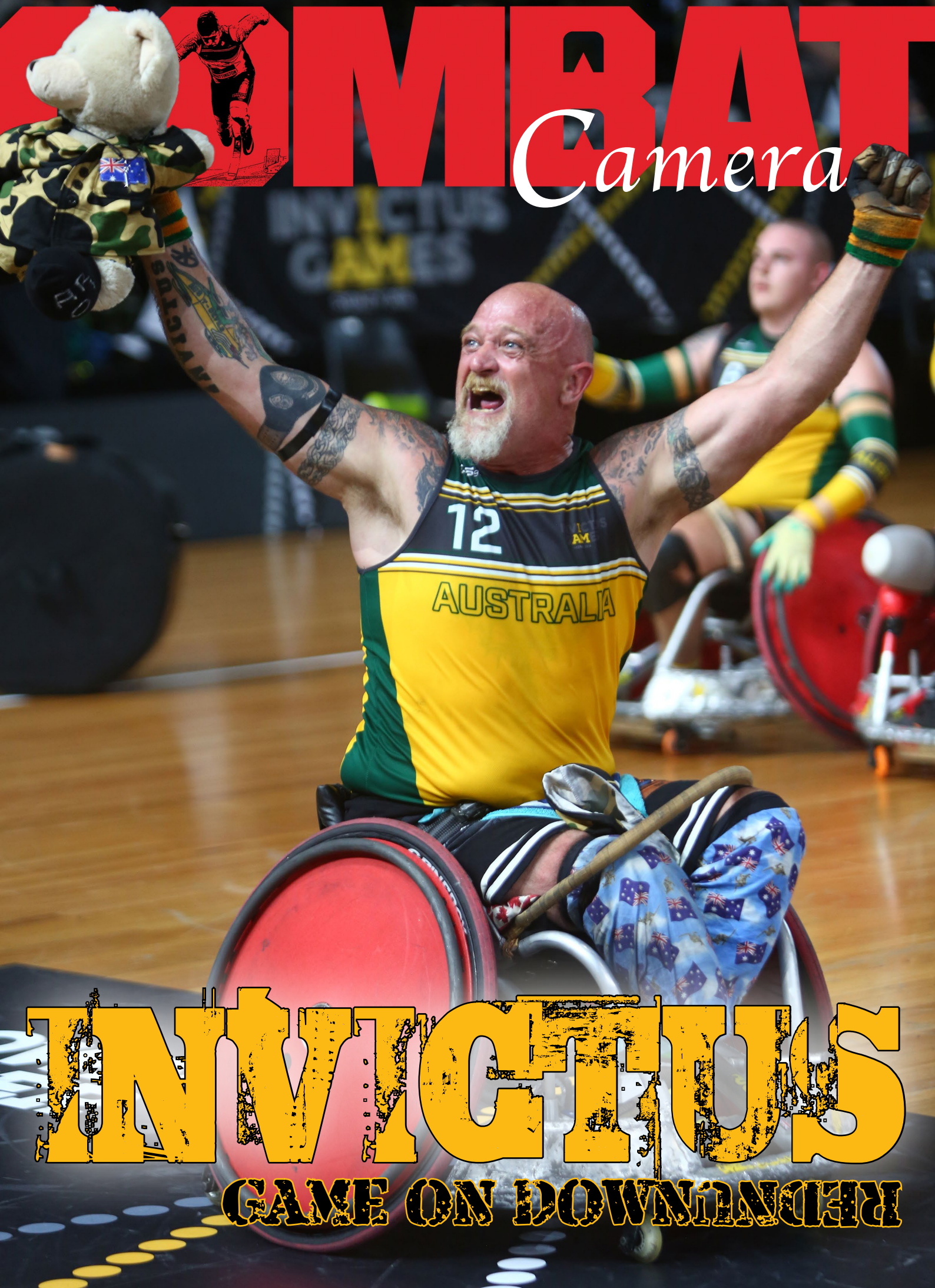


ISSUE 17 – OCTOBER 2018

COMBAT

Camera



INVICTUS

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Issue 17 – October 2018

COMBAT
Camera



INVICTUS
GAMES 2018
Special issue

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Welcome to this special issue of **COMBAT Camera** magazine – dedicated to the Invictus spirit of the wounded, injured and ill competitors at the Invictus Games Sydney 2018.

I had a huge week at the games. I went with a gameplan of my own – to photograph as much Team Australia action as I could. And I'm relatively happy I accomplished what I wanted to – i.e. get enough to fill this special issue of **COMBAT Camera**.

While I am aware that there were thousands, if not millions of photos taken at the Sydney games – and I've actually seen loads far better than mine – I am very proud of the fact that every photo bar one (plus the Team Australia portraits) in this magazine were taken by me.

That said, I don't know if I got photos of every Aussie, and if I did, I don't know if every Aussie team member makes an appearance in these pages. If they don't, I'm truly sorry, but there's only so much space available, even when you dedicate a whole magazine to one topic. As it is, this is a super bumper issue topping out at 100 pages! All this coverage plus some extra photos not included in this e-magazine are also available as a hard-cover coffee-table book (in same format as our Yearbooks). Find that via the "IN PRINT" button on our web site.

I'm very glad I chose to do this, though, rather than a 10-page wrap-up in the next **CONTACT** magazine. That just wouldn't have done justice to what was a fantastic week of sport, competition, camaraderie and 'Invictus spirit'.

Aside from the physical challenge of lugging two cameras around Olympic Park all week, I also found Invictus Games a challenge emotionally. I witnessed some very touching moments, and heard of many more. I have no shame in saying I cried more than once. In fact, I still can't talk or write about some of those moments without tearing up all over again.

I've chosen five of my favourite **EDITOR'S MOMENTS** from across the games and flagged those in the following pages (not in order). I hope you find them and hope you like them too.

And I hope you like my personal coverage of Sydney's Invictus Games. It was very challenging, but oh so rewarding.

However, the biggest challenge to my coverage, you may or may not know, was that I nearly didn't get to cover the games at all – see that story [here](#). But, in the end, I got my media accreditation. And I want to take this opportunity to again thank the dozens of people who went in to battle on my behalf on this issue – especially NSW Minister for Veterans' Affairs David Elliott for his official intervention, which I believe got me over the line. I hope David and all those other people still feel their lobbying and support was justified.

Please scroll through the following pages and judge for yourself.

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan
Managing Editor

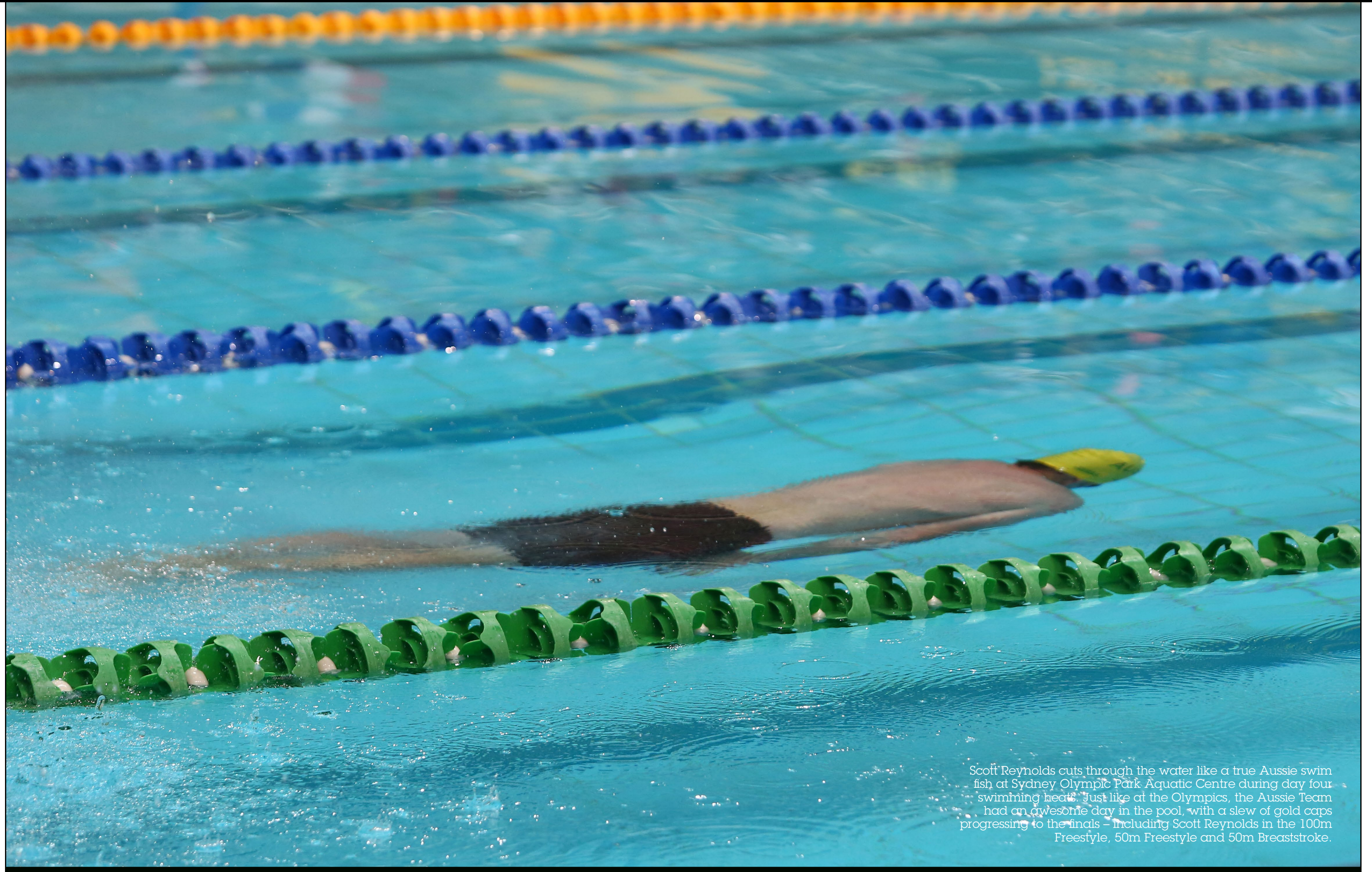
ON THE WATER AND...

PHOTO BY BRIAN HARTIGAN

In the shadow of the iconic Sydney Opera House sails, sailing was introduced to Invictus Games for the first time this year. Fittingly, the home team took out Gold in the 'Elliott 7' event (below), with Paul Langley, Craig McGrath, Rob Saunders and Marcus Wilson on board.

In the other sailing class, 'Hansa Dinghy Individual', Australia's Davin Bretherton and Pete Arbuckle took Silver and Bronze respectively, with Frenchman Cyrille Chahboune winning the Gold.





Scott Reynolds cuts through the water like a true Aussie swim fish at Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre during day four swimming heats. Just like at the Olympics, the Aussie Team had an awesome day in the pool, with a slew of gold caps progressing to the finals – including Scott Reynolds in the 100m Freestyle, 50m Freestyle and 50m Breaststroke.

SWIMMING

Tom Foster, right, likes what he sees on the scoreboard; and, below, launches into one of his five swimming events – winning Gold in all five – 50m Freestyle, 50m Breaststroke, 50m Backstroke, 100m Freestyle and 4 x 50m Freestyle. Mark Daniels, far right, about to start in the 100m Freestyle heat; and bottom right, on the last lap. Mark qualified for the finals and placed 7th against strong opposition, including Australia's Gold Medalist Andrew Wilkinson, who won by less than a second ahead of Michael Goody of the UK, but nine seconds ahead of Bronze Medalist Alex Dewar, UK.



Ruth Hunt, below, makes a clean entry in her 50m Freestyle heat; prepares to start her 100m Freestyle heat, far right; and, joins Vanessa Broughill and the entire field in a post-heat group hug, right. Ruth Hunt won Gold in the 50m Backstroke and 50m Breaststroke, Silver in the 4 x 50m Freestyle and Bronze in both the 50m and 100m Freestyle.

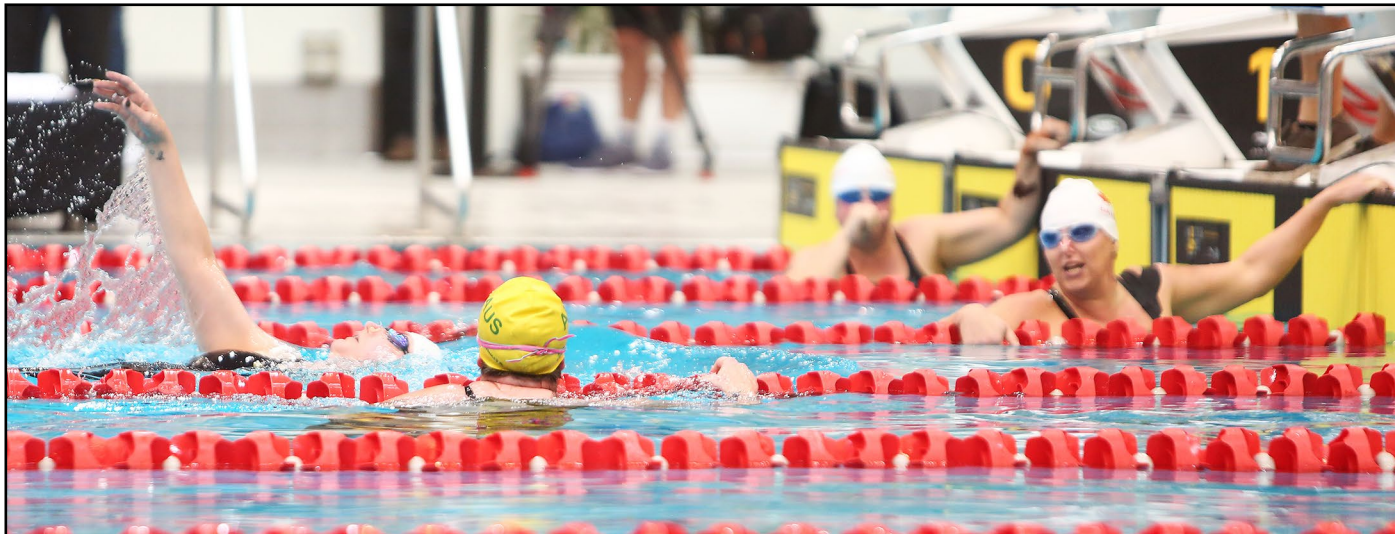
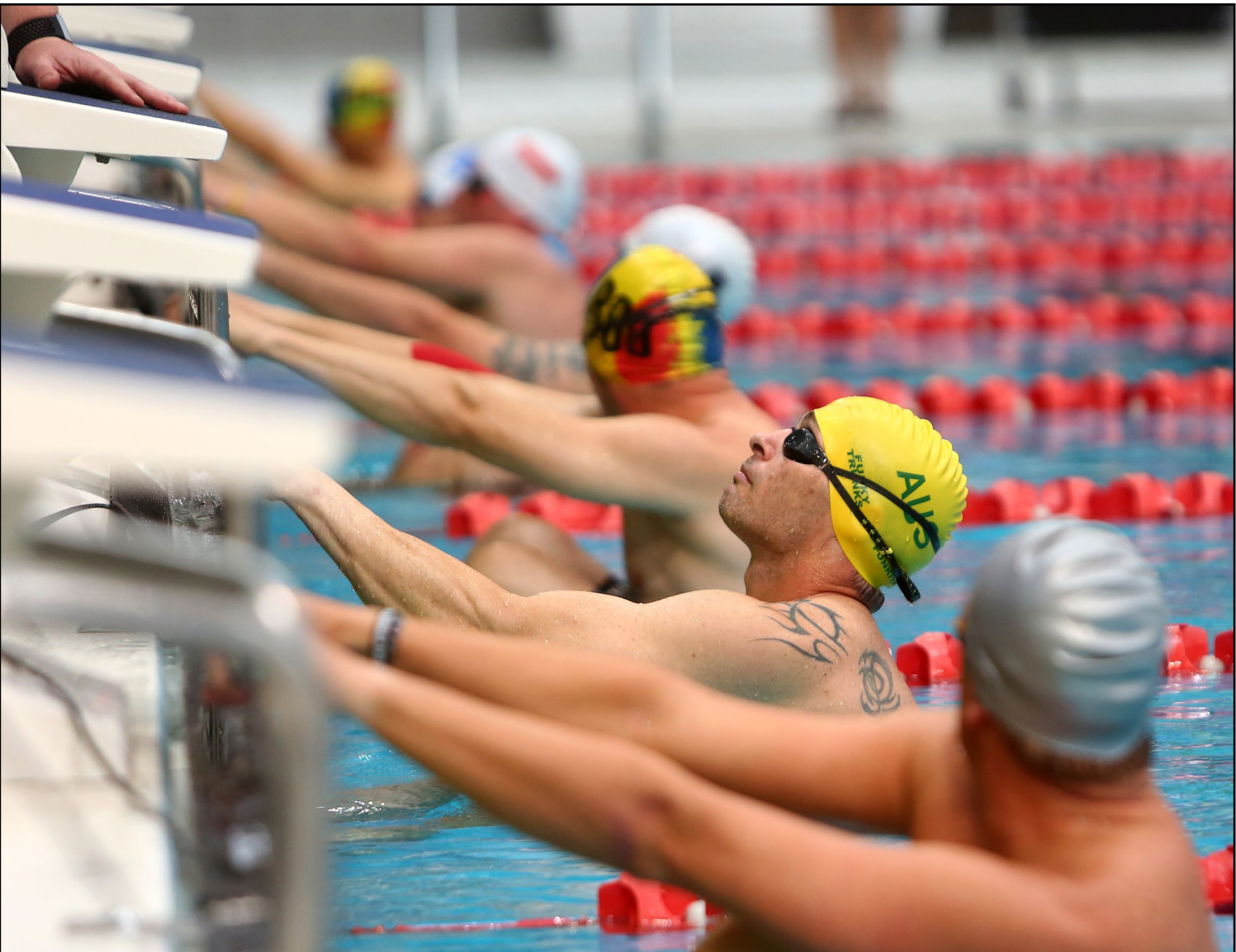


Men's ISA 100m Freestyle	
Garry Robinson	Silver
Men's ISA 50m Backstroke	
Garry Robinson	Silver
Men's ISA 50m Breaststroke	
Garry Robinson	Silver
Men's ISA 50m Freestyle	
Garry Robinson	Bronze
Men's ISC 100m Freestyle	
Andrew Wilkinson	Gold
Men's ISC 50m Backstroke	
Andrew Wilkinson	Silver
Men's ISC 50m Breaststroke	
Andrew Wilkinson	Gold
Men's ISC 50m Freestyle	
Andrew Wilkinson	Silver
Men's ISD 100m Freestyle	
Tom Foster	Gold
Men's ISD 50m Backstroke	
Tom Foster	Gold
Men's ISD 50m Breaststroke	
Tom Foster	Gold
Luke Hill	Bronze
Men's ISD 50m Freestyle	
Tom Foster	Gold
Mixed 4x50m Freestyle Relay	
Australia	Gold
Women's ISC 100m Freestyle	
Sonya Newman	Gold
Women's ISC 50m Backstroke	
Sonya Newman	Gold
Women's ISC 50m Breaststroke	
Sonya Newman	Gold
Women's ISC 50m Freestyle	
Sonya Newman	Gold
Women's ISD 100m Freestyle	
Taryn Barbara	Silver
Ruth Hunt	Bronze
Women's ISD 50m Backstroke	
Ruth Hunt	Gold
Women's ISD 50m Breaststroke	
Ruth Hunt	Gold
Women's ISD 50m Freestyle	
Taryn Barbara	Gold
Ruth Hunt	Bronze

