

A male athlete with a prosthetic left leg is shown in a starting crouch on a green athletic track. He is wearing a black sleeveless top and shorts, with a black eye patch on his right eye. The background is a cloudy sky.

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Welcome

From LimbPower Ambassador

Jody Cundy, MBE

► **Welcome to the LimbPower Sports Mag Book. Sport and exercise have been a part of my life since I was three years old. I have always engaged with sport and pushed myself to be the best that I can be, which sometimes meant being better than able-bodied competitors. Sport is a good leveller and I felt I was no different to anyone else. Sport enabled me to feel normal and accepted.**



Taking part in sport has opened many doors and allowed me the privilege of travelling the world, meeting other elite athletes and dignitaries, such as the Queen and Prime Ministers. Not all amputees and people with limb difference can be Paralympians, but most of us can exercise or participate in sport to aid our rehabilitation, improve our well-being and health and who knows what doors it might open for you!

The 2012 Paralympics shifted the nation's perception of disabled people. It was a showcase for what disabled people are capable of, it moved on from showcasing disabled people racing each other to showing that Paralympians are elite athletes just like Olympians, who dedicate years of their lives to gruelling training programmes to realise their dreams. 10 years ago the only disabled athlete the general public had heard of was Tanni Grey-Thompson. Today they can identify David Weir, Hanna Cockcroft, Sarah Storey, Ellie Simons, Richard Whitehead, Jonnie Peacock, Stefanie Reid and more.

If I could offer one piece of advice to you from my experiences – whether you are young or older, an amputee as a result of trauma, illness or congenital reasons – it would be to set no limits, push the boundaries and be the best that you can be. Focus on getting a socket that fits and is comfortable, because this is the first step to improving your life, and remember, you don't have to be a Paralympian to enjoy sport. Sport is about having fun, about participation, keeping fit, healthy and most importantly, mobile.

Jody Cundy

**Limb
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Life after limb loss

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The opinions expressed within this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect LimbPower policy. We recommend that you do not engage in any physical activity without consulting your G.P. or rehabilitation consultant.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed articles, advertising, research and proof reading skills to the magazine. I would personally like to thank John Berbuto for designing the magazine.

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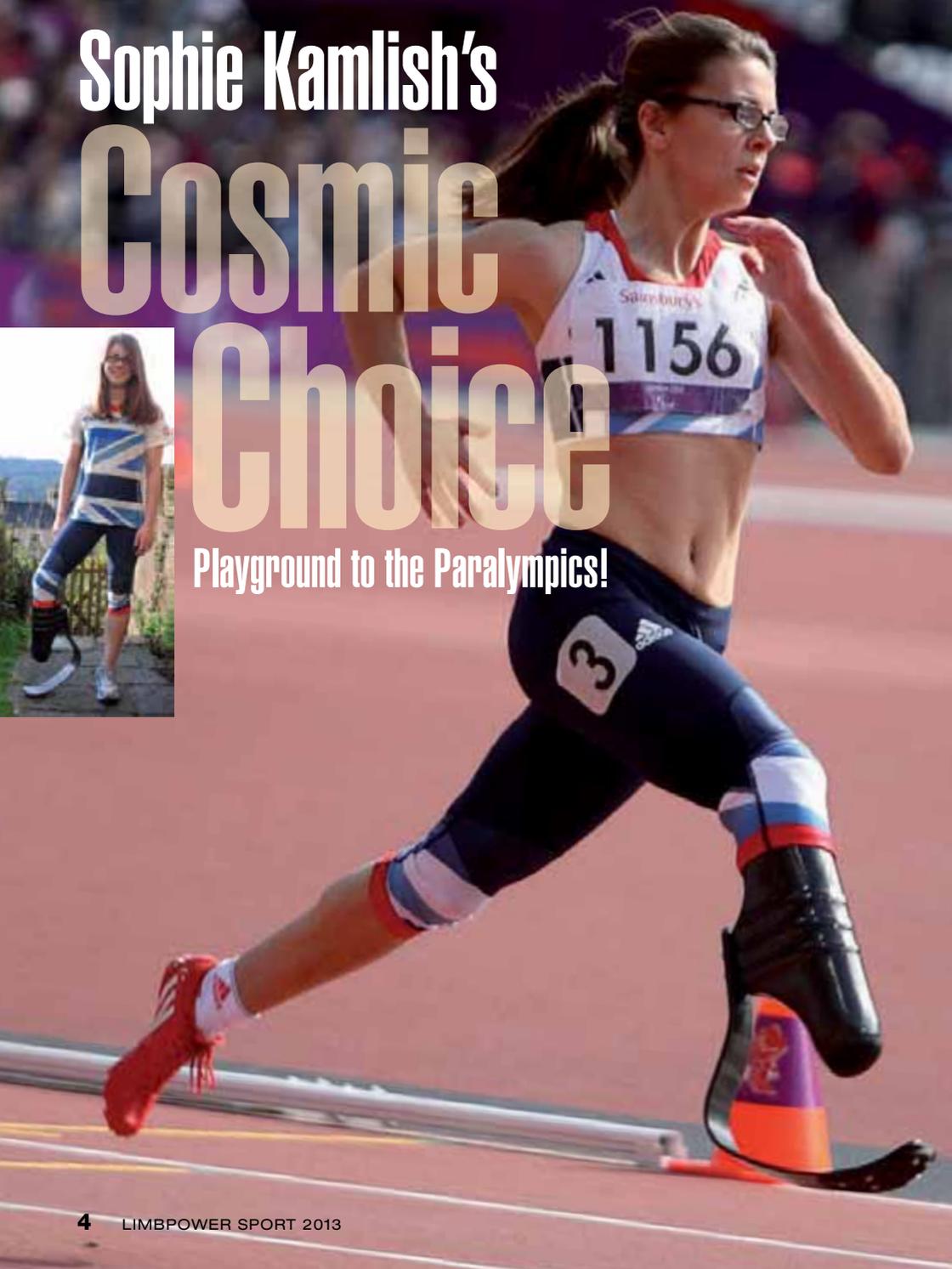


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Sophie Kamlish's

Cosmic Choice

Playground to the Paralympics!



► At the University of Bath in the Spring of 2011 when aged just 14, below knee amputee Sophie Kamlish was identified as a potential athlete through the Playground to Podium initiative. Two months later Sophie was competing in her first competition and being coached by Rob Ellchuck in both sprints and long jump.

The following May, still only aged 15 and with the provision of her first bespoke sprinting prosthesis, Sophie sprang onto the international Paralympic scene by winning a bronze medal in her first ever international event (Paralympic World Cup in Manchester). This proved to be just the beginning, as Sophie modestly explains, "Through funding from READY (Recreation and Easy Access for Disabled Youth), Pace Rehabilitation provided me with a specific running leg that enabled me to progress to the next level."

Up to this point Sophie had trained and competed on her everyday prosthesis. Thanks to the READY funding, she was able to attend the Pace Rehabilitation Clinic in Chesham, Bucks, to have a bespoke running prosthesis made. The specialist device incorporated an Össur Flex-Foot® Cheetah. The Cheetah is a foot for track and field sports, favoured by elite Paralympic Athletes around the world, with a design originally based on the hind leg of a cheetah.

Following her outstanding inaugural international appearance on her new Cheetah, Team GB selected Sophie for the 2012 Paralympics in London! On her Games debut, despite the huge pressure of competing in front of 80,000 people in the Olympic

stadium, not to mention the worldwide media, Sophie successfully qualified for both 100m and 200m (T44) finals from her heat races. Despite her lack of international experience, Sophie achieved very credible 5th and 6th places in the respective events, recording a personal best time of 29.08 in the final of the T44 200m.

Sophie's fast-track Paralympic achievements didn't go unnoticed, as Scott Richardson, Pace Rehabilitation's Business Development Manager explains, "Sophie's progress was incredible." He continued, "We wanted to recognise her achievements at the Paralympics and give her the best opportunity to continue to develop."

Following some discussion with her parents, Ros and Steve, Scott learnt that other than at school, Sophie didn't walk very far on her 'everyday' prosthesis, due to comfort issues. As Scott recalls, "It was ironic that a Paralympic sprinter was struggling to walk about on a daily basis, we felt we could improve the situation for Sophie."

