

**Peter Arbuckle, 47**

Former rifleman  
Sports: wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, sailing and sitting volleyball

"I have a left below-knee amputation and spinal disc derangement in my lower back. Sport gives me a reason to get out of bed in the morning and face the limits of my disabilities. My highlights have been competing at the 2017 Invictus Games and being a member of the Australian wheelchair rugby league team at the 2017 World Cup in France. Winning, for me, will be seeing every competitor at the Games come away in a better place mentally."

**Cpl Steven Avery, 33**

Air intelligence analyst  
Sports: Wheelchair basketball

"I have osteoarthritis of the right knee sustained during an Army course activity, PTSD and depression. Sport has given me drive, motivation and the willpower to succeed. I still have my bad days but they are fewer because I have sport to look forward to. With my injuries, I was finding it hard to do things with my daughter and I felt I was letting her down. I applied for the Invictus Games so I could show her how to go about achieving goals and to make her proud of me."

**Brigid Baker, 36**

Former Army medic  
Sports: athletics and powerlifting

"I was diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety and depression as a result of my service. Before re-engaging in sport I had effectively given up on all the things I enjoyed and basically just existed. I was a torch bearer for the 2000 Olympics and sport has reignited a passion I thought was lost long ago. I was facing uncertainty with a medical discharge and caught sight of the Toronto Invictus Games and thought, 'What have I got to lose?' It is not about the medals but about the journey and the people."

**Cpl Taryn Barbara, 31**

Army PTI  
Sports: indoor rowing

"I sustained a cumulative back and hip injury during an Army physical training course. My injury challenged me and forced me to make life changes. Being involved in sport has helped me understand that, although I cannot achieve all the things I previously could, I can make new goals. Invictus Games 2018 has helped me set new opportunities for success. Being selected is already a great accomplishment. Winning a medal would be the icing on the cake."

**WO2 Graham Bell, 57**

Army instructor  
Sport: archery

"I sustained leg and arm injuries when I was hit by a car and have had major heart surgery. I suffer from spinal disc protrusion due to operational service and have a major depressive disorder. Sport encourages me to focus on what I can do, not dwell on what I can no longer do. Since being injured, I've been interested in the psychology of the wounded, injured and ill during rehabilitation. When I see people pick themselves up after a personal tragedy, get off the lounge and move on, I am inspired."

**Carrie-Anne Bishop, 34**

Former Army driver  
Sports: athletics and sitting volleyball

"I have multiple injuries to my hips, back and shoulder, sustained during my service. Sport gets me out of the house, socialising, training and challenging myself physically and mentally. Sport was a large part of my life before I was injured and became isolated, not wanting to attend sporting events because I could not participate. I saw Invictus Games 2018 as an opportunity to again become a participant in sport and life. Just to be a part of a team again makes me feel like a winner."

**Matthew Blunt, 42**

Former catering and transport soldier  
Sports: archery and wheelchair rugby

"I have PTSD, depression and multiple physical injuries. My main physical injury, to my back, occurred during a vehicle rollover on a training exercise. Getting back into sport has helped me get out of the house and meet new people. I struggle to get out of bed daily and sport gives me something to focus on. I applied for the Games because I was looking for a sense of purpose and I wanted to be alongside other wounded soldiers who understand without judgement."

**Nicole Bradley, 45**

Former Army logistics officer  
Sports: athletics and powerlifting

"I have feet conditions that cause discomfort extending to my lower limbs. I have also experienced two deep vein thrombosis events. Since taking up powerlifting, symptoms from the blocked veins have largely dissipated. Going to the gym has increased my interest in physical activity and its relationship to better mental health. For me, the Games are about getting back in touch with the veteran community and feeling at ease with myself. Through my powerlifting training and counselling study, I can contribute to the team as more than a competitor."

**Davin Bretherton, 47**

Former infantryman  
Sports: wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and sailing

"I have PTSD and a below-the-knee amputation following complications from a training accident. I am alive because I have been able to play sport. As a result of my PTSD, my weight blew out, I was on every drug available and I was at the lowest point in my life. I used sport to get fit again and lose weight, which in turn increased my self-esteem and confidence. I recently returned from completing the Kokoda Track and have represented Australia in international sport."