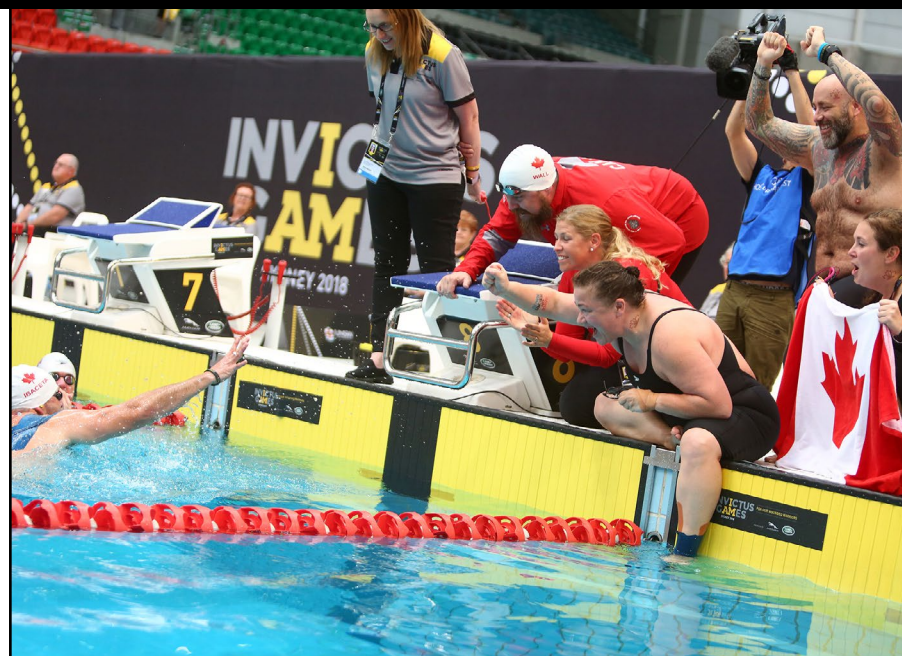


SWIMMING

Clockwise from right: Corporal Taryn Barbara launches into her 100m Freestyle heat (later winning Silver in the final. She also won Gold in the 50m Freestyle and Silver in the 4 x 50m Freestyle); Scott Reynolds dives into a 50m Freestyle heat; Vanessa Broughill is pleased with her performance in a heat; Vanessa Broughill goes back down the pool after finishing a swim to encourage a slower competitor; Michael Lyddiard awaits a start signal in a 50m Backstroke heat; and, Jarrod Kent congratulates another competitor after a heat.



Emotional scenes at the pool as, right, a Canadian swimmer struggles through the last metre of his race urged on by family and fellow competitors; and, below, Australian Army Corporal Sonya Newman receives her Gold Medal supported by the girls she beat, with her kids standing by. Corporal Newman won four Gold and a Silver in the pool – 50m Freestyle, 50m Breaststroke, 50m Backstroke, 100m Freestyle all Gold; and, Silver in the 4x50m Freestyle.



ADF SPORTS CELL

The healing power of adaptive sports to help ex ADF personnel will be adopted as a key measure to support the wounded, injured and ill (WII) community, with the announcement of a new ADF Sports Cell.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Darren Chester made the announcement during Invictus Games 2018.

Mr Chester said adaptive sport had proven to be a positive aid for ADF personnel transitioning to civilian life, and for veterans and serving members as part of rehabilitation, not only in health benefits, but through a sense of community that was so important to wellbeing after service.

"The formation of the ADF Sports Cell, led by the Department of Defence with support from DVA, will channel serving and ex-serving members into national and international adaptive and non-adaptive sports programs, including the Invictus Games," Mr Chester said.

"Transitioning from the ADF into civilian life can be a challenging time for our personnel, especially if this is for medical reasons – and we are committed to supporting them through this process.

"Sport is also the perfect platform to be active, build a sense of community and forge the friendships that play a big part of service in the Australian Defence Force, which is often a missing factor when re-entering civilian life.

"Like most of the world has seen this past week through the Invictus Games, it is truly inspiring to watch how powerful sport has been in motivating the recovery of our ex-serving personnel, enabling

them to accomplish great feats on an international stage."

ADF Sports Cell will support an initiative being proposed by the RSL, working with likeminded ex-service organisations, to implement the Veteran's Sports Australia Program as a legacy of the Invictus Games 2018.

It will also foster an alumni community that will enable past competitors to become volunteer mentors, coaches and sports administrators.

Returned and Services League NSW president James Brown said a veterans family was stronger when it worked together.

"The power of sport to heal and bind us as a community is incredible," Mr Brown said.

"For many veterans, it is a lifeline.

"Supporting veteran health and wellbeing is critical and Veteran Sport Australia will achieve this through sport."

Funding and support for the initiative is being provided by RSL NSW and ClubsNSW – both of whom are Founding Partners of Invictus Games Sydney 2018.

ClubsNSW CEO Anthony Ball said his organisation was thrilled to support Veteran Sport Australia – a program which, like the Invictus Games Sydney 2018, would use the power of sport to improve the lives of injured and sick servicemen and women.

"The club industry takes great pride in the practical support it lends to the veteran community and this program is just another example of our determination to help our wounded warriors transition back into civilian life," Mr Ball said.



WITH YOU WITH ME
National Career Expo
SYDNEY | OCTOBER 26TH

WithYouWithMe, is working to solve underemployment and unemployment for veterans and other underutilised talent groups. Industry is searching for great employees across a number of exciting industries and veterans will add great value to their workforce.

Our team is bridging the gap between employers and veterans via our free online tech solution that uses the 'match, train and employ' method. So far we

have helped more than 6000 veterans, with hundreds more joining each month.

We are still a young company, we have made mistakes along the way, but we have strong values and are committed to doing the right thing by veterans, helping them find renewed purpose in their next career.

Invictus Games Sydney provided an amazing opportunity to shine a spotlight on veteran employment. While energy built around the games, we saw a lot of support for the WYWM National Career Expo, held in support of the games at Olympic Park.

As energy built around this event, even more employers partnered with us to hire veterans into their

workforce, with a number of other affiliate groups joining in to support individuals on our program.

The most important aspect of the games for us was, "what happens afterwards".

We believe in creating an outcome-driven legacy to support veterans into new careers and we will work closely with sponsors and employment partners to ensure great opportunities continue to be offered.

2019 holds some exciting opportunities for both our company and for veterans. We have new software coming online for employers to have much faster and more accurate access to individuals on our program looking for work. This will allow employers

to hire the right veteran for their team based on their future potential, not past experience. There will no longer need to be a focus on translating military experience to a CV, rather highlighting an individual's future ability, trainability and cultural fit for a new team. This will be a game changer in opening up the number of opportunities a particular veteran can apply for.

We will continue to work hard to improve our training and employment opportunities and appreciate any feedback you have about our programs or service. We want to be the best we can – for you.

Tom Larter
CEO ANZ, WYWM

BEARS TO SCHOOL

ENSURING THE ANZAC SPIRIT REMAINS UNCONQUERED

The fourth Invictus Games will be remembered as a resounding success for all involved. This is true not only for the nearly 500 athletes from 18 nations who competed at the multi-sport event in Sydney, but also for the millions of people who followed coverage of the Games in Australia and across the world.

The 72 athletes from Team Australia did us proud, not only through their individual achievements at the Games, but also through exhibiting the qualities of mateship and camaraderie that underpin the Anzac spirit and Australia's heritage of service.

Since the first Invictus Games in 2014, the continued growth and rising popularity of this event has been instrumental in raising awareness about the men and women who serve their country, as well as the sacrifices they make in performing their duties. The Invictus Games highlights the challenges of wounded, injured or sick personnel and veterans and is a powerful way for the community to engage with the experiences of our service people. Ensuring that the stories of our service men and women are told is one of the most fitting ways in which we can honour their commitment to Australia's defence and our safety.

If you were following the coverage of the Invictus Games, you may have noticed that Team Australia was accompanied by some distinctive mascots – teddy bears donning a variety of historically accurate Australian uniforms from the Great War. Each of the 72 athletes from Team Australia and their 44 accompanying support staff joined the Bears to School initiative as Ambassadors by 'adopting' a Great War uniformed teddy bear for the Invictus Games. Following the Games, the athletes donated their bears to a school of their choice in the lead up to the Centenary of Armistice on 11 November.

The Bears to School program is a community focussed initiative that encourages the public to donate a uniformed teddy bear to a primary school of their choice. Once in their classrooms, the bears

can help teachers educate young students about the history of the Great War, our Anzac heritage and events such as the forthcoming Centenary of Armistice. Each of the 11 bears features an authentic and historically accurate Australian uniform from the Great War. Donated bears are accompanied to their schools by a story card, which features the bear's story of service and the details of the donor. Furthermore, 25% of every donation goes towards supporting the work of the donor's selected local military charity.

More than 800 bears have been donated to 520 schools across Australia to date. Keith Payne VC, Australia's oldest living Victoria Cross recipient, is the Bears to School National Ambassador. Prominent Australians have rallied behind Bears to School, including former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, Bill Shorten MP, Darren Chester MP, Kerry Stokes, Chief of Defence Force General Angus Campbell, Chief of Air Force Air Marshall Leo Davies, the RSL and NASHOS. Bears to School also was granted the privilege of using the protected term "Anzac" by the Department of Veteran Affairs – the Bears to School website can be found at AnzacBears.com.au

As a prominent voice for military veterans in Australia, the RSL has been involved in both the Invictus Games and Bears to School. RSL National Special Projects Manager Stephen Henderson explains how these two initiatives complement the mission of the RSL in promoting the interests and welfare of serving and ex-serving men and women.

"The Invictus Games and Bears to School both highlight the importance and significance of service," she said.

"RSL is proud to support Bears to School as an innovative way of helping young Australians appreciate the experiences of ex-service men and women and to engage with the history of the Great War leading up to the Centenary of Armistice."

The Team Australia Bears to School Ambassadors fully embraced the spirit of the campaign during



Sapper Tom Foster proudly displays his 50m Backstroke Gold Medal and his ANZAC Bear, flanked by Silver Medalist Volodymyr Korol of the Ukraine and Bronze Medalist Richard Gamble of the UK. Tom won five Gold Medals in the pool.

the games, and the bears generated a lot of interest from curious competitors, the public and the media. The enthusiastic and generous support of Team Australia has resulted in Bears to School reaching a new audience in its mission to make our Anzac history more accessible to young children, through an age-appropriate and non-threatening teaching aid.

The team behind Bears to School was inspired by Team Australia's support and the subsequent interest it generated from across Australia. Stephen Davie from Bears to School explained why it meant so much for Invictus Team Australia to get behind the initiative.

"Like Invictus, Bears to School aims to share stories of service," Mr Davie said.

"We want our bears to tell the stories of a generation that is now no longer with us – a generation that saw the beaches at Gallipoli and experienced the trenches in France and Belgium.

"It's so important for Australians to cherish this history that shaped our nation and to make sure that each successive generation remembers those sacrifices.

"Having the athletes from Team Australia help share that message was just extraordinary."

You can donate one of the 11 Great War bears to a school of your choice by visiting AnzacBears.com.au. The Bears to School team will make sure your bear is delivered to the school, along with learning materials and a story card about the bear and its service that recognises you as the donor.

HAPPY TO SUPPORT



As a proud Ambassador of the Bears to School program, I have no hesitation in endorsing this fantastic education initiative.

Brian Hartigan, Editor, COMBAT Camera

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

AKA

INVICTUS GAMES SYDNEY 2018



AUS

15



Try Clock

Period

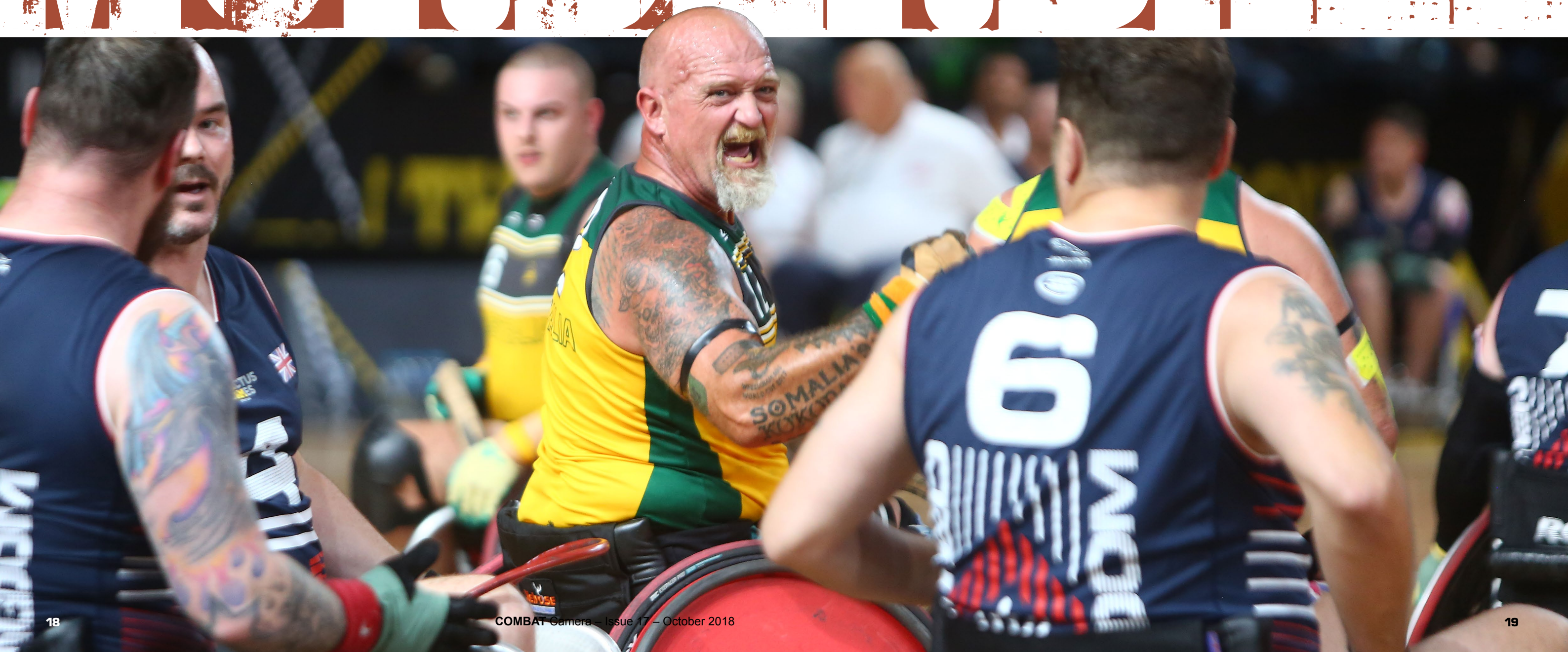
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UK

15

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY





A raucous home crowd cheered the Australian Wheelchair Rugby Team to victory in an exhilarating Invictus Games Sydney 2018 Gold-Medal match on 25 October.

Tight at the start, the Gold-Medal match was a tense affair with the Aussies eventually gaining the upper hand to win their first ever Invictus medal in the sport.

Australia took the honours with a relatively comfortable margin – 23-17 – though it was a tight and tense first half, neck and neck for much of play, until the Aussies broke away to a late lead, 14-11 at half time.

Very early in the second half, a careless Aussie arm smacked some Pommy chops and two Aussies

ended up in the sin bin, allowing the Brits to capitalise in the four-on-two situation.

But no sooner had the first Aussie been released to play again, he made up for his indiscretion with a blistering-speed slice down the left wing, to keep his team three points ahead.

Half way through the second half and with a Pom in the sin bin, the Aussies stretched their lead to five and really began to look like the dominant force.

Clever play and tough defence in the final minute locked the Brits out of the game at the deathknell.

With the final score settled the floodgates of emotion were opened for the team that had been knocked out in the Bronze-Medal match at the past three Invictus Games.

But this year they were truly dominant, winning all five pool games – and the big one.

Australian team captain Matt Brumby said the win was a result of the camaraderie and mate-ship within the team – not just in the tournament, but throughout the entire Invictus buildup.

"It's pretty emotional – it's been a big rollercoaster with this team since January," Matt said.

"It's great to have one of these gold puppies around my neck but I can definitely say it's not about the medals.

"I had cycling on day one and I didn't get a medal, but I didn't get sad about that either, because I knew I gave as much as I had, and that's what this team has done since January."

Aussie number 8 Jeff Wright said The UK team was tough opposition and that made the Gold-Medal win all the sweeter.

"They were worthy opponents," he said.

"But we came up with the goods and it feels fantastic."

Team UK were happy to have made it so far in Sydney – but the loss to the Aussies in the ultimate game only served as incentive for next time.

UK team-member Matthew Mellon said the loss only served to make him hungrier for the next Invictus Games.

"This has given me a goal for the future. I want to do the next Invictus Games and I want to do the next wheelchair rugby tournament," Matthew said.





"Hopefully we'll come fitter and stronger next time, and we'll take the gold off the Aussies there."

Earlier in the week, the same teams met in a pool match that was one of the best contests this reporter has ever seen – notwithstanding the fact it was only the third game I'd ever witnessed in what could well be my new favourite spectator sport.

Having seen the Brits soundly thrash France in an earlier game, and the Aussies do similar to the Kiwis, I felt the stage was set for an epic battle when the two old sporting foes finally met.

And it certainly did not disappoint.

The teams were locked at 6-6 at half time, with the break setting the field to send the Aussies attacking the end where I was privileged to be

seated in a photographers chair immediately behind the goal line.

Skill levels on both sides were amazing – not just in the speed, agility and aggression of their wheelchair handling, but also in their tactics and teamwork, in defence and attack.

Scoring was tit-for-tat from start to finish and the scores were again locked at full time – 12 all.

Three minutes of extra play was added to the game to try to split the teams, but to no avail – each side adding another three points.

So, the match would eventually be decided by 'golden point' – the next to score would win.

The UK had first possession but the turnover came quickly – how, I don't know (lack of insight on the

rules, plus the pace of the game) – and a strong Aussie attack and clever passing saw heavy-weight scoring machine Pete Arbuckle crash over for the win – 16-15 just seconds after the start of golden-point extra time.

Coming to this tournament with zero knowledge or experience of wheelchair rugby – also known as Murderball (for good and obvious reasons, as I can now attest) I'm hooked.

