

# National wheelchair rugby league team using Thomas assessments to develop team relationships to deliver match-day results.



## Sport

12 man squad  
5 support staff



## Objectives

- Build team relationships
- Manage a change of processes
- Beat France in the build up to the annual European Championships



## Results

- ★ Team felt more united by the common language provided by the PPA
- ★ Beat France for the first time since 2011
- ★ Won the whole European Championships tournament and became European Wheelchair Rugby League Champions

## THE CHALLENGE: Build relationships

In 2015, the England wheelchair rugby league team were preparing for the annual European Championships tournament and test match against France. The team hadn't beaten France since 2011 and while the results had been close, there were large periods of the game where the team would switch off, costing them the match. The key team objective for the 2015 season was to overcome this and beat France. Head Coach, Mark Roughsedge explains, "in international Wheelchair Rugby League where the margins are so tight we are always in pursuit of gaining an extra advantage over the opposition."

Mark had been working with the 12 man squad and 5 support staff for 2 years And was facing a period of change as he implemented a new regime to refresh the long-standing previous regime which had lost its effectiveness. As an amateur team, made up of community gamers training once a month, there was limited opportunity to build team relationships and managing the change process with such little team interaction time was becoming a challenge.



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**THE SOLUTION:** Gain an in-depth look into individual players

With such little time together as a team, Mark was looking for a tool to help him gain a more in-depth look into individual players. "The squad is made up of players from diverse backgrounds with varying personality and behavioural styles. I wanted to be able to dig deeper into what motivates them and their preferred behaviours in order to better manage the group and build team morale."

Mark came across Thomas International Sport through Simon Willis, Thomas Sport Associate and High Performance Director at Kent Cricket. "I attended Thomas' Winning Mindsets masterclass at Kent Cricket and saw an opportunity. I opened discussions with Thomas about how we could work together to get more from my squad. We decided to use the Thomas PPA to help me to gain new insights into my players".

Every member of the squad and the team support staff took the PPA and received feedback on their results. "Thomas came to our team training camp and delivered feedback to the players and helped them to develop a common language to talk about their behaviours and the impact this has on the way they play. As a coaching group, we used the results of the assessment to develop new ways of managing individuals within the group in order to maximise the time spent together as a team".



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**THE RESULT:** Champions

"The impact of the Thomas process on the team was huge. There was a clear change in atmosphere within the group and the common language provided by the PPA allowed the team to feel more united. One particular player used the results of his PPA to modify his behaviour towards the team in order to reduce his dominant tendencies and work more harmoniously with the squad. It also helped us as coaches as we understood that we needed to give him more responsibility to allow him the autonomy to make his own decisions."

At the European Championships, the team beat France for the first time since 2011, winning two out of their three matches against the French team, the first with an impressive 56-26 final score. They went on to win the whole tournament and became European Wheelchair Rugby League champions.



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Jodie Boyd-Ward was part of the championship winning squad. He explains: “During the build up to the European Championships, I noticed a change in the group dynamic and approach. Since working with Thomas International Sport, the coaches made some subtle changes in the way the group worked and this was a major factor in us beating France for the first time since 2011 and bringing the trophy home”.

Mark added, “the PPA tool was perfect for our group and undoubtedly played a major role in helping us to beat France and become European Champions. We look forward to building on the foundations created by Thomas process as we move forward as look to achieve future success.”



For more information about how we can help deliver confidence for your organisation, get in touch



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