**LS Vanessa Broughill, 33**

Navy electronic intelligence  
Sports: athletics and swimming

"I have had two separate operations on my right shoulder. I was also diagnosed with anxiety and depression in late 2015 after what seems like years of suffering in silence. I was so far down a hole I didn't like leaving the house for anything. Participating in sport – especially being on the Invictus Games pathway – helped me to get past this. Being held accountable by teammates compelled me to show up. In the Invictus Games, I saw an opportunity to improve myself as a person and get back to a place of happiness."

**PTE Peter Brown, 36**

Army administration clerk (former parachute rigger)  
Sports: athletics and rowing  
Sustained a serious leg injury in a parachute jump accident

"I have always been interested in sport and fitness. So when injuries restricted mobility and strength in my legs, sport had a massive effect on me physically. My main reason for applying for the Games is to show my kids that no matter how hard things get, always strive to achieve your goals and dreams – even if your original dreams have been smashed and you have to make new ones."

**Matthew Brumby, 40**

Former Navy steward  
Sports: archery and wheelchair rugby

"I am a T6 complete paraplegic from fluid forming inside my spinal cord following dehydration of my spinal cord during a clearance diver selection course and after a motorcycle accident. Applying for the Games was a culmination of disappointment at missing out on the 2016 Rio Paralympics, exhilaration at winning a world championship triathlon and dealing with injury. The opportunity to compete at the Games came up and I have gained so much from training and meeting other athletes."



**David Connolly, 55**  
Former Army parachute instructor  
Sports: wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby  
"I completed around 2000 parachute descents, which took a toll on my body to the point a knee replacement was required. The knee replacement failed and amputation above the knee was necessary. I suffered from depression after this and was selected for the first Invictus Games in London in 2014. Playing sport with other military and veterans with similar injuries rekindled my competitiveness. Training to excel at a sport gives me a sense of achievement and purpose."



**Pit-Off Jesse Costelloe, 22**  
Air Force aircrew  
Sports: athletics, indoor rowing and swimming  
Suffered physical and mental trauma as a result of a military bus accident.  
"Sport has kept me sane and fit. Just three months after four surgeries, I was back on the sports field. While physically difficult, it filled me with a sense of pride and purpose. Military-based gyms and sporting environments have been my safe space during my recovery. First place at the Games would be grand but I would define a win as crossing the finish line because I know what has gone into that moment."



**AB Mark Daniels, 25**  
Navy marine technician  
Sports: indoor rowing, sitting volleyball, swimming and wheelchair rugby  
"I am a right above-knee amputee from a motorbike accident. Sport saved my life. It gives me a sense of purpose and reminds me who I am, despite my disability. I competed at the 2018 Devonport Paratriathlon World Cup and the Invictus Games are a chance to represent my country again while showcasing what I am capable of. Winning will mean having that gold medal around my neck with my friends and family watching on, knowing what I have overcome just to make it to the start line."



**Gareth Desmond, 29**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: powerlifting and swimming  
"Sport has given me structure and a goal to work towards in my recovery within the limits of my ability. My best mate, Tyrone Gawthorne, competed in the Invictus Games last year and encouraged me to give it a shot. Every major achievement in my life, he has always been there to push me and encourage me to do and be better. To me, I have already won by being selected to compete for my country at the Invictus Games. Anything else on top of this is a bonus."



**Benjamin Farinazzo, 44**  
Former Army officer  
Sports: powerlifting and rowing  
"I was diagnosed with PTSD as a result of my military service. I also had a mountain bike accident and fractured my neck and spine. There was a period in my life where I was walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Sport and exercise formed pillars upon which I rebuilt a meaningful and purposeful life. I reached a point in my rehabilitation where I felt capable of embracing the challenge of competitive sport. The Invictus Games offered an opportunity to reconnect with the veteran community in a supportive environment."



**Trent Forbes, 40**  
Former soldier  
Sport: cycling  
"I have a variety of physical and mental injuries relating to my multiple deployments. Sport has been critical in keeping me physically active and engaged with the community, while assisting me in my mental and physical rehabilitation. A friend who had competed at an Invictus Games told me how much he had learnt about himself. I wanted to be challenged and to represent my country on the international stage. I also saw the Games as an chance to show my children that, despite my injuries, I am still achieving things in life."



**Spr Thomas Foster, 31**  
Combat engineer  
Sports: indoor rowing and swimming  
"I was injured on an exercise in 2016, resulting in a complete tear in major ligaments in my left ankle. I underwent two ankle reconstructions but still experience chronic pain and a severe lack of mobility in the joint. Swimming has become an outlet for me to feel I can still achieve goals and maintain focus. A colleague suggested I apply for the Games. Little did I know what an amazing experience and opportunity it would be. Preparing for the Games has also given me a direction to navigate my recovery."



