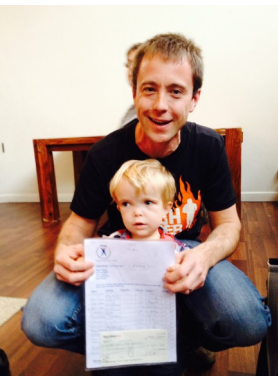
North West Region Update



As we come to the end of our years calendar we look back and remember we have had a fantastic time in the North West Region. We have done all the usual activities such as, Soft Play, Swimming, Athletics Training, Five-a-side Football, Badminton and Skiing. The North West families continue to come along and support of which we are very grateful.



We hope to fit more in next year, we have plans to try Archery, Target Shooting and Horse Riding. But our problem is time. At the moment we are organising things to do on three Sundays out of every four. I think we need to live in a north west commune!! Joking aside, we have been lucky enough to receive a substantial funding grant from Comic & Sport Relief through our local Community Fund (which I would urge the other Regions to look at).



This Fund will be put towards helping our North West families with the cost of attending our National Games in May and we will be organising to spend a weekend at the amazing Calvert Trust in September 2014.

Nigel and myself also attended two schools in the North West to help them understand about Dwarfism and Sport, this proved to be very successful and popular with the children and we hope to do some more of these education days during 2014.

Our Athletics Training run by Janie and Jay on a Friday evening had a visit from CBBC presenters Sam and Mark who were filming DSA activities ready for the Sport Relief Programme which will go out next spring. Again helping to bring awareness about the DSA to the general public.

I could not run the North West Region without the continued support of all the volunteers that help me, thank you so much. Here's to 2014 Happy New Year Everyone!!! Penny



DSA Facebook and Twitter pages



Don't forget to like the DSA's Facebook page and follow us on twitter. These internet media news feeds are one of the best ways of keeping up with what's happening within the DSA.

There is so much going on and there is something new nearly everyday, there is information on regional events, campaigns for fundraising, opportunities to try out new sports, reminders about competitions both within the DSA itself and the ones provided by governing bodies of sport, other national disability sports organisations or the EFDS. We post snippets about what's been happening around the country and there are links to interesting news stories about our members or subjects of interest.

If you've got a Facebook page or a twitter feed get along to the DSA pages and "like" us for Facebook or "follow" us for twitter.

Facebook:- <https://www.facebook.com/DSAUK> Twitter:- @dwarfsportDSAuk



2014 dates for your diary

DSAuk Dwarf Open National Games - Friday May 2nd to Monday May 5th.

DSAuk Canoeing and Sailing day - Saturday July 26th

DSAuk National Boccia and Badminton Tournament - Saturday 11th and 12th October.

Don't miss these amazing events, get them in your diary now, enter and join in the fun.

North East Region Update

The North East region held their first swimming, boccia and badminton day in Featherstone West Yorkshire on 23rd November. We had an amazing turn out with lots of families and full members in attendance. A great day was had by all. We spent an hour with a swim teacher in the pool followed by badminton coaching for all ages, some new age kurling and boccia practice. A special thanks goes to Rebecca Nuttall for finding a great venue, Tim and Jack Shephard for their help with boccia and badminton and last but not least Joanne Walker for bringing a kettle, tea bags and biscuits, very much appreciated refreshments!



We are still holding monthly soft play sessions organised by Anna Knowles, which as of next month will be held at Xscape! Please all come along and support this event, there are plenty of other activities also on offer for the older members at Xscape and it's easy to make a day of it if you wish.



We will be soon rounding off the year with a Christmas trip to Xscape, for sledging, bowling and our Christmas meal on the 21st December.

I hope to see you all next year for many more activities, if you have any feedback on events we have organised or have ideas for future events please feel free to contact me.

Best wishes,
Annie Morris.

Northern Ireland Regional Update

Congratulations to our members who competed in the 2013 World Dwarf Games in Michigan this summer. Our athletes made us proud by winning eight medals over this amazing week of sport.

Emma Fitzsimons medalled in swimming with Silver in 25M breaststroke and Bronze in 25M backstroke. Emma Farnham won Silver in the class 2 ladies open singles badminton and Bronze in ladies football. Andrew Moorcroft won Bronze in the class 2 junior badminton singles. Niall McVeigh won Gold in the class 2 men's open singles badminton and Bronze in the men's open doubles. Luke Irvine won Bronze in the men's open doubles.



Well done to Emma Fitzsimons and Thea Langton on their success at the DSNI Open Swimming Championships 2013 held at the Lagan Valley Leisureplex, Lisburn. Emma won Gold in the 25M freestyle event and Thea won Gold in the 25M backstroke and Bronze in the 25M freestyle. Our swimming sessions at the Olympia Leisure Complex have been progressing well. The sessions have been divided into two; a half hour session for the younger ones to enjoy splashing around and learn to swim with the final half hour session for the older ones to perfect their stroke.

We continue with our Sports Days on a monthly basis at the Lisburn Racquets Club. Mal Donaghy takes football for the first hour, then members can try out other sports such as New Age Curling, Boccia, Badminton and Unihoc in the second hour. These sessions have been very popular with our younger members who show a growing interest in sport. There will be three more sports days coming up in the New Year during which we hope to build on the success of this year.

