Team Nationale Sportweek:

‘Wow, 18 children are training on the RaceRunner at Rotterdam Atletiek. Who is behind this fantastic initiative? Meet our local hero Ramon Storm!’
#BeActive Local Hero Award 2018

Name of National Coordinator or the European Partner: NOC•NSF

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Name of nominated establishment: Ramon Storm - RaceRunning

Date and duration of initiative: ongoing

Town/City, Country: Rotterdam, The Netherlands
It’s a sunny day when I visit Rotterdam Atletiek, a multicultural sports association for people with and without physical disabilities. Ramon has arrived early and welcomes me with a big smile on his face. He starts to tell me all about the association and the main reason for this meeting: RaceRunning.

**What is RaceRunning?**

The RaceRunner enables people with a physical disability (such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida or other syndromes), who need a walker or wheel chair to get around, to propel themselves at a relatively high speed. The RaceRunner enables them, despite their disability, to take part in a sport &to #BeActive! Have a look at the promo video to see how it works.

**About Ramon Storm**

Ramon is an enthusiastic and highly motivated RaceRunning volunteer trainer for *Rotterdam Atletiek*, a sports association in Rotterdam, where he works with a team of trainers. He is also employed as a movement therapist by *Rijndam Revalidatie* where he regularly works with children with a physical disability who may benefit from RaceRunning. His enthusiasm is infectious; the local rehabilitation centre and the association work closely together which means that more and more local children are being introduced to the structural sporting activities organised by the association.
Inspiring kids to #BeActive

The children are incredibly motivated; they love the fact that they can experience the feeling of running. For some children it takes a while to get to grips with the RaceRunner and some parents find it difficult to try a new sport with their child. Ramon is the kind of trainer which makes you want to succeed.

Ramon: ’It was Robin’s own idea to start RaceRunning so we said to him “Sure, let’s give it a go, why not”? Robin started an intensive week of training where he used the RaceRunner every morning before starting school. By the time it was Friday he managed to walk no less than 8 meters in a RaceRunner! Robin then started weekly training sessions with me. I agreed with Robin that if he managed to walk 1 round through the halls of the rehabilitation centre, I would let him use the RaceRunner on the athletics track, plus he would get a surprise. This was like a red rag to a bull and he managed to walk 1 round by the end of the school year. Without Robin knowing, I had agreed with this mother that he could try out a prototype of the RaceRunner at home. Today you can find Robin regularly on the athletics track.’

Fighting the barriers

RaceRunners aren’t cheap and this is why Ramon and his team are continuously looking for partnerships. For example, Ramon recently visited a primary school where the children were learning about children with physical disabilities. As a result of this visit, the teacher and the children decided to raise money for Rotterdam Atletiek. The class raised so much money during a sponsored walk that the association was able to buy two RaceRunners and materials.
The impact of RaceRunning

Ramon: ‘It is truly incredible that such a simple piece of equipment, which is basically a three-wheeled bike, can make such a huge difference, not only for the children themselves but also for the whole family. It creates so much positive energy that the whole family benefits, which is a wonderful thing to see.’

Ramon then tells me about Colin, a boy who is training with Rotterdam Atletiek. Colin started RaceRunning in September 2017 and has already achieved three world records. He participated in The Camp & Cup RaceRunning in Denmark (July 8 – 15 2018) and Colin’s family flew out to support him, including his grandparents. The whole family had such a great time. Quite often you see the opposite: a child with a disability takes a lot out of people. This initiative has had a very positive effect on everyone involved.

Petra van Schie (Project leader RaceRunning The Netherlands) explains why she would like to nominate Ramon for the #BeActive Local Hero Awards 2018:

‘Rotterdam Atletiek has many distinguished trainers but if we’re talking RaceRunning, we’re talking about Ramon Storm. His unwavering commitment means that Ramon has put RaceRunning on the map in Rotterdam and has given a platform for children with disabilities to play sport at their level. In just a short time, he has made it possible for eighteen children to attend weekly training sessions in Rotterdam and he has also generated interest from surrounding cities (including Dordrecht, Leiden, Delft, Den Haag, Breda). A real asset for the association!’
Why RaceRunning & Ramon Storm should win the #BeActive Local Hero Award 2018

The Nationale Sportweek Team has nothing but praise for Ramon. He has lots of energy and ambition and is full of ideas. More than anything, he would like to see RaceRunners compete in the Rotterdam Marathon. He does everything he can to increase the presence of RaceRunning in the Netherlands. In the meantime, he has already become involved with a new sports initiative for disabled children: Frame Football. As Ramon himself said: ‘there are so many things we could do for this target group, which is often still marginalised.’ Perhaps that will be a great story for the #BeActiveLocal Hero Awards 2019...
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☑️ The information on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge
☑️ I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions of the competition
☑️ I confirm the applicant’s availability to attend the Awards Gala in Sofia, Bulgaria (the exact date to be confirmed)

Signature:

Position: National Body Coordinator European Week of Sports
Date: July 30 2018