**Tyrone Gawthorne, 36**  
Former rifleman  
Sports: athletics and powerlifting  
"I have a lower limb degenerative injury and PTSD. Sport has played an enormous role in my rehabilitation in regards to my health and fitness, and my drive. It has given me direction, a schedule, a routine and a goal. I want to continue on the Invictus Games path to rehabilitation not only for myself but for the many other veterans in my community who are struggling from day to day. By setting an example, and giving it a crack, may they also take the chance to change their lives for the better."



**Erika Gosney, 44**  
Former Army administrative position  
Sports: athletics, cycling and swimming  
"I have a muscle disorder. Without sport, I have nothing – I would not be here. Sport gets me up in the morning and I feel free when I'm training. It gives me purpose. I applied for paracycling classification and Cycling Australia mentioned I may be eligible for Invictus Games 2018. I never thought I would be picked to go on the training camps. Winning for me at the Games will be about having my family there to watch me, especially my mum, who has sacrificed everything for me."



**Samantha Gould, 29**  
Former Army cargo specialist  
Sport: powerlifting  
Suffers from PTSD  
"Sport allows me to make connections with people I had not been able to make in a long time. My greatest achievement has been teaching kids self-defence. It gives them confidence. I applied for the Invictus Games because of the amazing experience I had at the Games last year. It is a chance to meet people and form friendships. The people I most admire are my parents, Ron and Vivienne. We call Mum the Champion of Little Causes because she's always helping people others might not notice."



**AB Braedon Griffiths, 22**  
Former Army cargo specialist  
Sports: wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and sitting volleyball  
"I had a car accident and have spent the past two years in rehabilitation. I have an above-knee right leg amputation, which has affected my feet, hips and lower back. Sport gives me something to look forward to. For the first year of my rehab, I wasn't allowed to do much. It was a pretty dark time for me. Sport has given me the opportunity to get out of the house and get fit. I feel like I am coming out of that dark place and starting a new chapter in my life."



**Tim Grover, 39**  
Former infantryman  
Sport: cycling  
"I sustained a number of injuries throughout my 20-year service in the ADF. Sport keeps me mentally and physically focused. Without sport and physical goals, my injuries would have worsened and stopped me from integrating back into society. When I attended my first Invictus Games (in 2017), I wasn't focused on achieving my best. Now I am. Winning medals is only one part of the story. It's the transition of the competitors as they progress through their rehabilitation and ultimately perform to the best standard they can achieve."

**Sport saved my life. It gives me a sense of purpose and reminds me who I am, despite my disability.**

AB Mark Daniels



**Brendan Hardman, 30**  
Former Army officer  
Sports: wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball  
"I suffered back injuries while serving, resulting in two spinal surgeries, the second being a spinal fusion. I have also suffered from severe depression and anxiety. Sport has been my saviour. It's helped me overcome a lot of struggles and regain fitness and health. I applied for the Games to prove to myself I could still compete and achieve my goals. There is the romance of winning a medal, but the biggest wins will be surrounding myself with like-minded and inspirational people and contributing to our team."



**Stephen Hayes, 53**  
Former aircraft life support fitter  
Sport: archery  
"I suffer from a range of mental and physical injuries, including PTSD, depression and anxiety, resulting from a car accident and compounded by illness. Getting involved with sport has given me a reason to get out of bed. I have met some awesome people along the way, who I talk to through social media and look forward to meeting at the training camps. I have met people from other countries who I stay in contact with and they are all like family and help with the journey. Without this, rehabilitation is nothing."



**Luke Hill, 40**  
Former infantryman  
Sport: swimming  
"I have an ongoing illness, which I am actively managing. Participating in sport has had a positive contribution to enhancing my overall general health and wellbeing. My greatest achievement is my young family but, in sport, it is swimming the English Channel in 2014. I applied for the Invictus Games to improve my overall health. At the end of the Games I would like to look back on this year and see a big improvement in my mental and physical state."



**Wayne Hopkins, 46**  
Former Air Force member  
Sports: archery and cycling  
"I suffer from PTSD, chronic anxiety and depression, and musculoskeletal and nerve crush injuries, as a result of my ADF service. Sport has provided me with the opportunity for mood stabilisation, reintegration with the civilian community and a chance to set personal goals and achieve them. Since my discharge in 2011 I have attended rehabilitation programs and felt I was at a stage where I could meet the demands of participating in the Invictus Games. This was reinforced when I sailed in the Games launch in Sydney in 2017."