Thanks to excellent cooperation from Össur UK, who agreed to provide a Low Profile Vari-Flex® foot, Pace prosthetist Paul Richardson

began working with Sophie, to provide her with a new 'everyday' prosthesis.

Paul explains, "The very low build height (68mm) of the foot is designed specifically for users like Sophie with long residual limbs. It offers similar benefits to the Vari-Flex®, providing a high level of confidence and security." He continued, "If we could provide Sophie with a more comfortable prosthesis for her everyday life, she'd hopefully be in better condition, both physically and mentally, for her sporting activities."

Össur UK Sales Manager, Paul Jamieson, was invited to Pace Chesham when Sophie took delivery of her new device. He said, "We are really pleased to have worked with Pace and Sophie to fit the new foot, and look forward to working together towards the Paralympics in Rio."

A few days afterwards, Sophie contacted Pace and said, "The leg is superb. I'm very happy with it and really do appreciate the whole team's effort. Thank you!" Adding, "Not only is my new leg loads lighter, it also has a really awesome design and walking around on it is so much easier now."

Outside athletics, Sophie has ambitions to develop a career as an author and illustrator.

Keep an eye out for Sophie this summer, at the World Championships in Lyon, and follow her progress to the Paralympics in Rio in 2016.

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Five minutes with John Wrightson on learning to run...

STATISTICS

Name: John Wrightson **Age:** 33 **Weight:** (Rude to ask!) 80kg
Height: 1.73m **When did you become an amputee?** May 2010

Why running?

I always ran, even though it was never the most natural sport for me (see height and weight stats!) it was always difficult and therefore a challenge.

Before my accident I was regularly running 10ks for fun. I ran a half marathon in Feb 2010. I am competitive when it comes to physical training/sports, but I always try and approach things with a smile.

What motivates you?

Memories of what I used to do, inspiration from the TV (Paralympic), underlying medical conditions and most significantly, I have a brother who'll never give me a minute's peace! Honestly he's just given me a call as I type this...

Did you start running on your everyday leg?

Yes, from the early stages I tried to run on my day leg. I wasn't aware of how to change the settings and it would regularly lock causing me to fall. After

picking myself up again, I would keep trying, and eventually I got my second leg, a Mauch knee joint from Ossur, with a fairly basic foot. It felt a bit like trying to run through treacle with a broomstick for a leg.

What are the components of your artificial limb?

I have the 3S80 Sports knee joint with the 1E90 Sprinter Carbon Foot fitted by ProActive prosthetics. I chose these after trying out both this option and the Ossur Flex-Run. The Ottobock foot felt like it gave me more energy in return for my efforts. The 3S80 knee joint is the only one of such a compact size designed for the recreational runner.

What is your training programme?

I start the week off with a core session, run at least twice a week, with one other cardio session (Bike/Swim/Kayak), then one body weight session (Chin ups & Cable suspension) and then drink beer and eat cake. ➤



A black and white photograph of a man with a prosthetic left leg running on a beach. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and dark shorts. A dog is running alongside him to the right. The background shows a beach and hills under a cloudy sky. In the top left corner, there are two overlapping circles, one green and one blue. The text 'Quality for life' is inside the green circle. The 'ottobock.' logo is in the top right corner. The main headline 'Pure Sport.' is in a large serif font. Below it is the sub-headline 'The New 3S80 Sports Knee Joint from Ottobock'. There are three paragraphs of text, each starting with a different quote. At the bottom, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and a copyright notice on the left side.

ottobock.

Quality for life

Pure Sport.

The New 3S80 Sports Knee Joint
from Ottobock

There is nothing quite like the feeling of satisfaction I achieve after a good run with the new 3S80 Sports Knee.

The new knee joint has made it possible for me to achieve and reach new limits of performance from my running.

The 3S80 vastly improves my sporting mobility and the exercise increases my overall strength and wellbeing.

When you feel your best, you can perform and realise your potential in a truly different way.

John Wrightson



and the soul. Unless you can win the fight against the PCT (or GP Trust) and get the right kit it will always be this way.

If you have access to other sources of funds (legal case, charity, rob a couple of post offices) then life can get better quickly. But it will still take one hell of an effort, keep going, split your goals into small chunks and tick them off as you achieve them.

Any favourite quotes you would like to leave with?

There's the obvious ones of "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger", but personally I like the poem *Invictus* by William Ernest Henley. Look it up.

How to reach John Wrightson:

I'm on Facebook and LinkedIn.



➤ ***What is your goal and how has the right prosthesis helped you achieve this?***

My first goal is to run continuously for a 5K run in my local village. This has been a long-term goal since I had my accident: on the to do list, just after carry a cup of tea up stairs!

What is your proudest achievement so far?

Well I've got up to a 5k interval run, with some nasty hills in it. I'm now bringing down the rest times and upping the running intervals.

What advice would you give to other amputees who want to run?

Running on your day leg is very tough, both physically and mentally; it just saps the moral

Keeping a cool head under the pressure of competition: The importance of thinking positively

Ross Wade Ph.D. is a Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology at the University of Roehampton

▶ **Events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games are global media spectacles, placing immense pressures on performers. Whether it comes from external sources, (the expectations of others) or internal sources (one's own expectations), it can do extraordinary things to performers. It can affect the way they think, creating confusion and panic; how they feel, affecting muscle tension tummy butterflies; and how they behave, causing fidgeting and disrupting sleep patterns in the lead up to competition.**

All performers experience pressure, but they don't all cope with it in the same way. Working with performers who have competed at elite level, I have witnessed some folding under the pressure and others who thrive on it. So what is the difference between these performers? The answer is positive thinking. At the highest level in sport it is often an athlete's ability to think positively that will determine who succeeds and who fails.

In pressure situations, athletes must believe they are capable of meeting the demands of the competition before them and they must maintain this high level of self-belief at critical moments. One of the most important determinants of developing and maintaining self-belief is what athletes say to themselves (either out loud or inside their head). It is through this thinking that confidence is either enhanced or diminished. Most performers indulge in negative thinking from time to time and think, "I give up, and I can't do it." They talk

themselves out of the possibility of success. So how can we get performers to think positively? From my professional experience, strategies that promote positive thinking and the use of positive statements can be extremely effective. Here's an example of one technique:

Step 1: Recognising negative self-talk. The first step is to raise one's awareness of negative thoughts and statements (e.g., "I can't relax. I hate these butterflies.") and discover when they occur (e.g., 10 minutes before competition). Try it for yourself. In pressure situations, what negative thoughts go through your mind?

Step 2: Thought-stopping. Once you are aware of negative statements, use a technique called thought-stopping to block them out. This technique involves using a mental cue, e.g., repeat the word 'stop' or a physical cue such as clenching your fist as a reminder to stop the negative thoughts and

replace them with positive ones. What thought-stopping cue would work most effectively for you?

Step 3: Turn a negative into positive. After using the thought-stopping cue, the negative thoughts need to be replaced with positive statements – These butterflies indicate I am mentally charged and physically ready – otherwise the negative ones will re-emerge. Try and write a list of positive statements to counter each one of your negative thoughts.

This technique may seem simple and straightforward, but just like a physical skill, it takes a great deal of practise and rehearsal for it to work effectively at critical moments during competition. The time and effort required to practise this technique is a small price to pay to increase the likelihood of performing to your potential and making your athletic experience more enjoyable, whether it is at a professional, amateur, or recreational level.

Running Workshop

► **Over the last 12 months LimbPower have been working with UK Athletics and British Athletics to deliver Learn to Run Workshops. We wanted to share what we have learnt with you.**

I once had a prosthetist in America tell me that you can run on any leg above or below knee, so I thought I would give it a go. In my opinion the answer is that if you are physically fit and don't have any stump problems (please check this with your rehabilitation consultant) you can certainly follow the steps and techniques that lead to running, but other factors may prevent you from actually running. As an above knee amputee I tried running at the first clinic on a c-leg and while I was able to run (I use the term loosely) it was not a fluid movement, as the knee didn't swing through fast enough.

Below are a list of physical exercises that will prepare you for running. Ideally do these on a mat or carpet to prevent injury.

