



News Release

Army veteran bound for Invictus Games joins run as part of city Sport Festival

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A disabled Army veteran who has found sport is helping him re-build his life will take part in a run in Derby on Wednesday.

Andy Carlton from Swadlincote will join an event held by Shelton Striders Running Club as part of the Festival of Sport organised by Derby City Sport Forum.

He will take part in a 3k run through Darley Park with volunteers from the club. The event is one of a number of events offered by clubs and venues to get people off couches and try sport and exercise to boost a healthier lifestyle.

Andy's run will help his training as he has been selected as the only veteran from Derbyshire in the 72-strong British team to take part in this year's Invictus Games.

The Games, started and supported by Prince Harry, are for wounded, injured and sick military personnel and veterans and empower individuals to re-build their confidence, fulfil their potential and regain purpose through sport. Athletes will take part in 11 sports in Sydney, Australia, in October.

Andy was a staff sergeant with the Queen's Royal Lancers until he was medically discharged in 2013. He was serving in Afghanistan when he was injured by an improvised explosive device which left him with multiple injuries including the loss of his left leg.

Now 40 and working as an enforcement agent he has found that sport has given him a new purpose in life.

"It has definitely helped my mental wellbeing," he said. "Last September I joined my local Taekwondo club and since then I have completed three belt gradings. This is something I really enjoy, but it can be challenging at times as I am disadvantaged by the limited movement of my prosthetic leg.

"I have also recently joined my local running club to help build my fitness. I aspire to work up to half marathons and maybe one day compete in the London Marathon.

"This run in Darley Park will help my training, particularly in this heat, and running with a different group will boost my social confidence."

Ann Scott, of Help the Heroes said: "Many of our wounded, injured and sick veterans miss the camaraderie of the military; being able to take part in physical activity in this way should be really good fun for all and enable them to feel part of a team again."

Pascale Holden, who chairs Shelton Striders, said: "We hear that running is helping Andy to build for the future and we are delighted that he is able to join us and hope that he enjoys it."

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City Sport Forum chair Ian Cotter said: "It is great that Andy can take part in this Festival event and show what he can do, despite his disability. I hope that other people will join and try this free event or cheer on Andy to support him as he uses sport so positively."

The run starts at 6pm from the front of the activity barn near the car park at the Darley Abbey village end of the park.

Details of all the events and venues are on Facebook page [Derby Festival of Sport](#).