It's massively exciting – especially when two near-peer, skillful, passionate, aggressive teams lock horns.

I can't wait to see more – and I can't wait to see Australia's "Rolling Diggers" do battle again.

ROLLING DIGGERS INVICTUS 2018 CAMPAIGN

Australia v France	25-8
Australia v USA (photos below)	16-10
Australia v New Zealand	24-6
Australia v UK (photos above)	16-15
Australia v Unconquered	21-9

Gold Medal Match

Australia v UK	23-17
----------------	-------

Bronze Medal Match

USA v France	24-20
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EDITOR'S MOMENT #3

Wheelchair Rugby in general is the wildest game I've ever watched. It's definitely my new favourite spectator sport.





This photo supplied by NZDF

The Australian wheelchair rugby team put aside trans-Tasman rivalry to give New Zealand Defence Force team member George Nepata an Invictus Games moment he'll never forget.

Mr Nepata, who was left a tetraplegic when he was dropped from a stretcher during a training exercise in Singapore nearly 30 years ago, said he got the ball and suddenly players from both sides were pushing him towards the try line.

"That's the Anzac brotherhood and the Invictus spirit," Mr Nepata said.

"It was a humbling experience and I'll never forget it. I thank the Aussie guys and our guys for making that a special moment for me."

The atmosphere in the stadium was already electric after the New Zealand team performed their Invictus haka before the game – and went wild when George Nepata scored.

"We keep the Invictus haka just for the Australian team and the Australian people," Mr Nepata said.

"We were in a spearhead formation, we were loud and proud and the haka was just tremendous."

The Australians won the game convincingly

but their assistance to Mr Nepata was hailed a wonderful example of the Invictus Games spirit.

His Invictus Games dream didn't end there however. As the only team member fully dependent on a wheelchair, Mr Nepata had to play all five NZ Wheelchair Rugby pool games – in recognition of which he received the Exceptional Performance of the Games Award at the Closing Ceremony.

Mr Nepata's family – wife Kim, daughter Air Force Corporal Whakapono, 14-year-old son Ngaheke, mother Christine Kidwell and brother Damien Nepata – were there to see him honoured.

George said receiving the Exceptional Performance Award was an overwhelming and humbling experience.

"This has been a life-changing moment and experience I've shared with my teammates. I'm just so proud of them all – they're all helping me," he said.

The star-studded Closing Ceremony was attended by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, who later travelled 'across the ditch' with the New Zealand Invictus Games Team.



EDITOR'S MOMENT #2

When Aussie Davin Bretherton passed the ball to Kiwi George Nepata then pushed him over the try line to score New Zealand's final goal.

NEWS

VETERANS' COVENANT

On the last day of the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 the Australian government publicly pledged to develop an Australian Veterans' Covenant to recognise the role and service to Australia by veterans and their families.

The new Australian Veterans' Covenant will be enacted in legislation so that the nation can recognise the unique nature of military service and support veterans and their families.

This initiative will, at least in part, be modelled on the United Kingdom Armed Forces Covenant, in place for more than 18 years.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Darren Chester jointly announced the Australian Veterans' Covenant saying it was designed for the Australian community to recognise the service and sacrifice of the men and women who commit to defending the nation, and to pledge their commitment to support veterans and their families.

"We understand the home front is just as important as the front line," Mr Morrison said.

"As part of this Veterans' Covenant, a new Australian Veterans' Card and an Australian Veterans' Lapel Pin will make it easier for all Australians to recognise and respect the unique contribution that veterans have made to Australia

and for our veterans to reconnect with others who have served.

"As we have seen throughout the Invictus Games and in the lead up to the Centenary of Armistice, Australians want to acknowledge and show respect for our veterans who have given so much in their service.

"Businesses, government and community organisations can also play their part in recognising and respecting those who have served."

Mr Chester said the new veterans' card and lapel pin could help organisations and individuals identify veterans when they aren't wearing their uniform or medals, so they could offer discounts and extra support.

"The new card and lapel pin will, for the first time, enable everyone across the nation to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and support the more than 300,000 veterans in Australia, and their families.

"The Prime Minister will be writing to businesses and communities to urge them to recognise the service of our veterans.

"We will invest \$11.1 million in these measures to deliver a national approach to recognise veterans and will further consult defence and veteran communities in coming weeks."

Funding for Fussell House

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester also announced a \$6.7million package to develop the SoldierOn Fussell House accommodation facility to be co-located at the Concord Repatriation Hospital in Sydney.

Concord Repatriation Hospital is currently undergoing a NSW-government-funded \$340million rebuild program.

New facilities will include the National

Centre for Veterans Health – an Australian first, state-of-the-art centre for specialised healthcare for veterans.

Named in honour of Lieutenant Michael Fussell who was serving with the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan when he was killed in action by an improvised explosive device, the facility will house up to 40 veterans and their families at a time, especially beneficial to veterans

from regional and rural areas.

■ Mr Chester further announced the government would invest \$7.6 million for the Kookaburra Kids Defence Program to boost their targeted support to children of ex-defence force members who are experiencing mental-health issues because of their service.

"The Kookaburra Kids Defence Program was first supported with a \$2.1 million injection in

a pilot program in NSW, ACT, Queensland and the NT for 569 children," Mr Chester said.

"This extra investment will see the program expand into Victoria, South Australia and WA for 1750 children.

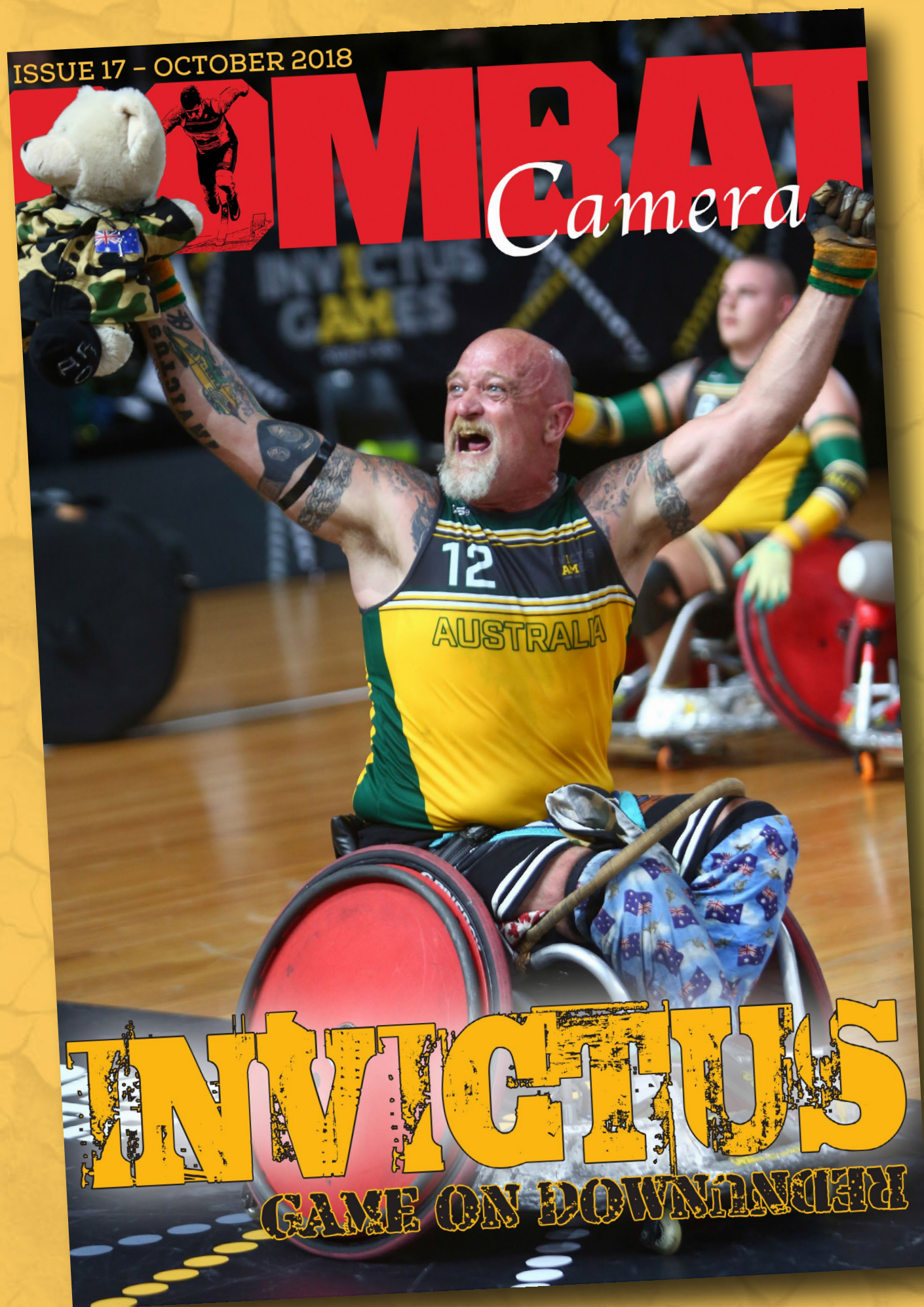
"As a country we can always do more to recognise and back our veterans.

"The government is committed to setting Australia up to support the veterans of today and tomorrow."

BASKETBALL

With many of the same players carried over from the Gold-Medal-winning Wheelchair Rugby, hopes were high for Australian Wheelchair Basketball glory. But, alas, it wasn't to be. Australia was squarely beaten by both the British (photographed) and the Dutch. The British went on to win Bronze and the Dutch claimed Silver – Gold to the USA.





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ATHLETICS



“IT'S REALLY SPECIAL FOR ME JUST TO BE HERE IN SYDNEY AND TO COMPETE

Very vocal and appreciative crowds witnessed two huge days of track and field action at the Sydney Olympic Park Athletics Stadium on the Thursday and Friday of Invictus Games 2018.

There were some awe-inspiring stories to come off the field – like the one-armed man, USA's Mike Kacer, who said he had already 'won enough medals', so gave his next one to a one-armed little girl he plucked from the crowd and brought up to the medal ceremony with him.

Arm amputee, eight-year-old Jemma, had told Mr Kacer how she dreamed of being a Paralympic swimmer when she grew up and was inspired by the athletes at Invictus.

"I thought I'd give her her first medal and an experience she may never forget," Mr Kacer said after handing over his Men's Discus Silver Medal.

Then there was the Romanian 1500m runner proud to boast he was running on royal legs – a carbon-fibre running blade donated by Prince Charles of England.

There also were several competitors who knew full well they didn't stand a chance of winning, but competed anyway just to make sure there were enough entrants in the events so that medals could be awarded.

And, of course, there were the entrants who knew they couldn't win medals, but just entering, giving it a crack and having some fun was its own huge victory in the bigger battle of life after military service.

Of course there were loads of Aussies competing – not all of whom won medals. But that's OK – participation, camaraderie and mutual support were the order of the day.

In the crowd at Sydney Olympic Park Athletics Field were four gents I have the honour of sharing gym sessions and two separate 'veteran coffee clubs' with.

Invictus was the theme of conversation at both gatherings the week after – and, I suspect, for some time to come.

In fact, there's even talk that some of us – myself included – might throw our hats in the ring to compete at The Hague in 2020.

One other theme among my veteran friends was their observance of how uninhibited the athletes were – a seemingly total lack of self-consciousness or shyness about physical or mental afflictions.

It was my observance, in fact, that the more an athlete embraced his or her affliction, the more warmly he or she was embraced by the audience – all of whom were there to support, not judge or ogle.

Governor of New South Wales retired General David Hurley said Sydneysiders had thrown their support behind the Invictus Games, with many saying the spirit of the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games had returned to the city.

That may be true, but I think the spirit of Invictus was something entirely different – dressed up as 'competition', Invictus was much more about mateship and healing and 'having each others backs'.

"Everyone is trying their utmost to perform well," Governor Hurley said.

"Hard work has brought them to this point and you can see the concentration and effort.

"But, underneath all that, there is enormous camaraderie across the board – 'I'll do my best, but I'll help the next guy as well, if they are struggling'."

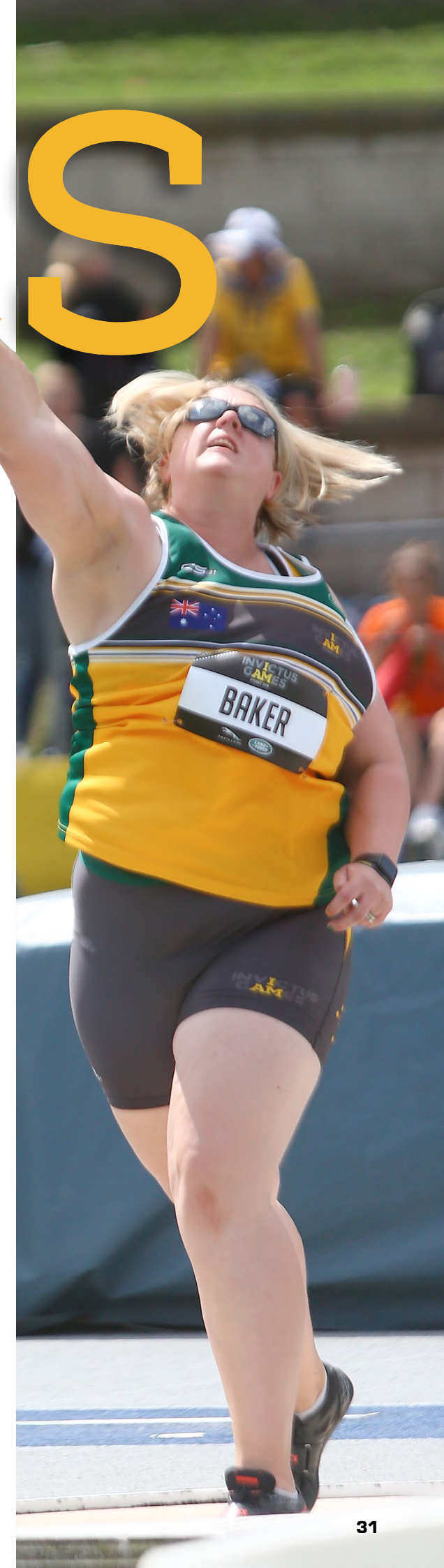
And the warmth of the audience reflected that sentiment in spades.

Australian nursing officer Captain Emma Kadziolka said the home crowd really worked in the Aussies' favour.

"It's been so positive to see so many people supporting us. Nothing beats a home crowd" Captain Kadziolka said.

"It's been really inspiring for me to be able to share this experience with others. It's really special for me just to be here in Sydney and to compete."

Find, like, share at [f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [y](#) [i](#) [w](#) [e](#) [a](#) and [r](#)







ATHLETICS





Men's IF4 Discus Damien Irish	Gold
Men's IF5 Discus Pete Brown (left)	Bronze
Men's IJ1 Long Jump Stix Parker	Silver
Men's IJ3 Long Jump Michael Lyddiard (right)	Silver
Men's IJ5 Long Jump Benjamin Yeomans	Gold
Men's IT1 100m Stix Parker	Silver
Men's IT1 1500m Andrew Wilkinson	Gold
Men's IT1 200m Stix Parker	Silver
Men's IT1 400m Stix Parker	Gold
Men's IT3 100m Nathan Parker	Gold
Men's IT3 400m Nathan Parker	Silver
Men's IT4 100m Matthew Brumby	Gold
Men's IT4 1500m Matthew Brumby	Gold
Men's IT4 200m Matthew Brumby	Gold
Men's IT4 400m Matthew Brumby	Gold
Men's IT7 100m Benjamin Yeomans	Gold
Men's IT7 200m Benjamin Yeomans	Gold
Mixed 4x100m Relay Australia	Gold
Women's IF4 Discus Brigid Baker Vanessa Broughill	Gold Silver
Women's IF4 Shotput Brigid Baker Rebecca Kuenstner	Gold Bronze
Women's IJ5 Long Jump Heidi Joosten Vanessa Broughill	Gold Bronze
Women's IT7 100m Heidi Joosten Alexia Vlahos	Gold Bronze
Women's IT7 200m Heidi Joosten	Gold
Women's IT7 400m Heidi Joosten	Gold

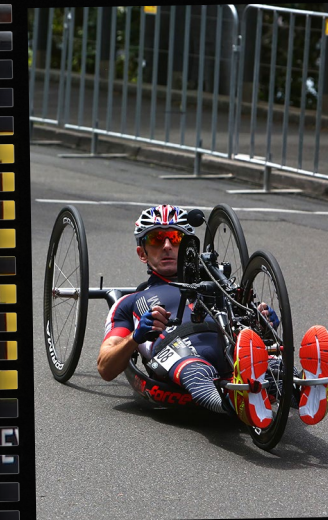
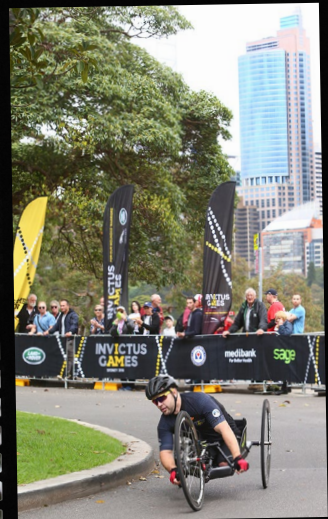


THRILLS
SPILLS IN

CHYCHU
CITY



CRITERIUM AND TIME TRIALS





Women's Road Cycling IRB2 Criterium
Emily Mysko Silver

Women's Road Cycling IRB2 Time Trial
Emily Mysko Silver

Men's Road Cycling IRB2 Criterium
Andrew Wilkinson Silver

Men's Road Cycling IRB3 Criterium
Tim Grover Silver

Men's Road Cycling IRB3 Time Trial
Tim Grover Silver



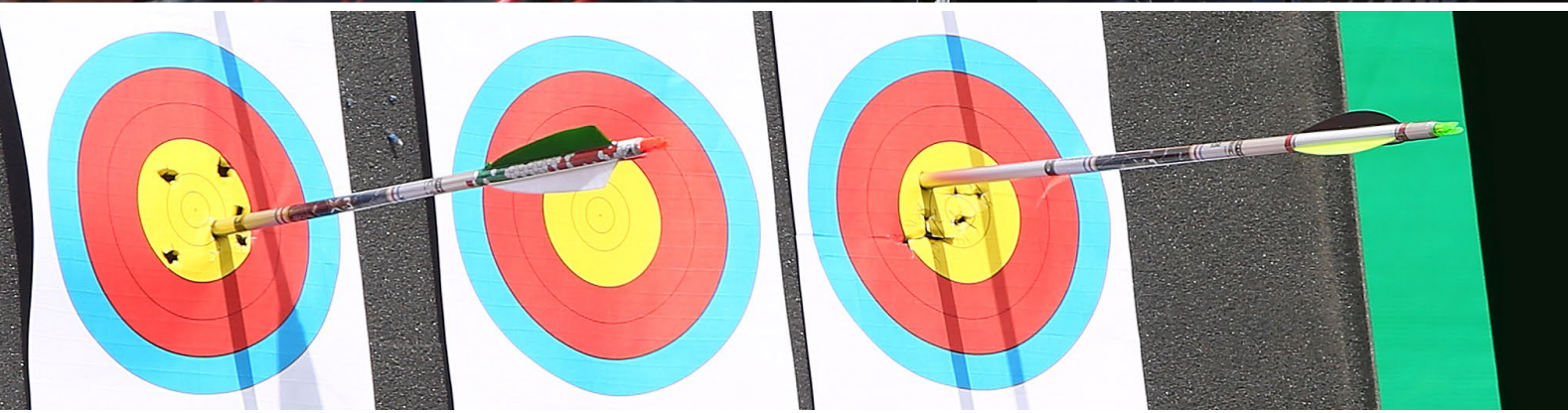
ARCHERY



Men's Novice Recurve		
Darren Peters	Gold	
Men's Open Compound		
Stewart Sherman	Gold	
Steve Sandman	Silver	
Team Open Compound		
Australia	Silver	
Women's Open Recurve		
Jocelyn McKinley	Silver	



Garry Robinson



Stephen Osbourne



Team Australia 1 – Trudi Lines and Stewart Sherman – in the Open Doubles Wheelchair Tennis provided lots of entertainment, but failed to make the finals, going down to New Zealand and the USA, but salvaging some pride with a win over 'The Unconquered'.