1. Walk taking large strides forwards and then repeat going backwards for 6-10 repetitions (reps).

2. Side step leading with your prosthetic limb. Ensure that as you move your hips are level and not dipping and your elbows remain on your hips and don't twist throughout the movement. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

3. Side step leading with the sound limb. Ensure that as you move your hips are level and not dipping and your elbows on your hips and don't twist throughout the movement. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

4. Grapevine, this is like weaving with your feet. Side step by bringing the back, prosthetic leg across in front then step to

the side with the sound limb and bring the leg across and behind and step to the side. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

5. Grapevine, leading with the other leg. Side step by bringing the back, sound leg across in front then step to the side with the prosthetic limb and bring the leg across and behind and step to the side. Repeat for 6-10 reps.

6. Stand on the spot with your legs slightly apart and bounce from one leg to the other trying to put weight equally through both legs, repeat for 20 reps.

7. Stand on the spot and bounce up and down on both legs, again putting weight equally through both legs, repeat for 20 reps.

8. Place the sound limb out in front of you and bounce backwards and forwards from the sound limb onto the prosthetic limb, repeat for 20 reps.

9. Place the prosthetic limb out in front of you and bounce backwards and forwards between the prosthetic limb and the sound limb, repeat for 20 reps. *If you have a free knee be careful that the knee doesn't give way.*

If you can do these exercises without pain you are ready to start running. Always consult your rehabilitation consultant before trying to run. Keep doing these exercises and make the steps longer and the feet faster as you improve.

Now you have mastered the techniques it's time to give running a go. Make sure you are wearing comfortable clothing and that your leg is fitting properly and then take a deep breath and go... If you feel a pain in your stump you must stop!

LimbPower advocate that if you want a running leg you need to prove that you are serious by attending a clinic and trying to run on your current leg or joining an athletics club.

Written by: Kiera Roche
Programme by: Siobhan Strike
Principal Lecturer in Biomechanics, Sport and Exercise Science Research Centre, University of Roehampton



Health benefits of running

- Running regularly improves circulation, reduces the risk of a heart attack, high blood pressure and stroke.
- Running on a regular basis stimulates the bones to remain strong.
- The average runner burns 1,000 calories an hour during a training session.
- Endorphins released during exercise can also improve happiness.
- Running can help relieve mild depression.

You can attend a LimbPower running clinic (www.limbpower.com) or join a local club through <http://clubfinder.englandathletics.org> If you would like to talk to someone about competition opportunities please contact **Liz Purbrick**, National Disability Manager (Community Participation)

E: lpurbrick@englandathletics.org
T: 07850 514936



Five minutes with Jack Evers

STATISTICS

Name: Jack Evers **Age:** 23 **Weight:** 90kg **Height:** 6ft 2inch
When did you become an amputee? November 2005

How did you loose your leg?

I was born with Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency (PFFD) in my right leg. I had elective surgery when I was 16 to have my right leg amputated above the knee.

How did you become an actor/extra?

I was 7 and going through a tough time at school, I was at the limb centre when my prosthetist introduced me to an inspiring guy who had been filming Saving Private Ryan. He showed me pictures of him being blown up on the beach and called himself a one-legged stunt man! He said I should join a disabled acting agency. My first job was a short disability awareness film called Talk.

What was the most exciting role you have been in?

Barclays advert because of the publicity and coverage.

Have you ever needed a specifically designed leg for a role?

I've had to wear several partially attached or severed limbs. In a stunt film a martial artist had to kick my knee in so it bent backwards and looked broken.

I had to design that knee... I just loosened the pins in my water leg and turned the knee joint backwards so when he kicked it, it collapsed and looked dislocated.

What was it like being a part of the opening ceremony of the Paralympics?

Amazing! I auditioned to be a part of the London 2012 Paralympic opening ceremony with not much confidence I would get through. I was chosen to perform with a fantastic group of other disabled people. I spent 4 months training with a renowned circus school in London and learnt to be an aerial artist. In front of 80,000 people at the Paralympic opening ceremony, I performed an aerial rope routine 10 metres in the air, and a harness routine flying over 35 metres. I learnt so much about my body's abilities, and the confidence I have gained will follow me throughout life. Being part of such a momentous event was truly unforgettable.

How intensive was the training?

Very intensive! I spent 4 months in London, the first 2 months was at a Circus school and we



trained every other day for 5 hours a day. Strength and conditioning, movement class, rope and trapeze... We then spent 6 weeks in a studio practising and putting routines together. We were training 5-6 days a week for 5-8 hours a day. The last 2 weeks was in the stadium. We were there 7 days a week. Most of the rehearsals were in the evenings so we could practise with the lights and music.

What will be your lasting memory?

Waiting to perform the rope act... standing back stage in my skin tight green shiny leotard,



the Great British flag had just entered the stadium and I could hear the crowd roaring! Adrenaline was coursing through my veins. We were all so excited and yet nervous knowing that the royal family will be watching. Ear-piece in and sticky rosin on my hands, ready to climb the rope! My friend I had been training with turned to me and said "this is it... this is what we have been training so hard for!" It was a real sense of achievement for me.

How did you get into modelling?

I came across an article on a disabled modelling agency (Models of Diversity) when

browsing through a magazine at the limb centre. I got in touch and they invited me to a trial photo shoot. They gave me a crash course on how to model, how to hold my posture and how to hold my facial expressions. They were fantastic and gave me lots of confidence to start fitness modelling.

What motivates you?

My motivation is... how far can I go? How strong? How big? How lean can I get?

The body is an amazing thing and will adapt to anything you put it through. I enjoy pushing the limits of what I can achieve. My body is my business, so I believe I should preach what I teach.

What are the components of your artificial limb and how have they helped you achieve your goals?

I've been through 4 or 5 different knees but somehow managed to buckle or break the majority of them, I now wear suction sock and pin and a Blatchford Endolite KX06 knee.

What advice would you give to other amputees?

I believe when you lose a limb you are reborn. Like a child you have to learn to walk and/or catch again (depending on the amputation). It is expectable to fall over, drop things and be clumsy. This teaches a baby's brain motor skills, balance and hand eye coordination. As a new amputee it is important to go through this process and get outside your comfort zone by trying new activities and sports. Chase your dreams! Change is scary and often uncomfortable, but life begins outside your comfort zone. So learn to embrace it. Believe in yourself!

Any favourite quotes you would like to leave us with?

"Live the dream, No one has ever drowned in their own sweat."

How to get in touch with Jack

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Sports Prosthetics

by Ian Jones
of Limb Solutions

► **When it comes to sport, prosthetics cover a large range of socket design and components, you need different equipment and different designs for different sports, whether you are going for the occasional jog or game of table-tennis on holiday through to the seasoned Paralympian training for hour after hour, week after week to reach the top.**

Back pedalling to the start, you must first consider the basics. We have all done it, the sun is shining, you feel inspired to play that game of tennis or go for a run. By the end you ache, or worse, you have pulled a muscle or have blisters on your foot or residuum (Stump). But that is not the end of it; the next morning you can barely walk, which takes days to get over. As a prosthesis wearer this can be far worse as sockets rub, you get inflammation and can't put your limb on. In short you must prepare properly for sport.

We encourage you to work on the body's core – working on all those small muscles for control. Get the training right and your limb-wearing can become so much easier. Balancing on a physio ball works the muscles you use to maintain balance – essential strength for any activity. Find your local physiotherapist and ask them to work on exercises to help your core.

Now you can get started, once you have stretched of course! For many sports you do not need special sockets or components as you probably have enough equipment to make a start. You do not need a blade or Hi-tech component. As long as your components have energy return you are halfway there. Speak to your prescriber and ask what components are in your prosthesis, ask for information about what each bit does and then surf the web for information about the parts. Look out for the build height, activity level, weight category, and component weight. These are all the things that will tell you if you have the right part for your sport. Most of the components will have an activity code e.g. K code, Mobis scale etc. With a little ingenuity you should be able to determine if your parts



are up to the job. Many of the mid level products will work. Some high activity components become very rigid and are not suitable to do other activities e.g. blades can be difficult to walk on. Most limbs are set up for walking, however running changes your gait pattern – you now only have one



foot in contact with the ground. All the forces and alignment change, so be careful! Practice in a controlled area so you don't injure yourself. Prosthetic centres struggle to supply sports limbs thus you must prove your commitment by taking part in sport regularly or participating at a competitive level. Join a sports club, here you will meet other athletes that will help you or inspire you. Anyone heard of joining the gym on January 1st and by February you never darken the door? If you are meeting others you are more likely to stick at it and meet the prosthetic centre criteria. A running blade is about £1300 cost price – not that expensive, but if left in the cupboard this cannot be justified. It maybe that the only way to get a sports limb is to self fund through private care.

