

**News release**

**Monday June 19th 2017**

Special Olympics athlete Ricky gets fundraiser up and running

Special Olympics Norfolk athlete Ricky Brown is aiming to finish with a flourish on his final day as a student at Yarmouth’s East Coast College on Friday week (June 30th).

The 22-year-old is heading up a sponsored 5 km shuttle relay to raise funds for the Norfolk squad going to the Special Olympics GB National Games at Sheffield in August for athletes with intellectual or learning disabilities.

Ricky’s Funracing Relay starts at 11 a.m. on part of the Gorleston Cliffs parkrun and involves teams of five runners, each member completing a 1 km leg. Ricky and his friends can be sponsored via Virgin Money Giving: RickysFunRacing5kmRelay.

“It’s Ricky’s final year and last day of college so it will be a celebration of his time there and one of the sports he loves,” said Kay Bailey of Special Olympics Norfolk (SON). “He was eager to fundraise in some way for the National Games and after chatting with his mum and his college tutor, Phil Worlledge, who is a great supporter of SON, we thought this would be a really fun and inclusive way of achieving his aim.”

 Ricky’s mum Denise said: “Ricky had to overcome a lifetime of entrenched fears about trusting new people, strange places and fears of crowds to get involved in SON. He now has an active role in sports at college and with SON and Great Yarmouth Athletics Club.

 “He has competed in local and regional events and is extremely excited about competing at national level in August. It is a huge achievement.”

Ricky, of Caister Road, Yarmouth, has been training with SON for three years and has competed in regional events at Boston and Ipswich, winning medals each time. He recently took part in Special Olympics events at the Norfolk Athletics Championships, winning bronze in the mini javelin.

 At the National Games he will be competing in the 100 metres, long jump and mini javelin events as part of a 28-strong Norfolk squad representing Special Olympics Eastern Region.

He is being sponsored for the games by former Norfolk County Council chairman and keen athletics supporter Rex Parkinson-Hare.

Ricky joined the mainstream Great Yarmouth Athletics Club in March and trains with them on Thursday evenings at Wellesley Road.

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Kay Bailey said: “Among our aims is to provide a pathway for our more able athletes into more competitive sport, raise awareness of SON athletes in mainstream clubs and encourage more inclusivity. We hope Ricky’s example will go some way towards making that happen.”

To find out more visit:  <http://www.specialolympicsnorfolk.com>

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For further information: Kay Bailey 07825 778173 or Tom Walshe 07799 048405

**Notes:**

**Special Olympics Norfolk** is a county branch of Special Olympics Great Britain. It was originally formed around 15 years ago, and relaunched in 2013. It is one of 6 branches in the Eastern Region, along with East Herts, Essex, Peterborough, Suffolk and St Albans. **SON** currently supports around 70 registered athletes with about 120 training regularly and the numbers are growing. It offers 7 sports: Alpine skiing, athletics, artistic gymnastics, boccia, cricket, football and swimming.

On 13 June 2017 at 17:21, Kay Bailey <kbailey23@me.com> wrote:

Afternoon Tom

Thats sounds a fab idea

I have copied Denise Ricky’s mum so she can correct the below and add her spin on things too…..

and also Phil Worlledge for his angle….

Michael…would you pick 3 or 4 fab action and personal shots of Ricky…..

Heres a bit of detail….in no particular order !!

Ricky is just 22.(i think !!) Confirmed !

Ricky has been coming to SON Friday athletics session for around 3 years.

He so enjoyed his first year with us that he persuaded his Gt Yarmouth college students friends to bring a mini bus of them for a year a couple of years ago as part of the sports foundation course curriculum…It was a great success. His tutor at Gt Yarmouth College Phil Worlledge is a great supporter of SON and what we are trying to achieve...

One of our aims is to provide a pathway for our more able athletes into more competitive sport and raise awareness of SON athletes in mainstream clubs and encourage more inclusivity. In march this year Ricky joined the GYAC mainstream athletics club and trains on a Thursday evening at Wellesley Road in Gt Yarmouth. Alan Jones and his coach John Barwick tells me he has settle in well.

He has recently invested in his first set of spikes and is excited about competing in them !!

       Ricky’s mum Denise says ..”Ricky had to overcome a lifetime of entrenched fears about trusting new people, strange places and fears of crowds to get involved in SON. He now has an active role in sports at college, athletics with SON and GYAC.He has competed in local and regional events and is extremely excited about competing at National level in August. It is a huge achievement. "

We hope others will follow Ricky’s example in due course.

Ricky has competed in a few regional SO events in Boston and Ipswich over the last 3 years , winning medals each time

He competed at the recent Norfolk Athletics championships and came away with a Bronze.

He is competing at the National Games in Sheffield in the 100m sprint, Long jump and Mini Javelin.

He is very competitive and loves winning and fame…he is desperate to appear in the paper- always has been !!

He was eager to fundraise in some way for the National Games and after chatting with his Mum, Phil Worlledge his college tutor we thought this would be a really fun inclusive way of fundraising. It is Ricky’s last year and last day of college on Fri 30th June so it will be a celebration of his time there and one of the sports he loves

Ricky has been sponsored to go to the National Games by Rex  Parkinson - Hare former head of Norfolk County Council, his borough is Gt Yarmouth and is an enthusiastic athletics supporter so was thrilled that one of athletes going to the Games comes from Yarmouth

SON are eager to encourage athletic organisations in the Yarmouth area to offer athletics for people with learning disabilities under the SO banner. We hope this will go some way to raising awareness and making this happen.

Details of the run…

It will be a shuttle relay on the promenade part of the Gorleston Cliffs Park run. a team of 5 runners each taking on a 1km leg of the relay.

Meet 10.30am  at  JayJays cafe on the promenade. Run begins at 11am

Here is the flyer and sponsor form for more info….