We resisted the urge to use the headline "Sherman tanks in tennis".



EDITOR'S MOMENT #1

During their match with 'The Unconquered' – Brit Paul Guest and Dutchman Edwin Vermetten – the audience was brought to tears when Mr Guest succumbed to a PTSD attack triggered by the Rose Bay Sea Plane (not a helicopter as widely reported), was calmed by his playing partner singing to him, then played well on resuming.





INDOOR ROWING



Clockwise from here:
Mark Daniels;
Nathan Parker;
Emilee Mysko;
and, Sarah Petchell.





EDITOR'S MOMENT #5
 The pain, passion and determination I witnessed here was so inspiring, I've now dumped treadmill for a rower in my own gym routine.



Clockwise from here:
 Emilea Mysko; Mark Daniels; Pete Brown;
 and, Pete Brown with Mark Daniels.



Men's IR3 Four Minute Endurance	
Nathan Parker	Gold
Men's IR3 One Minute Sprint	
Nathan Parker	Silver
Men's IR4 Four Minute Endurance	
Pete Brown	Gold
Mark Daniels	Bronze
Men's IR4 One Minute Sprint	
Pete Brown	Silver
Men's IR6 Four Minute Endurance	
Ben Farinazzo	Gold
Matt Model	Silver
Men's IR6 One Minute Sprint	
Ben Farinazzo	Gold
Matt Model	Bronze

Women's IR5 Four Minute Endurance	
Emilea Mysko	Gold
Women's IR5 One Minute Sprint	
Emilea Mysko	Gold
Women's IR6 Four Minute Endurance	
Emma Kadziolka	Gold
Tiff White	Silver
Sarah Petchell	Bronze
Women's IR6 One Minute Sprint	
Tiff White	Gold
Emma Kadziolka	Silver
Sarah Petchell	Bronze

Sitting VOLLEYBALL



POLAND 21-21 BEAT AUSTRALIA 15-15

AUSTRALIA 19-21-15 BEAT FRANCE 21-17-12

Relief for Nicki Bradley after she secured Silver in the Women's Midweight with a final lift of 70kg. Compatriot Alexia Vlahos (below) won Bronze with her 68kg second lift.

- Men's Middleweight**
Tyronne Gawthorne Silver
- Women's Heavyweight**
Sarah Petchell Gold
Tiff White Silver
Brigid Baker Bronze
- Women's Lightweight**
Sarah Sliwka Gold
- Women's Midweight**
Nicki Bradley Silver
Alexia Vlahos Bronze

Luke Jones successfully lifts 145kg, placing 8th in the Men's Heavyweight IP6.

EDITOR'S MOMENT #4
Wheelchair-bound UK Powerlifter Martin Tye doing a PB for his first lift, then smashing out two more – 195, 200 and 206kg – to take Gold in the Men's Heavyweight. There was Wheelchair Rugby next door, but I just couldn't leave this contest until I saw the result.



Almost overwhelmed by crowd noise before competition, Ben Farinazzo hugs an official after his final lift of 132kg. Below, Canadian Michael Their psyches himself for a big one.

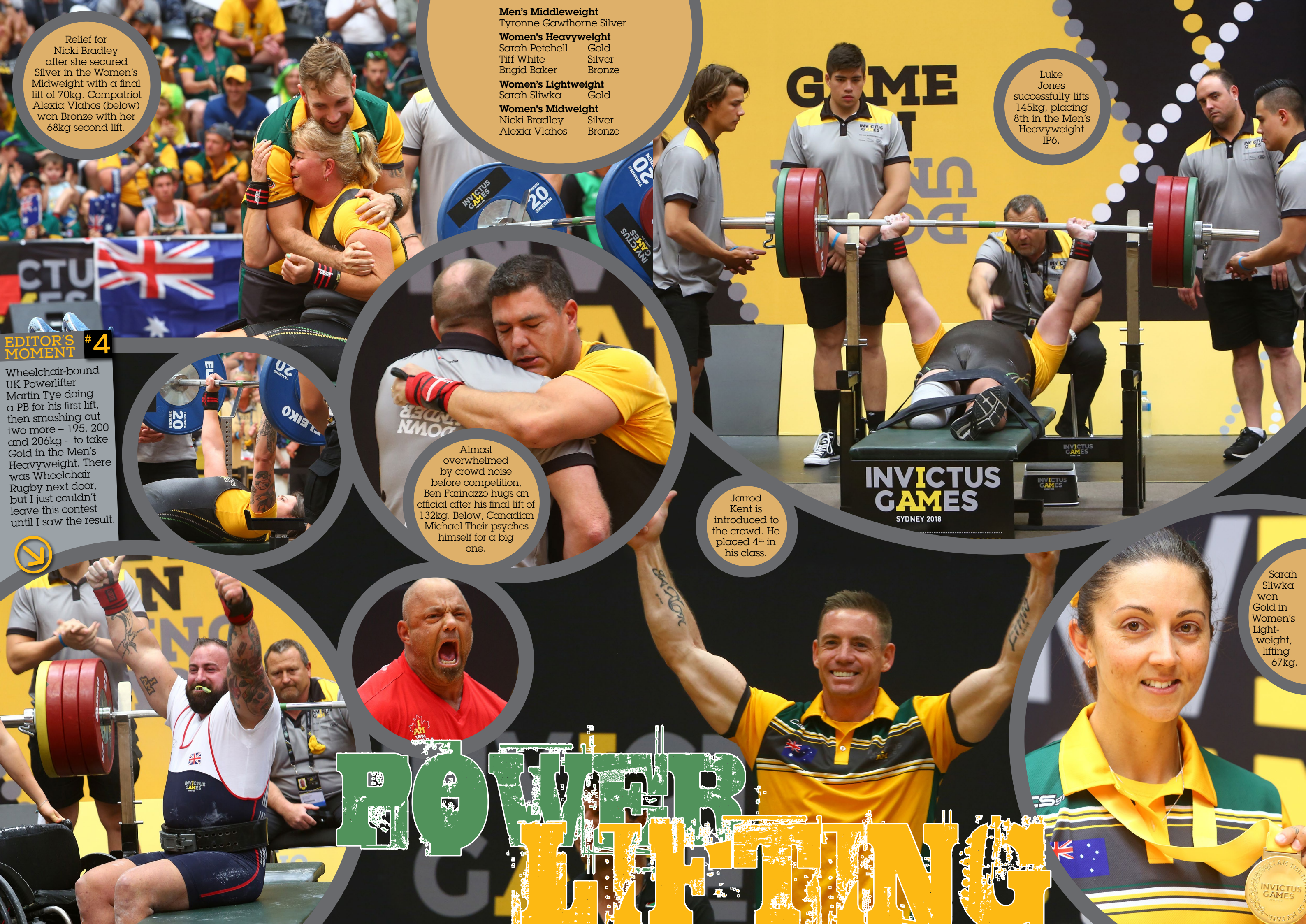
Jarrod Kent is introduced to the crowd. He placed 4th in his class.



POWERLIFTING



Sarah Sliwka won Gold in Women's Lightweight, lifting 67kg.





Peter Arbuckle

Age 47 from Brisbane, Queensland, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined the Army in 1989 and served in 2/4RAR. Deployed Cambodia 1992-93.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, sailing and sitting volleyball

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I have a left below-knee amputation and spinal disc derangement in my lower back.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has played a pivotal role in my rehabilitation. I cannot stress enough the importance of sport in anyone's rehabilitation. Sport gives me a reason to get out of bed in the morning, face the limits of my disabilities and transfer my energy into competitive sport. I cannot imagine what my life would be like without sport being my focus.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Competing at the 2017 Invictus Games in Toronto and also being a member of the Australian Wheelchair Rugby League Team at the 2017 World Cup in France.

Why did you apply for Invictus Games 2018?
I am only at the start of my rehabilitation journey and Invictus Games Sydney is the next step for me.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Winning will take on many forms. Firstly, being the competitive person I am, winning means winning. I hate to lose and I have set a goal to perform better than I did in Toronto. That said, winning will also take on a much deeper meaning for me because it means defeating my demons and disabilities. It will mean coming out on top in my own internal battles. Above all else, winning will be seeing every competitor at the Games come away in a better place mentally than they arrived. Winning is seeing the smiles and tears of my brothers and sisters in uniform.

The person I most admire is...
Arnold Schwarzenegger, who made it to the top in three very different professions: body building, entertainment and politics. He excelled by setting goals and overcoming adversity. I admire him for his courage, his tenacity and his devotion to everything he has ever set his mind to.



Corporal Steven Avery

Age 33, from Maitland, NSW, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined the RAAF in 2006 and due to discharge in January 2019. Deployed on border protection operations and an operation supporting ADF contingency planning and regional relationships in the Middle East. Currently an instructor at the Air Intelligence Training Unit and has been an Air Intelligence Analyst since February 2013. Before that, was a Security Police member

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Osteoarthritis of the right knee sustained during an Army course activity, PTSD and depression.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has given me the motivation to get up and do something. For a long time I just sat inside feeling sorry for myself, putting on weight and becoming unhealthy. Getting back into 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.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Raising my beautiful daughter to be the best she can be.

Why did you apply for Invictus Games 2018?
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.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Putting on the green and gold to represent Australia. Anything else is just a bonus. I feel that everyone who has applied for Invictus Games 2018 has won. They have done something to test themselves and push boundaries. Even if that is a little victory for some, it can be a huge personal victory for others.

The person I most admire is...
Both my parents. They raised me to be the man I am today, with the fighting spirit I have. They have supported me through all my victories but, more importantly, they have always been there when I have been at rock bottom. They have never given up on me and encourage me every day to achieve my dreams, whatever they may be.



Brigid Baker

Age 36, from Hobart, lives in Canberra.

ADF Service: After joining the Army Reserves as a medic in 2002, moved to full-time Army in 2005 and commissioned in 2006. In 2008 participated in border patrol operations. Deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2011. Medically discharged in 2017.

Competing in: Athletics and powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety and depression as a result of my service.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
It has been my 'light at the end of the tunnel'. Before re-engaging in sport I had effectively given up on all things that I enjoyed and basically just existed. Sport has reignited a passion which I thought was lost long ago.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
I was a torch bearer for the Year 2000 Olympics.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
It was a Hail Mary on my account. I was facing uncertainty with medical discharge and caught sight of the Toronto Games and thought "what have I got to lose?"

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Merely by being selected I feel like I have 'won'. It is not about the medals, it is about the journey and the people – the friends you make along the way.

The person I most admire is...
Not necessarily a person, but those with the courage to take the first step in active recovery and have the charisma and infectious drive to bring others along with them.



Corporal Taryn Barbara

Age 31, from Rockhampton, Queensland, lives in Brisbane

ADF Service: Joined the Army in 2004. Currently posted to 11 Close Health Company in Brisbane as a PTI. Participated in a range of humanitarian operations, including flood assistance in Queensland. In 2010 took part in an infantry foundation warfighting activity in Papua New Guinea.

Competing in: Swimming

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I sustained a cumulative back and hip injury during an Army physical training course.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Being actively involved in sport has helped me understand that, although I cannot achieve and do all the things I previously could, I can make new goals. Invictus Games 2018 has helped me set new opportunities for success.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Raising my two beautiful girls. They mean the world to me and provide me with an amazing sense of achievement.

During my career in the ADF, my greatest achievement has been working on the clean-up and community-recovery efforts in Brisbane and north Queensland following a cyclone and floods. This gave me a sense of being something special. I have also been posted to various training commands where I have helped people rehabilitate and train towards their own goals within the ADF.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Sustaining my injury challenged me and forced me to make life changes. My main drive with Invictus Games was to provide a 'positive' to focus on.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
I believe I have already experienced that winning feeling. Being selected is already a great accomplishment. Winning a medal would be the icing on the cake.

The person I most admire is...
The man I am fortunate enough to call my husband. He has such a level head and supports me through everything. If I have a goal, he will move heaven and earth to help me achieve it.



WO2 Graham Bell

Age 57, from Maitland, NSW, lives in Maitland.

ADF Service: Joined the Australian Army Reserve in 1977 as a rifleman. In 1984 began work as an armoured-vehicle crewman. Participated in operations in Solomon Islands and on border protection, as well as two domestic security ops. Currently posted to the University of New South Wales Regiment as an instructor.

Competing in: Archery

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I sustained leg and arm injuries when I was hit by a car. I have had major heart surgery, including replacement of an aortic valve. I suffer from service-related spinal disc protrusion. I have a major depressive disorder because of my injuries.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has played a significant role in my rehabilitation. It encourages me to focus on what I can do, not dwell on what I can no longer do.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
A 40-year part-time career in the Army, and marrying my beloved wife, followed by three children and four grandchildren. Sport wise, it has been achieving my personal best in archery due to the fantastic Invictus Games coaches.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Since being injured and going through a long rehabilitation myself, I’ve been interested in the psychology of the wounded, injured and ill during rehabilitation. The adaptive sports program in the ADF has helped me find a way to participate and again be part of a team. I will enjoy the camaraderie of not just my fellow Australian teammates but all the wounded, injured and ill competitors from around the world.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Wearing the Australian uniform and competing in archery in the Open Recurve Category, in a world class event.

The person I most admire is...
Anyone who has suffered a personal tragedy, like being wounded or injured, or a life-threatening illness. When I see people pick themselves up, get off the lounge and move on, I am inspired.



Carrie-Anne Bishop

Age 34, from Brisbane, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined the Army in 2002. Medically discharged in 2015. Served in the Corps of Transport and promoted to corporal. Deployed to Timor Leste in 2006, participated in border protection operations in 2003 and worked on the G20 summit in 2014.

Competing in: Athletics and sitting volleyball

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I have multiple injuries – hips, back and shoulder – sustained during my service.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
A major role – sport gets me out of the house, socialising, training and challenging myself physically and mentally. It makes me feel like myself again and it shows me what I am capable of and what is possible.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
To be working again and attending social events.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Sport was a large part of my life before I got injured and became isolated, not wanting to attend sporting events, knowing I could not participate. I saw Invictus Games 2018 as an opportunity to again become a participant in sport and life.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
To win would be amazing – but just to be a part of a team again makes me feel like a winner.

The person I most admire is...
I admire anyone who sustains a serious injury and is told you will not be able to do certain things again. They are the people who get up and get on with life.



Matthew Blunt

Age 42, from East Maitland, NSW, lives in Wallan, Victoria.

ADF Service: Joined Army Reserve Artillery Corps in 1994. Transferred to full-time Army in 1998 – Catering and Transport Corps. Deployed to Timor Leste 1999 and Malaysia 2005. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Archery and wheelchair rugby

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I have PTSD, depression and multiple physical injuries, mainly a back injury from a vehicle rollover accident on a training exercise. I suffered ruptured and bulged discs and nerve damage to my spine. I also have curvature of the spine. I have had a left ankle reconstruction, right knee reconstruction and two reconstructions on my right shoulder. I have tinnitus and partial deafness in my right ear and pterygiums in my eyes, affecting my vision.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Getting back into sport has helped me get out of the house and meet new people. I struggle to get out of bed, but sport gives me something to focus on.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
From a personal perspective, it is the birth of my daughter in 2015. From a sporting perspective, it was winning the 1 Brigade rugby union grand final with 1 Combat Service Support Battalion in 2005 and being selected for both the Army and the Northern Territory Defence rugby union teams.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I was looking for a sense of purpose and wanted to be alongside other wounded soldiers who understand without judgement. This helps with my recovery and moving forward in life.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
For me, winning will look like team unity, smiling faces and happy voices. Being as good as I can to support my teammates.

The person I most admire is...
I admire the soldiers who have lost everything and gotten back up. There is one guy I train with in the wheelchair rugby team who has a T6 spinal injury and complete loss of movement in his legs, but he is the happiest guy I have ever met. I have so much admiration for people with that positive attitude.



Nicole Bradley

Age 45, from Canberra, Lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1993. Graduated RMC 1996. RAEME logistics officer. Deployed Timor Leste 2000 and UNTSO 2005. Discharged 2015.

Competing in: Athletics and powerlifting

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
My injuries are associated with my early training at ADFA and RMC. I have feet conditions that cause daily discomfort that extends to my lower limbs. More recently I had two DVTs.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Since taking up powerlifting, symptoms resulting from the blocked veins have largely dissipated. I now have a much greater awareness of my body and can feel the imbalances and seek attention. Going to the gym keeps my emotions in check and has increased my interest in physical activity and its relationship to better mental health.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Achieving two Australian Masters bench-press records in the Global Powerlifting Committee and being selected on the Invictus Games 2018 team. The opportunity to serve at UNTSO was a teenage goal and was an extraordinary experience. Finally, of course, my children. They have taught me so much, including how to be a better person.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
It’s about getting back in touch with the veteran community and feeling at ease with myself. I also felt that, through my current powerlifting training and counselling study, I could contribute to the team in more ways than just as a competitor.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Being part of the team is a big part of winning. I have personal bests in mind to achieve at the games that will be a significant milestone if it works out. Having others see my participation as a catalyst to get involved in something themselves – adaptive sports or just trying something new – that would be a big win.

The person I most admire is...
I admire many who have been in the Invictus Games team before, particularly those who’ve faced significant adversity, like Garry and Katrina Robinson, who came embraced life as it is, making the most of opportunities that are presented.