There are a multitude of products that can help you in sports, whether it is a shotgun appliance or kayak appliance for upper limb through to the Genium knee, which was used to help a Paralympian throw discus in last year's Paralympics. I am more than happy to

give advice on prosthetic components so best to email me: enquiries@limbsolutions.co.uk

Socket and component design

Your current socket will allow you to make a start, however for the seasoned sports person you may require specialist liners or suspension devices to allow you to develop. Many endurance sports will require remade sockets but make sure they are well worn before competing. Don't run a 5 miler on a new socket because you know what will happen. When you plateau in your development, you will know when it is time for a specialised part. If tiredness prevents you running more than three miles, then you may need a carbon foot to go further, but remember, you can't expect to run on a £10 pair of shoes, you will need to spend your hard earned cash on equipment. A pair of £70 trainers helped me past 5 miles, and because they were light and comfortable I was able to complete a marathon last year. If you progress into elite sports you may have to look carefully to find someone to make a bespoke prosthesis.



In the past I have made a balsa wood blade shaped cycling prosthesis for a cyclist, or specialised sockets to aid comfort, which have taken many weeks to produce.

In summary, sort yourself out first, try and find a coach to help you, work on your fitness if you want to develop, and ensure you have the right equipment for the job, but most of all...

ENJOY YOUR SPORT!

Good luck, Ian.

Ian Jones

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Bladerunner

▶ **Adrian Howden was knocked down by a motorcyclist in 2006, after completing the Three Peaks fell race in North Yorkshire. Andrew was a long-distance runner who suffered a badly fractured ankle, which became infected and threatened to end a career that saw him become the first winner of the Leeds Abbey Dash in 1984, before he opted to have it amputated.**

Andrew was made aware of high-technology blades that can be prescribed by the NHS for patients who have lost a limb but still have a high level of mobility and fitness. Adrian was determined to continue his career and joined only a handful of West Yorkshire patients prescribed the carbon fibre blade after proving his fitness to staff at Leeds Teaching Hospitals.

The 54-year-old said: "I've been competing since 1976 so after 30 odd years I suppose I was ready for a change – what I didn't expect was for it to be so dramatic."

Having competed in disabled triathlons and duathlons (run-bike-run) since 2008, he finished fifth in this year's ITU Duathlon World Championships in Spain and now aims to compete in the 2016 Paralympics in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

"The difference it has made is immeasurable. To get this blade through the NHS is fantastic and I feel very privileged to have received this new lease of life."

Steve Carter, Prosthetic Service Manager at RSL Steeper, which works in partnership with Leeds Teaching Hospitals, at Seacroft, said: "Many practitioners simply don't realise that such highly specialised limbs are available on the NHS, but they can make huge improvements to the lives of active amputees. Adrian has taken to his blades really well and the whole team is delighted to see him competing at a high level once again.

"It's really inspiring to work with people like Adrian. They are living proof that athletic ability isn't constrained by losing a limb. We are really proud that patients from our centre are able to compete in top international events and it is a privilege to work with them."

The father-of-two, from Roundhay, said: "The NHS try to return you to what you were before and I was an international distance runner. They've got me back to that, so from disaster I have a new thrill."

RSL Steeper offer a wide range of different lower limb prostheses, designed to enable patients to live active lives at home, work and in the community. In addition to prostheses for everyday use, these include a selection of specialist solutions designed for activities including swimming, running and skiing. www.rslsteeper.com/products/prosthetics

MANIC

The Limbpower "Fun" Marathon

MaraFun

24th August 2013

Stoke Mandeville Stadium Athletics Track

*Come and join us for a mile of this crazy
MaraFun and raise invaluable funds
for LimbPower and LimbAppeal
Each mile will be completed
using a different method
of movement*

*Fancy dress is optional
BBQ*

*Family entertainment
All welcome*

See website for details



T: 07502 276858 E: kiera@limbpower.com
W: www.limbpower.com

**Limb
POWER**
Life after limb loss

My Cycling Experience

by Damian MacDonald

► **Here's a little story about how I got back on a bicycle after losing my left leg below the knee. It's not a short story. It took me 25 years.**

As a teenager I loved to be active. Basketball, X-country, athletics, football, hockey, cycling, skateboarding, body-surfing, I loved them all. When I turned 16 in January 1985, Uncle Peter bought me a motorbike. It was a second-hand Honda MT5 50cc scrambler. Awesome! Talk about independence. I could get up a bit later and not worry about being late for school. I could go where I wanted, when I wanted. No more buses or Mum's taxi. September 1985 things changed. Late on the evening of the 25th I was involved in an accident on my way home from a friend's house. In April 1987 we threw in the towel and decided to amputate.

Often, when I met with friends on bicycles, I would have a go, but I could never get a full revolution with my prosthetic limb.

In 2008, while waiting to see a consultant at Sussex

Rehabilitation Centre, I picked up a leaflet to read. It was a Douglas Bader Foundation leaflet and it had information about cycling clinics where there would be people on hand to help amputees get into cycling. I went along to the Lingfield Bike Ride where I met Kiera Roche and a number of cycling enthusiasts. Even though I didn't ride a bike on that occasion, I saw other amputees cycling and I learnt a lot. SPD cleats, saddle height & position, crank length and, most importantly, that it could be done.

In Horsham, where I live, there is a cycle shop, Freeborn. I had often walked past their display of bicycles coveting the shiny road

and mountain bikes... Finally, in 2010, I plucked up the courage to go inside and seek advice. The staff were great. I wasn't their only amputee customer. After a chat and some measurement taking we wheeled a "hybrid" city bike out to the parking lot behind the shop. My eldest son, Jacob, stood nearby as I sat on the bike. I was extremely nervous, anticipating a fall or not being able to complete a revolution on the pedals. I pushed off and before I knew it I was pedalling around the car park. I couldn't believe it. After so many disappointments it was, well it was like riding a bike. The key had been getting help and



advice. The following weekend, I returned to Freeborn and bought the Specialized Globe Carmel 3 that I had ridden.

There were a number of factors that had been at the root of my frustration in the past. The reason I had been unable to complete a revolution on the pedals with my prosthetic limb on friend's bikes was saddle height, position and frame size. Once I was on a bike that was the right size and the saddle was at the right height and positioned correctly I could complete a revolution easily. Once I completed a revolution I discovered the next problem. How do I keep a foot I don't feel on the pedal? At first I used toe-clips without the strap, but quickly moved to clipless pedals and cycling-specific shoes. With SPD cleats and pedals I have the security of knowing my left foot "ain't goin' nowhere it shouldn't".

I started out cycling up to the village shop and back, about a mile all-in. I was knackered, but ecstatic. As I gained confidence, and stamina, I started timing myself over a 5 mile circuit out and around the village. I heard that LimbPower were organising another fundraising ride in Lingfield and signed up to do the "Family Fun 17 mile ride". In training for this I eventually managed to ride 20 miles non-stop. I was over the moon. The feeling of freedom, the fresh air, my improved fitness were all reasons to smile. After the Lingfield Bike Ride I got side-tracked by a little bump in Tanzania called Kilimanjaro which I summited for LimbPower in October 2010, but immediately



after that I signed up to cycle from London to Paris in 2011. I bought a "proper" road bike, joined Horsham Cycling Club and got down to some serious mileage. As part of my training for L2P I took part in a number of cyclosporiffs, most notably the Merlin Ride in Wales with my Kilimanjaro buddy Wyn Jenkins and the Mistress of Cycling,

Margaret Biggs. Wyn and Biggs have been fantastic resources and role-models for amputee cycling.

I now cycle most days. I tow a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old behind me in a trailer and love every minute of it. It's never too late to get on a bicycle if you want to. Don't be afraid to ask for help and advice.

