



## MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 13 June 2019

### **New film launched to celebrate disability football ahead of The FA Disability Cup**

The FA has today released an inspiring new film celebrating disability football ahead of the 2019 FA Disability Cup, which will take place at St. George's Park on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 June.

The film shines a spotlight on five grassroots disability footballers telling the story of their own individual journey into the game, from those seeking a competitive environment in which to play the game to others simply finding fun, sociable ways of keeping active.

Their stories are being shared to encourage anybody with a disability to give football a try, whether they are an elite sportsperson looking to compete in the structured game or a complete newcomer exploring new ways to be active. It is part of The FA's continued drive to improve equality, diversity and inclusion across English football at all levels through its *[In Pursuit of Progress](#)* plan.

Watch the film here [\[insert YouTube link\]](#).

The players featured in the film include:

- **Bradley Newton, Partially Sighted Footballer**
- **Cameron Osburn, Cerebral Palsy Footballer**
- **Che Gray, Amputee Footballer**
- **Darren Harris, Blind Footballer**
- **Rosie Hodgson, Powerchair Footballer**

Each of the five players will be competing at The FA Disability Cup, now in its fourth year, which will return to St. George's Park this weekend, with five finals scheduled to take place in partnership with a range of impairment-specific organisations.

Specifically, The FA will be hosting the:

- **Amputee Cup Final in partnership with England Amputee Football Association,**

- **Blind Cup Final in partnership with the National Blind Football League**
- **Cerebral Palsy Cup Final in partnership with CP Sport**
- **Partially Sighted Cup Final in partnership with the National Partially Sighted Football League**
- **Powerchair Cup Final in partnership with the Wheelchair Football Association.**

Bradley Newton, who became involved in Partially Sighted football after his eye sight was affected as a result of a stroke at the age of 16, explained his excitement, saying: “Playing at St. George’s Park is a special experience and to be able to share that with a brilliant group of team mates is fantastic. Since joining North West Scorpions I’ve not only been able to improve my own game, but I’ve made lifelong friends along the way. We’re now hoping we can take that spirit into the weekend to bring the trophy home.”

Paul Elliott, Chair of The FA’s Inclusion Advisory Board, said: “This film is a great way of celebrating disability football by demonstrating the impact the game is having on the lives of those who already play. By telling these stories, we hope to raise awareness of the opportunities that exist for all within grassroots disability football.”

This year’s event will also showcase the exhibition of a new format of 2v2 blind football which The FA is developing as a beginner friendly-format of the standard 5v5 format currently adopted within blind football.

To find out how to get involved in disability football, visit: [www.thefa.com/disability](http://www.thefa.com/disability)

[Click here](#) for more information on The 2019 FA Disability Cup

Tickets for The FA Disability Cup are available from <https://fa.ticketline.co.uk/> priced £2 for adults and £1 for juniors and concessions

-ENDS-

#### Notes:

For more information or If you would like to speak to any of the players featured in the film, please get in touch with [Lewis.Hickford@fuseint.com](mailto:Lewis.Hickford@fuseint.com)

Player biographies:

### **Bradley Newton, 22, Partially Sighted Footballer**

Bradley had a stroke at the age of 16 after an accident in a school PE lesson ruptured a blood vessel in his neck, which travelled to his brain. As a result, Bradley lost his left sided peripheral vision. The Macclesfield Eye Society introduced Bradley to the National Partially Sighted Football League which led to Bradley joining the North West Scorpions. Since then, Bradley has won two National Player of the Year Awards and two National cups while his confidence has grown as he's become more comfortable with his impairment.

### **Cameron Osburn, 18, Cerebral Palsy Footballer**

Cameron is in his second full season with the senior North East & Yorkshire Disability squad since moving up from the junior team. During his time at the club Cameron has developed into a dangerous goal scoring winger. Cameron's performances this season have seen him called up to the England U21 Cerebral Palsy Squad. Outside of playing, Cameron has set up a youth team in Harrogate to provide playing provision for young players with a disability.

### **Che Gray, 18, Amputee Footballer**

Having lost his leg a week from birth from a blood clot, Che originally started playing football at the age of four with the Southampton Pan Disability team. At 14, Che started playing for Portsmouth Amputees and training with the England Amputee youth team. Che was recently called up to the England Amputees u23s squad, and has ambitions to play on the international stage and win trophies with England.

### **Darren Harris, Blind Footballer**

Wolverhampton born Darren is a father of one. Darren has had an extraordinary career in disability sport, going to two different Paralympic Games where he competed in two different sports; Judo and Football. Darren is England's most capped male footballer at any level having played 150 times for his country scoring 34 goals.

### **Rosie Hodgson, Powerchair Footballer**

Rosie, who is currently studying for a degree in photography, began playing Powerchair Football in 2010. Rosie initially played for Norwich City PFC and won promotion to the Premiership. Rosie went on to play for Muscle Warriors (Watford) where she won the championship before joining Aspire PFC where she has now played for four seasons, successfully winning the FA Disability Cup twice. Rosie has represented Aspire in European competition at the 2016 and 2018 EPFA Nations Cup and has travelled worldwide to watch powerchair football, including Ireland, France and America.