Four of our members travelled to Dortmund, Germany last month to compete in the BWF Para-Badminton World Championships. They did extremely well on the world stage taking home four medals. Niall McVeigh retained his World Champion title winning Gold in the SS6 men's singles.



Emma Farnham lifted two bronze medals in the SS6 women's singles and SS6 mixed doubles partnered with Luke Irvine. Luke narrowly missed out on a second medal partnering Andrew Moorcroft when they just missed out on a semi-final place in a three set match.



Andy Duff runs London Marathon for DSAuk

Josh Duff's dad Andy has been lucky enough to get a place in the London Marathon for April 2014. He is hard in training at the moment preparing for this mammoth undertaking. Andy is raising money for DSAuk and the Down's Syndrome Association, two charities close to the families heart. We wish him all the best in his endeavour and encourage you to donate to Andy's virgin giving page which can be found here:

www.virginmoneygiving.com/AndyDuff

Here is a recent photo of Josh sporting his DSAuk medals from this years national games with his sporting hero Usain Bolt.



South East Region Update

Cambridge soft play and swim continue to meet once a month and since the summer we have met 5 new families! We also continue to have a core group of regulars so our numbers are growing which is wonderful.

We are pleased to welcome the Grundy family with Samuel (achon) 8mths, Emma Beer and family with Eden (achon) aged 18mths, Precious family with Taylor aged 18mths, Kennedy family with Toby (achon) aged 18mths, Zoe, Barry with Tommy (aged 18mths) all with dwarfism. We use Whale of a Time in Bar Hill for soft play as it has a big area to socialise as well as the soft play area and in the summer we can go outside where there are swings and some ride-on toys then from 4-5pm we use Kings Hedges Learner Pool which is warm and shallow.

Sarah Brinkley has been teaching with us since the start and particularly enjoys working with the younger children. Our older children have had a mixture of instructors, we had some great teaching from Paval for a while, but sadly he is no longer available. At our last session a new instructor Helen taught the older group and did some great work on swim skills and technique improvement.

Tom Smith has learnt to swim through these sessions and is now an increasingly confident swimmer which is a real success story! Well done Tom. Our younger swimmers too are increasingly confident and with Alex Tampkins and Wilf O'Donoghue both winning gold medals in their races back in May at the National Games thanks to Sarah's encouragement and guidance. Lucy Heath's swimming has also improved with each gathering and she is looking forward to coming to her first National Games in May 2014 which is very exciting!

We have more monthly soft play and swim sessions in the pipeline for 2014 and we welcome all families to come along and join us. We enjoy all elements of getting together each month. It's lovely to meet new families with their babies, and toddlers and the soft play gives parents a chance to chat, share stories and talk about common experiences and information. The swimming goes from strength to strength, our children are becoming much more confident and go back to their local pools and clubs with new skills and abilities.

Our Stevenage football training sessions are still as popular as ever and attract regular participants as well as some new faces. Stevenage Football Club are keen to help the region and to be more involved with dwarf football and the DSA itself. In the new year we'll be publishing the dates for 2014's training calendar.



We hope to be starting coached badminton sessions very soon with a mind to developing and encouraging our young players to improve and learn the game, many of the regions under thirteen's are keen to attend some of four nations para-badminton events next year and we are keen to help them prepare for this series of national events starting in February 2014.

We hope to see lots of you at our events in the new year, have a great Christmas.



A word from the Chair of the DSAuk board

You could not have written how this year would have gone! Great excitement in Celebrating our 20th Year of the Association of which everyone I am sure enjoyed some of those Celebrations. Tears of Happiness in all the achievements of the team in the 6th World Dwarf Games. Tears of joy for the DSA's Swimmers and at the Four Nations. Tears of achievement with all the sponsored events and tears of sadness in losing one of our young members. But what we do know is that we will continue on in the work of bringing the Dwarf Sports Association to the forefront of Disability Sport.

We will continue on in finding the funding to keep the association going for our next generation of people with dwarfism. So that there is a future in Sport for them. Thank you to everyone that has played some part in securing the vision of the DSAuk.

CAN YOU HELP IN THE WEST MINDLANDS REGION?

April Barrett is our West Midlands Region Co-Ordinator and she needs help to revive this region. We have over 30 families in this area and April needs to hear from you. She is eager to start Soft Play for the little ones, football, basketball, skiing and swimming, all the activities other regions have enjoyed. There are the resources to do this, but she cannot do it on her own. So please help us to help you. Can you spare a couple of hours a month? Do you want these activities for your region? If so please contact April (below) or the DSA office.

DSA Merchandise

DSAuk Hoodies - £25.00 each

DSAuk Polo Shirts - £15.00 each

DSAuk T Shirts - £12.00 each

Childs sizes

3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 14,

Adult sizes

S small, M medium, L large, XL and XXL .

Post & Package £7 or can be delivered to you at any DSA event.

All clothing has the DSAuk logo on the left breast of the garment, and can also have your name embroidered underneath the logo.

Contact the office to order your DSA clothing order form on
tim.shephard@dsauk.org

Regional Contacts

Northern Ireland:

Eugene McVeigh on 02838318512

North West:

Penny Dean on 0161 355 5399

North East:

Annie Morris on 07595 027774

Midlands:

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East Midlands:

Willie Coppen on 01332 514813

South West:

Carole North on 01963 250175

South Central:

Karen Lee on 02392822045

South East:

Paul Doling on 07789 557143