HEATHER MILLS

Winter Paralympian



▶ **Heather Mills is training for the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games in Russia. At 45 and a relative novice on the slopes Heather's progress is simply inspirational. She had her first trial with the British disability skiing team in December 2010 and officially joined the 19-strong development squad last year. New athletes embarking on disability skiing enter with an International Paralympic Committee Alpine Ski (IPCAS) score of 990; this is reduced through competing in Europa Cup and World Cup events. In the short time she has been skiing Heather has cut her Super-G score to 311.94, with 582.91 for downhill. Athletes need to reach a score of 220 to be eligible for the Games.**

Getting to this level has been something of an uphill struggle for Heather. As a leg amputee she would be eligible to compete on a mono-ski, however due to the metal plates which were inserted into her

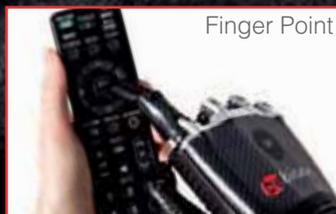
pelvis after her original accident in 1993, medical experts advised against this.

Typically, this has not significantly hampered her prospects on the slopes as she claimed the Super-G Austria

Cup title in the speed race last year, followed by four golds at the US Adaptive Alpine Skiing National Championships in Aspen, Colorado. She has recently won three silver and one bronze medal at the ▶

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HEATHER MILLS

► National Championships in Innerkrems, Austria in March.

Speaking of the level of sacrifice that is required, Heather praised the efforts of The London Prosthetic Centre who worked closely with her to develop a specialised prosthetic skiing leg that can withstand the harsh racing conditions. She said: "A prosthesis is not just about helping people regain mobility in their lives; it's about enabling them to achieve their goals. If I'm going to do this, I'm going to do it properly. That means spending half of every month training in the Alps, and six-hour round trips on the train to the Milton Keynes indoor snow zone when I'm home. Abdo Haidar, the Consultant Prosthetist, and the team at The London Prosthetic Centre fully understood this from day one, and devoted the care, attention, ability and creativity that enabled me to push on with complete confidence."

Heather's achievements are even more remarkable when one considers that she only took up ski race training a few years' ago after being spotted on the slopes and encouraged to try out for competitive skiing.

"I was on holiday in Austria, it was really early in the morning and they'd opened the lifts for the racers and one slope was empty so I just kept going straight down," said the charity campaigner.

"I hadn't skied properly for 10 years, but the head of the Slovenian Masters said, "You know you're doing 100kph

(62mph) on slalom skis and that's very dangerous?"

But despite her impressive speed, Heather's progress was hampered by difficulties with her ordinary prosthetic leg, which frequently 'ejected' her from her skis. That's when she visited Consultant Prosthetist, Abdo Haidar, at The London Prosthetic Centre in Kingston upon Thames, to have a new specialised skiing prosthetic leg fitted that would be ideally suited to the task.

One of the difficulties was finding a design that would enable Heather to ski freely. Mr Haidar even visited the Hemel Hempstead ski slopes to watch Heather in action, and help her with any problems. It was a painstaking process that involved over a year of fine tuning and over 15 appointments. Mr Haidar explains:

"We spent so much time to find the ideal solution, working all the while with Heather and her coach. The key was to provide maximum control and manoeuvrability, so that Heather could take corners close to the ground and really attack them with complete confidence. To achieve this we designed and fitted the socket in a way that considerably reduces movement and thereby enhances control and focus."

Heather has been selected for the team and Mr Haidar believes she could do very well at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Russia.

"Of course, the key factor is the incredible drive and courage



that Heather possesses. We come across a lot of talented people and I genuinely believe that she can achieve success at the games. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to help her in such astonishing achievements."

The London Prosthetic Centre is the only facility in London to provide cutting-edge prosthetic care within a private facility equipped with a modern workshop and silicone facilities. It is a division of RSL Steeper, which was founded in 1921, and is one of the largest suppliers of prosthetic, orthotic and assistive care in the world.



**The London Prosthetics Centre
Unit 20, Kingsmill Business Park
Chapel Mill Road
Kingston Upon Thames
Surrey KT1 3GZ**

Tel: 0208 789 6565

Website:
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Email:
ahaidar@thelondonprosthetics.com
cbuckingham@thelondonprosthetics.com

“I’ve never looked back; I don’t regret being an amputee, I really embrace it.” – Gemma Trotter

▶ **At the age of 14 I was involved in a road traffic accident in Belgium, which caused extensive injuries to my left leg.**

After two years of operations I was told my leg was beyond repair, which ultimately led to an above knee amputation just prior to my 17th birthday. I was fitted with a prosthetic leg, but due to socket discomfort I struggled and didn’t walk for 4 years! It was at this point that I learnt about Osseointegration and became involved in an Osseointegration research programme and became the first female and youngest amputee in the world to have a pin inserted into my leg. It was at times an incredibly gruelling rehabilitation process and it takes a while to get used to putting weight onto your leg, but once I started wearing the C-Leg® I began to realise I wasn’t as limited as I thought. I’ve been wearing my current C-Leg® for about 8 years and it’s so comfortable I often forget that it is not my real leg.

Following the birth of my son, I decided it was time to give something back to other amputees, so I embarked on a gruelling 300km London to Paris bike ride challenge to raise money for LimbPower. Following this success and having a love for the gym I decided to complete an intensive training course and I am now a qualified



Personal Trainer and Nutritional advisor. I am the only amputee in the world to have qualified to teach Les Mills Body Pump and Spin. My C-Leg® enables me to do squats, lunges and squat jumps. During 2011 I attended the Amputee Games as a

participant and in 2012 I attended the event as a team Mentor, looking after a group of amputees showing them the ropes. Being available to answer any questions the amputees had was incredibly rewarding.

My goal is to work with amputees both new and existing to show all their potential and prove health and fitness is the road back to obtaining quality for life. I am currently helping a female above knee amputee train for a big event in 2014 and I find sharing my knowledge and experience extremely rewarding. I want to demonstrate to others that even though you have lost a limb it doesn’t inhibit you from physical activities. After amputation it is very important to utilise the muscles you have left as this will make everyday activities easier and therefore more enjoyable.

I am currently learning how to use the Genium Knee from Ottobock. Applying my knowledge of biomechanics I am able to utilise all of the incredible unique functions the Genium offers, including walking up stairs step over step. It is even possible to walk backwards safely. The better your proprioception, the sense of your body’s position in space, the better you will be able to manage your prosthesis, which will enable you to progress to higher activity and a more healthy and active lifestyle.

How the games work

► **The LimbPower Games is a two-day introduction to sport, where participants can try 14 Paralympic sports and meet staff and coaches from other sports, sports governing bodies and associations. For the first time this year we will have Wheelchair Dance Sport, standing Basketball and Hand Cycling. You can also attend the belly dancing class to help with core stability and meet the incredible Tracey Jones.**

There will also be an opportunity to meet the prosthetists from Blatchford, they will be on hand to answer any questions you have about your current and future prosthetics. Meet the team from ProActive Prosthetics, who work with Paralympians Stefanie Reid and Scott Moorehouse and are working with Canoeists on the

Talent ID Programme for Rio 2016. You are welcome to talk to the lawyers from the Stewarts Law 'Advice Clinic' about legal issues, benefits etc. The advice is free, so do take advantage of it! Don't forget to introduce yourself to Dean Heffer the Sports Officer at the Limbless Association.

Participants at this year's

amputee games will be allocated to a group, with a group mentor. The group mentor will be an amputee who has previously attended the event. They will be available to help and encourage their group, offering advice and support throughout the event.

HOW THE GAMES WORK

The programme has been streamed, so that each group has an opportunity to take part in all of the sports.

Each group will be given a set programme to follow, with different sport choices for each session.

Participants are required to participate in all four of the competitive sports and can participate in the 'have-a-go' sessions highlighted in the programme. Points will be awarded to competitors finishing in the top three

places for each of the competition sports.

The competition sports are archery, shooting, swimming, and table tennis. There are no restrictions on the 'have-a-go' sessions, but bonus points are awarded for taking part in the 'have-a-go' sessions.

Competitors will be given a score sheet on which to record the 'have-a-go' sessions. The onus is on the participants to ask the sport officials to sign the score sheet for all of the 'have-a-go' sessions as a record of participation.

POINT SCORING SYSTEM

FIRST PLACE
will receive 5 points,

SECOND PLACE
will receive 4 points,

THIRD PLACE
will receive 3 points.

All competitors will receive 1 point for taking part.

The Games finish at 4 pm on Sunday after the awards ceremony.