**Simon Horridge, 50**  
Former British and Australian soldier  
Sports: powerlifting, sitting volleyball and swimming  
"Most of my injuries have resulted from wear and tear after 33 years' service. I have injuries to my back, right hand and wrist, left knee, left shoulder and right hip, and ruptured hamstrings. I also have carpal tunnel syndrome and osteoarthritis. After being injured and having to stop competition, I lost my way. Adaptive sport has given me the drive and opportunity to get back to my passion in life – competition. I saw the Games as a motivational tool to regain my focus and drive."



**Capt Ruth Hunt, 35**  
Army legal officer  
Sports: indoor rowing and swimming  
"I was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2016. I completed my treatment in April 2018, although I have some surgeries later this year. I have always played sport and being able to compete in the Invictus Games has given me a short-term goal to focus on while I recover. I won five gold medals at the US Air Force Warrior Games trials in Las Vegas just two weeks after finishing chemotherapy. I am just happy to be competing at these Games, given my illness."



**Damien Irish, 42**  
Former Army driver  
Sports: athletics, indoor rowing and powerlifting  
"I suffer from PTSD, anxiety and depression. Sport has given me drive again and got me out of the house, doing more with my family. I applied for the Games to challenge myself and making the team this year has been my greatest sports achievement to date. It's not all about winning medals, even though that would be great. It's about showing my kids if you work hard at something you can achieve it."



**Kevin Jacoby, 49**  
Former Army computer operator  
Sports: indoor rowing and sitting volleyball  
"I suffer from PTSD, severe depression, anxiety and adjustment disorder. I also suffered permanent nerve damage to my right hand in a training accident, and injuries to both of my shoulders, lumbar spine and knees. Sport has inspired me to get better physically and mentally. It has forced me to socialise with other veterans, serving members and the community, which I could not do without major anxiety a year ago. After seven years of therapy, I was finally in the right head space to try out for the Invictus Games."



**Pte Luke Jones, 31**  
Rifleman  
Sports: indoor rowing and sitting volleyball  
Below-knee amputee  
"Playing sport and competing has helped me physically and mentally. It has brought back a sense of normality to my life and helped me adapt to my injury. My greatest sporting achievement since I lost my leg was winning a bronze medal in powerlifting at the US Air Force Warrior Games Trials. I got a taste for adaptive sports in 2017, when I competed at the Warrior Games. Seeing so many people overcome their injuries and disabilities was inspirational."



**Heidi Joosten, 33**  
Former Army combat fitness leader  
Sports: athletics and indoor rowing  
"I have neck, shoulder and back injuries from a vehicle accident during a military exercise. Sport has been important for my rehabilitation and pain management by releasing feel-good endorphins that help reduce my perception of pain. It helps me feel connected with others in a team environment. The Invictus Games have inspired me to study towards a career in rehabilitation to help veterans. Competing at the Games last year was a healing and uplifting experience. The social connection was very important and I have made lifelong friends."



**Capt Emma Kadziolka, 29**  
Army nursing officer  
Sports: athletics and indoor rowing  
"I was diagnosed with a Stage II glioma (a brain tumour) in November 2016 and have not received treatment as my glioma has remained dormant. Sport helped me cope with depression that came after my diagnosis. My journey is not about rehabilitation or recovery, but about getting fit and healthy so I can deal with any complications in the future, and looking after my psychological wellbeing. I was co-captain of the Australian Invictus Games team last year and that allowed me to see the positive effect it had on everyone."



**Jarrod Kent, 34**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: powerlifting and swimming  
"I was badly injured while training for the Special Forces, resulting in 10 surgeries in 14 months. I have PTSD, lower-back, shoulder and knee injuries, and I almost lost my left leg to a golden staph infection. Sport has been a catalyst for turning my life around. Having had to fight for my own life, as well as save lives, I know how important life really is. Applying for the Invictus Games has given me something to strive for, something to look forward to, higher goals and a higher purpose."



**Beau King, 36**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: athletics and powerlifting  
“I suffer from hearing loss in both ears from an IED blast and PTSD from my deployments to the Middle East. Sport has allowed me to integrate back into society. It’s given me goals and friendships. I’ve found a new outlet for my frustration. This has allowed me to push hard on the days I’m doing well and rest and recover on the days I struggle. I have always wanted to represent Australia in the Invictus Games and to show I can strive for greatness, no matter what challenges are thrown at me.”



