



Oct 27, 2016 19:14 BST

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines and the Suffolk Football Association host the first-ever game of 'Walking Football at Sea'

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines will be hosting the first-ever game of 'Walking Football at Sea' on 31st October 2016, when 804-guest ship *Black Watch* calls at Harwich – the closest cruise port to its Head Office in Ipswich, Suffolk. The event, which is being held in partnership with the Suffolk Football Association ('Suffolk FA') – co-ordinators of Walking Football across the county – will see up to 12 players take part in 10/15-minute games on the ship's top deck, Sun Deck 10.

As well as enjoying a tour of *Black Watch*, the Walking Football teams and

supporters will also be hosted by the ship's Cruise Director, Simon Vickers, in the impressive Observatory Lounge, where there will be an opportunity to enjoy a VIP Reception and discuss the benefits of Walking Football. One of the key topics of discussion will be the possibility of implementing the sport into the ship's regular programme of onboard leisure activities, which is co-ordinated by the Cruise Director and his Entertainments Team.

Fred. Olsen and the Suffolk FA have been working together since 2014 and, in January 2016, Fred. Olsen announced that it would take on the lead sponsorship of Walking Football. Fred. Olsen sponsored the inaugural Walking Football Tournament in Suffolk in May 2016, which was held at GOALS in Ipswich.

The sport is now played at 13 venues across Suffolk – from Felixstowe in the east, to Lowestoft in the north, and Newmarket in the west. Primarily played by men and women over 50, the game is ideal for those looking for a lower impact activity, and is designed to help people maintain an active lifestyle, irrespective of their age, as well as assisting those who have had to stop playing through injury.

Keith Norman, Business Development Manager for Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said:

“Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is excited to be taking Walking Football 'to sea' for the very first time! This fun event is a great opportunity for us to bring this unique and popular sport to our cruise guests through *Black Watch's* Cruise Director and Entertainments Team, who will watch and lend their support on the day, and will also give us the chance to showcase the benefits of Walking Football and our successful partnership with the Suffolk FA.”

“There is a natural link between our customer base and the Walking Football community; plus, as a fellow Suffolk organisation, we value the importance of being involved with such an important local resource for the county.”

Nick Garnham, Suffolk FA Marketing & Communications Officer, said:

“Walking Football continues to grow at a fast pace both in Suffolk and across the country, and we have been looking forward to this day ever since Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines first floated the idea.

“We are excited about the prospect of showcasing the sport at sea as it is potentially something that will appeal to their cruise guests, and the more people we can get playing the game, the better.”

Suffolk FA is a not-for-profit organisation that is committed to ‘developing, growing and supporting’ players, volunteers, clubs and schools across the county in enjoying ‘the beautiful game’.

All players attending the ‘Walking Football at Sea’ event are regular players for ActivIpswich, which is a new physical activity initiative that works with people who are 45 years and over. The project is a partnership between ActivLives and Ipswich Borough Council and is funded by Sport England and the National Lottery.

From Harwich, *Black Watch* will be departing on the afternoon of 31st October 2016 on an 11-night 'Spain, Morocco & Portugal' cruise.

For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit the website at www.fredolsencruises.com To find out more about Suffolk FA’s Walking Football initiative, go to www.suffolkfa.com, or contact Nick Garnham, Marketing & Communications Officer, Suffolk FA, on 01449 776380 or 07508 838181.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Line operates in the UK with four intimately sized ships for a more personal cruising experience.

Contacts



Georgina May

Press Contact

PR Manager

georgina.may@fredolsen.co.uk



Georgie Long

Press Contact

PR Executive

georgie.long@fredolsen.co.uk