Saturday

Weekend Programme

Saturday 18th May 2013

Time	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
9.30 – 10.15	Basket Ball	Table Tennis Wheelchair Racing	Cycling, Handcycling,	Athletics Track
10.20 – 11.05	Archery	Basket Ball	Table Tennis Wheelchair Racing	Cycling, Handcycling,
11.05 – 11.15	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
11.15 – 12.00	Athletics Field/ Shooting	Archery	Basketball	Table Tennis
12.05 – 12.50	Athletics Track Shooting	Athletics Field/	Archery	Basket Ball
12.50 – 1.35	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1.35 – 2.20	Cycling, Handcycling, Wheelchair Racing	Athletics Track/ Cycling	Athletics Field/ Shooting	Archery
2.25 – 3.10	Table Tennis Wheelchair Racing	Cycling, Handcycling,	Athletics Track	Athletics Field/shooting
3.10 – 3.25	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
3.25 – 4.10	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports
4.15 – 5.00	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports	Swimming/ Open sports
5.00 – 6.00	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time
6.00 – 7.00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
7.15 – 8.15	Archery competition/ Table Tennis Competition/ Basketball Demonstration	Archery competition/ Table Tennis Competition/ Basketball Demonstration	Archery competition/ Table Tennis Competition/ Basketball Demonstration	Archery competition/ Table Tennis Competition/ Basketball Demonstration
8.15 – 9.15	Wheelchair Dancing and Belly Dancing			

This programme is subject to change. Please check the website for updates.

Our Sponsors



Weekend Programme

Sunday

Sunday 19th May 2013

Time	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
9.30 – 10.15	Sitting Volleyball	Powerlifting/Shooting	Athletics	Fencing/Rowing
10.20 – 11.05	Tennis	Sitting Volleyball	Powerlifting/Shooting	Football/Badminton
11.05 – 11.15	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
11.15 – 12.00	Football/Badminton	Tennis	Sitting Volleyball	Athletics
12.05 – 12.50	Fencing/Rowing	Football/Badminton	Tennis	Sitting Volleyball
12.50 – 1.35	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1.35 – 2.20	Athletics	Fencing/Rowing	Football/Badminton	Powerlifting/Shooting
2.25 – 3.10	Powerlifting/Shooting	Athletics	Fencing/Rowing	Tennis

This programme is subject to change. Please check the website for updates.





The Limbless Association - a national charity that provides support to amputees and the limb loss community

Membership benefits include:

- **Volunteer Visitors** – free peer to peer visits from an LA amputee member;
 - **Help Bureau** – free & impartial advice;
 - **Limb Loss Legal Panel** – free legal advice from a group of specialist law firms;
 - **Step Forward magazine** – a quarterly publication providing news, views and advice;
 - **Local support** – learn about local services, facilities and local User and Support Groups;
 - **Website** – containing useful information and links;
 - **Sports+** - advice on keeping fit and sports activities.
-

Contact us for more information or to become a member



0800 644 018



www.limbless-association.org

Registered Charity Nos. 803533, SC042256 Company No. 2487661



Paracanoeing

One of the new Paralympic sports for Rio

▶ **Paracanoeing is being introduced to the Paralympics Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. GB Canoeing are developing a national programme to ensure we have disabled athletes who will be competitive to win medals in Rio. They have already identified paracanoe athletes who will train over the next 3 years to qualify for a place at the Paralympics Games. Could you be one of them?**

Paracanoeists race 200m in a Kayak or Va'a (Outrigger Canoe). You paddle as fast as you can in a frenzied collaboration of mind and body to cross the finish line before your adversaries amidst an abundance of spray from start to finish. Sound like fun?

Paracanoe athletes are training at the Wey Kayak Club in Guildford, Surrey. Volunteer Coaches, all ex-international athletes, have taken the training group, currently 4 athletes, under their wing, all 4 (1 lady and 3 men), with different disabilities.

ProActive prosthetics, who supported two athletes at the London Paralympics, presented a Paracanoe to Wey Kayak Club for aspiring athletes to train in. Richard Nieveen, director of ProActive Prosthetics said "The London 2012 Paralympics left a huge mark on us as a profession. The athletes, who did not want to be called brave or court pity, blew us away and we ran out of words to describe them. They have shown us what triumph can emerge through



adversity. We were privileged to have supported two athletes, Stef Reid and Scott Moorhouse, competing in the Paralympic Games.

"I have been involved in

canoeing since I was a young boy and have competed at a national level. Looking forward to the next Paralympics in Rio, as a business we are privileged to make a contribution to Wey



If you would like to learn more about Paracanoeing...

you can contact Steve Harris, Paralympic Programme Manager GB Canoeing,

Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, Marlow, Bucks. SL7 1RR.

Tel +44 (0) 162 848 6619

Mobile: +44 (0) 77969 52277

Email: steve.harris@gbcanoeing.org.uk

Web: www.gbcanoeing.org.uk

To find out about opportunities at

Wey Kayak Canoe Club contact

Mike Childerstone

Tel: 0789 9924884

Email: teamleader@weykayak.co.uk

Guildford Waterside Centre, Riverside,

Bellfields, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1LW

Telephone: (01483) 536407

Web: www.weykayak.co.uk

Tania Coleman

ProActive Prosthetics, Ash House,

Shackleford Road, Elstead,

Surrey GU8 6LB

Tel: 01252 702 500

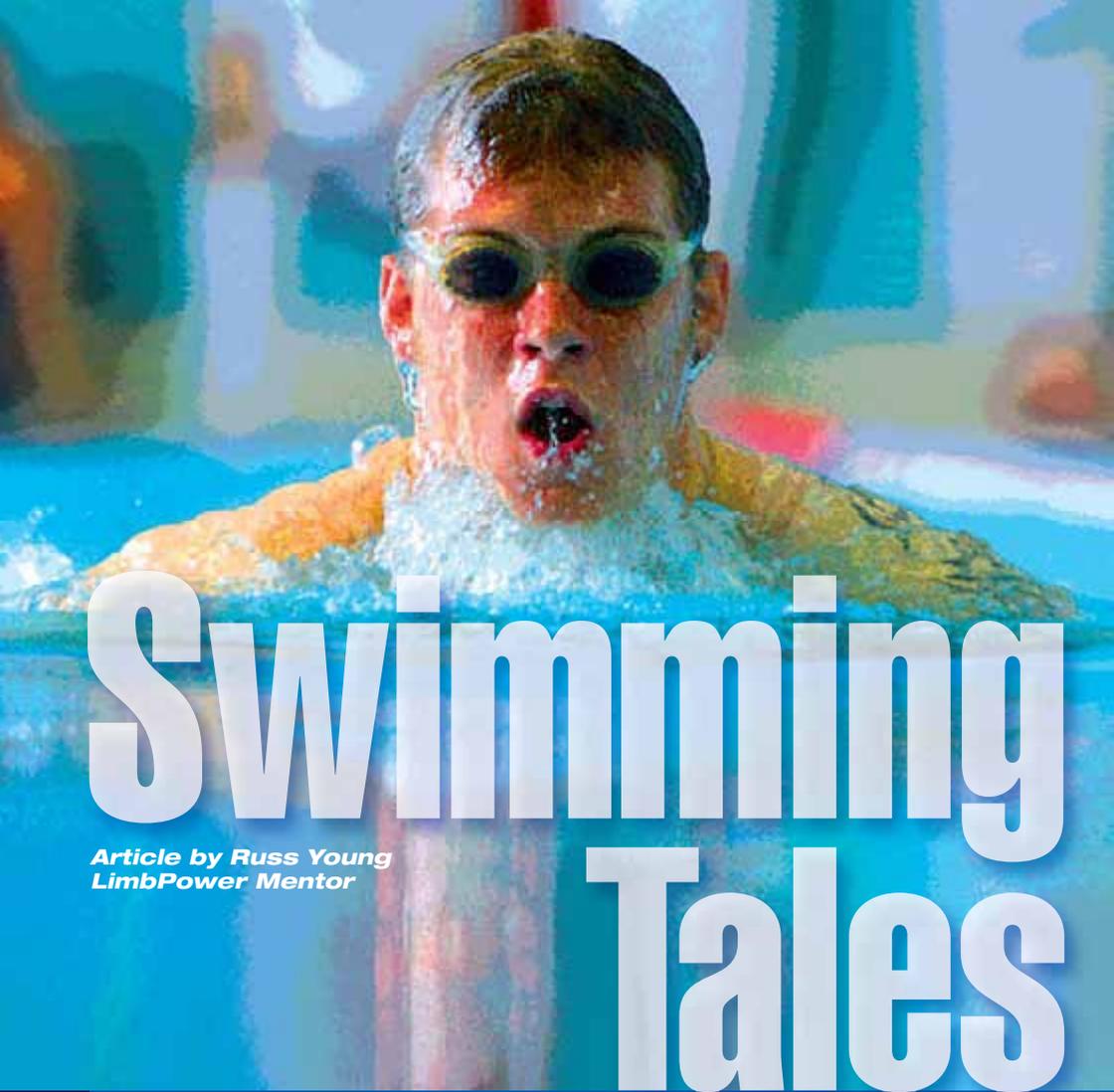
Email: clinic@proactiveprosthetics.co.uk

Web: www.proactiveprosthetics.co.uk

Kayak Club.”