**Dean Knobel, 35**  
Former Navy marine technician  
Sports: powerlifting and swimming  
“I have a spinal injury from a heavy lifting accident in 2010, in which my left hand was crushed. I also live with an adjustment disorder. Sport and gym-based physical therapy have played a massive role in my rehabilitation. Following my injury I quit all sports but now I swim competitively and am back into sports such as surfing and golf. I saw the Invictus Games as an avenue for rehabilitation, a way to challenge myself and an opportunity to meet people, and to train and compete with others with similar injuries.”



**Rebecca Kuenstner, 30**  
Former electronic warfare sailor  
Sport: sitting volleyball  
Has physical and mental health injuries  
“I was always a sports person (volleyball) before I joined the Navy. When people at my gym see me getting over my injuries, they ask me how sport helps and I tell them my story. It has given me wider social networks. The Invictus Games is a self-healing, self-development journey towards achieving my goals. Just representing Australia is an accomplishment for me. Winning, for me, is belonging and being part of a team. It is training hard and playing hard with my buddies.”



**Trudi Lines, 40**  
Former Air Force electrician  
Sports: indoor rowing and wheelchair rugby  
“I have injuries to my neck, lower back and ankle, and I have PTSD. Sport has been great for my mental health and ensuring I maintain my fitness. I was struggling to find a purpose after I left the ADF and thought being around other former and serving members, through the Invictus Games, would do it. It’s been comforting to feel you’re back at home with people with a military background. It’s helped with my rehab and given me back that drive to be fit and have a go.”



**AB Daniel Marsh, 44**  
Navy electronic warfare analyst  
Sports: cycling and sitting volleyball  
“In 2009 I suffered a severe fracture of the left knee in a motorbike accident, and in 2010 I sustained a fracture to my left hip. After my accident in 2009 I lost all motivation to do anything, including keeping fit and healthy. After being introduced to the Invictus Games programs, my life turned around. I have reconnected with my love of cycling and volleyball. I applied for the Games to prove to myself that, no matter what life has put in front of me, sport goes beyond boundaries.”



**Matthew Model, 33**  
Former rifleman  
Sports: athletics and indoor rowing  
“I sustained a lumbar/spinal injury after a fall during an operation to catch former Timorese rebel leader Alfredo Reinado. Sport has always been a part of my life and I have adapted to the challenges of continuing an active lifestyle. Against a lot of odds and advice, I have completed three marathons. After a great deal of encouragement from family and friends, the Invictus Games was my new goal for 2018. Watching a close friend overcome PTSD and win a silver medal at the 2017 Games motivated me to apply.”



**Emilea Mysko, 30**  
Former Navy medical worker  
Sports: cycling and indoor rowing  
“I have mental health illness and physical injuries due to service. Sport has been an integral part of my ability to feel part of a team again, to feel a sense of belonging. I was advised to apply for the Games when I was having difficulty adapting to the restrictions of a surgery. I was given a bike and cycling gave me a sense of achievement. For me, winning will be the ability to compete in a new sport just 12 months after getting parts of my foot fused.”



**Cpl Sonya Newman, 38**  
Army driver  
Sports: wheelchair basketball, indoor rowing, sitting volleyball and swimming  
Suffered an above-knee amputation following complications from minor surgery  
“Sport gives me the motivation to get moving. My entire outlook has changed since I started swimming again and learnt to walk. I now see what I can achieve in life, not what I cannot. I competed in last year’s Invictus Games in Toronto. It was a life-changing experience to see people with different injuries and illness putting in so much effort to be the best that they can be.”



**Cpl Sarah Petchell, 39**  
Army reservist clerk  
Sport: powerlifting  
“I have spinal pain, a shoulder tear and instability, chronic pain in my feet and instability in my ankles. Powerlifting has strengthened the muscles in my shoulder, ankles and feet. Dealing with pain every day is emotionally wearing, but sport gives me a goal to focus on. I represented Australia in powerlifting in 2015 and 2016 but the past year has been a dark time for me with injuries and pain. I was fed up with them limiting me and, when I saw what the Invictus Games was all about, grabbed the chance to be involved.”



