

Northwich



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# JOHN BLOWER TRUST

**PRESS RELEASE 23/02/04**

## **JOHN REGAINS MOVEMENT IN HIS FINGERS**

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2003, John Blower broke his neck in a collapsed scrum whilst playing rugby for Northwich RUFC. The irrefutable fact is that due to his level of severe disability John has lost the capacity to live a normal life.

The great news is that since John's morale boosting visit to see the Rugby World Cup at Moss Farm last week on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004, as shown within the picture of John with his wife Julie and their three children, Natalie, Christopher and Paul. John has since regained some movement in his fingers.

His wife Julie explains: -

"It started when John could move his right thumb, when he did this for the first time we both cried. Now he can move all the fingers on his right hand and he has some movement with his fingers on his left hand. John has movement but has no feeling; he does not know when I am holding his hands. I know that John has worked really hard to regain this movement; it's difficult for him because sometimes the movement will send him into spasms but he is learning to control this. Movement we take for granted, John has to concentrate really hard on, it is exhausting for him and it does take it out of him, but he keeps on pushing himself."

John's medical Team does not fully understand how John has regained movement within his fingers, but it is seen as a major step forward in his



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NORTHWICH RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB  
A community rugby club



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rehabilitation programme. John will never be able to walk again, and any movement he gains will significantly open up avenues for him to minimise his level of severe disability. The fact that John can now move his fingers means he could operate a powered wheel chair and therefore enhance his mobility independence.

John explained: -

"I have been working really hard to try and move my fingers when my right thumb moved for the first time I thought it was an accident, but I discovered I could move it. I kept it a secret at first in case it was just a passing phase my body was going through, but I couldn't hide it from Julie for long. When she touched my hand one night I moved my thumb, she looked at me and said you just moved your thumb and I did it again and she could not believe it. The occasion was momentous and I could not stop myself from crying it is an occasion that I will always remember and cherish. I have remained focussed and worked hard with my medical team and it is with their help that I can now move my fingers. I still cannot feel my hands but moving my fingers has now become my party piece when visitors come into to see me. I have no feeling in my hands or arms, but some sensation his slowly coming back to my right upper arm. I can't move my arm but my right side is definitely stronger than my left side. My objective now is to move my hands and my right arm. With hard work and determination I can't see why I cannot succeed, I just hope I can do it for my family. I am just hoping that I don't suffer any setbacks".



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Andy Naylor the Chairperson of the John Blower Trust said,

"John's ability to move his fingers has lifted everyone's spirit's within his family, friends and the local community. We are all hoping that the ability to move his fingers is permanent and that it progresses to his hands and arms. The worry for all of us is that John may have to an operation to fuse some bones within his neck to help support his head when the traction halo cage is removed from his upper body later this week. Obviously if he has to have an operation there are associated risk's, it would be tragic if through the operation John lost the ability to move his fingers. All we can do his hope that this does not happen"

## FUND RAISING MILESTONE ACHIEVED

The other significant announcement is that the John Blower Trust has hit its first major milestone target - it has now raised over £15k. Andy Naylor stated: -

"The John Blower Trust was formed to help John and his family through this traumatic time and provide some financial security. The Trust target for 2004 is to raise £150k, and with less than 2 months into the year we have already achieved 10% of the target. There is still a long way to go, but the target is achievable. I am sure that the commitment of the Northwich community will prevail and help John and his family in their time of need"

The JOHN BLOWER TRUST has a number of forthcoming social events confirmed.



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This Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004 sees the Gladstone Club promoting free of charge to the Trust a live Duo Act called 'Mid Life Crisis'. This event is nearly a sell out, and a few tickets are left at a cost of £5 each. Any one still requiring a ticket can contact Mrs Blower on 01606 75894.

The first major fund raising event open for all the people in Northwich is on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2004 where three massive acts will be appearing LIVE at the Northwich Memorial Hall: -

- 'SOLD OUT' - a fantastic young duo act singing all the latest pop songs.
- 'IS THIS TOM JONES' - this guy is better than the real thing. Please no underwear to be thrown on stage.
- EXCAPOLOGY - a 7 piece Robbie Williams Tribute Band. This band is really hot, there so hot there cool.

There will also be a late bar and disco.

This fund raising event at Northwich Memorial Hall has been designed to cater for all tastes and ages and at £5 a ticket it's a real bargain. So come on Northwich let's help make a difference to John's life today weather you're young or old for a superb night out ring the ticket hotline 01606 867588 and reserve your place now.

Any donations should be sent to the John Blower Trust C/O A.E.Naylor, 10 Townfield Court, Barnton, Northwich, CW8 4 UT. Cheques should be crossed and made payable to the N.R.U.F.C. John Blower Fund.



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