This canoe is designed to enable people with a range of disabilities to compete against each other without a handicap system. Wey Kayak Canoe Club

aims to have 4 or 5 of these boats in the club for the Paracanoe group of athletes.



Swimming Tales

Article by Russ Young
LimPower Mentor

Set No Limits

Swimming is one of the most popular choices of activity for disabled adults and children. Some of the benefits swimming offers are:

- Improved mobility compared to when on land as water supports the whole body
- Ease from tight or painful joints and tendons thanks to water buoyancy
- Improved balance and agility
- Improved confidence and comfort in and around water

Use Pool Finder to track down your local pool and ask about learn to swim sessions for people with disabilities. It will offer adult classes in a friendly and supportive environment.

<http://www.swimming.org/poolfinder> or Contact your regional ASA office. They will have lots of information and can point you in the right direction. <http://www.swimming.org/asa/regions/>



▶ **As an amputee, the first time you go for a swim can be daunting as you don't know what to expect. The best way to start is to tell yourself that you are no different from anybody else apart from having a 'bit missing'.**

If you have a friend who can go with you, this is a good start. They don't necessarily have to go into the pool with you, being there for moral support is great. Another thing you could do is visit or telephone your local pool to see if they have a hoist or particular facilities to help you in or out of the pool. I went along to my local pool and was lucky to find a Mobility Group which took me under their wing.

Hopefully before you've done all this you will have thought about swimming attire (skinny dipping is frowned upon in public these days!) I would think about getting some goggles which are good for when you're doing the front crawl and a swimming float both of these can be bought cheaply and are

readily available. The float can be used in a couple of different ways, you can hold it in front and kick your legs, or placed between your legs helps with buoyancy when doing front crawl, it also challenges your stomach muscles and helps to build that all important six pack or flat stomach for the ladies.

I get asked quite a lot why I started swimming. From an early age I always liked swimming and up till I lost my foot in 1997, I used to swim as much as I could, mainly on holiday, as other sports like rugby, cricket and football got in the way. After my accident

I wanted to find a sport that didn't put any pressure on my pelvis which I had shattered, so swimming was ideal as it's non weight bearing.

Through swimming I have learnt to be more confident about myself around people not just in the pool but life in general. Swimming has also helped me get fitter, and as a diabetic as well as an amputee, improve my health, confidence, self esteem and wellbeing. My goal now is to become a swimming instructor to show others that if you put your mind to something it can be done.



What impact will the Jackson reforms have on amputee claimants?

▶ **On 1 April 2013 an extensive new costs regime came into force that is in numerous ways less advantageous to amputee Claimants. These changes are as a result of a lengthy investigation and report into the cost off civil claims by Lord Justice Jackson. Unfortunately, despite extensive lobbying from disability charities and legal groups, he failed to make any modification to his reforms to reflect the fact that claimants with serious injuries really need their compensation and the costs in their cases are rarely disproportionate to the issues and the damages claimed.**

The main rule changes include the following:

1. Success fees pursuant to Conditional Fee Agreements (CFAs) will no longer be recoverable from the Defendants and are to be capped at a maximum of 25% of the damages excluding future loss;

2. To offset the above General Damages will increase by 10%, but in complex catastrophic injury claims that is a small element of the damages and the adverse changes to the costs rules are likely to considerably exceed it in most cases;

3. After the event (ATE) insurance premiums will no longer be recoverable from the Defendant;

4. A new system of qualified one way costs shifting "QOCS" will be introduced so that Claimants who are unsuccessful in their claim will not be liable for the Defendant's costs, in most, but not all case. QOCS do not cover Claimants for their own disbursements (e.g. expert reports, court fees etc), which are considerable in amputee claims. A further major risk is that Claimants could be liable for a considerable adverse costs award if they fail to beat an offer to settle. Consequently, claimants with high value claims still ought to seriously consider taking out comprehensive ATE cover on the advice of their solicitor;

5. A system of costs management will be introduced so that

the Court will set budgets at an early stage in the Court Proceedings. It is likely that Defendants will try and convince the Court to set a low budget to try and restrict the amount of work is undertaken. That may well make it harder for Claimants to prove all aspects of their case and maximise their damages recovery;

6. A new rule of costs proportionality will be introduced in which it will no longer be good enough to show that it is necessary to take a particular step, for instance as a result of a Defendant's conduct;

These rule changes do not apply retrospectively, so 1-4 above are inapplicable to anyone who signed up to



a CFA and/or ATE prior to 1 April, and 5-6 above are inapplicable to cases with court proceedings commenced before 1 April.

Catastrophic injury specialists like Stewarts will be working hard with their clients to try and mitigate the effects of the new rules, but it has to be acknowledged that the new costs regime will be a lot tougher for Claimants and will enable the Defendants to avoid numerous costs liabilities which they used to have to meet.

Julian Chamberlayne
Partner at catastrophic injury specialists solicitors, Stewarts Law LLP

About Us

Stewarts Law is the largest litigation only Law firm in the UK. The firm is top-ranked in both the Legal 500 and Chambers, the two leading guides to the legal profession in the United Kingdom.

The firm is a leading Personal Injury Law firm, specialising in pursuing high value and complex personal injury claims with expertise in compensation claims following traumatic amputation and limb loss.

The firm is proud of the Stewarts Law Foundation, which is committed to supporting a wide range of charitable causes, and of its ongoing commitment to completing pro-bono work.

Stewarts Law sponsor the LimbPower Games and offer a free legal and benefits advice service to all participants, so do take advantage of this unique opportunity.

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Kieran Maxwell

Qualifies for Gymnastic Nationals!



▶ **15 year old Olympic torchbearer Kieran Maxwell from Heighington recently stepped closer to his goal of becoming a world-class gymnast by representing the North with his partner Abbie in The NDP Grades Finals (including Disability) in the mixed Wheelchair Pairs.**

Both Kieran and Abbie were delighted to qualify at Temple Park Leisure Centre in South Shields in March and are eager to compete in the Nationals that will be held in Stoke-On-Trent on the 18th and 19th of May.

In October 2010, 13 year old Kieran Maxwell's life changed forever when he was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma. Although he won the battle against the disease he lost his left leg from the knee down.

Due to carry the Olympic torch in June 2012, Kieran was approached by Athena Sports Academy to attend their gymnastics sessions to help build up his strength. During the torch relay Kieran lost his balance and fell, however the crowd got behind him and cheered him all the way. Colin and Chris Weir from Ayrshire who won the lottery heard about Kieran's story and agreed to a donation to provide Kieran with a state of the art prosthetic leg.

"I was so happy I didn't think anyone would do that for me. My mum and dad buying me one yes, but people who I've never met, that shows there are good people out there."

Kieran visited Dorset Orthopaedic's Midland's Clinic in May 2012, where Mark Woolsey, who has specialist knowledge in sporting

prosthetics, fitted Kieran with a bespoke prosthetic, tailor-made especially for Kieran's active lifestyle. Consisting of a flexible inner socket surrounded by a lightweight carbon fibre frame, it has a vacuum-assisted system acting to suspend the limb and helps to suspend and stabilise the prosthesis. Kieran's prosthesis also has a lightweight Titanium hydraulic knee designed for his level of amputation. The Foot module is a carbon fibre blade similar to that seen on many of the athletes in the Paralympic games, helping to give Kieran the energy kick he needs during sport.

