



T3 3-a-Side Academy, holds Whizz-Kidz Event in Swansea

The T3 Academy recently organised an event for disabled children's charity Whizz-Kidz. We sent our coach Hewley Griffith down to Swansea to give young wheelchair users some 'one on one' T3 training, and for some, it was the first time they had picked up a bat.

Para players are no stranger to Hewley who has been coaching some of the UK's best for over a decade now. But this group made their own mark on our international coach. "The kids were so excited to see the round T3 table and had great fun using it. It was difficult for them at the start because they were complete beginners and hadn't played T3 or traditional table tennis before, but the progress and feedback was amazing! They said they wanted to continue playing because it was so much FUN, helping them with their co-ordination and they can play with all their friends at the same time - that was a big plus for the teenagers" reported Hewley who went on to say "They also found it was perfect for wheelchairs because they don't have to cover large distances. In short they all, without exception wanted to play more and wanted me to come back and work with them on improving their co-ordination and skills!"

After the session we asked some of the young players what they thought:

Sarah said: *'I'd never played before but I had a lot of fun and I would really like to develop my skills and get better. It really works well for me being in a chair and I wish there were more places where we could gather and play more often.'*

Dave said: *'Thank you T3 and AFS for taking the time organise this event and come all the way here. Hewley has been so patient with us and teaching us how to play. I think it's an amazing game and I want to keep playing. At first I couldn't hit the ball at all, but you have been patient enough to help me find the correct timing and now I am doing much better - I am hitting the ball! There aren't many places where we can gather and play, I would really like to have one of these tables in the youth club.'*

Q&A with Arron Ring, Whizz-Kidz Regional Services Co-ordinator, South Wales

1) What was the general opinion of T3?

All agreed it was great social activity and fun. The table is a good height for a wheelchair user and allows people with different abilities/disabilities to play together. Because the table is round and wide we can hit together and swap places more.

2) How was it for them in their wheelchair?

It was fine, plenty of space and height, and because it has a hard net the ball bounces back to you so it didn't get stuck and they didn't have to reach in all the time!

3) Would they like to play again?

Yes PLEASE!

4) What was it like compared to playing on a traditional table tennis table?

Personally I thought it was better in our type of setting purely because of the social aspect, it seemed more of a fun activity rather than a competitive one. Both myself, other staff and the young people thought it definitely has good potential for wheelchair users, as it is it is great for those with good arm/hand mobility but we thought there is definitely potential for others to play with slightly adapted equipment.

5) What suggestion would you make to improve the game?

Lots of balls, we like playing with lot of orange balls!

For more information or if you would like to plan your own wheelchair or disability T3 event contact Jason:

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