



UK SPORTS ASSOCIATION For People with Learning Disability

NEWS RELEASE

- For Immediate Release -

Team Great Britain Top Medal Table at the 2008 European Athletics Championships



World record holder Allan Stuart in action

Team Great Britain showcased British athletic talent as they emerged victorious at the recent 2008 INAS-FID European Athletics Championships.

8 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 bronze medals saw Great Britain top the medal table over 3 days of fierce competition at Sports City, Manchester during 27th –

29th June 2008. On points, the British ladies earned 3rd place, with Portugal taking 1st place on points in both the mens and ladies competition.

Led by Olympic medallist and GB Team Manager Verona Elder, 15 athletes with learning disability from around the UK joined teams from the Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Finland, France, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands, Ukraine, South Africa, Australia at this important event attended by the Minister for Sport and supported by Manchester City Council.

Sensational performances from Monique Davis (Croydon), in the 100m, 200m and 400m and Claire Ryan (Bradford) in the Pentathlon and Long Jump saw both ladies putting Great Britain firmly on the medal table with gold in all events. World record holder, Allan Stuart (Glasgow) added to the tally by taking prime position and the gold medal in the 200m and 400m.

Adding to their personal tallys, both Davis and Ryan joined Abigail Greetham (Halifax), Laura Kinder (Paisley) and Annette Cornwall (London) in relay combinations that earned them Gold in the 4 x 100m and silver in the 4 x 400m relays.

Andrew Kaar (Solihull) romped home in the 800m earning a well deserved bronze, with 16 year old, first time internationals Jamie Graham (Stafford) and Jonathan Kay

(Birmingham) achieving bronze for their contribution to the mens 4 x 100m relay with Allan Stuart and Thomas Poulton-White (Bradford).

Contributions from experienced athletes Neill and Tony Collins (Essex), saw both reaching the finals in their events with John Jones (Neath), Rizwan Khan (Bradford) and Richard Robb (Lancashire) demonstrating their abilities in the track and field events.

Speaking at the event, Team Manager Verona Elder said « *this was a brilliant performance from the whole Team. They have worked well together – Im very proud to have been Team Manager* »



2007 Team GB - World Athletics, Brazil

Tracey McCillen, National Director, UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability said « *It was a privelege to watch our athletes compete at this INAS-FID event and a particularly proud moment for me to present some of our own talented competitors with their well deserved medals on home soil. This was a great showcase for learning disability sport and my thanks go to the staff and athletes in Team GB, the Local Organising Committee who did such a great job in welcoming so many competitors to Manchester and all the Sponsors for their support* »

The ban on athletes with intellectual disability competing in the Paralympic Games continues. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Sports Federation (INAS-FID) continue to discuss how and when athletes with intellectual disability will be re-admitted. There will be no programme for athletes with intellectual disability in 2008 Paralympics in Beijing. The situation for London 2012 remains undecided.

The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA), working with its members and other organisations across the UK, has been leading a campaign since 2001 for the ban to be lifted. UKSA continues to urge Government to address the lack of funding for athletes across the UK as a result of the continued IPC ban and to ensure that this group of athletes are re-admitted in time for London 2012.

ENDS

8th July 2008

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability (UKSA) is the disability specific National Governing Body in the UK for sport and people with learning disability. UKSA is a national umbrella charity that co-ordinates and promotes sport and recreation for all people with learning disability across 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.

Its members are Scottish Disability Sport, Welsh Sports Association for People with Learning Disability, Disability Sport Northern Ireland and Mencap Sport in England. All are working together through UKSA to ensure that this group of athletes compete in the Paralympic Games.

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
3. The 2008 European Athletics Championships was sanctioned by INAS-FID Europe (www.inas-fid-europe.org) and endorsed by the UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability. The event was run under IAAF and INAS-FID rules and was hosted by Mencap Sport. Over 130 competitors took part in the event over 3 days in Sports City Manchester.
4. Team GB was led by Olympic Medallist, Verona Elder MBE, supported by Head Coach John Wootton (Wakefield), coaches John Kinder (Paisley), Christine Galloway (Halifax), John Matthews (Wakefield), Ian Eaton (Keighley) and Jane Coia (Monmouthshire), plus support officers Kathy Collins (Essex), Vic Collins (Essex) and Di Freeman (Hull).
5. Team GB Results - For a full set of results log onto www.inas-fid.org

Gold

200m	21.89	Allan Stuart
400m	47.07	Allan Stuart
100m	12.93	Monique Davis
200m		Monique Davis
400m	59.03	Monique Davis
4 x 100m ladies relay		Monique Davis, Laura Kinder, Annette Cornwall, Claire Ryan
Pentathlon		Claire Ryan
Long Jump		Claire Ryan

Silver

4 x 400m ladies relay		Monique Davis, Claire Ryan, Laura Kinder, Abigail Greetham
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Bronze

800m	2.03.18	Andrew Kaar
4 x 100m mens relay		Jonathan Kay, Allan Stuart, Thomas Poulton-White, Jamie Graham

6. 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 as a result. 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 the British Paralympic Association, INAS-FID and other agencies, plus throughout 2007 with the former Disability Rights Commission to have the IPC ban removed.
7. Learning Disability is a term used in the UK, with intellectual disability being used internationally. Both refer to the same group of athletes.