

A GIFT OF RUNNING

Rio Woolf, aged 4, finished 2012 on a high. He received what his mother describes as the perfect gift - the ability to run.

Born without a tibia, knee or ankle joint, Rio had his lower right leg amputated at 14 months. Three years on, like many little boys, Rio dreams of following in the footsteps of his sporting idol, Jonnie Peacock. Now the British hero has improved Rio's chances of following in his footsteps.

Rio first met the Gold medalist at a filming promo for Limb Powers Sport Fest - an open weekend event set up by the British Paralympic Association (BPA) to encourage disabled youngsters to take up sport.

Touched by the youngster's enthusiasm for the Summer Paralympics, the blade runner put Rio's parents in contact with Dorset Orthopaedic. This prompted Bob Watts, managing director at the Dorset based clinic to set about securing sponsorship for an Össur running blade. In fact, he decided to donate the prosthetic socket himself.

A wonderful Christmas present, Rio was soon bouncing for joy as he was being fitted with a lightweight carbon-fibre blade decorated with his favourite character Fireman Sam.

Juliette Woolf, Rio's mother said "London 2012 transformed Rio's life - from being downhearted about not being able to run as fast as his friends earlier in the year, he was then inspired and motivated watching "people with special legs running."

"We took Rio along to the Paralympic Primary Games for children and he loved participating, even with his NHS leg. He showed he



loved to run.

The delighted mother said: "My husband and I are incredibly thankful to Dorset Orthopaedic and we are hugely indebted to them for giving Rio this amazing opportunity. Now there is nothing stopping him."

As a result Rio's mother has started a fundraising campaign so Rio can continue wearing the blades as he grows and needs replacements.

"Rio can now run, jump and play football and get involved with Paralympic sport that much earlier. He has a better quality of life and a new sense of freedom and movement."

www.dorset-ortho.com
www.ossur.co.uk



SPORTS FEST

ParalympicsGB held the first ever Sports Fest in Surrey on December 3 and 4, 2012. It was a great success with over 1000 people attending.

The days allowed young disabled people to come a try out new sports and some of the Paralympians were also on hand, signing autographs, chatting with the attendees and getting pictures taken.

Hailed a great success by everyone, Tim Holligsworth, Chief Executive of the BPA, commented,

"I am delighted with how people have responded to the event over the past two days. The festival has achieved our ambition to inspire people of all ages to try different sports. We have had lots of positive feedback and we are looking forward to hosting similar festivals in 2013."

More Sports Fest events will be taking place throughout the year across the UK, to be kept up to date with when and where these events will be, visit www.paralympics.org.uk/sportsfest.