

18 August 2015

Archer's kicking goals

Archer Johnson of Coolbinia, who is just 5 years old, has Cerebral Palsy and a vision impairment but thanks to his mother, his Starkick coach and Senses Australia's therapists, Archer is able to participate in a team sport for the very first time and is kicking goals both on and off the football field.

Archer's mother, Lisa says she feels proud that her three sons all get to go out and play football. Lisa will be right there with Archer when he will be playing football at Domain Stadium during half time at the West Coast Eagles versus Western Bulldogs game on Sunday, 23 August 2015.

"Sunday is football day in our house. Archer's older brother plays Auskick and so does Archer's twin brother Ryder.

"Before Starkick we thought Arch would have to sit on the sidelines and be a spectator. But thanks to Starkick, the fantastic initiative from the Coolbinia Bombers Football Club and coach Rob who is the brains behind this amazing initiative, we all get up in the morning, get dressed and make our way to the oval. Arch gets so excited," says Lisa.

To enable Archer to play football, he wears an 'Upsee', which is a piece of equipment that Lisa straps around her waist that supports Archer, enabling him to stand and walk with her assistance and without having to hold onto him. Lisa's movements help Archer to move. Archer also uses his Nimbo walking frame and Motum wheelchair for some football activities including handballing.

"He now knows what it's like to be part of a team and he is part of a very supportive community. Something that he has never had the chance to do," says Lisa.

Archer's Senses Australia's therapists, Aimee, Haylee and Maryke are helping Archer achieve his goal of being able to walk independently, through the charitable organisation's Early Intervention Therapy Program.

"With physiotherapy and occupational therapy, as well as participating in extra-curricular activities such as Starkicks, this is all helping to improve Archer's strength, balance, coordination and physical skills," says Aimee.

"Archer is progressing well, he has learnt how to independently transfer in and out of his walking frame and wheelchair, as well as learning how to walk up and down stairs. Archer can stand for short periods of time for play and is learning how to use his core strength for balance so he can take that next step to start to walking and playing football more independently.

Cont...

“Starkicks is a fantastic opportunity for Archer to interact and play with children of all abilities, in turn developing his social skills, team player skills and self-confidence,” says Aimee.

2015 is the first season for Starkick, which is an AFL side at the Coolbinia Bombers club for children with disability. Started by coach Rob Geersen, Archer was the inaugural team member.

“Archer’s favourite warm up drills include dodgeball and he loves throwing the footy into the buckets and kicking a goal,” says Rob.

Senses Australia is a leading disability service provider with a difference, to find out more about Senses Australia’s services visit www.senses.org.au

Ends.

Media Contact

Claire Rowe, Public Relations and Social Media Coordinator, Senses Australia

Mobile – 0418 544 032

Email – claire.rowe@senses.org.au

