Local Youth keep moving forward – Parkour's formal recognition as a Sport

Tuesday 11 April, 2017

Members of The Showroom Parkour Club are looking to the future with excitement after Parkour, the discipline of movement, has now been officially recognised as a sport by the UK's Sports Councils.

The formal recognition of Parkour/Freerunning as a sport came on Tuesday, January 10, 2017, announced by the Minister for Sport, Tracey Crouch, at Westminster Academy's L.E.A.P. Park – currently the UK's largest outdoor Parkour and FreeRunning facility.

"I want people to get out there and find the sport and physical activity that appeals to them and Parkour is certainly a fun, creative and innovative option" said Tracey.

"I am pleased that it has been recognised as a sport… The sport promotes movement and using the great outdoors as a space to get active in and I encourage people to don their trainers and give it a go."

Joe Hicks, Head Coach for The Showroom Parkour Club, explains his definition of Parkour;

"Parkour, also known as FreeRunning or by the original French name of 'L'art Du Déplacement', is the discipline of navigating obstacles through efficient and controlled movement relevant to an individual."

He describes Parkour as closer to a Martial Art; "we teach all of our students as individuals, aiming to develop general physical literacy, but also self-restraint and the individuals' 'vision' – their ability to confidently understand their own physical abilities and limits."

"We run over a dozen sessions a week, coaching over one hundred and fifty young people with particular experience in SEND+, Youth Engagement and Alternative Education provision."

"Our sessions encourage participation in non-competitive physical activity, creativity, problem solving, and self-awareness whilst continuing to build our friendly, respectful pro-social community of young, next-generation Traceurs*!" (*Parkour Practitioners)

Throughout Parkour's massive growth over the past two decades, the media coverage of the sport has led to controversy and misinterpretation of what the sport actually is.

"It is not the extreme sport everyone thinks it is… Yes, you'll see athletes doing big stunts on TV, flipping over buildings for the media, but what you won't see in the mainstream media is the hard work that got them there; the thousands of hours spent training, repeating those jumps and conditioning their bodies."

"Anyone can jump off something big, but that doesn't mean they're doing Parkour… A Parkour practitioner is more likely to say 'not today' and step away than to take a silly risk."

The sport has recently been targeted at the 'over-60's' demographic by The Parkour Dance Company based in London, with sessions focused around maintaining mobility and reducing hospital fall admissions.

The Showroom Parkour Club hopes to offer similar opportunities outside of its regular clubs, and has recently announced it will be taking part and hosting a Parkour 'Jam' for the international 'WeJumpTheWorld Day' – an annual event to recognise and promote Parkour.

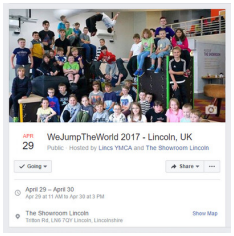
The club's WeJumpTheWorld Event will be offering a number of one-off community workshops, specifically aimed at; under-fives, parents with children, and the older generation. A speed-competition as well as training and conditioning opportunities for regular members will also be on offer.

"We're really excited to be able to introduce Parkour to a much wider audience…" says Joe,

"These are the first Parkour sessions of their kind to be delivered in Lincolnshire, and we can't wait to see new groups of local people exploring how they can move."

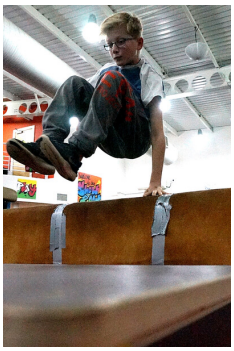
Information about the #WeJumpTheWorld Lincoln, UK event, visit:
www.facebook.com/events/212257422588416

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