Davin Bretherton

Age 47, from Adelaide, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1987 as a driver and deployed to Somalia as an infantryman with 1RAR in 1992-93. Discharged 2001.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

I have PTSD as a result of my deployment. I also have a below-knee amputation following complications from a training accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

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. Then I got involved in sport and used it to get fit again and lose weight, which, in turn, increased my self-esteem and confidence. I recently returned from completing the Kokoda Track, which would never have been possible if I hadn't got back into sport.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Representing Australia in international sport. I have competed in bobsledding, currently hold the wheelchair boxing Australian title and was recently selected to compete in the wheelchair National Rugby League World Cup in France.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I want to represent Australia with fellow serving and former serving military personnel.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Showing my family and friends that my training and dedication to adaptive sport has paid off and that anything is possible – even to be playing for Australia at the Invictus Games.

The person I most admire is...

My wife, Elle Bretherton. She has been there for me throughout my service, deployment and discharge. Elle is my rock, always supporting me in my sporting career, during the very low times in my life, as well as the highs. Elle has given me three wonderful children and enhanced all our lives.



LS Vanessa Broughill

Age 33, from Wagga Wagga, lives in Adelaide

ADF Service: Joined Army 2005 as electronic warfare operator. Transferred to Navy 2009 as cryptologic systems operator. Deployed on RAN ships throughout Asia and currently posted to Joint Electronic Warfare Operational Support Section.

Competing in: Athletics and swimming

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

I had two operations on my right shoulder, including removing a section of AC joint, repairs and re-stabilisation. I was also diagnosed with anxiety and depression in 2015 after what seems like years of suffering in silence.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

I was so far down in 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. It was less confronting than other social events and, after training or playing, I felt like I accomplished something. This did the most wonderful things for me.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Being selected to represent Australia at Invictus Games is my greatest achievement so far.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I have always loved sport and loved pushing myself to be better but have not allowed myself to take that time – just for me. I always put my ADF work and my family's wellbeing ahead of my own. With the Invictus Games, I saw an opportunity to improve myself as a person and get back to a place of happiness. I feel like it's been forever since I have been truly happy and I am hoping that the Invictus Games journey will help get me there.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

For me, finishing my events with a smile on my face, knowing I did my best.

The person I most admire is...

I have met the most amazing people who have been through truly horrific events, but pushed through pain and mental barriers and come back with the most admirable attitude to help everyone around them – even though, to the outside world, they are in fact people who might need help.



Private Peter Brown

Age 36, from St Marys, NSW, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2011 as a parachute rigger. Transferred to admin clerk after injury.

Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Serious leg injury from a parachute-jump accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

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 – not only physically, but mentally. Getting back into any form of sport and fitness has given me a goal and a purpose to work towards. Mentally, it has been a major outlet and stress relief for me.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Being a father to my three amazing children.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To challenge myself, physically and mentally. However, my main personal reason is to show my kids that no matter how hard things get, no matter how long your recovery and rehabilitation is, always strive to achieve your goals and dreams – even if your original dreams have been smashed and you have to make new ones.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

It has always been a dream of mine to represent Australia. So, just being selected to participate in the Invictus Games and doing my family proud is 'winning' to me. Of course, I will give my all, but anything further – like winning medals – would mean more to my kids than me.

The person I most admire is...

My mother. Although I lost her two years ago to cancer, she was and still is my inspiration. Even when she was getting sicker, she always put her kids and grandchildren first.



Matthew Brumby

Age 40, from Devonport, Tasmania, lives in Devonport.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 1994. Discharged 2001. Deployed as steward on HMAS Newcastle to many locations, then short time on HMAS Brisbane.

Competing in: Athletics, cycling and wheelchair rugby.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

I am a T6 complete paraplegic as a result of a pocket of fluid, called a syrinx, which formed inside my spinal cord, sustained following dehydration of spinal cord during a clearance-diver selection course, plus subsequent motorcycle accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

It took me a while to realise the positive impact team sports could have on my physical and mental wellbeing. I wanted to meet new people and travel again. The people you meet at sporting events are like-minded and have the same positivity.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Winning the Ironman 70.3 World Championship Triathlon in 2016 on the Sunshine Coast.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

It was a culmination of disappointment after missing out on 2016 Rio Paralympics selection, exhilaration after winning the Triathlon World Championship and then dealing with injury. This resulted in me deciding to take some time out from the sport. But then the opportunity of Invictus came along and I have been amazed by how awesome the preparation has been. I have gained so much from the past few months of training and meeting other athletes.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Winning at the Invictus Games would mean a lot. I hope it would then inspire other competitors, no matter their level of disability, to get out and have a crack.

The person I most admire is...

I really look up to Richie Porte, the cyclist. I am inspired by the amazing things he has done and will hopefully continue to do. Two members of the Invictus Games squad – Peter Rudland and Garry Robinson – also inspire me. The mental and physical trauma they have both overcome – while still smiling and helping others – is amazing.



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wanderingwarriors
saluting their sacrifice



www.wanderingwarriors.org



David Connolly

Age 55, from Liverpool, NSW, lives in Mena Creek, Queensland.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1982. Majority of service with 3RAR and Parachute Training School. Deployed to the Middle East 1995. Completed all parachute instructor courses and became the Wing Sergeant Major (PTS) and was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC). Discharged 2003.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

After around 2000 parachute descents, needed knee replacement. After three failed ops and infection, above-the-knee amputation was necessary.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

After my leg was amputated, I suffered depression but was fortunate to be selected for the first Invictus Games in London in 2014. Playing sport with other military and ex-military suffering the same, if not worse, rekindled my competitiveness. Training to excel at a sport with a disability is hard and requires focus and commitment. This keeps my mind active and gives me a sense of achievement and purpose. After London, I joined the local wheelchair basketball team.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Having the privilege and ability to be selected for two Invictus Games and make the Games in Sydney at the age of 55.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

After London and Orlando, training became a part of my weekly routine. It is satisfying to strive for a goal. In the ADF you are part of a team and you always strive to better yourself. However, after discharge, all that dissipates, amplified by disability. It's great to be able to compete with and against people at your level, with disabilities you can relate to.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Winning would be the pinnacle of all the training up to now. But, being there and competing, regardless of the result – I have already won. Win or lose doesn't matter, it's the spirit of how you play the game.

The person I most admire is...

Paralympic Gold medallist Riley Batt, because of his achievements – regardless of his disabilities – and the skills he has on the wheelchair rugby court.



Pilot Officer Jesse Costelloe

Age 22, from Seymour, Victoria, lives in Canberra.

ADF Service: Graduated ADFA 2017 as RAAF aircrew. Posted to ADFA completing a masters.

Competing in: Athletics, indoor rowing and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Physical and mental trauma as a result of a military bus accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has kept me sane and fit. Just three months after four surgeries I was back on the sport field. While physically difficult, it filled me with such a sense of pride and purpose. Military-based gyms and sporting environments have been my 'safe space' during recovery. Other ADF members were accepting of my physical change in appearance and have provided an unwavering level of support.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Graduating from ADFA with my cohort. Despite having the injury and a number of personal issues – such as family and relationship breakdowns – I still managed to complete my basic officer training when I could easily have quit. I refused to give up and fought to stay in for as long as I could.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

For the camaraderie, the common ground we all share and understand, and the want to improve ourselves in our chosen sports. This has helped me in many ways with what I need to do to get control over my life and how to move on. But, at the same time, it caters for my love and drive for competition.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

First place would be grand, but that is not the tone for how I define a win for me – not in this instance. For me, it will be crossing that finish line because I know what has gone into that moment.

The person I most admire is...

My coach and support staff. They have challenged me to make healthier life choices and provided me with consistency in life through the training regimes they have developed for me.



Able Seaman Mark Daniels

Age 25, from Forest Lake, Queensland, lives in Hastings, Victoria.
ADF Service: Joined Navy 2012. Currently marine technician at HMAS Cerberus.

Competing in: Indoor rowing, swimming, sitting volleyball and wheelchair rugby.
What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Right above-knee amputee after motorbike accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport saved my life. It gave me a sense of purpose and reminded me who I am, despite my disability.
What is your greatest achievement to date?
Competing at the 2018 Devonport Paratriathlon World Cup.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To represent my country again in the green and gold while showcasing what I am capable of.
What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Having that gold medal around my neck with my friends and family watching on, knowing what I have had to overcome to just make it to the start line.

The person I most admire is...
Australian wheelchair racer Kurt Fearnley. He has done amazing things for the adaptive sport community and how adaptive competitors are viewed, as not just people but also as sportsmen and women.



Aaron Elkin

Age 41, from Newcastle, NSW, lives in Townsville.
ADF Service: Joined Army Medical Corps 2001. Deployed Solomon Islands and the Middle East. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Cycling.
What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Right shoulder injury from a car accident in 2013 and have PTSD.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Cycling plays a large part in my rehabilitation. It makes me socialise and I find cycling a mindful activity, taking my mind off my problems.
What is your greatest achievement to date?
Reconnecting with my family after my discharge from the Army. I’m now a stay-at-home father and get to spend more time with my four kids, which I missed out on during my military service.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To meet other veterans and get motivation from them on how they use sport to push through the barriers.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Wearing the Australian uniform at the opening ceremony with my family watching me from the stands.

The person I most admire is...
My wife Helena. Since I was diagnosed with PSTD she has been our rock. She ensures that our family has worked through the changes resulting from my medical conditions and during my discharge. She changed her life to support us by now being the fulltime employee for the family. She’s prepared to do whatever it takes to protect us. I love her dearly and she amazes me.



Benjamin Farinazzo

Age 44, from Brisbane, lives in Canberra.
ADF Service: Joined Army 1991. Graduated ADFA and RMC. Posted 3RAR. Deployed INTERFET 1999. Discharged 2002.

Competing in: Powerlifting and rowing.
What is the nature of your injury or illness?
In recent years, my family and I have faced several challenges. I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of my military service. I also had a mountain-bike accident and fractured my neck and spine in several places.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has played a critical and ongoing role in helping me to balance my mind, body and connection to the world. There was a period in my life where I was walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Sport and exercise formed one of the pillars upon which I rebuilt a meaningful and purposeful life.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
The deep sense of satisfaction that I get from seeing my three children grow as humble, strong and compassionate individuals, ready for the world.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I reached a point in my rehabilitation and recovery where I felt confident and capable of embracing the challenge of competitive sport. I specifically applied for Invictus Games 2018 as it offered an opportunity to reconnect with the veteran community within a supportive environment.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
The opportunity to deliver a powerful individual performance as part of an inspirational Australian team at a successfully conducted Invictus Games event.

The person I most admire is...
My wife, for her strength, tenacity, compassion and support to me, our family and others.



Trent Forbes

Age 40, from Hobart, lives in Brisbane.
ADF Service: Joined Army 1997. Deployed Timor Leste 2006/07 and Afghanistan 2009, 2011/12. Discharged 2016.

Competing in: Cycling.
What is the nature of your injury or illness?
A variety of physical and mental injuries relating to multiple deployments.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport, especially cycling, has been critical in keeping me physically active and engaged with the community, while greatly assisting me in my mental and physical rehabilitation.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Overcoming the challenges related to my injuries. It’s been a very long journey and I am proud that I have been able to continue to live life to the fullest and be a role model to my two daughters.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
A friend, who had previously competed at an Invictus Games, told me how great the experience was and how much he had learnt about himself from competing. I wanted to be challenged and to represent my country on the international stage. I also saw the games as an opportunity to show my children that, despite my injuries, I am still achieving things in life. I want to inspire and support others who may be in a similar position to me and show them that, while an injury or illness is part of who you are, it does not define you.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
For me winning was applying for the games, because it took me outside my comfort zone and challenged me to do something that I knew I would struggle with.

The person I most admire is...
My wife, for supporting me through my career and now keeping me on track with all of my injuries. She has made a massive commitment to give me this opportunity to extend myself and improve as a person.



Sapper Thomas Foster

Age 31, from Perth, lives in Darwin.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2015 as a combat engineer. Currently posted to the 1st Combat Engineer Regiment.

Competing in: Indoor rowing and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

I was injured on exercise in 2016, resulting in a complete tear in major ligaments in my left ankle. During 2017 I underwent two ankle reconstructions. However, I still experience chronic pain in my left ankle and a severe lack of mobility in the joint.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Throughout my rehabilitation, swimming has become a large outlet for me to feel that I can still achieve goals and maintain focus. Over the course of two surgeries I lost a lot of fitness and personal drive because I was restricted from walking and weight-bearing exercise for several months.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

It is making Team Australia for Invictus Games 2018. Getting my rehabilitation to the point of being able to trial and then make the team has been both mentally and physically challenging.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

A colleague suggested that I apply and so I did. Little did I know then what an amazing experience and opportunity it would turn out to be. Preparing for the games has also given me a direction to navigate my recovery.

What will ‘winning look like for you at Invictus?

For me, winning is getting to compete in the pool and, after my swim, to know that I have given it my absolute best.

The person I most admire is...

My grandfather, Frederick De Lacy, who passed away last year. When he was alive, he was always very supportive of his family pursuing their dreams, whatever they may have entailed.



Tyrone Gawthorne

Age 36, from Caboolture, Queensland, lives in Daintree, Queensland.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1999 as rifleman and posted to 1RAR and 4RAR. Deployed Timor Leste and Afghanistan. Medically discharged 2011.

Competing in: Athletics and powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Lower limb degenerative injury and PTSD.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has played an enormous role in my rehabilitation, both in regards to my health and fitness, and my drive. It has given me direction, a schedule, a routine and, most of all, a goal to continue on this path.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Thus far, it is my children.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I want to continue 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. The Invictus Games is such a positive event, clearly showing the benefits of adaptive sports.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Making the team and representing Australia, with like-minded veterans and current serving personnel, is already a win.

The person I most admire is...

The Invictus Team – which I am proud to be a part of – and ultimately, its founder, His Royal Highness Prince Harry.



Samantha Gould

Age 29, from Canberra, lives in Darwin.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2007 as cargo specialist. Posted to HMA Ships Kamimbla and Choules. Deployed Afghanistan 2012. Discharged 2017.

Competing in: Powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has allowed me to make connections to people, something I had not been able to do in a very long time.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Teaching kids self-defence, because it gives them confidence.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

Because of the amazing experience I had at the games last year.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

The Invictus Games is a great opportunity to meet new people and form new friendships.

The person I most admire is...

My parents, Ron and Vivienne, because they are just really really good people. We call Mum the Champion of Little Causes because she’s always helping people who other people might not notice.



Able Seaman Braedon Griffiths

Age 22, from Brisbane, lives in Botany, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2015 as marine technician. Posted to HMAS Kuttabul.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Above-knee right leg amputation after a car accident, with detrimental affects to my feet, hips and lower back.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport gives me something to look forward to. For the first year of my rehab, I wasn’t allowed to do much so I came home to an empty house, worked and went back home. That’s basically all I did. It was a pretty dark time for me. I developed some bad habits, struggling with depression and anxiety. 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.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Having the courage to turn my life around.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I was angry and disappointed when I missed out last year but I put my name forward again because I knew I needed to challenge myself and try something different.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

It will be a validation for all the hard work I’ve been doing – training, dieting, cutting right down on smoking and drinking.

The person I most admire is...

I don’t really have any role models. I have an anti role model – me. I want to be better than the person that I was.



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Tim Grover

Age 39, from Chelsea, Victoria, lives in Townsville.
ADF Service: Joined Army 1996 as infantryman. Deployed Malaysia 1997 and 2006; East Timor 1999, 2001 and 2004; Sinai 2007; and Afghanistan 2015. Discharged 2016.

Competing in: Cycling.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

I sustained a number of injuries throughout my 20-year service in the ADF.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport keeps me mentally and physically focused. Without sport and associated physical goals, my injuries would have worsened and stopped me from integrating back into society.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Being a father and a husband; and completing 20 years of service with the Infantry Corps.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

When I attended my first Invictus Games in 2017, I wasn't mentally focused on achieving my best. Now I am.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

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.

The person I most admire is...

My wife Susan, who has experienced the highs and lows of supporting an infantry soldier, moving house 13 times and putting aside her career while I focused on my military career. She has had a lot of late nights waiting for me to come home and/or for a very brief phone call from far away to hear that I'm OK. Susan has done an amazing job as my best friend, wife and mother to our son. She is my life. In close second, in the sporting world the person I most admire is Australian cyclist and 2011 Tour de France winner Cadel Evans.



Brendan Hardman

Age 30, from Perth, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2009. Graduated RMC 2010 as artillery officer. Posted 16 Air Land Regiment. Deployed Afghanistan. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Series of back injuries while serving in the Army, resulting in two spinal surgeries, the second being a spinal fusion. Also severe depression and anxiety.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport – specifically wheelchair basketball – has been my saviour. It's helped me overcome a lot of struggles and regain my fitness and health.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

In life, it is marrying my beautiful wife Monique who has saved my life and supported me through everything. In sport, this year I debuted for the Red Dust Healers in the national Wheelchair Basketball League.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To prove to myself that I could still compete and achieve my goals.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

There is the romance of winning a medal at the games, which would be incredible. However, for me, the biggest wins will be having the opportunity to surround myself with like-minded and inspirational people in our team and contributing to that team.

The person I most admire is...

My wife Monique, a strong and incredible woman. Without her, I would not be here. From a sporting point of view, Brad Ness is one of the greatest paralympians and leaders that Australia has produced. I am lucky enough to work with and learn from him.



Stephen Hayes

Age 53, from Koraleigh, NSW, lives in Koraleigh.

ADF Service: Joined RAAF 1987. Working as aircraft life support fitter at discharge 2015. Time in Darwin, Malaysia and Hawaii. Deployed Afghanistan.

Competing in: Archery.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

A range of mental and physical injuries including PTSD, depression and anxiety, resulting from a car accident, compounded by illness. Dealing with physical ailments including painful ankle and shoulder conditions, tennis elbow, lower back issues and osteoarthritis in the knees. Had mini strokes and neurological challenges, and chronic nerve pain.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Getting involved with sport has given me a purpose, a reason to get out of bed. I have met some really awesome people along the way – people who I talk to through social media and look forward to meeting at the training camps. I have met people from other countries and stay in contact with and they are all like family and help with the journey. Without this, rehabilitation is nothing.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Being selected for the Invictus Games is very high on this list – but achieving my personal best is a major highlight.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I had previously competed in the United States Marine Corps Paralympics in 2013 and 2014 and the positive outlook and inspiration that I got from attending was enormous, so I thought, “why not have a go at Invictus Games?” – and here I am.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

I have already won. A medal would be a bonus but it is not what it’s all about.

The person I most admire is...

My wife. She is my full-time carer and my driving force. She gives me encouragement and criticism and, at times, she is a very hard taskmaster. She is the main reason I have started on this journey. She has been with me my entire time in the ADF and has held the family together through the good and the bad. She has had to pick up the pieces through my PTSD and also through multiple surgeries for my cancer.



Luke Hill

Age 40, from Sydney, lives in Sydney.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1997. Posted 3RAR. Deployed Timor Leste 1999/2000 and 2002. Discharged 2003.

Competing in: Swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Ongoing illness actively managing.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Participating in sport has had a positive contribution to enhancing my overall health and wellbeing.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

On a personal level, it is my young family. With sport, it is swimming the English Channel in 2014.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To improve my overall health.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

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.

