

**DISCOVER
GYMNASTICS**

DISABILITY GYMNASTICS

**I'M THE ONE
WHO FULFILS MY POTENTIAL**

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**British
Gymnastics**

JEMMA KILKERRI

COACH AMBASSADOR

First recommended by her occupational therapist, Jemma tried gymnastics over five years ago as she wanted to have some fun whilst also exercising. Since then, Jemma has tried multiple disciplines including artistic, TeamGym and trampolining, and loves the variety available within the sport. In the last two years she has also trained as a coach, and now enjoys introducing others to the sport, helping them to develop new skills.

“I’ve had a go at gymnastics myself on and off, taking breaks from participating when my epilepsy has become more unstable. When participating, I enjoy it as I can challenge myself and show others that I am more than just a disabled person. As a coach, the thing I love most is when one of my gymnasts finally achieves a new move that they’ve been struggling with. When coaching, I feel equal with the other coaches in my club and the children accept me for me.”

Jemma has a range of impairments including autism, epilepsy, dyspraxia and speech difficulties, and as a result needs a little support from her club: “All of the coaches help me a lot. I can get really tired, especially when I have my medication adjusted. My group of gymnasts are my responsibility, but the

club ensure there is always another coach around so that if I do need to go and lie down then it doesn’t impact on my gymnasts. If I really don’t want to miss out, I can coach using my wheelchair.

“Due to my speech difficulties, our Head Coach encourages me to communicate in other ways; and if I need to go out of the busy gym environment for a few minutes to de-stress, she supports that and comes back in with me when I’m ready to join in.

“I CAN CHALLENGE MYSELF AND SHOW OTHERS THAT I AM MORE THAN JUST A PERSON WITH DISABILITIES”

“The other coaches at the club have let me get to know my surroundings at my own pace but still challenge me to develop my skills by setting goals and targets. Due to my autism, I can find imaginative role play games and warm ups to be really challenging, but I’ve had some fantastic support from others and have shadowed their sessions to help me with this.”

About her experience of the sport as both a coach and gymnast, Jemma says: “There is always something that you can do within gymnastics, and I would say to anyone who wants to try it... go for it! I know first-hand the difference that a good supportive club can make; a good club will be able to put adaptations in place to support you and they won’t make you feel different for wanting to join in.” ■



Disability: Autism, epilepsy, dyspraxia and speech difficulties

Club: Northern Hope Gymnastics and Velocity Trampoline Clubs



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