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New bat pushes 'boundary' for disabled cricket

A cricket bat for people for disabled people has been designed by a Northumbria University student.

Leanne Cracknell, a final year Design for Industry student, worked with disabled cricketer Will Hardy who plays for Newcastle Cricket Club, to come up with the radical new design.

The bat has been designed specifically for cricketers who have lost an upper limb and can be adapted to fit their needs depending on the area and severity

of their limb loss. It features a removable armrest that the player can attach their prosthetic to or rest their shorter arm on, if they have one. They are able to change the size of this depending on the length of their arm. It also has a removable handle which can easily be removed using one hand by pressing a spring button and pulling the handle out. A wide variety of handle shapes, grips and sizes are available to tailor to each player's specific needs and wants.

"The design allows disabled cricketers to use both arms, just like a non-disabled cricketer, so it allows them to have more momentum and power when they strike the ball," said 23-year-old Leanne who comes from the Isle of Man.

The new design, which is mostly made from willow just like a traditional bat, has been given approval from the English Cricket Board which has set rules on the types of bat that can be used.

There is set to be a rise in the number of people playing disability cricket in the next few years due to investment in the game from the county boards.

Leanne, who also plays for Newcastle Cricket Club, took her inspiration for the bat from the Paralympic Games.

"The concept could be developed for a variety of other sports," she added.

The cricket bat will be on display, alongside the work of fellow final year Design students, at the REVEAL: Design show which runs until 27 June. One of the North East's most anticipated cultural events, REVEAL: Design is respected by many industry professionals and sees hundreds of visitors pass through its doors each year.

This year, the show is part of the wider Festival of the North East and will run alongside the University's REVEAL: Arts and REVEAL: Media shows.

Renowned for producing the best new designers Northumbria Design has alumni working for River Island, Abercrombie and Fitch, Apple, Mars, Habitat, Phillips, BBC and Nokia to name a few.

Work will be on show from across the Design programmes, including Fashion,

Graphic Design, Motion Graphics, and Animation, Design for Industry and Transportation Design.

Also on show will be a selection of work from postgraduate courses; MA Design, MA Design Management, MA Design Professional Practice, and MA/MSc Multidisciplinary Design Innovation.

Members of the public can visit REVEAL: Design, which will be exhibited at Northumbria University Design, on City Campus East every weekday between 10am and 4pm.

The work of selected Northumbria Design graduates will also be show at New Designers, London, in July. New Designers sees over 3,000 of the most talented, newly graduated designers showcasing the future of design and creativity. The event runs from 3-6 July.

Alumni from Design for Industry, Transportation Design and 3D Design are invited to attend a networking event organised by staff and graduating student following the New Designers Private View on 3 July at the Metal Works, Angel, Islington. Anyone interested in attending should contact howard.fenwick@northumbria.ac.uk

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