The person I most admire is...

My wife – for always being there.



Wayne Hopkins

Age 46, from Wangi Wangi, NSW, lives in Arcadia Vale, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined RAAF 1990. Deployed Iraq. Medically discharged 2011.

Competing in: Archery and cycling.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

PTSD, chronic anxiety and depression, and numerous musculoskeletal and nerve-crush injuries from ADF service.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has provided me with the opportunity for mood stabilisation, re-integration with the civilian community and a chance to set personal goals and achieve them.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Being married to my wife for 26 years and raising three healthy and intelligent young adults.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

Since my discharge I have been consistently attending rehabilitation programs and I felt I was at a stage where I could meet the needs and demands of participating in the Invictus Games. This was reinforced when I sailed in the Invictus Games launch in Sydney in 2017. I am proud to have served my country and I applied for Invictus Games 2018 to focus on a specific short-term goal. I also applied for the opportunity to encourage others to live life to the best of their abilities.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Doing my best and improving my overall fitness, both physically and mentally.

The person I most admire is...

My wife and three lovely children. They have always been supportive throughout my career and when I was at my weakest during my rehabilitation. Outside my awesome family, I admire Kurt Fearnley. I also admire Kurt’s wife and family for all the love and support they have provided him in his quest to be the best father, husband and athlete.



Captain Ruth Hunt

Age 35, from Perth, lives in Sydney and Canberra.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2016 as a legal officer.

Competing in: Indoor rowing and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Breast cancer.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

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 to full health.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Winning five gold medals at the United States Air Force Warrior Games trials in Las Vegas just two weeks after finishing chemotherapy.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To facilitate my recovery and to provide me with something to focus on.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

It is not about winning for me. It is about doing my best and supporting other competitors. I am just happy to be competing, given my illness. It is a miracle I am still able to train, let alone compete.

The person I most admire is...

My partner, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Love. His unwavering support, while he continues to work full-time, has been inspiring. He has been constantly able to find ways to support me while working in demanding roles, and has always managed to get a smile out of me, even during chemo. I genuinely do not know how he has managed everything over the past year. His commitment to the ADF – and to me – is truly inspiring.



Damien Irish

Age 42, from Sydney, lives in Townsville

ADF Service: Joined Army 1997. Driver in the Royal Australian Corps of Transport. Deployed East Timor 2001. Achieved Corporal. Discharged 2009.

Competing in: Athletics, indoor rowing and powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
PTSD, anxiety and depression.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has given me drive again and got me out of the house, doing more with my family.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Making the Australian Invictus Games team.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To challenge myself.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
It is not all about winning but it would be great. It is about showing my kids that if you work hard at something you can achieve it.

The person I most admire is...
My friend and former Army medic McQuilty Quirke. We served together on deployment in East Timor and at 2RAR. McQuilty has been through so much – from losing a very close family member, to another one having cancer. He was injured in Iraq; and in Afghanistan his vehicle was blown up by an IED. McQuilty has finished a university degree and has a motivational speaking business. I also pay tribute to my family and everyone with whom I served during my ADF career.



Kevin Jacoby

Age 49, from Toowoomba, Qld, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1996 as clerk in the Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps. Transferred to the Signals Corps 1999 as computer operator. Deployed Timor Leste and Afghanistan; Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program and project in PNG; and floods search team Queensland 2011. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Indoor rowing and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
PTSD, severe depression, anxiety and adjustment disorder. Permanent nerve damage to my right hand from training accident, injuries to both shoulders, lumbar spine and minor tears to the meniscus in both knees.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has inspired me to get better both physically and mentally. It has forced me to socialise with other veterans, current serving members and the greater community, which I could not do with major anxiety a year ago.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Marrying my wonderful wife, Charmaine, and parenting our three boys and a beautiful grandson. Also, serving my country for 20 years.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
After seven years of therapy, I was finally in the right head space to try out for the Invictus Games. In doing so, I hope to improve more by meeting other veterans and service members with similar disadvantages and to assist each other to recover.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Being in the presence of 500 Invictus Games competitors, competing for our countries and recovering.

The person I most admire is...
My ever-loving wife, Charmaine, who has supported me throughout our married life, including my service and subsequent disabilities and mental challenges. She was both mother and father to our children whenever I deployed, went on extended exercises and completed courses. Charmaine has helped me through very dark times and, without her, I would not be here today.



Private Luke Jones

Age 31, from Sydney, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2010. Currently rifleman position at Rehab Platoon, 8/9RAR. Deployed Iraq 2015.

Competing in: Powerlifting and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Below knee amputee.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Playing sport and competing has helped me, both physically and mentally. It has brought back some sense of normality into my day-to-day life and has played a big part with me adapting to my injury.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
I am not sure what my greatest achievement is, but my greatest sporting achievement – since I lost my leg – would be winning a bronze medal in powerlifting at the United States Air Force Warrior Games Trials.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I got a taste for adaptive sports in 2017 when I competed at the Warrior Games in Chicago. Seeing so many people overcoming their injuries and disabilities was inspirational – especially seeing those who were worse off than me achieving their goals. After meeting them and hearing their stories, I knew that I wanted to continue with adaptive sports and see just how far I could push myself, despite my injury.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Win or lose, I think that just to make the Australian team is an achievement I can be proud of.



Heidi Joosten

Age 33, from Melbourne, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2004 as combat clerk, Royal Australian Engineers. Also combat fitness leader. Promoted corporal. Participated in border protection operations 2008/09. Discharged 2017.

Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Neck, shoulder and back injuries from a vehicle accident during a military exercise.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has been important for my rehabilitation and pain management by releasing ‘feel-good’ endorphins that help reduce my perception of pain. Sport allows me to feel connected in a team.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Serving in the Army and competing at Invictus Games 2018 are my biggest highlights. Invictus has inspired me to study towards a career in rehabilitation to help veterans. I’ve recently been accepted into uni to study a Bachelor of Exercise Physiology. This has given me a positive way forward to retrain and gain another identity.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Competing at Invictus last year was such a hedding and uplifting experience alongside my teammates and competitors from other nations. The social connection was very important and I’ve made lifelong friends. Invictus has been important for my recovery, helping to assist my transition and allow me to feel socially connected with like-minded veterans. The journey to be selected was hard work but gave me a purpose and focus other than personal battles, which is positive for my physical and emotional health and well-being. The camaraderie of Invictus Games teammates has allowed me to feel a sense of belonging and be socially connected.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Competing in front of my home crowd will be the most amazing feeling and winning would just be the icing on the cake.

The person I most admire is...
My beautiful mother who has been there for me always – through highs and lows. She’s my rock; she’s amazing; and she’s the woman who has shaped me into becoming the person I am today.



Captain Emma Kadziolka

Age 29, from Hobart, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2013 as nursing officer. Postings to 8 Close Health Company, 1 Close Health Battalion and 2nd General Health Battalion. Deployed Iraq 2015.

Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Stage II Glioma (brain tumour), dormant.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has given me a focus and enabled me to channel my energy into something positive and beneficial for my health and fitness. It has provided me with a psychological outlet, helping me cope with depression that came after diagnosis. Sport has assisted me in coming to terms with potential health difficulties in the future. My journey is not about rehabilitation or recovery, but more focused on getting fit and healthy to deal with any health complications in the future, as well as looking after my psychological wellbeing.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Being named co-captain of the Australian Invictus Games Team 2017.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Being involved last year in the games allowed me to see the positive effect it had on everyone involved. Invictus Games is a powerful tool. It is a support network like no other and I wanted to be part of that again.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
I’m aiming for a personal best in my events and winning for me is walking away from competition knowing I had nothing left in the tank and that I gave it my all. For me, it is not about the gold, although that’s nice to have. The Invictus Games is so much more than medals and every competitor will have different goals in mind when they step into competition in October.

The person I most admire is...
I don’t admire just one person. The people I have come to admire most recently are the men and women who were part of last year’s games. Not just my fellow Australians, but all competitors who have a story of experiencing some form of physical or psychological adversity, yet triumphed above and beyond their injuries and illnesses to succeed in life.



Jarrod Kent

Age 34, from Latrobe, Tasmania, lives in Latrobe.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2010. Infantry, 6RAR. Deployed East Timor. Medically discharged 2017.

Competing in: Powerlifting and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
In late 2015, while training for Special Forces, I was badly injured resulting in 10 surgeries in 14 months. PTSD, lower back, shoulder and knee injuries and I almost lost my left leg to golden staph infection.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has been key to my rehabilitation. It has been a catalyst for turning my life around.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Turning my life around in 12 months, moving from the very bottom of the darkest valley to now being at the top of a magnificent mountain. A part of that is being selected for the Australian Invictus Games 2018 Team and being given the opportunity to inspire other people.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Having had to fight for my own life, as well as save lives, I know firsthand 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. Also, it’s a chance to use exercise to inspire others to follow in my footsteps.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
I have won already, by being part of the Australian Invictus Games Team. Winning will be me striving for excellence during the games, showing selfless leadership and being able to inspire and ignite people’s imagination to what is possible so they can take their lives to the next level.

The person I most admire is...
Ritchie Gibson. Ritchie is a speaker, author, mentor, trainer and the leadership and culture coach for NRL St George Dragons. I met Ritchie in 2017 when he was the speaker for a two-day Defence transition seminar. After that seminar, I found myself thinking and acting differently. Since then, he has been a significant mentor and very close friend. His outstanding devotion to life, as well as an endless pursuit of excellence, is truly inspirational.



Beau King

Age 36, from Brisbane, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2001. Infantry, 2RAR. Deployed Iraq 2003 and 2006; Afghanistan 2007/08. Discharged 2008.

Competing in: Athletics and powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Hearing loss both ears from IED blast. PTSD.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has massively benefited me, allowing me to slowly reintegrate into society. It’s given me goals and friendships. I’ve found a new outlet for frustration. It allowed me to push hard on the days I’m doing well and rest and recover on the days I struggle.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
2014 was a year of achievement, playing in various Townsville touch football competitions, winning two grand finals, player of the year, and a north Qld championship – then undefeated Qld men’s 30s State Championship. I achieved Club Person twice, volunteering with two separate clubs, coaching junior and senior teams, refereeing and playing. I also coach in a program called Happy Touch where kids with disabilities compete against teams of similar ability.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Unsuccessful in 2017, I wanted the chance to represent Australia and show that I can strive for greatness, no matter what challenges are thrown at me. It’s a chance to represent my family, friends and the people who’ve supported my journey thus far.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
In a way I have already won by getting myself this far. Winning will just be the icing on the cake and to be able to share it with so many great competitors and family will make it even more special.

The person I most admire is...
I get strength from my mum, dad and two sisters. When dad got sick and lost his leg, it was even motivating for me. My three children, Kayden, Lathan and Haidynn, motivate me to be the best dad I can and to show them you can do anything you set your mind too. My partner Stacey has always been there for me the past year and helped me through the grind of training and exhaustion. She has cheered me on, showed me endless love, given tough love and is always the first person to remind me how far I’ve come.



Dean Knobel

Age 35, from Mullumbimby, NSW, lives on Gold Coast.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2007 as marine technician. Served HMA Ships Kanimbla, Manoora and Sydney. Medically discharged 2013

Competing in: Powerlifting and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Spinal injury from a heavy lifting accident; left hand also crushed. Adjustment disorder.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport and gym-based physical therapy have played a massive role in my rehabilitation. After my injury I quit all sports, but now swimming competitively and been able to get back into surfing and golf, which I used to do before my injuries.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Making the Australian Invictus Games 2018 Team. This is by far the most significant achievement I have ever accomplished because I never expected to compete in sport again.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I saw the Invictus Games as an additional avenue for rehabilitation and a way to challenge myself. I also saw it as an opportunity to meet new people and train and compete with others who have been through similar injuries.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
I see winning at the games as standing with my fellow competitors, friends and family and once again proudly serving my nation.

The person I most admire is...
The surfer, Mick Fanning, who has always shown great tenacity throughout his career, winning three world titles. Having been in the water with Mick on the Gold Coast and seeing him surf, the respect he deserves in and out of the water is clearly seen. Mick has suffered personal tragedies and shown true bravery and courage to keep competing. He inspires me to keep pushing myself to achieve the best in life.



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Rebecca Kuenstner

Age 30, from the Philippines, lives Narangba, Qld.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2008 as electronic warfare sailor. Deployed Afghanistan 2010. Discharged 2014.

Competing in: Sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Physical and mental-health injuries.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
I was always a sportsperson (volleyball) before I joined the Navy. After injury, sport helped me to better manage my conditions. It got me out from an institutional environment and helped me to hang out with people outside Defence. That got me reconnected with my community. When people at the gym see me getting over my injuries, they ask how sport helps and I tell them my story. It has given me wider social networks.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Since discharge, it's been getting back to work and finishing courses. I never thought I could study again. I didn't know I was capable of some things because, when I was sick, I was given restrictions about what was possible for me. But I've been able to go outside them in a positive way. I really thought, at this early stage, it wasn't possible for me to work. I persevered and now I am confident and know I can work.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Invictus Games is a self healing, self-development journey to achieve my goals. I need to work towards my goals.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Just representing Australia is an accomplishment for me. Winning is belonging and being part of a team. Winning is training hard and playing hard with my buddies.

The person I most admire is...
My local RSL (Returned and Services League of Australia) advocate and welfare officer from Redcliffe RSL. She helped me to get outside my boundaries and get into my community. She ended up being my friend. I helped her with cycling and she helped me with volleyball.



Paul Langley

Age 62, from Sydney, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1980. Assault swimmer diver and section commander 1 Commando Company. Discharged 1987.

Competing in: Indoor rowing and sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Bilateral hip replacement, torn trapeze muscle, torn ankle ligaments, damaged rotator cuff, arthritic knees, back, after parachute accident and training.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has given me the ability to redefine physical and mental targets. It's given me new goals for training my body for strength, and my mind for toughness. Sport helps me in day-to-day life as well as enabling me to help others in their struggles.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
I have just competed in the Outrigger World Sprint Championships in Tahiti representing Australia in the single V1 (one man) and the team V6 (six men) events, winning bronze in both. In 2015 I represented Australia as team captain in the Dragonboat World Championships in Canada. The team comprised 318 competitors and 195 supporters. We medaled (68) in nearly all events.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
As a mature veteran I hope to show older veterans the Invictus approach to life where success means putting your best foot forward with people who will not judge, stepping out of your comfort zone and challenging what may have become a personal norm, to grasp a new lease on life. This may also help younger veterans, showing them they can have a long and active life. If I can inspire just one person, my participation in will not be wasted.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
For me, the Invictus Games is not so much about me personally winning events. Rather, it is just as much about me helping teammates to reach their goals and believe in themselves. I will cheer loudly for the winners and even louder for those who are giving their best. Whoever competes is a winner.

The person I most admire is...
People with broken bodies and minds who show there is no barrier too great for them to try to conquer, inspiring us with their efforts.



Trudi Lines

Age 40, from Shepparton, Vic, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined RAAF 2003. Logistics and air movements. Transferred electrician 2011. Peacekeep/humanitarian ops PNG, Malaysia, Thailand, Timor Leste; deployed Afghanistan 2008 and 2010. Discharged 2017.

Competing in: Indoor rowing and wheelchair rugby.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Injuries to neck, lower back and ankle. PTSD.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has been great for my mental health and ensuring that I maintain my fitness.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Joining the ADF and various accomplishments I’ve achieved in my military career. In January 2010, I received an Australia Day medallion for my work with air movements. Marching on Anzac Day with my Pop was also a pretty amazing experience.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I was struggling to find a purpose after I left the ADF and needed to find something with a sense of purpose. I thought being around other former-serving and current-serving members would do it. It’s certainly been comforting to feel like you’re back at home with people with military backgrounds. It’s helped with my rehab and given me back that drive to be fit and get out and have a go at other things.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
It gives me tingles, just thinking about it. To be out on the court with the guys I’ve been training with, to see their faces and to feel that excitement when we win. It will be so very rewarding. An unforgettable moment. I’ll again feel proud to have served in the military.

The person I most admire is...
My grandfather, who was an RAAF bomber pilot during WWII. I was honoured to have marched with him in Melbourne in 2014. We marched in uniform and wearing our medals, with me beside him as he rode in a new Mustang car. It was a special day that I’ll never forget. He even had a beer with me. He had a great spirit, right to end (2015) and was as tough as nails, never complaining about anything.



Michael Lyddiard

Age 41, from Ipswich, Qld, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1995 as combat engineer; specialised in explosive ordnance disposal. Deployed Timor Leste 2006 and 2009; Afghanistan 2007. Medically discharged 2014.

Competing in: Athletics, cycling and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Seriously wounded and ill from overseas service. Lost right arm below the elbow, fingers on my left hand, and right eye, plus impairments in left eye and hearing. PTSD, anxiety, depression.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport helps to build my identity and self-esteem through giving me vision and purpose, while empowering others and re-defining labels. Through competing and social engagement, I continue to build on my resilience and learn more about my strengths and defeating my fears. I like to think sport shows my children that I’m willing to accept my choices and losses – regardless of perception, labels and hardship.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Completing the Cairns 140.6 Ironman (3km swim, 180km ride, 42km run) in 12hrs 35minutes and swimming the Rottnest Channel (19.7km).

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
For a number of reasons: To build on the mateship I found during Invictus Games 2017; to overcome the hardship I endured while at the 2017 games; and to feel that sense of purpose and belonging when representing Australia on home soil.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Having a sense I conquered my fears and difficulties, with no relapse, while trying to enjoy the moment.

The person I most admire is...
Team Hoyt, a father-and-son team – Richard and Rick – who competed together in various athletic endeavours (marathons, ironman and triathlons) to show commitment, gratitude and the meaning of life, given Rick was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy.



Craig McGrath

Age 45, from Camden, NSW, live in Springwood, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1995. 4RAR (Cdo). Deployed Timor Leste 2001 and twice to Afghanistan. Tactical Assault Group East 2002-07. Traing staff RMC 2008-09. Discharged in 2018.

Competing in: Sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Wounded in action 2012 by IED in Afghanistan. Significant shrapnel wounds and broken bones, with permanent damage to my lower body.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
After injury, I was unable to participate in the sports I enjoyed and became frustrated at my new self. A very good friend and fellow commando introduced me to sailing, giving me an opportunity to contribute to a team in a competitive sport. When I’m sailing, I’m in a peaceful environment where I can appreciate the simple things in life I once took for granted.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Twenty years of marriage. Despite everything that’s been thrown at us in that time, my wife and I are stronger and happier than ever.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Invictus Games is an opportunity to take my sailing to the next level and test myself against others with similar experience. It’s the first time I will compete in this type of regatta.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Sailing the best race I can and knowing that, win or lose, I gave the best of myself to the team.

The person I most admire is...
Outside sport, I admire my wife for staying strong and for coming second behind Army for much of that time. I admire His Royal Highness Prince Harry. Together with several wounded commandos, I had the opportunity to speak at length with the then Captain Wales in 2015. I admire his conviction and determination to bring awareness to the struggles of veterans. In sport, I admire Sir Robin Knox-Johnston for his tenacity and down-to-earth nature – a true sailing pioneer and legend.