**Darren Peters, 50**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: archery and wheelchair basketball  
“I have PTSD, depression and anxiety, 50 per cent hearing loss, asthma, knee injuries, lower back injuries and osteoarthritis. Re-engaging in sport has given me the drive to succeed and has made me believe in myself again. I am motivated to train and compete, always with the aim of setting higher goals. Because sport is social, I am connecting with others, giving me increased confidence. The Invictus Games gives those of us who have lost confidence and direction an opportunity to stand tall.”



**Chris Pitman, 48**  
Former Australian and US Navy member  
Sports: cycling and indoor rowing  
“I sustained injuries to my knee, back and hip, as well as PTSD, anxiety and depression. After leaving the ADF, I started drinking heavily, fell into depression and gained a lot of weight. A mate encouraged me to get on a bike and cycling helped me to lose weight, regain fitness and refocus. After I wasn’t successful in my bid for the last Invictus Games, I spent 12 months reflecting and training and applied for 2018. I have developed more resilience and proven I can pick myself up and try again.”



**Scott Reynolds, 39**  
Former Navy clearance diver  
Sport: sailing  
“I have a range of challenging health conditions and started sailing through the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club’s Integrated disAbled Sailing (IdS) program. I am now part of a team of veterans who race regularly, as well as volunteering with the program. Sailing has been a helpful part of my recovery and transition from the ADF. I see the Games as a way to progress my sailing, and improve my health and wellbeing. The mindfulness and teamwork in sailing continues to help me while I am learning to support other veterans.”



**Michael Lyddiard, 41**  
Former combat engineer  
Sports: athletics, cycling and indoor rowing

"Seriously wounded and ill from my overseas service, I manage my mental health diagnoses (PTSD, anxiety and depression) with support and a degree of acceptance. My physical losses (right arm below the elbow, fingers on my left hand and right eye) and impairments (left eye and hearing) don't define me. Through competing and social engagement, I build my resilience and learn more about my strengths and defeating my fears. I like to think sport shows my children I can accept my choices and losses."



**Craig McGrath, 45**  
Former commando  
Sport: sailing

"I was wounded by an IED in Afghanistan. I sustained significant shrapnel wounds and broken bones, with permanent damage to my lower body. I couldn't participate in sport and became frustrated at my new self. A friend and fellow commando introduced me to sailing, giving me a chance to contribute to a team in a competitive sport. When I'm sailing I'm in a peaceful environment and can appreciate the simple things in life. The Games is a chance to take it to the next level and test myself against others with similar experience."



**Jocelyn McKinley, 41**  
Former airborne electronics analyst  
Sport: archery

"I was medically discharged following injuries to and surgeries on my knees and right wrist. Joining an archery club allowed me to re-engage in life outside work or study (occupational therapy) and be part of a social community. I have been grateful to find a sport that suits my physical capacity and in which I can see a return for my efforts. Having goals to improve my scores and preparing for competitions provides a sense of purpose and I love that archery can be a meditative sport. Physically, the walking helps my knees."



**Jason McNulty, 43**  
Former Army cargo specialist  
Sport: cycling  
Suffered a brain injury, PTSD, depression and anxiety

"Sport has been hugely significant in my continued recovery, helping me to focus and move forward even though my conditions are incurable. I have competed in front of my beautiful daughter and amazing partner, making them proud and showing them I'm not finished yet. Some unfinished business – showing my contribution to Australia is not finished yet – made me apply for the Games. I need the Games to continue my recovery. It helps me set goals and carry them out."



**Stephen Osborne, 50**  
Former infantryman and Army aircrew  
Sport: archery

"I sustained head trauma and a shoulder injury, Meniere's disease (vertigo, nausea, hearing loss and cognitive impairment) and PTSD as the result of an armoured fighting vehicle accident. I started archery to improve focus, balance and coordination. I qualified as an instructor and now host a small but growing number of veterans who shoot at the Toowoomba Archery Club. I applied for the Games because I wanted to challenge myself to get out of my comfort zone, where I had been hiding since discharge."



**Daniel Parker, 29**  
Former combat engineer  
Sports: athletics and swimming

"I have PTSD, pins in my hips and a nerve stimulator in my spine, and had major surgery on most joints. Sport gets me off the couch and out of the house. It has given me the confidence I had lost and I have been able to decrease my medication dramatically. I applied for the Invictus Games to show the games we play in our heads are just that – games. We can overcome them through sport or by reaching out to a fellow mate."



