

John Jackson

Age: 37

Injury: Ruptured Achilles tendon

John Jackson is a Royal Marines Commando and a member of the Great Britain Bobsleigh Team. He competed in both of the last two Winter Olympics, with his team achieving fifth place in 2014.

In July 2013 John suffered a complete rupture of his Achilles tendon. He had a pioneering surgery to repair it so he would be ready for the 2014 Winter Olympics which were due to take place seven months later. The surgery involved minimally invasive internal bracing. Medical cable/wires running through the centre of his Achilles tendon were attached to three pins drilled into his heel.

He started having problems again in October 2014 and after a couple of scans the medical team thought that one of the pins wasn't secure as it should be. John was put back on crutches for six weeks to try to help the bone grow back around the pin to make it more secure.

Rather than using conventional crutches, John decided to use the iWALKfree. He points out that "to be able to still walk in a relatively normal fashion as opposed to overloading the arms and shoulders" was a nice change, adding that "still being able to keep the weight off the injured area and still managing to do basic life skills that can't be done on standard crutches" was a real benefit.

This was particularly important for John as he had recently moved into a new house two months before, had an eight month old puppy and his girlfriend was six months pregnant with his fourth child. The iWALKfree meant that he could still function around the house, performing tasks such as decorating, cutting the grass and other small jobs. He says that "being able to reduce the work load on my pregnant girlfriend was a big help."

John is currently studying again, doing a BTEC Professional Diploma (Level 5) in Clinical Sports & Remedial Massage at The Massage Training School in Exmouth, Devon. He says that the iWALKfree "allowed me to carry books around while doing course work."