Jocelyn McKinley

Age 41, from Redcliffe, Qld, lives on Gold Coast.

ADF Service: Joined RAAF as signals operator/ linguist 2001. Transferred airborne electronics analyst 2006. Aircrew on P3-C Orion R&D squadron. Several Pacific and Indian Ocean work opportunities. Medical discharge 2012.

Competing in: Archery.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
I was medically discharged following injuries and surgeries on my knees and right wrist.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Joining an archery club one year after medical discharge provided me with a fresh opportunity to re-engage in life outside work or study and be part of a social community. I’ve been grateful to find a sport that’s suitable to my physical capacity and in which I can see improvement and return for effort. Having goals to improve and preparing for competitions provides a sense of purpose. I love that archery can be a very meditative sport, with focus on mind and body. And the walking helps my knees. I have enjoyed coaching newer archers as a qualified instructor for the past three years.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Completing a four-year university degree in Occupational Therapy, after being medically discharged, and achieving Class I Honours.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
For the opportunity to represent my country, to re-engage with the Defence community and (I hope) to help other competitors increase their participation and quality of life with my new skills as an occupational therapist. I also believe that re-engaging with the Defence community will assist with my own sense of closure and acceptance of my medical discharge and new life and career outside ADF.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Winning at the Invictus Games represents a reward for effort and a celebration of resilience.

The person I most admire is...
Anyone, no matter their circumstance, who picks themselves up after being knocked down in life and keeps pushing to fulfil their full potential. Sometimes it seems easier to just give up, but to keep pushing is to show true resilience and courage.



Jason McNulty

Age 43, from Townsville, lives in Brisbane.
ADF Service: Joined Army 1995 as cargo specialist. Deployed to Bougainville; three times Timor Leste. Discharged 2007.
Competing in: Cycling.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Brain injury. PTSD, depression and anxiety.
What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
It's been hugely significant in my continued recovery, helping me to focus and move forward even though my conditions are incurable.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Being able to compete in front of my beautiful daughter and my amazing partner, making them proud and showing them I'm not finished yet.
Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
Some serious unfinished business – my contribution to Australia is not finished yet. I need the Invictus Games to continue my recovery. The games helps me to set goals and carry them out.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Being the best I can be.
The person I most admire is...
No single identity. It's anyone who says "I'm not done". It's anyone who supports a fellow veteran climb out of a hole; anyone who inspires others by their actions; anyone who speaks for the forgotten. This is the Invictus Games story. Any person who can use their position for the betterment of others has my admiration.



Samual Maraldo

Age 40, from Warrnambool, Vic, lives in Epping, Vic.
ADF Service: Joined Navy 2008 as electronic technician. Served in south-east Asia, the Pacific region and on border protection operations. Medically discharged 2015.
Competing in: Sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Bilateral hip, knee and shoulder joint injuries. Anxiety and depression. Degenerative lower back condition.
What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport gets me off the couch and interacting with people I usually wouldn't meet. Playing in team sports links me to my community and gives me an outlet for my competitive nature.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Being drafted to play wheelchair football for Hawthorn in the inaugural Victorian Wheelchair Football League. Also, winning a silver medal with the Australian archery team at the London Invictus Games 2014 was very special.
Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I wanted to represent Australia. I also wanted to push myself to attempt selection and, through perseverance, obviously got there. Being part of a team was a big factor. The Invictus Games team is like a family where, no matter your ability or how you sustained your illness or injury, you are accepted for who you are.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
It's pushing myself to do the best I can for both me and my team mates. Just participating in a home games is a win for me.
The person I most admire is...
Recently I have come across many people who have overcome huge hurdles from injuries and medical conditions and achieved their goals – especially some of the wheelchair football community – so to pick just one is too hard.



Able Seaman Daniel Marsh

Age 44, from Melbourne, lives in Adelaide.
ADF Service: Joined Navy 1992 as submariner marine technical propulsion. Discharged 1997. Re-enlisted 2006 as electronic warfare analyst. Multiple deployments on Oberon-class subs; border protection operations.
Competing in: Cycling and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Severe fracture left knee in motorbike accident. Fracture left hip subsequently.
What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Everything changed after my accident in 2009. I lost all motivation, including to keep fit and healthy. My weight increased, placing more stress on my injuries and it was hard to see light at the end of the tunnel. After being introduced to Invictus Games programs, my life turned around. I have reconnected with my love of cycling and volleyball. These programs show that there are sports that have been adapted to fit our needs. My Invictus Games journey has been one of the biggest highlights of my life.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Passing the submariner board selection and being awarded my Dolphins badge in 1994. And, of course, being selected to compete for Australia at the Invictus Games 2018.
Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To prove to myself that, no matter what life has put in front of me, sport goes beyond boundaries. The Invictus Pathway Program has given me the opportunity to train with men and women who've also faced difficult times and, through sport and rehabilitation, we've been given the opportunity to represent our country.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Every competitor from every country at the Invictus Games is a winner. We have travelled the same path, faced the same obstacles and come out on top. This is winning.
The person I most admire is...
I admire anyone who falls off a horse, dusts themselves off and gets back on, knowing that they could be thrown again. Once that person has mastered riding the horse, they then go out and show others, passing on their knowledge.



Matthew Model

Age 33, from Coffs Harbour, lives in Port Macquarie.
ADF Service: Joined Army as rifleman 2004. Deployed peacekeeping 2006 and 2007. Injured in East Timor in 2007. Medically discharged 2008.
Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Lumbar/spinal injury in a fall.
What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has always been a part of my life and, although having an injury now, I have been lucky enough to adapt to the challenges involved in continuing an active lifestyle. Sport has aided in my recovery both physically and mentally, giving me the confidence to participate and achieve personal sporting goals.

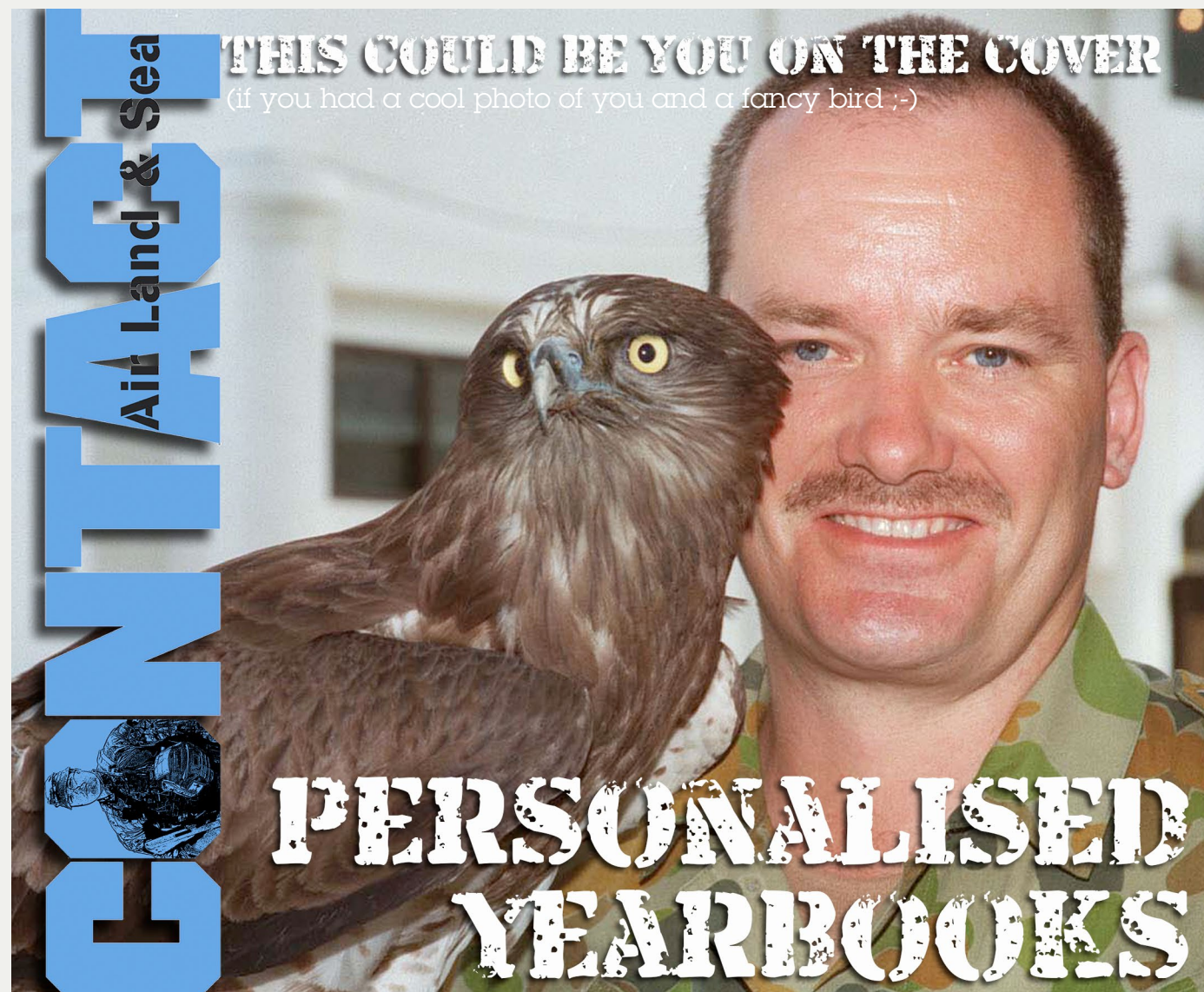
What is your greatest achievement to date?
Apart from (so far) successfully raising twin 11-year-old boys, it is training and competing in three 42km marathons – including the iconic Gold Coast Marathon and the Beach 2 Brother cross country marathon. These events seemed almost impossible, considering my injury and physical capacity. Against a lot of odds and advice I managed to both compete and complete.
Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
After receiving a great deal of encouragement from family and friends, the Invictus Games was my new goal for 2018. Watching a close friend, with whom I served battle PTSD, overcome it and win a silver medal at Invictus Games 2017 was inspiring. It motivated me to apply.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
'Winning' for me will be no easy task with so much talent and strong competition in the Invictus Games community. If I can turn up well prepared and be competitive, I have already won and achieved so very much.
The person I most admire is...
My family – for the continued support I have received throughout my rehabilitation and during my Invictus Games journey.

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Emilea Mysko

Age 30, from Adelaide, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2007. Peacekeeping missions south-east Asia. Discharged in 2015.

Competing in: Cycling and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Service-related mental health illness and physical injuries.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has been an integral part of my ability to feel part of a team again, to feel a sense of belonging. It has given me direction and focus, with support and encouragement beside me. Sport allows me to use physical activity to reduce mental-health symptoms and to feel able again.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Currently my greatest achievement is being a single mum, raising a six-year-old girl who is confident, independent, happy and intelligent. In sport, my greatest achievement is overcoming injuries and getting involved in a new sport that can be adapted and achieved, despite the injuries.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I was advised to apply when I was having difficulty adapting to restrictions after surgery, that impacted my physical and mental health. I was given a bike and when I started cycling, I felt a sense of achievement – just being able to participate in a physical activity. I felt Invictus Games would give me the focus I needed to assist in my rehabilitation.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Winning at the games starts before the opening ceremony. It will be the ability to compete in a new sport, just 12 months after getting parts of my foot fused – something I could never imagine. Winning is being part of the Australian team, encouraging and supporting fellow athletes. Being in a team and representing my country will give me a real sense of pride and achievement, which I felt I lost when I left RAN.

The person I most admire is...

There is no one person. My parents are the two people to whom I owe everything. Without them, I could not do what I do. They have always shown strength and resilience. At times it is a bit of tough love, but they are the true testament of love, strength, hope and resilience. They have never given up on me, even when I had given up on me.



Corporal Sonya Newman

Age 38, from Burnie, Tas, lives in Darwin.

ADF Service: Joined Army Reserves 1999. Full-time 2002. Operator specialist vehicle, 1st Combat Service Support Battalion. Deployed Solomon Islands; Sumatra.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball, indoor rowing, sitting volleyball and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Above-knee amputation following complications from minor surgery.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport gives me the motivation I need to get moving in life. 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.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

My two young children, Douglas and Ashley.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I was lucky enough to compete in last year's Invictus Games in Toronto. It was such a life-changing experience to see people with different injuries and illness putting in so much effort to be the best they could be. I couldn't pass up the opportunity to be a part of the games here in Australia.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Bringing my best efforts to the competition and showing my kids what I can achieve.

The person I most admire is...

My partner Jennifer, for the patience and compassion she has shown through my injury and recovery. Her commitment to our children ensures that, no matter how difficult life can be, they always have a reason to smile.



Stephen Osborne

Age 50, from Sydney, lives in Toowoomba, Qld.
ADF Service: Joined Army Reserve 1985. Full-time 1986. Service included: rifleman 9RQR; AFV crewman 2 Cav Regt; Black Hawk aircrew 5 Avn Regt and School of Army Aviation. Medically discharged 1999.
Competing in: Archery.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Head trauma, shoulder injury, Meniere’s Disease (vertigo, nausea, hearing loss, cognitive impairment) and PTSD from AFV accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
After medical discharge, I did about three years of rehab. In 2008, I started archery as an extension to my rehab program for physical and mental training, to improve mental focus, balance and coordination. Along with diet and nutrition, target archery now plays a central role in my rehab.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
In late 2017, I qualified as a Level 1 Archery Instructor with Archery Australia, to share the benefits of target archery with fellow veterans from Mates 4 Mates in Toowoomba and Darling Downs. I now host a small but growing number of veterans who shoot regularly at Toowoomba Archery Club. It gives me great satisfaction to see others, who may have withdrawn from society, suddenly come alive when shooting arrows at the range with fellow vets.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I want to challenge myself physically and mentally, take myself out of my comfort zone where I hid since discharge. I want to help other veterans and integrate more with society. I believe Invictus Games will help me gain that confidence.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Representing my country, participating with my team, and just doing my best for my country and myself. I already feel like I am achieving this.

The person I most admire is...
Wendy-Leigh, my wife and carer. When I got very sick, she could have left, but stayed. She married me, gave up a promising career and has cared for me through bad times. She coaches me through life’s difficulties, stands up for me when others fail to understand and cleans up the mess when I do things my way – while fighting cancer. She loves me for who I am.



Daniel ‘Stix’ Parker

Age 29, from Hervey Bay, Qld, lives in Hervey Bay.
ADF Service: Joined Army 2007 as combat engineer. Deployed Timor Leste; Afghanistan. Discharged 2013.
Competing in: Athletics.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
PTSD. Pins in hips; nerve stimulator in spine; major surgery most joints.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport gets me out of the house and off the couch. It has given me the self confidence I had lost and I have been able to decrease my medication dramatically.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Being a husband to my beautiful wife and a good role model for my kids.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To show that, no matter the games we play in our heads, they are just that – games. We can overcome them, through sport or by reaching out to mates.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Being able to run with my brothers-in-arms on the world platform, and to beat my nerves and perform at one hundred percent in front of my family and mates.

The person I most admire is...
My mate Scott Evennett. Scott joined the Army when he was 18 as a rifleman and went for his selection course for commandos in 2008. He toured to Timor Leste and Afghanistan multiple times. Unfortunately, on his last tour to Afghanistan in 2013, he was wounded in an ambush when a round struck his weapon, with fragments flying into his face. Following that, PTSD from his tours was taking its toll on his life but he decided to venture out and help others by opening up his own personal training program that not only works on physical fitness but also on your mindset. His key motto is ‘challenge accepted’. I have never met anyone so willing to go out of their way to help others.



Pilot Officer Nathan Parker

Age 23, from Lismore, NSW, lives in Lismore.
ADF Service: Joined RAAF 2014 as trainee pilot. Graduated ADFA 2017.
Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Amputated left hand, tendon damage right hand, multiple facial lacerations, in military bus rollover.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has played a considerable role in my rehab. In the early stages, sport and exercise was one of the few things I could actively control or influence in my recovery. Throughout my Invictus Games journey in 2017, sport provided clear fitness goals and enabled me to experience continual improvement. Even if everything else seemed to be going wrong, every small improvement on the rowing machine or the track was a significant victory, a step forward.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Recovering from my injuries and regaining my civilian pilot licence, despite my injuries.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I was extremely fortunate to compete in the 2017 Invictus Games and was blown away by the vast lessons and experiences I gained from that. A key part of those experiences was the support, mentoring and guidance I got from athletes who competed in 2016. A big part of wanting to be involved this year was to try to do the same for competitors embarking on their own journey.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
It will be the opportunity to represent Australia on home soil, in front of a home crowd, alongside some incredible and inspiring current and former ADF.

The person I most admire is...
Curtis McGrath, who had both legs amputated after an IED blast in Afghanistan. He won two gold medals at the 2016 ICF Paracanoe World Champs and gold at the 2016 Rio Paralympics. He captained the Australian team at the first Invictus Games in London and competed at three Invictus Games winning, numerous medals. Curtis is an inspiration and an example that injuries and setbacks don’t have to be limitations. Being on the team with Curtis last year was extremely motivating. It helped me to become proud of my injuries/differences, rather than ashamed of them.



Matthew Payne

Age 38, Darwin, lives in Cairns.
ADF Service: Joined Army 1998 as marine specialist. Deployed Timor Leste; PNG. Transfer to Navy 2005 as a marine technician. Postings HMAS Cairns, HMAS Cerberus. Discharged 2017.
Competing in: Wheelchair basketball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Bilateral ankle instability; shin splints; severe knee deterioration; osteoarthritis of shoulders; neck and spinal degeneration. Adjustment disorder and depression.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport has helped me regain some of my life. It has given me the strength to get back out there and push aside the pain in my mind, so I can enjoy life.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Fatherhood.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I want to be pushed past my limits and out of the comfort zone of my home. I want to meet truly inspirational people who have gone through similar experiences.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?
Walking out during the opening ceremony wearing the Australian team colours of green and gold. I think that every competitor has, in some way, already won – just by giving it a go.

The person I most admire is...
People like my Australian Invictus Games teammates Garry Robinson, Peter Rudland, Michael Lyddiard and Gary Wilson. What these guys and their families have gone through – and how they have progressed – is truly amazing. They show how tough we Aussies really can be. Seeing what the guys are doing makes me realise that there is no excuse for not trying, just because it hurts, or you think you can’t do it. Get out there and give it a go. There is always someone worse off than you and, if that person is trying, then why not you?