**Pit-Off Nathan Parker, 23**  
Air Force officer  
Sports: athletics and indoor rowing

"I was involved in a bus rollover while returning from a training exercise. This accident resulted in the amputation of my left hand, tendon damage to my right hand and multiple facial lacerations. In the early stages after my accident, sport and exercise were among the few things I could control in my recovery. A key part of my Invictus Games experience last year was the support and guidance from the athletes who competed at the 2016 Games. I'd like to do the same for competitors embarking on their Games journey this year."



**Matthew Payne, 38**  
Former Navy marine technician  
Sport: wheelchair basketball

"I have bilateral ankle instability, shin splints, severe knee deterioration, osteoarthritis of the shoulders, and neck and spinal degeneration. I also have adjustment disorder and depression. Sport has helped me gain back some of my life. It has given me the strength to get back out there and push aside the pain in my mind. I applied for the Games because I want to be pushed past my limits and out of the comfort zone of my home. I want to meet some truly inspirational people who have gone through similar experiences."



**Garry Robinson, 45**  
Former commando  
Sports: archery, cycling and swimming

"I was in a Blackhawk that crashed in Afghanistan in 2010. I sustained a traumatic brain injury and fractured my lower spine, sacrum, eight ribs, both shoulder blades and my left leg, which was later amputated below the knee. I had internal bleeding, my spleen removed and a punctured lung. I competed in the first Games and came home wanting to compete more. My abilities have changed over the years and, through sport, I have found ways to adapt so I can stay involved and active."



**Peter Rudland, 47**  
Former soldier  
Sports: cycling and wheelchair rugby

"I was in a Black Hawk crash in Afghanistan in 2010 that left me with multiple musculoskeletal injuries. Sport has provided the platform for me to redevelop my competitive attitude and has given me positive role models. I am proud of my rehabilitation and selection in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 teams. I was co-captain of the 2017 team and won gold in the recumbent cycling time trial and criterium. These Games will be a chance for those involved in my rehabilitation to see how far I have come."



**Steve Sandman, 35**  
Former infantryman  
Sport: archery  
Has osteoarthritis in both knees, PTSD and severe hearing loss.

"When I left the ADF in late 2014 my right leg was in a brace, I couldn't walk more than a few hundred metres and was told I would never run again. I struggled with depression and contemplated suicide. In 2015 I decided I couldn't accept that and started training. I have since competed in off-road multisport races, road cycling and archery at the 2016 Games, cross-country marathon and mountain biking titles, and archery at state and national levels."



**Sqn-Ldr Rob Saunders, 53**  
Aircraft technician  
Sport: sailing

"Not all injuries are visible, but due to the support from my family and the ADF, including the opportunity to be involved with the Invictus Games, I am on the road to recovery. I had always competed in sports (soccer, baseball and sailing). But after my last deployment I lost interest in recreational activities. The camaraderie and resilience of the athletes at the Games has reinvigorated my passion for sport, especially sailing with a great team. For me, sport is about how you play the game and about the social interaction."



**Rye Shawcroft, 22**  
Former soldier  
Sports: wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball

"I have neural pathway and circulation problems, and musculoskeletal problems with my knees and hips. Sport has helped with pain management and helped me overcome and adjust to the change injuries have made to my life. I applied for the Games to maintain an active lifestyle, to help me set achievable goals, to get out into the community and to help others with disabilities, showing that physical and or mental disabilities don't need to hold you back from doing the things you love."



**Stewart Sherman, 34**  
Former Army medic  
Sports: archery and wheelchair tennis

"I suffer from PTSD related to my operational service in Afghanistan, and lower leg injuries that make it difficult to run and jump during sports. Sport has been the pillar supporting my recovery. It allows me to set measurable goals that prove to myself I am getting better and performing to the best of my ability. We made it into a bronze medal match in Invictus Games Toronto 2017. Unfortunately, we lost but it motivated me to train even harder and longer, and to be at my peak this year."



**Sarah Sliwka, 34**  
Former Army linesman  
Sports: powerlifting and swimming

"I have a lower back injury and curved spine, broken bones in my right arm, snapped ligaments in my right ankle and a strained Achilles tendon. After military discharge I wanted to strengthen my body. Weight training has given me a focus outside of the military and my job. I am now confident in what my body can do and don't worry too much about injuring myself. Sport helps me deal with stress. When I competed at last year's Games I felt like I was a part of the Defence community again."



