



Sitting Volleyball in Great Britain

Gordon Neale OBE

FOR SKILLS, FITNESS, TACTICS AND GREAT SOCIAL BUZZ...

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GB Sitting Volleyball – Challenge

Sitting Volleyball in Great Britain has recently undergone a surge of activity due to the Paralympics being staged in London this year. Volleyball England now have the responsibility for the GB programme and under their guidance a specific Sitting Volleyball Centre Network and a Grand Prix Circuit has been established with the finals being staged and integrated alongside the Volleyball National Finals. It is now crucial to the sport that we recruit, retain and inspire more people into the game of Sitting Volleyball bringing with them a legacy and vision for 2020.

Obstacles – Current reality indicates that apart from financial programme sustainability for both the men’s and women’s programmes (we only have a joint income of £100,000 annually) the difficulty in attracting and retaining suitable players remains a concern especially for the women’s programme given the time scales and pressure from the British Paralympic Association regarding qualification.

Objectives

- To establish the unique selling points of Sitting Volleyball versus the main sports and disability sport agenda.
- To position our sport and brand in the public and commercial marketplace.

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The Challenge – RECRUITMENT!

Sitting Volleyball Awareness Workshops ran in, Canterbury, Loughborough, Salisbury, Warwick, Sunderland, Leeds...

Players

A game named as Bum Ball was produced and published on the VE website as a starting point for any School or Disability Group.

Referees

A sitting referees award is available as an addition to the standing qualification

Classifiers

4 qualified classifiers within Great Britain of varying levels within Great Britain Programme but more are needed at the entry point

Coaches

All Centres with qualified coaches and coaching awards encompassing sitting and standing.

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The Challenge – RECRUITMENT!

This is underpinned by:

- Marketing
- Promotion
- Financial Resource
- Limited staffing time to coordinate and facilitate course etc...
- Restrictions in availability of volunteers at club level
- Suitable Sports Halls (sockets required but not a full size VB court)
- Equipment (the ball is so important!)

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Challenge – RETENTION

Each Centre will work closely with Volleyball England to deliver 4 main aims:

- 1) Establish a mixed group of able bodied and physically disabled individuals that are working towards training at least once a week.
- 2) Work with a nominated qualified coach who is committed to developing their understanding of Sitting Volleyball.
- 3) Run an equitable and integrated programme that recruits players with the potential to go on and represent Great Britain.
- 4) Be prepared to host and enter a team (containing a certain % of players with GB potential) into Volleyball England Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix Series

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VOLLEYBALL ENGLAND

Phase 1 (2009-10)

- 1 – East London Lynx Sitting Volleyball Club (London)
- 2 – Surrey Sitting Volleyball Club (South East)
- 3 - Kent Wyverns Sitting Volleyball (South East)
- 4 - Essex Pirates Sitting Volleyball (East)
- 5 - East Midlands Lions Sitting Volleyball - Lincoln, Loughborough, Nottingham (East Midlands)
- 6 - Birmingham University Volleyball Club (West Midlands)
- 7 – Merseyside, based out of Chester (North West)
- 8 - Portsmouth Sitting Volleyball (South East)

Phase 2 (2010-11)

- Lincoln
- Aylesbury
- North-East (Newcastle?)
- South-West (Bristol?)



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Challenge – RETENTION!

This is limited by:

- The all important first impression...
- Financial Resource to support attendance
- Some centres lack basic disability awareness
- Limited local opportunity - no-one likes to travel long distances!
- Awareness and recognition of the sitting version of the game
- Adequate competition opportunities (National/International)
- Suitable, accessible and cheap Sports Halls and Equipment (the ball is still important!)

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CHALLENGE – Marketing and Promotion!

Great Britain Sitting Volleyball:

- Significantly increased the number of players in the Men's and Women's Programme.
- Appointed two full teams of staff (HC/AC/TM/ATM/Physio/Doc)
- Secured 10 TASS awards and launched Project Roehampton for support services and daily training in London.

Competitions

Men - Euro Championships (11/12), World Cup (10/10), World Championships (17/22)

Women – World Championships (11/12)

Men/Women – Inter Continental Cup Egypt 2012

Men/Women –Continental Cup Ukraine 2012

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London 2012 Qualification

The last chance for us to **qualify** through results for the Paralympic Games is at the Europeans Championships 2011.

To attend a Paralympic Games in the **host nation** slot we need to be endorsed by 2 organisations:

International Federation – World Organisation of Volleyball for the Disabled

National Paralympic Committee – British Paralympic Association

That endorsement is based on Great Britain Sitting Volleyball providing a credible performance in the eyes of these organisations.

Define credible?

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CHALLENGE – Marketing and Promotion

This is restricted by:

- Lack of National Media Opportunities
- Staff/Player/Volunteer time to support Regional and Local Media Opportunities
- Financial Support (for dedicated time) for PR and Marketing
- Awareness and recognition of the sitting version of the game (internal/external)
- The position of Volleyball within our sporting culture

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CHALLENGE 1 – Recruitment

CHALLENGE 2 – Retention

CHALLENGE 3 – Marketing and Promotion

Any questions...?

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