



ALWEN HOUGH JOHNSON PARTNERING WITH GREAT BRITAIN WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

Wheelchair rugby is about inspirational people, it's about courage, integrity, trust, and teamwork, it's about community, and inclusiveness and the extraordinary human capacity to embrace challenge and seek the positive.



Wheelchair Rugby is a London 2012 legacy success story. GBWR has grown the sport from 7- 23 teams in 4 years, delivers programmes in all military rehabilitation centres, Spinal Injury Units and as part of Premiership Club Foundations at Saracens, Harlequins, Gloucester, Exeter, Northampton Leicester Tigers, Bristol, and Sale. Sport England recognised this success with an award of £1.4M in 2017 over 4 years, whilst this is ring-fenced for grassroots programmes it provides the confidence and resource to ensure that the sport continues to thrive. In addition to a healthy club scene which sees teams compete against each other in a league system, GB also leads a Youth Programme in partnership with the Lord's Taverners charity. There are 10 youth teams regularly playing wheelchair rugby and in 2018 over 130 young people played the game.





GB Team

The GB national team are the current European Champions and ranked 5th in the world. They narrowly missed the semi-finals in the Rio Paralympic games having lost to the eventual gold medallists Australia in extra time in the group stage. They have recently competed in the King Power Quad Nations where they defeated the USA who were the eventual tournament winners and ranked No 2 in the world. As has been widely reported, UK Sport took the decision not to fund the GB Wheelchair Rugby team for the 4 year Tokyo cycle 2017-2021. Although UK Sport agreed that GBWR had the potential to medal in Tokyo it argued it does not have sufficient resources to invest in all sports and that wheelchair rugby is below the investment cut off point. GBWR appealed but the original UK Sport decision not to invest was upheld. This means that GBWR faced the challenge of raising £750k per year for 4 years to fund the GB national team. This is required to:

- provide a small living allowance to the 15 athletes who form the programme, without which at least half of them will be on disability benefit
- fund domestic training facilities – e.g. hire costs of training centre and accommodation
- fund performance and medical staff (services contracts based on days used)
- fund travel, accommodation, subsistence costs for training against top 4 teams in the world – Japan, Australia, Canada, USA
- fund travel, accommodation, subsistence and entrance charges for international competitions including the 2018 World Championships in Australia, the 2019 European Championships and World Rugby Challenge which is held in parallel with the Rugby World Cup, and the Tokyo Paralympic Games in 2020
- fund equipment, consumables and kit costs e.g. an elite chair costs circa £6000





We have joined others in the Lloyd's of London insurance market to support GB and to ensure the team gets to the Tokyo games. We at Alwen Hough Johnson pride ourselves on the calibre of our people. As a business we invest in high calibre individuals and teams who have the skills and values to deliver the best for our customers. In GB Wheelchair Rugby we see a team of athletes who embody the qualities we as a company strive always to achieve: courage, commitment, integrity, trust, and teamwork. Each individual athlete has embraced the opportunity to play the game and faced up to the challenges that has presented for them. Stuart whose vehicle hit an IED whilst he was serving in the RAF Regiment in Afghanistan and who suffered life changing injuries; Chris, our Captain who was a young professional golfer and who was starting to make his name on the circuit when he became paralysed in a car accident on the way home from a golf tournament; and Jim who contracted meningitis at University, was in hospital for a year and had both his legs amputated and other parts of his body, yet still went on to get a 1st class honours degree in architecture. All have picked themselves up and gone on to become elite athletes, undertaking the same demanding performance and competition programmes as any able bodied Olympian.



These athletes demonstrate the power we all have to achieve the unthinkable and we at Alwen Hough Johnson are proud to partner with them.