Through-knee amputee Kieran said "I want to learn how to do back flips and front flips and also I'd love to be able to have a run with Jonnie Peacock, Richard Whitehead and Stefanie Reid!"

PRIMARY & JUNIOR GAMES 2013

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Injuries

– how they happen and how to avoid them

Injuries happen to most athletes at some time or another. Although injuries have a number of causes, mechanically they occur because a tissue in the body is damaged. Factors both internal to the body and external from the environment contribute to the occurrence of injuries. Internal factors which predispose athletes to injuries include muscle weakness and imbalances, joint looseness, overweight, leg length discrepancy. External factors include training errors, bad weather, bad equipment and excessive loads.

We classify injuries as being either acute – a sudden traumatic event causes the injury, or overuse – the tissues slowly become more damaged over a period of time, culminating in an injury. An acute injury typically occurs as a result of some event, we trip over a crack in the pavement when out for a jog and twist our ankle, we break a bone or damage a ligament in a tackle. Often there is nothing we can do to avoid these types of injury as the reason for the injury is out of our control. The best we can do is ensure that our body tissues are as strong as they can be and can adapt to different situations. For amputees, developing body feedback is very important. It is important to help the stump to understand where the limb is placed and how it moves through space. Lower limb amputees could try hopping from one leg to the other, side to side and front to back.

We can plan to avoid overuse injuries, but still they are incredibly common. This is because training requires us to push our bodies ever harder in order to get stronger, faster, more flexible etc. Unless this training 'overload' is carefully

managed, the necessary tiny tears in the tissue get bigger and bigger and slowly cause the tissue to break down. Examples of overuse injuries are skin blistering, fatigue fractures in bones, ligament damage in joints and muscle tears.

For amputees who are starting to exercise with their prosthesis donned, the most common problem is skin blistering at the stump. Exercise causes us to sweat and if the socket doesn't fit well, the small movements and sweat cause skin breakdown. To avoid this, make sure the socket is a tight fit and wear high quality socket liners. Try to keep the skin dry and clean.

Other common problems are muscle and joint pain. Here, the joints are experiencing larger loads than usual and so they begin to ache. For unilateral amputees, the intact limb often takes extra load to avoid loading the prosthetic side. This is inevitable, but try to avoid loads that are too unbalanced as this can cause long-term joint problems. Slowly build up the amount of exercise and the size of the force over a period of time to get the body used to the higher forces.

Top tips to avoid injury

- Carefully plan training sessions – ensure there is sufficient rest to recover from an exercise bout. At the start of an exercise programme ensure there is a day of rest after each exercise session. This can be tailored as you become more experienced. Include a warm-up and cool-down into every session.
- Keep the stump clean and dry. Skin breakdown is a serious problem.
- When running or jumping try to land equally on both sides – avoid limping.
- Develop a sense of where the limbs are in space. For lower limb amputees try hopping from one foot to the other and doing bunny-hops. Gradually make these more dynamic and testing.
- Immediate first aid – Rest, Ice, Compress and Elevate can reduce the length of time it takes to recover from an injury.

Siobhan Strike

Principal Lecturer in Biomechanics, Sport and Exercise Science Research Centre, University of Roehampton

SPORTS Contacts

ARCHERY

Archery GB

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ALPINE SKIING

Disability Snowsport

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ATHLETICS

UK Athletics

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England Athletics

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British Wheelchair Racing Association

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ADAPTIVE ROWING

British Rowing

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Badminton England

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CANOEING

Canoe England PaddleAbility

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CYCLING

British Cycling

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GOLF

Disabled Golf Society

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GYMNASTICS

British Gymnastics

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PARA-EQUESTRIAN

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FOOTBALL

English Amputee Football Association

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Football Association

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ICE SLEDGE HOCKEY

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SPORTS Contacts

POWERLIFTING

British Weight Lifting

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The Gwennili Trust

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SHOOTING

Disability Target Shooting GB

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VOLLEYBALL

Volley Ball England

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SWIMMING

Disability Swimming

Eligible classifications are S1 – S14.
S14 is for those with a learning disability.
Tel: 01509 640317
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Web: www.swimming.org

TABLE TENNIS

The English Table Tennis Association

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British Wheelchair Basketball

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WHEELCHAIR FENCING

British Disabled Fencing Association

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WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

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BRITISH PARALYMPIC ASSOCIATION

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Email: info@paralympics.org.uk
Web: www.paralympics.org.uk/

BALASA

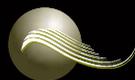
BALASA: British Amputee & Les Autres Sports Association

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Web: https://sites.google.com/a/balasa.org.uk/main

SPORTS+ (LIMBLESS ASSOCIATION)

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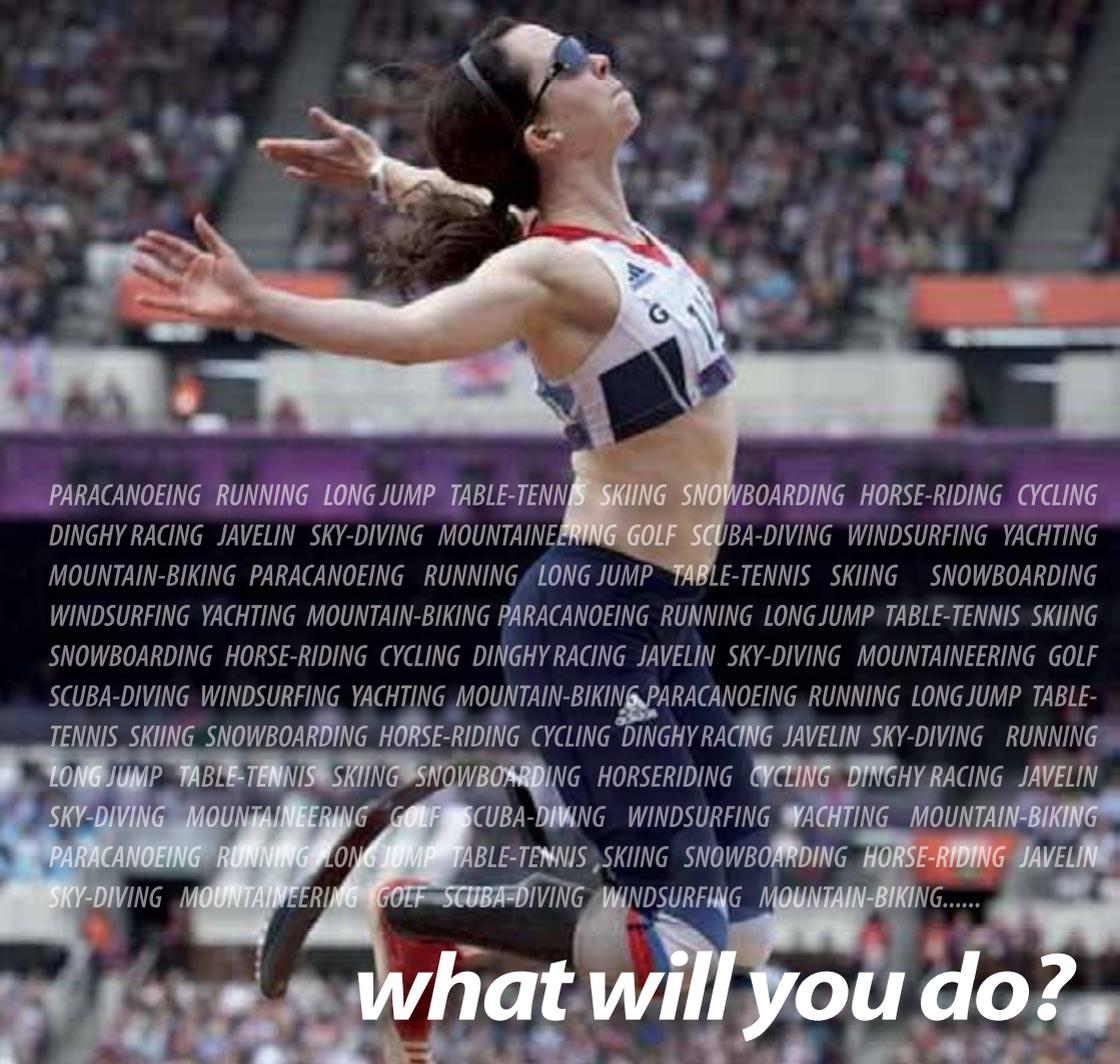
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