

VIOLET AIMS FOR SWIMMING GOLD

A 61-year old athlete is 'going for gold' in the swimming pool – a quarter of a century after first competing in the Special Olympics when they came to Brighton in 1984.

In July, Violet Pearce will be part of a team from Special Olympics Brighton & Hove – competing at the Special Olympics GB Summer Games in Leicester.

The event will see around 2,700 athletes representing 19 Special Olympics regions across the UK competing in a range of Olympic sports competitions across the city.

Violet is no stranger to the competition however, having competed in one of the first Special Olympics when it was held in Brighton in 1984. In recent years though she has spent more and more time in the swimming pool and in September last year felt she was ready to compete again.

“Since then I have been training every Wednesday at the Prince Regent Swimming Pool in Brighton and now feel really fit,” said Violet who lives with a full-time carer in Patcham.

In her first gala, earlier this year, Violet scooped a medal in her specialist event, 25 meter freestyle.

Violet’s swimming coach, Heather Ellis, believes she is an excellent medal prospect for the Leicester games.

“When it comes to swimming, Violet is a natural. Violet keeps herself very fit and also does a lot of walking and so it didn’t take her long to become a serious competitor again.”

Heather also believes that the support offered by Special Olympics Brighton & Hove has also enabled Violet to make the most of her talent.

“Sport plays an increasingly important part in helping people with learning disabilities to keep healthy, gain confidence and to enjoy a greater degree of independence in their lives.

Violet is also a regular visitor to the Grace Eyre centre in Avondale Road, Hove, where she takes part in a wide range of other activities including arts and crafts. She travels here on her own by public transport and is proud of her independence.

Meanwhile other members of Special Olympics Brighton & Hove are busy preparing for their events at the Special Olympics.

In addition to swimming, Special Olympics Brighton & Hove, athletes will be competing in power lifting, 10-pin bowls, indoor bowls, golf and football competitions.

Added Special Olympics Brighton & Hove Chair, Eva Jarvis: “We are proud of all our athletes who are working extremely hard at the moment and I am sure their efforts will be rewarded once the games get underway on July 25.”

Contacts

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