



# UK SPORTS ASSOCIATION For People with Learning Disability

## NEWS RELEASE

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### British Swimming Team to 2009 Global Games Announced



2008 European Swimming Champion Team

The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability has announced the talented team of 8 elite swimmers representing Great Britain at the 2009 INAS-FID Global Games in the Czech Republic in July.

The 2009 Team has been named as Ben Procter (Oldham), Dan Pepper (Poynton), Craig Rodgie (Dalgety Bay), Craig Moate (Barking), Nicholas Boylan (Ashford), Matthew Bell (Newtownards), Jack Thomas (Swansea) and Stephanie Bird (Lowestoft).

Supported by GB Team Manager, Wendy Thomas (Swansea), Head Coach, Mark Thomas (Swansea) and Coach, Mark Watson (Pembrokeshire), the Team is keen to retain its impressive medal tally and Champion status from the 2008 INAS-FID European Swimming Championships in Poland .

*"I am looking forward to working with this exciting GB Team at the 2nd Global Games", says Mark Thomas, Head Coach. "They are a great group of elite athletes who are highly committed and motivated to be the best in the world. It'll be a tough challenge to become the Swimming World Champions; there are some very impressive teams from other countries, but we will be aiming for the top!"*

*"We've got high expectations for our swimmers, comments Tracey McCillen, National Director, UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability, "It's a strong team and I am confident they will do their job as athletes well". I am also delighted to welcome our Chef de Mission, Verona Elder MBE who is an experienced athlete and Commonwealth Games Gold medallist. This is a critical event for our athletes as the eyes of the sports world will be on the Global Games for a number of reasons, not least of which is it will be*

*the first time the outcomes from the work of the joint INAS-FID/IPC Working Group will be tested in anticipation of inclusion in the London 2012 Paralympic Games”.*

Swimming events at the INAS-FID Global Games are run under INAS-FID and FINA regulations. The Games is a multi sport event at which over 2000 athletes with intellectual disability from across the world are expected to compete between 5<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

The ban on athletes with intellectual disability competing in the Paralympic Games, imposed after the Sydney 2000 Games continues. The joint Working Party of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Sports Federation (INAS-FID) continues to look at how athletes with intellectual disability will be re-admitted. The IPC decision on inclusion in London 2012 is expected in November 2009.

UKSA working with its members and organisations across the UK, has led a campaign since 2001 for the ban to be lifted. UKSA urges Government to address the lack of funding for athletes across the UK as a result of the IPC ban and LOCOG, the Mayor of London and MP's to ensure that athletes are re-admitted in time for London 2012.

#### **ENDS**

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#### **NOTES TO EDITOR**

1. The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) is the disability specific Governing Body in the UK for sport and people with learning disability. UKSA facilitates and supports talented sports people with learning disability in the UK to train, compete and excel in national and international sport and is the body responsible for classification of athletes from the UK. UKSA is recognised by UK Sport and is the official Great Britain member of the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability (INAS-FID), a member of IPC. See [www.uksportsassociation.org](http://www.uksportsassociation.org)
2. INAS-FID, the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability. Founded in 1986, is a member of the International Paralympic Committee and is the body responsible for the international competition for athletes with intellectual disability. See [www.inas-fid.org](http://www.inas-fid.org)
3. Official 2009 INAS-FID Global Games website [www.globalgames09.com](http://www.globalgames09.com)
4. UKSA expect a British Team comprising swimming, athletics, table tennis and cycling.
5. The ban on athletes with learning disability was imposed by the IPC following an incident at the Sydney Paralympic Games in 2000 when a group of adult non-disabled athletes infiltrated the Spanish learning disability basketball team. The IPC banned every athlete with learning disability across the world from competing at future Paralympics and IPC sanctioned competitions. This has had the additional impact of funding being stopped across the UK and some athletes not having the financial means to continue in their sport. UKSA has since Sydney 2000 been working with its Members, the British Paralympic Association, INAS-FID and other organisations across the UK, including RADRA and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to have the IPC ban removed.
6. LOCOG is the 2012 London Organising Committee of the Olympic & Paralympic Games.
7. Learning Disability is a term used in the UK, with intellectual disability being used internationally. Both refer to the same group of athletes.