

Six Scottish teams to take part in prestigious Walking Football tournament in Portugal



Six Scottish teams will take part in this year's prestigious Walking Football tournament at Brown's Sport and Leisure complex in Vilamoura, Portugal.

The 53,000 square meter complex is considered Europe's premier warm weather training resort which facilitates training for sports teams of all levels and disciplines.


The tournament will take place on 6/7th October and is for players aged over 50 with 20 minute games played on 3G and grass pitches.

Tullibody Reds and Carnoustie Panmuir have both been drawn in Group A alongside Browns WF, Mansfield Reds 'A' and Chesterton Crusaders 'A',

Tullibody Blues are in Group B with Tavira WF, Mansfield Reds 'B', Chesterton Crusaders 'B' and West Lincs.

Hearts 56 who are currently top of the Scottish Walking Football league are in Group C with Olhao 'A'. Stamerton Stalkers Navy, Canterbury City and Thanet Barbarians.

Hearts 98 and Tweedvale are in Group D alongside Olhao 'B', Stamerton Stalkers Black and Derby County.

 Gary McLaughlin, Chairman of Walking Football Scotland said: "Good luck and safe journey to all the Scottish team competing in this tournament. I am sure that everyone will

enjoy the experience of playing in the warm weather at the excellent facilities at Brown's complex and make many new friends in the Walking Football community from throughout Europe.

"Whilst tournaments are great fun for those who enjoy the competitive side of the game, I should point out that the vast majority who play walking football do so purely for the fun of kicking a ball again and the social aspect of the sessions are probably more important than the results.

"It is also a great way to get or stay fit and I would urge anyone to take up the sport whatever their level of ability or fitness. Hundred's of sessions take place throughout the country each week and new members are always made welcome."

Current Scottish Cup holders [Midlothian](#) were the first Scottish team to take part, two years ago and reached the quarter final and since then a number of others have followed their lead. The popularity of the event has now seen the participants rise from eight to twenty.

Walking Football has seen a massive surge in popularity in recent years with teams and projects developing in settings from football clubs, local authorities, community groups, sports clubs and in healthcare settings.

The sport is aimed at keeping people aged over 50 involved with football if, due to a lack of mobility or for other reason, they are not able to play the traditional game.

Though based on association football, the key difference in the rules, from standard football, is that if a player runs then they concede a free kick to the other side. This restriction, together with a ban on slide tackles, is aimed both at avoiding injuries and facilitating the playing of the sport by those who are physically disadvantaged.

Walking Football also has the potential to improve people's

lives. Benefits include increased physical activity, improved mental health and wellbeing, access to additional sources of support and the opportunity to form new friendships for those living in isolation.

Hundreds of men and women take part in sessions throughout the country from Gretna to Fort William and regular tournaments are held both locally and nationally.