Celebrating 10 years, 100 countries and thousands of sporting moments with Motivation

Friday 5 April, 2019

Coinciding with **International Day of Sports for Development and Peace** tomorrow (6th April), Motivation, the disability charity and social enterprise, is celebrating ten years of making sports more accessible for disabled people around the world.

- Wheelchairs provided to over 100 countries
- Used by up to half a million people to access sport – often for the first time
- Racing wheelchair launched at London 2012 Paralympics
- Commissioned by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) to help more para-athletes from developing countries compete in sport

The IPC and their Agitos Foundation were the first to suggest that Motivation could help more para-athletes from developing countries to compete in global and grass roots competitions. Using their years of experience designing wheelchairs for developing countries, Motivation excitedly took up the challenge.

The popularity of the resulting wheelchairs led the IPC to return five years later with another request: for Motivation to design a racing wheelchair. It was launched at the London 2012 Paralympics.

Since then, Motivation sports wheelchairs have helped hundreds of thousands of disabled people to access sports – often for the first time. They are easy to use, adjust, maintain and designed to allow for varied seating positions, enabling athletes to tailor a multi-use chair to their own sporting style.

Used in rehabilitation centres, sports clubs, schools and universities, as well as in international development programmes each wheelchair might see 20 different users or more each week. No other sports wheelchair we've seen can cope with that level of prolonged use and multiple users.

The most recent wheelchair design, the Multisport, allows a person to use a single wheelchair for different sports: they can play tennis or cricket in the morning, then basketball or touch rugby in the afternoon. It is currently displayed at London's Design Museum, demonstrating its appeal as a functional but well admired design.

David Constantine MBE, Co-Founder of Motivation, comments:

"Motivation has seen exactly how sport empowers children, families and communities while tackling prejudice and importantly, improving health and well-being. That's why the International Day of Sports for Development and Peace is the perfect time to celebrate all we've achieved since 2009. By designing and producing sports wheelchairs that can be used by beginners and aspiring para-athletes alike, we are working towards a world where people with disability are included and fully participate in every aspect of life."

Motivation's sports wheelchairs were part of a successful programme in Uganda that used sport to challenge discrimination and promote inclusion. Denis was a young participant who found a passion for wheelchair basketball as a result of the project. He told us:

"It makes me feel good! I now have more friends; I am better known; getting skilful and hope to play in the Paralympics! Disability is not an inability. If you are disabled you can still do something better in your life like I have done!"

Here in the UK Motivation sports chairs serve a dual purpose. Sold to individuals and sports clubs through its social enterprise the profit from sales is fed back into Motivation's charitable work in East Africa and South Asia.

As a fit and healthy young man who took part in regular sport Steve's life was irrevocably turned upside down when he was involved in a serious accident. He describes participating in sport coming to an abrupt halt and for 15 years thinking of sport as a thing of the past until he discovered a Motivation Flying Start. The impact was immediate:

"I had [my Flying Start] assembled in a few minutes and out I went. It felt right from the start, I was out

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there flying along, well it felt like that to me anyway. Within a month I was taking part in my first 10k race, better yet I finished it. That was all I needed, I had been bitten by the bug. The next year I entered the Cardiff Bay 10K. I will never win a race, I'm not what you would call a spring chicken, but just being [involved] is fantastic. I don't know what life would be like without my Motivation chair, but I know it would not be as good."

Michael, 8, one of Motivation's youngest Multisport users, said:

"As soon as I got my sports wheelchair, I tested it on the street outside. It was the fastest I'd ever gone! My Multisport is just brilliant – I use it on the playground and PE at school is much easier. "I've started playing basketball with my school friends… and now I've joined Warwickshire Bears wheelchair basketball club. I train every week!"

Ends

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Notes for editors:

1. Motivation is a Bristol-based international development charity and social enterprise. As well as designing and manufacturing their own special range of wheelchairs, Motivation provides training and practical support to ensure that individuals develop confidence, self-esteem and skills to use their wheelchair. They also help disabled people, their families and communities to fight stigma and understand their rights. Last year their work had a direct benefit on the lives of 19,000 people and a further 87,000 disabled people were reached through their work influencing the product design and practices of others.

2. Motivation sports wheelchairs are sold through the social enterprise and all profit goes back into their charitable work.

3. The Agitos Foundation is the development arm of International Paralympic Committee (IPC). Since 2012, it has become the leading global organisation for developing Para sport as a tool for changing lives and contributing to an inclusive society for all. https://www.paralympic.org/agitos-foundation/

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