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Monday 12th May

was the day that **Ayaz** qualified for the 2016 Paralympic games in Rio. Born with Roberts Syndrome, Ayaz stands at just 3ft 7inches tall. Despite being warned that his size meant he would be unlikely to succeed at international level in wheelchair rugby, Ayaz refused to let this set him back and continued to train and work harder. With his goal in sight, Steeper Orthotist, John, was able to provide him with a new carbon fibre AFO that gave him the support and stability he needed whilst in his sports chair. His persistence and determination paid off and Ayaz has now become one of the best wheelchair rugby players in the country.



Case Study

Ayaz Bhuta

Without my Steeper Orthotist, John, I would most probably have been wheelchair bound for my whole life but because of him and his care, he has enabled me to experience many things I didn't think were possible.



The story

Born with Roberts Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that affects the growth of bones in the arms and legs, Ayaz is just 3ft 7inches tall. After major surgery as a child to realign his feet, Ayaz began wearing orthotics. The results were so remarkable that Ayaz was able to achieve things he never thought he would be able to do; from playing football with his friends to walking short distances, he was astounded at how stable his orthotics made him feel.

Over the years and as a result of his condition, Ayaz's ability to walk reduced and he now has to rely heavily on his wheelchair. This change meant he needed a new orthotic solution to support his legs whilst in his chair, to provide him with the protection and stability he needed.

The solution

For as long as Ayaz can remember, he has been under the careful watch of Steeper Orthotist, John Turner. To this day, Ayaz credits John with providing him with the very best support and care, enabling him to experience things he thought were impossible as a child. As Ayaz's condition has developed over the years, so has his need for different orthotics. Ayaz currently uses a carbon fibre made-to-measure AFO (Ankle-Foot Orthoses) that provides him with support and stability whilst in his sports chair. When not

in training, Ayaz wears his own fashionable footwear that has been specially adapted by Steeper technicians. These enable him to stand, with confidence as they are specifically moulded to his feet and raised on one side to accommodate his shorter leg. These bespoke products give Ayaz all the support and stability he needs, but in the disguise of his favourite pair of shoes.

The turning point

Originally a wheelchair basketball player, Ayaz started playing club rugby in 2009. He found that the more physical elements of the game suited him better and his dream came true when he was selected to play in the tri-nations tournament in Australia in 2010. However, he returned disappointed and disheartened after being warned that his size meant he would be unlikely to succeed at international level.

His persistence and determination saw him train and work harder, demanding more from himself, and his orthotic supports. Merely a year later, his hard work was rewarded as he was selected for the Great Britain Development Squad. Since then he has become one of the best players in the country, securing his place at the Rio Paralympic Games and become an inspiration to other young athletes.

To find out more about Ayaz visit www.steepergroup.com