



PRESS INFORMATION

11/08/08

STREETGAMES FESTIVAL OF SPORT COMES TO NORTH WEST

Summer festivals may traditionally be more mud and music than trainers and tabards but one major sporting event bucking that trend this August and getting the region's children active, is the **North West StreetGames festival, taking place on Friday 29th August, at Sport City.**

The North West StreetGames festival, which this year is to be attended by former **Commonwealth Champion and Olympian Diane Modahl**, will see over 1200 young people, from 19 youth sports projects across the region, take part in a multitude of different sporting challenges and activities, including athletics, basketball, futsal, handball, tri-golf, cricket, Street Cheer, skateboarding, rugby league, graffiti art, military challenge and dance performance.

The New Deal for Communities Programme are sending a strong team of 80 young people from across Hathershaw and Fitton Hill to this year's StreetGames Festival. All the youngsters, age between 8 and 18 and have been working hard all summer to prepare for the competition and are keen to show the rest of the North West what they are made of.

This is the fifth year that Team Hathershaw & Fitton Hill have competed and last year the team came back with 3 trophies and were runners up in the handball. This year the team are hoping to exceed their number of trophies and come first in the handball event. The youngsters will be accompanied and supported by 20 adult volunteers from the area. Good luck to everyone.

The festival is being sponsored by The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), the partnership organisation between the ten local authorities that make up the Greater Manchester area. For more information: www.agma.gov.uk



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The festival is an initiative established by StreetGames, the only national charity dedicated to developing sport in disadvantaged communities, as part of its ongoing programme of activity and will provide children from the North West, many of whom have little or no access to sport in their daily lives, with an exciting opportunity to compete at a major event, work as part of a team and meet other young people from across the region.

John Dwan, North West Regional Manager for StreetGames, commented: “Our aim as a charity is to bring sport to young people from all social backgrounds in a way which engages them and encourages them to make sport a regular part of their lives. We do this each year by helping local providers set up schemes and initiatives to deliver sport and activities to young people in their areas.

“The summer festivals are a hugely important part of our calendar as they give the children from these various projects the opportunity to learn what it is like to take part in a major sporting event, showcase the skills they have developed, both social and sporting, and to simply enjoy sport in the company of other young people.”

One of the biggest differences between the StreetGames festival and other sporting events is the rich diversity of activities on offer. This year the event incorporates the inaugural grass roots skateboarding competition and “Street Cheer”, a combination of contemporary Street Dance moves and Cheerleading culture. This diversity is reflective of the StreetGames philosophy that sport doesn’t have to have strict boundaries but instead can and should be delivered to young people in a way that suits them.

One person who agrees with this philosophy and who will be showing her support for competitors on the day is former Commonwealth Champion and Olympian **Diane Modahl**. Originally from the North West herself, Diane strongly believes in the charity’s work in the region and across the country. She commented: “There are two basis principles behind StreetGames, one is that sport should be available to all children regardless of social background or circumstances and the second is that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution to getting kids into sport.



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“The StreetGames festivals, which happen all across the country, address both these issues as not only do they help children access sport who may not normally be able to in their day-to-day lives, they also have such a varied range of activities on offer that those who may not even have thought of taking part in sporting activity before, suddenly have an option available that suits them.”

In addition to giving young people a great sporting opportunity, the festival is also a valuable chance for young volunteers to demonstrate their skills and learn what it takes to put on a major sporting event.

31 young volunteers (aged 16-25) from the North West, participants in the Co-operative StreetGames Young Volunteers Programme, a national initiative developed between the Co-operative Group and StreetGames to encourage young people to gain leadership, social and sports coaching skills, will assist in running the North West Regional festival on the day.

John Dwan, from StreetGames concluded: “For many children who regularly take part in StreetGames activities in their local community, or indeed help run them through the volunteering programme, the festival represents the highlight of the year. The hundreds of spectators we are expecting for this event will certainly enjoy themselves and see how successful sports development in the community can be.”

The North West StreetGames festival is managed by Sport 4 Life and is supported by the following organisations: AGMA, The Co-operative, V and youth activity specialist SHOKK.

If you would like to support teams from across the North West and attend the StreetGames festival, please contact Jill Rothwell on 0161 707 0782 or email jrothwell@mysport4life.co.uk, for full details of the event.

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Notes to editors:



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- Established in 2006, StreetGames is the only national charity dedicated to developing sport in disadvantaged communities and making sport accessible to all young people regardless of their income and social circumstances. This is achieved by supporting and establishing local projects around the UK that deliver doorstep sport, i.e. positive activities provided to young people when they want it, where they want it and how they want it.
- As a partnership organisation that works in conjunction with local providers, StreetGames ensures that local projects have the flexibility to meet the needs of their specific community, rather than forcing conformity to a 'one-size-fits-all' solution, a fact which encourages sustainable sport provision.
- StreetGames is also an active lobbying organisation with an ongoing objective of encouraging Government to invest more money in sport with disadvantaged communities.
- StreetGames is funded primarily by: Sport England, the Football Foundation, V and the Co-operative Group.



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