



REPORT FROM THE 2023 WESTFIELD HEALTH BRITISH TRANSPLANT GAMES 2023

The British Transplant Games are a celebration of life and have been staged annually since 1978 in 17 host cities across the UK including Portsmouth (1994), Edinburgh (2007), Belfast (1998) Medway (2012), Sheffield (2013), Bolton (2014), NewcastleGateshead (2015), Liverpool (2016), North Lanarkshire (2017), Birmingham (2018), Newport (2019), Leeds (2022) and Coventry (2023).

Taking place in different host cities every Summer, the games see teams from hospitals across the UK come together to compete in a medley of sports. The 4-day event attracts around 1000 transplant athletes and more than 1700 supporters.

An inclusive Games: Transplant survivors including children as young as five can compete in more than 25 sports and indeed, many athletes also go on to compete at the World Transplant Games.

About the Games: The Games are organised on behalf of Transplant Sport whose aim is to raise awareness of the need for organ donation, encourage transplant recipients to lead active lifestyles and show appreciating for, and remember, donors and their families.

The British Transplant Games also help to increase the awareness of Anthony Nolan and their need for blood stem cells and bone marrow donation.

This year saw the Devon and Cornwall Transplant Team (DCTT) compete together under its new name (formally Plymouth Transplant Team and Exeter Transplant Team) This team is open to all transplant recipients who live or have been transplanted in Devon and Cornwall.

The Westfield Health British Transplant Games 2023 took place, in Coventry, from 27 July 2023 to 30 July 2023 with DCTT attending with six competitors (including an altruistic live donor) and seven supporters. Most of the team stayed at the Bluebell Halls of Residence located within Warwick University and near to where many of the sporting and social events took place.

Day 1 - Thursday saw Paul and Martin take part in Volleyball at the Sport and Wellness Hub. They were put together in a mixed team with competitors from other hospitals. There was only one full hospital team, Nottingham, and 3 mixed teams. DCTT will be aiming to develop its own team in the future with plans for open/training days for anyone interested. If interested please email the team at joinus@transplantees.co.uk

After some great competition Paul and Martin made the final against a strong and organised Nottingham team and didn't quite get over the line but won a well-earned silver medal each.



Paul and Martin – Silver Medal Volleyball

That evening DCTT attended the Opening Ceremony in Coventry city centre which gave the team chance to show off their new kit (polo shirts sponsored by Summerskills) and for Sharon the newest member of the team to take on the role of carrying our new team name banner.



Opening Ceremony 2023

The opening ceremony is usually an emotional evening and Coventry did not disappoint. The muster point for the parade was in the amazing setting of the ruins of Coventry Cathedral. The parade, which gives the opportunity for the games to promote the power of organ donation, went through the streets of Coventry past statue of Lady Godiva finishing on Broadgate where the opening ceremony formalities took place. The teams enter the arena in alphabetical order and as we are now DCTT this means we were one of the first teams and get an front row position for the ceremony. One of the most moving parts of the ceremony was a poem written and read by a sister of a transplant recipient. The poem was written for her brother's donor. To listen to this poem please visit <https://youtu.be/VTCxDiW4L1c?si=NXS-787nWWQuzI0x>

Day 2 – Friday saw Sharon taking part in her first event – the obstacle relay race in which she won a hard-earned gold medal. Friday also saw the first day that supporters could take part in events such as wall climbing and mini-tennis.



Sharon – Gold in Obstacle Race



Olivia – Rock Climbing



Issac and Samuel – Mini Tennis

Friday evening saw a children's social event as well as an adult social event. The children's event was held at a waterpark in Coventry – The Wave – which some of our younger members enjoyed, whereas for the adults it was a loud shirt disco, which coincided with the Darts Competition. The loud shirt part of the evening was established for all to have the opportunity to remember their donors by wearing something bright.

Day 3 - Saturday marked one of the busiest days with the Swimming (Louise), Badminton doubles (Paul), football (Martin & Ryan) and the Donor Run (Martin, Louise, Claire, Olivia, Issac and Samuel) taking place.

Paul had an early start in the badminton doubles and with a new partner managed to win a couple of matches, but did not progress through to the semi-final. Martin and Ryan were paired together in a mixed six-a-side football team and after some serious competition were not quite strong enough to make it through to the finals.

The afternoon saw the swimming take place with Louise out on the hunt for medals. Louise took part in four events and won 2 Golds and 2 silvers with is a fantastic achievement.



Paul – Badminton



Louise – Swimming



Louise 2 Golds / 2 Silver

After the events of the day there was even more to come with the Donor Run taking place in the War Memorial Park. The donor run turned out to be the biggest ever with over 500 entries on the day. DCTT had six people taking part and all completed either the 2.5k or the 5k course.



Martin – Donor Run



Sharon – Donor Run



Claire / Olivia – Donor Run



Issac / Samuel – Donor Run

And when you think a Saturday could not get any busier it was time for the DCTT team meal. After a last-minute cancellation by the restaurant, it was decided that we would get together at the Halls of Residence with a pit stop at Asda and a quickly arranged pizza delivery. Still wearing our team kit, one member of the team, whilst walking round Asda was asked where things were kept on more than once occasion. Looking at the Asda advert we now know why



That's Asda price

Day 4 - Sunday marked another busy day with the athletics (Martin, Steve and Sharon) and tennis singles (Paul) taking place.

Paul was first up winning gold in a tough tennis singles competition followed by Sharon taking part in the live donor 100m who ran a great race in rainy conditions but just missed out on a medal.



Paul – Gold Tennis Singles



Sharon – Live Donor 100m

Martin took part in two athletic field events (Javelin & Ball Throw) winning two excellent silver medals.



Martin – Silver medals in Javelin & Ball Throw

Our final competitor Steve had waited three days to compete and was raring to go. He is a seasoned competitor and came away with a fantastic four gold medals (100m, 200m, 400m and High Jump).



Steve (4135) – Gold 100m

The finale to the games is the Gala Celebration which took place within Warwick University. The team donned their finest attire and danced til the early hours.

