

## Access to ....Games (Part One)

### Introduction

In the first part of this article on Games, we look at equipment which enables disabled children, young people and adults to take part in sporting activities, and which is particularly useful in inclusive settings. In the next issue, Part Two will look at games, both cooperative and competitive, which are played with little or no equipment.

All prices quoted exclude VAT and carriage charges.

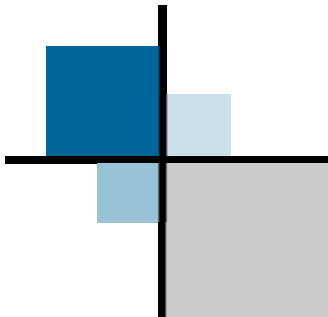
### Balls

Balls are an essential part of any games kit, and we need to make sure that we have balls that are suitable for a range of abilities. It is likely that balls will be used on different coloured surfaces - wood, carpet, tarmac, etc - so we need a selection of balls of different colours, to ensure a good contrast between ball and floor. A ball with a pattern of spots or stripes will help someone with visual or perceptual difficulties to judge whether the ball is moving, and in which direction.

Balls with sounds will help visually impaired players to locate the ball. The Wiggly Giggly Ball<sup>1</sup> (£12.95 each) makes an interesting giggling noise which is very motivating. The Jingle Trainer<sup>1</sup> (£16.95 each) is a 27cm diameter, lightweight ball containing loud bells, which is ideal for football and other games.

The Spordas Sensation Ball<sup>1</sup> (£5.99 each) is a soft inflatable ball containing two harder balls. These can be seen and heard, but can also be felt rolling over the palm of the hand and vibrating. The ball can be used for throwing, catching and rolling games but it is also enjoyed as a sensory experience by people with complex needs.

Rubber Flex GrabBalls<sup>1</sup> (three sizes, £15.95 to £27.95 for set of six) are very easy to catch and pick up, and can be used for a variety of games. GrabBalls are also available singly,



Jingle Trainer

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under the name of Flexi Ball<sup>3</sup> (£4.95 or £9.95). Dino Eggs<sup>1</sup> (£9.99 for set of 3) are ideal for target games. They have a limited bounce and will always settle with the grab side up, making them easy to pick up and handle.

Learning to catch small balls is even more difficult! Catchtail<sup>2</sup> (£3.95 each) and Numbered Tail Ball<sup>1</sup> (£2.95 each) are both soft balls with brightly coloured fabric tails which make judging the direction and speed of the ball easier and increase the chance of catching it.

It can be hard to find the original Koosh Balls nowadays - so many of them have been produced as characters with hard plastic heads and limbs, which hurt if the ball hits you! Koosh are ideal for throwing and catching, and for target games as they don't bounce or roll. Prices vary: Koosh<sup>1</sup> (£16.95 for set of 5), Koosh<sup>2</sup> (£2.95 each, £24.00 set of 10).

Hacky Sacks<sup>2</sup> (£2.75 each) are 11cm diameter, rubber "balls" that are easy to catch or pick up, don't hurt and don't travel too far.

### Bean bags

Various animal bean bags are available, covered with soft vinyl material and filled with plastic pellets: Dog Bean Bags<sup>1</sup> (£9.99 for set of 6), Bean Bag Zoo<sup>1</sup> £52.99 for 36 assorted animals); Shakin' Turtle<sup>1</sup> (£9.99 for set of 6) incorporates a shaker. Commercial fabrics bean bags never seem to be strong enough - making your own means that you can make them the size and shape you want, using strong fabric and varying the filling (aquarium gravel, sand, plastic beads, polystyrene beads) for different tactile and weight experiences.

### Frisbees

Soft versions of Frisbee are available in the catalogues but it is also worth checking out pet shops for dog Frisbees, which are often soft, interesting textures, and don't fly too far!



Spordas Sensation Ball



(clockwise from left)  
Dino Eggs, Large and Small Rubber Flex GrabBalls, Rubber Hacky Sacks

## Access to ....Games (cont.)

### Games



Flipball

Flipball<sup>2</sup> (£8.75 per set) is an enjoyable game for two players - the easy to hold fabric “pads” are used to launch and catch the tennis ball, and the game has its own drawstring bag for storage. Some players may find it easier to use a Koosh ball to start with. Spordas Mono-Fling<sup>1</sup> (£9.99 per set) is a similar idea, although some players may find the nets more difficult to control. Both games can be played individually as well as in pairs.

Spordas Fling-It<sup>1</sup> (£14.95 per set) is a larger version. Each net can be held by two players, with two handles each, or four players with one handle each. The net can be used for bouncing balls, which then develops into a team game, passing the ball from one net to the other.



Spordas Mono-Fling

Spordas Float-R's<sup>1</sup> (£49.95 for set of 3) are giant shapes - pyramid, cube and cylinder - made from tightly stitched nylon with a short zip. When filled with air (a hairdryer is the easiest way), the shapes are easy to lift and manoeuvre. Fun for any age group, encouraging interaction and cooperation. Must be used under supervision and with some ground rules (the stitching on the seams won't survive a large person throwing themselves on the inflated shape!). The Giant Air Ball<sup>2</sup> (£19.95 each) is a large nylon ball, 90cm when inflated, which is easy to throw and catch as it moves slowly through the air.

### Adapted games



Spordas Fling-It

2 Dimensional Boules<sup>2</sup> (£6.99 per set) is a clever variation on the idea of boules or bowls. Instead of round balls there are thick plastic discs in four colours, and a smaller white “Jack” disc. The discs are much easier to hold and throw, making the game more successful in an inclusive setting. As with all Edventure's games, there is a drawstring storage bag to keep the pieces of the game safe.

## Access to ....Games (cont.)

Remember when you started to play rounders as a child? How on earth were you expected to hit the ball with a small round bat, when your friend wasn't very good at bowling the ball and you had no idea what direction or speed to expect? Players with visual difficulties or coordination problems will find that the Up Rite Safe Tee<sup>1</sup> (£22.95 each) will enable them to join in such games. The ball rests on the top of the height-adjustable tee, which has a weighted base so that it always returns to the upright position.

Also useful is the Spordas Swing-N-Fling<sup>1</sup> (£9.99 each) - the bat has an internal scoop which will propel a ball out of the hole when the bat is swung. This enables the player to learn to control the direction, speed, height and distance of the released ball.

Mini Polybat<sup>1</sup> (£21.95 per set) is an adapted form of table tennis. The plastic bat is held in contact with the table and used to push the ball along the table (without a net in place). This is easier than playing the conventional way, as the player only has to judge the direction and speed of the rolling ball, rather than the height and direction of a bouncing ball. The set includes 2 polybats, an airflow ball and batgloves to help players who cannot grip the handle of the bat.

### And finally...

Referee's whistles are useful for all sorts of games, but they are not the most hygienic of things are they? Squistle<sup>1</sup> (£7.45 each) is the answer - a whistle held in a soft plastic casing which, when squeezed, will blow the whistle!

### Suppliers

1. Davies Sports, phone 0845 120 4515 or visit [www.daviessports.co.uk](http://www.daviessports.co.uk)
2. Edventure Playtime Games, phone 01323 50 10 40 or visit [www.edventure.co.uk](http://www.edventure.co.uk)
3. Spacecraft, phone 01274 581007 or visit [www.spacecraft.co.uk](http://www.spacecraft.co.uk)



2 Dimensional Boules



Mini Polybat Set