

‘Walkerspor’ helps children with cerebral palsy to play football

ISTANBUL

A football team consisting of 36 children with cerebral palsy using a walker has been established in Istanbul.

In the first training session of the football team called 'Walkerspor', the children who touched the ball for the first time played the match and wore their medals.

Families of children with special needs came together and founded ‘Walkerspor’.

Children with cerebral palsy, who have problems with muscle activity and body posture because of brain damage, wore jerseys specially made for them.

They first practiced and then played matches.

The little ones who struggled against both the opposing team and their own obstacles, were given medals that read ‘Great champion’ after their first training.

Emin Ergün, father of eight-year-old Hamza Eymen Ergün, told the story of the establishment of the team.

“I took my son Hamza Eymen to the park a month ago. The children did not take my son with them. When she cried, I hugged her and brought her home. My heart ached that day, and I shared the situation with my wife Şeyma Ergün”, he said.

“Then we got together with the families of other children with cerebral palsy we know. We decided to establish this team by looking at the examples abroad,” he added.

Ergün stated that football with cerebral palsy, which has been accepted in the world for a long time, will offer their children the opportunity to increase their ties with life.

He expressed that their goal is to become an official club.

“Sam Turner from the International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football (IFCPF) contacted us. Our call to the families of children in similar situations is to join Walkerspor”, he said.

Some of the children have also expressed their joys for being able to play football.

“It was amazing to play,” said Mehmet Zeki, adding that his favorite is Brazilian football player Neymar da Silva Santos Júnior from Paris Saint Germain Football Club.

“I have become a football player just like him,” Zeki said.

Meanwhile, Hamza Eymen Ergün said after learning how to kick the ball, he went to the goal.

“I am actually a fan of Fenerbahçe but now I am a fan of Walkerspor,” he said.

“My dream has come true. I really wanted to play football,” said Eyüp Karataş.

“At that moment the world was mine”, he added.

In addition, İbrahim Efe Gürsoy has said “My dream was to be on the field, but I did not know what it would be like.”