**Tony Sten, 40**  
Former Army reconnaissance patrol commander  
Sports: athletics and powerlifting

"Sport has given me a renewed drive and focus to train and compete. In 2015, I kayaked 400km unassisted across Bass Strait with a group of veterans, after just one day of prior kayaking experience. My other great achievement, on a personal level, is being a father to two beautiful children. I applied for the Games to represent my country while competing alongside other serving and former military personnel from around the world, in front of my family and friends."



**Jamie Tanner, 35**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: wheelchair tennis and wheelchair rugby

"I suffer from numerous musculoskeletal injuries, PTSD, depression and adjustment disorder. Adaptive sport has been the way for me to join in again – not just in sport, but in life. Sport is helping me to become comfortable around people. It's given me a reason to leave the house, to work on my physical fitness and to become part of a team. I applied for these Games to confirm to myself that I have moved forward and am progressing with my recovery, both physically and mentally."

I applied for the Games to prove to myself you can still do what you love, regardless of the challenges thrown your way.

**Benjamin Yeomans**



**Alexia Vlahos, 23**  
Former Army driver  
Sports: athletics, indoor rowing and powerlifting

"I have had five surgeries on my right knee, including two reconstructions and a bone graft from my hip. Living with these injuries has presented mental health challenges. Finding myself on a rollercoaster of injuries and rehabilitation affected my mindset and I lost the sense of identity and confidence that came from competing at state level. Sport and gym help me put my mind to something positive and surround me with like-minded people. I know I'm not alone on my rehabilitation journey."



**Tiffany White, 31**  
Former communications information system sailor  
Sports: powerlifting and indoor rowing

"I have adjustment disorder with depressive moods and anxiety, and a degenerative joint disease of the right knee. Sport has enabled me to re-enter the community and leave the house. My sports keep me active and have me on the road to being happy and healthier. After not being selected for Invictus Games 2017 there were a lot of things I had to work on. I re-applied in 2018 to show I am more capable than my negative self-talk allowed me to be."

I was a member of the Invictus Games 2017 team ... I felt I had unfinished business and wanted to compete again.

**Jeff Wright**



**Pte Nathan Whittington, 26**  
Army instructor  
Sports: athletics, swimming and sitting volleyball

"I am a below-knee amputee following a water skiing accident. Within five months of having my amputation I was recognised as an elite competitor in the ADF and trained for the 2016 Paralympics. But, due to injury, I was not selected. Being part of that elite sport crowd gave me a deeper understanding of my body and its bio-mechanics. After I failed to meet the standards to become a PTL in 2017, the Games has given me a new training focus. It has also given me a new mental focus."



**Andrew Wilkinson, 40**  
Former Navy aviation technician  
Sports: cycling and swimming

"I have had two back operations for bulged discs, which left my sciatic nerve squashed. This has caused left foot drop and muscle atrophy down the left side of my body. From a very young age, I was always involved in sport. It gives me the chance to turn everything off, including the brain, and hide away from the world. I can shut out all the people who told me I was too unfit to serve, and that I would never compete again. Through sport, I can – and do – prove people wrong."



**Marcus Wilson, 47**  
Former Army gunner and medic  
Sports: cycling and sailing  
Has numerous musculoskeletal injuries and spinal cord damage

"Before putting my hand up for the Invictus Games it was easier to stay at home and not exercise or socialise, which isn't a healthy strategy for anyone. By nominating for the Games and being selected, I have turned that approach around 180 degrees and am now headed on a much more positive pathway. My greatest achievement to date is being awarded the Bravery Medal for rescuing five passengers from a crashed helicopter in Kabul, Afghanistan."



**Jeff Wright, 50**  
Former Army driver  
Sports: wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby

"I was medically discharged following a knee injury in a training accident. Due to a motorcycle accident after discharge I became a paraplegic and incurred vision loss. I also have PTSD. Sport has been the catalyst for me to revisit the camaraderie and competitive nature of sport. It helps me stop thinking I am a person with a disability. I was a member of the Invictus Games 2017 team and had a rewarding experience. I felt I had unfinished business and wanted to compete again."



**Benjamin Yeomans, 27**  
Former infantryman  
Sports: athletics and indoor rowing  
Has traumatic brain injury and eye muscle dysfunction

"Sport has played a huge role in my rehab, mentally and physically. The competitive nature of training to the highest standard possible is a driving force each day. Rubbing shoulders with amazing people who have been through hell and come out the other side has inspired my own development and understanding of injuries. I applied for the Games to prove to myself you can still do what you love, regardless of the challenges thrown your way."