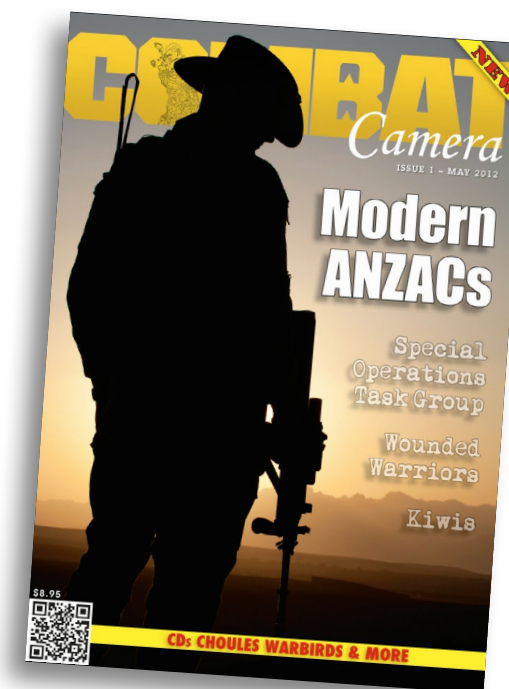
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Corporal Sarah Petchell

Age 39, from Sydney, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army Reservist as clerk 1998. Full time 2012. Currently APAC-SQ.

Competing in: Powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Spinal pain, shoulder tear and instability, chronic pain in feet, instability in ankles, result of various injuries.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Powerlifting has allowed me to build muscles around my shoulder joint, helping stabilise it. I've also strengthened ankle and foot muscles, almost eliminating ankle roll. Dealing with pain every day wears on me emotionally, but sport gives me a goal to focus on.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
I represented Australia in powerlifting in 2015 and 2016 and, in my civilian job, I work with amazing children at Lady Cilento Children's Hospital school and Enoggera State School.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
The past year has been a dark time, dealing with a back injury, worsening of other injuries and constant pain. I was fed up with pain and injury limiting me, when I believed I could do so much more. I saw what Invictus was about and grabbed the chance to be involved in the sport I love. I wanted an opportunity to aim for something and to have hope.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Successfully lifting weights and gaining a PB. But winning will also be about inspiring others with injuries to not count themselves out and helping everyone understand that a person could be suffering unseen injuries, yet the challenge is very real.

The person I most admire is...
Curtis McGrath. He is a world champion, Paralympic gold medalist and Invictus Games multi medalist. I met him at the Soldier Recovery Centre in Brisbane when he was in a wheel chair with shrapnel still making its way out of his body. His face was bright and his words full of hope, talking about his future and how he would walk again. I remember when he joined his unit Welcome Home parade – and Curtis stood and marched off that parade ground wearing a fresh pair of prosthetic legs, which must have really hurt. I was so proud of him – as a soldier and fellow human being.



Darren Peters

Age 50, from Melbourne, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1987, RAR, reached Warrant Officer Class 2. Deployed Malaysia; Timor Leste; Iraq; Afghanistan. Tactical Assault Group-West. Medically discharged 2008.

Competing in: Archery and wheelchair basketball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
PTSD, depression and anxiety; hearing loss; asthma (75% loss of lung function); torn meniscus both knees; lower back injuries; osteoarthritis.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Re-engaging in sport has given me the drive to succeed and made me believe in myself again. I am motivated to train and compete, always with the aim of setting higher goals. Because sport is a social activity, I connect with others on a regular basis, giving me increased confidence on and off the court and the range.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Being selected for the 2018 Australian Invictus Games team.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
To improve my quality of life and give me something to look forward to and strive towards. In doing so, I want to inspire my family, friends and current and former members of the ADF. Invictus Games is a remarkable event which gives those of us who have lost confidence and direction, an opportunity to stand tall. My life has already been changed forever.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Overcoming my anxieties and managing my injuries, so that I can be a valuable team member. Getting on a plane had previously been an issue for me but Invictus Games have given me the courage to travel again and enjoy my time away from home.

The person I most admire is...
My wife and three daughters. They consistently believe in me and have encouraged and supported me in everything I do. I also admire my fellow Invictus Games competitors. They are all people with an amazing sense of worth and the belief that they can achieve anything when you put your mind to it – even with the challenges they each face.



Chris Pitman

Age 48, from Adelaide, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 1987. Deployed Iraq 2003 and 2005. Discharged 2007.

Competing in: Cycling and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Service-related knee, back and hip injuries; PTSD, anxiety and depression.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
Sport, particularly cycling, has played a major role in my rehab. After leaving the ADF I drank heavily, ate poorly, fell into deep depression and gained a lot of weight. A mate got me on a bike, and cycling helped me to lose weight, regain fitness and refocus.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
My children Rebeka, Jackson, Sean and Ethan are, without doubt, my greatest personal achievements. Even though we are often far apart and not always in contact, they're always in my heart and thoughts. Being awarded Submarine Dolphins in 1997 was my proudest military achievement.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
I didn't make the last games and spent 12 months reflecting and training, then decided to apply for Invictus Games 2018. I have developed more resilience and proven to myself and my family that I can pick myself up and try again. The games will also give me the opportunity to experience the camaraderie and teamwork I have missed so much.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Training hard and participating at my best and the opportunity to share this experience with my amazing partner, and give my kids proud memories.

The person I most admire is...
I admire Invictus competitors. Their stories continually encourage me to keep fighting, especially in sport. But, the person I admire most is my partner, Kylie – an amazing mum to five awesome children who she has raised mostly on her own, in some pretty difficult circumstances. Last year I was in a very dark place and attempted to take my life. It was an extremely scary time for me and our family and Kylie had to make the difficult but necessary decision to involve outside people, to ensure I was safe and get the help I needed. If it wasn't for that intervention, I could not confidently say I would be here today.



Scott Reynolds

Age 39, from Manly, NSW, lives in Queenstown, NZ.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 1998, as mine warfare and clearance diving officer. Deployed Iraq 2003. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Swimming and sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?
Range of challenging health conditions.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?
I started sailing through the generous support of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club's Integrated disAbled Sailing (IdS) program. Sailing has been a helpful part of my recovery and transition from the ADF through the physicality and social interaction of the sport.

What is your greatest achievement to date?
Having progressed through the IdS sailing programs, I am now part of a team of veterans who race regularly, as well as volunteering with the program.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?
It was a combination of encouragement from my family and fellow sailors. I see it as a way to progress my sailing, improve my health and wellbeing and to enjoy the opportunities that Invictus Games offers, notably representing Australia.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?
Sailing has been like a self-licking ice-cream for me. The mindfulness and teamwork in sailing continues to help me while I am learning to support other veterans on their individual journeys of recovery and transition. Winning to me means remaining true to this contribution, while giving my best in training and competition.



Garry Robinson

Age 45, from Camden Park, NSW, lives in Camden Park.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1994. 3RAR and 2 Cdo Regt. Deployed East Timor; Afghanistan. Medically discharged 2016.

Competing in: Archery, cycling and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Severe traumatic brain injury; fractured spine, sacrum, eight ribs, both shoulder blades and left leg (later amputated below the knee); spleen removed; punctured lung; induced coma four weeks; two years in hospital re brain injury; following Black Hawk crash in Afghanistan.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has been a big part of my rehab, especially since competing in the first games. I came home from that wanting more. My abilities have changed over the years and, through sport, I have found ways to adapt so I can stay involved and active.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

I feel honoured to have spent 21 years in the Army, which provided me with the means to support my wife and three children. The Army has given me many opportunities and long-lasting friendships.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

Sport plays a major role in my recovery. I really want to show my family and friends – and the medical staff I’ve met – what I can do now.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Seeing my family, friends and supporters in the stands, watching me compete. I have come far and trained hard so, I already feel like I have won.

The person I most admire is...

My mate Pte Ben Chuck who, along with three others, was killed in the accident. Everyone admired him as a great person and a great soldier. I think the world of my son, Joshua, who has seen the worst that can come out of the Army – death and severely wounded – and still chose an Army career. I admire many of my fellow competitors, especially Peter Rudland, who has been on the Invictus Games journey with me. After being wounded, he couldn’t ride a two-wheeled bike but now competes in recumbent trike. Lastly, I admire my wife Katrina and children Rebekah, Carly and Joshua, for the unconditional support they have given me since the crash. It has not been easy for them.



Peter Rudland

Age 47, from York, WA, lives in Tweed Heads, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1989. Deployed Cambodia 1993; Iraq 1997 and 2003; Timor Leste 2001 and 2006; Afghanistan 2010. Discharged 2017

Competing in: Cycling and wheelchair rugby.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Multiple musculoskeletal injuries from Black Hawk crash in Afghanistan.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has provided the platform for me to redevelop my competitive attitude and has given me positive role models.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

I am very proud of my rehabilitation and selection into the 2016 and 2017 Australian Invictus Games Teams. I was also lucky enough to be a co-captain of the 2017 team and I won gold in the recumbent cycling time trial and criterium.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I thought Invictus Games 2018 would provide a great opportunity for all the people who have been involved in my rehabilitation to see how far I have come and, in some way, see how much I appreciate everything people have done for me.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

The Australian wheelchair rugby team has worked really hard over the past few years. I would love to see the team win a medal.

The person I most admire is...

Garry and Katrina Robinson. I worked with Garry in Afghanistan. He was the most professional and brave soldier I ever worked with. We were wounded together and lay in beds next to each other in hospital. I watched him come back from massive injuries. His wife Katrina’s dedication to his rehabilitation and development is second to none. They do everything together and she does so much for him. In my opinion, Garry and Katrina represent all the qualities of the Invictus Games.



Steve Sandman

Age 35, from Hobart, lives in Woodside, SA.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2001. Infantryman RAR. Medically discharged 2014.

Competing in: Archery.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Osteoarthritis both knees. PTSD. Severe hearing loss.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has played a massive part in my recovery and ongoing rehab. When I left the ADF in 2014 my right leg was locked in a brace, I couldn’t walk more than a few hundred metres and was told I would never run again. I felt like my world had fallen apart and I struggled with depression and suicide. I decided I couldn’t accept that and started training, intending to compete in multisport events and adventure racing. This I achieved in 2016, competing in a number of off-road multisport races, road cycling and archery at the 2016 Invictus Games in Orlando, and the Australian cross country marathon and gravity enduro mountain bike titles in 2017. I competed in target and field archery, at a state and nationals, winning in both disciplines.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Finishing the 2016 Magnetic Island Adventurethon, because it was the first multisport race; and placing fourth in the archery at Invictus Games 2016.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

As soldiers, we become goal focused and accustomed to pushing ourselves to achieve objectives. After discharge, training for and competing in sports changed my outlook on life and helped reignite my drive and focus.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

As much as I would love to win my event in front of a home crowd, winning to me has been training with and competing against so many great shooters, making it through the selection process and representing Australia on the international stage.

The person I most admire is...

Nino Schurter, current cross country mountainbike world champ and only rider to win every XC World Cup round and world championship in one season. He says, we can either remain stuck in the past, feel sorry for ourselves and play the blame game, or choose to look forward, find the next challenge and get on with life.



Squadron Leader Rob Saunders

Age 53, from Cairns, Qld, lives in Canberra.

ADF Service: Joined RAAF 1984 as a technologist apprentice. Deployed Afghanistan 2014-2015.

Competing in: Sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Not all injuries are visible.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

From the time I was seven years old, I have competed in sports (soccer, baseball and sailing). However, following my last deployment, I lost interest in all recreational activities. The camaraderie and resilience shown by the athletes at the Invictus Games has greatly reinvigorated my passion for sport, especially sailing with a great team. For me, sport has not always been about winning. It’s about how you play the game and it’s about the social interaction.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

My family is my best and most enjoyable achievement to date. I have a very supportive wife and fantastic children. Another achievement I am proud of is NORTHSAIL, a personal and leadership program I developed, which takes ADF personnel (civilian and military) offshore and provides them an environment to extend themselves beyond their perceived barriers, while growing as individuals and as part of a team.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I have been forcing myself to get back into sport and Invictus Games 2018 was a fantastic opportunity to return to a sport that I love.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Conquering my personal challenges, while building mental strength and resilience, through being part of a team that performs to its best.

The person I most admire is...

My wife. As a family, we have faced some very difficult challenges and my wife has always been resilient, resourceful and strong.

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CONTACT Air Land & Sea magazine was started by two ARMY Newspaper NCOs tired of seeing great stories vetted and sanitised to within an inch of their lives.

CONTACT quickly built a reputation for presenting quality photos and stories that capture the essence of serving-members' lives and interests, as far as possible from an insider perspective.

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Saving squillions of dollars on print allowed CONTACT to not only survive – but the switch to digital also meant it thrived, building a new and dynamic on-line audience.

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Rye Shawcroft

Age 22, from Carrum Downs, Vic, lives in Carrum Downs

ADF Service: Joined Army 2014. Discharged 2015.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Neural pathway and circulation problems; musculoskeletal problems with knees, hips.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has played a massive role in my rehabilitation. It has helped with pain management and helped me overcome, adapt and adjust to the damage and change that injuries have made to my life. It continues my efforts to maintain an active lifestyle, set goals that I can strive to achieve and get me out into the broader community.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Competing in obstacle course racing throughout Australia.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I applied for the games, to maintain an active lifestyle, to help me set achievable goals, to get out into the broader community and to help others with disabilities – showing them that your physical and or mental disabilities don't need to hold you back from doing the things you love and enjoy.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

For me, being a part of the Invictus Games team is already 'winning'. Representing my country and the wounded, injured and ill service and ex-service men and women, is winning enough for me.

The person I most admire is...

I don't have any single person who I most admire. Anyone who can get back up after falling down, and continue on, is worth my admiration.



Stewart Sherman

Age 34, from Hobart, lives in East Maitland, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2000 as combat medic. Deployed Solomon Islands; Afghanistan. Medically discharged 2013.

Competing in: Archery and wheelchair tennis.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

PTSD. Lower leg injuries.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has been the pillar supporting my recovery. I think sport is a very important part of recovery as it allows me to set measureable goals that prove to myself that I am getting better and performing to the best of my ability.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Making the bronze medal match in Invictus Games Toronto 2017. Unfortunately we lost that match but it has motivated me to train even harder and longer, to be at my peak this year.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

Over the past two years I have seen growth in my recovery and I want to be in and around the team to help mentor others who are just starting their journey, and to show them how sport can change lives for the better.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

I think winning for me is improving on my best. I don't have to medal to be at my best. I would love to shoot a personal best in archery.

The person I most admire is...

My wife. She has stuck by me throughout my darkest days and been the stability that I and my children have needed. Everything she does is to benefit me and to allow me to compete and train for Invictus Games. In my eyes, she is the embodiment of what the Invictus Games stand for and I thank her for that.



Sarah Sliwka

Age 34, from Broken Hill, NSW, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2002. Linesman RA Sigs and AFG. Medically discharged 2006.

Competing in: Powerlifting and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Lower back injury and curved spine; broken bones right arm; snapped ligaments right ankle; strained Achilles tendon.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

After discharge I wanted to strengthen my body. Weight training has given me a focus outside of the military and my current job. I am now confident in what my body can do. Sport helps me deal with stress. Sport gives me something to strive for and a sense of achievement.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Winning my pro card for the Professional Natural Bodybuilding Association (PNBA). This enabled me to compete for prizemoney and, after I finished competing, to judge international events. Representing Australia at last year's Invictus Games and winning two silver medals in two different sports was pretty special. I have also qualified for this year's Australian national powerlifting comp.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I want to represent Australia and the ADF on home turf. At last years' Invictus Games I experienced something I hadn't had in a very long time – feeling like I was part of the Defence community again. The friends I have made from reconnecting with military personnel has been the best thing to come out of my Invictus Games experiences.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Just walking out at the opening ceremony in front of a home crowd, with all my teammates, is winning. We have all trained so hard and just want to show the country what we are all capable of. If I can stand on that podium again it would be an extra bonus. And if I can help others to do the same – that's winning.

The person I most admire is...

Curtis McGrath, for his positive mindframe, athletic ability and accomplishments. I am inspired by every Invictus competitor dealing with different injuries or illnesses and coming through as better people.



Tony Sten

Age 40, from Ballina, NSW, lives in Brisbane.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1996. Infantry rifleman. Deployed East Timor 2000 and 2002/03. Discharged 2006.

Competing in: Athletics and powerlifting.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has given me a renewed drive and focus to train and compete.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

In 2015, I kayaked 400km unassisted across Bass Strait with a group of veterans – after just one day of kayaking experience. On a personal level, it is being a father of two beautiful children.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To represent my country while competing alongside other serving and former-serving military personnel from around the world, in front of my family and friends.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Competing in front of my family and friends.



Jamie Tanner

Age 35, from Lismore, NSW, lives in Ballina, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2001. Infantryman. Deployed Timor Leste; Iraq; Afghanistan. Discharged 2011.

Competing in: Wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Numerous musculoskeletal injuries; PTSD, depression and adjustment disorder.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Adaptive sport has been a way for me to join in again – not just in sport, but life in general. 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.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Accepting that I needed help and then to actively engage in my rehabilitation program.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To confirm to myself that I have moved forward and am progressing with my recovery, both physically and mentally.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

Putting myself out there and participating in an event such as the Invictus Games is the biggest win I can achieve.

The person I most admire is...

There is no one person I admire more than another. I admire every single competitor who has shown the courage and the determination to attend and compete at past, present and future Invictus Games. Every person at these games has overcome enormous hurdles and great personal struggles to get to the point where they can compete on an international stage. Every competitor at the Invictus Games has a unique story of how they got to where they are today and everyone of them should be admired. I also admire the family and friends who have stood by the competitors during their darkest times. Without their unconditional support, we would not be here to share our stories.



Alexia Vlahos

Age 23, from Bindoon, WA, lives in Stafford, Qld.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2014 as driver. Medically discharged 2018.

Competing in: Athletics, indoor rowing, powerlifting.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Five surgeries right knee, including two reconstructions and bone graft from hip. Living with injuries presented mental-health challenges.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport and going to the gym have helped me both physically and mentally. Finding myself on a massive rollercoaster of injuries and rehabilitation affected my mindset and I lost the sense of identity and confidence that came from competing. Sport and gym put my mind to something positive and surround me with like-minded people. I understand that I'm not alone on my rehabilitation journey.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Things like having the chance to play tennis on the Wimbledon courts and making the cut for Invictus Games are all great achievements. But, I'm most proud of simply not giving up. Not giving up and chipping away at rehab, is definitely my greatest achievement.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

As a child I wanted to be an elite athlete but, injuring myself when I was young, I lost hope of getting there. I had to step back and think what I actually could do. Just days after my second knee reconstruction and being told I was being medically discharged, someone told me about Invictus Games. Thinking about games selection brought out an drive to work for something.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

People smiling and achieving things they didn't think they ever could. It's not about the medals, it's about pushing yourself past your boundaries and everyone's boundaries are just so different.

The person I most admire is...

I'm surrounded by so many admirable people. One is my beautiful partner. I have never met someone so determined and talented. My best friends Mez and Pam are strong, independent women who I would trust with my life. My dad is the hardest-working person in my life and does everything possible to look after me. My mum battles with demons every day. She has the most beautiful heart.



Tiffany White

Age 31, from Canberra, lives in Canberra.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2006 as communications information system sailor. Served HMA Ships Adelaide, Newcastle, Sydney. Medically discharged 2015

Competing in: Powerlifting and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Adjustment disorder with depressive moods and anxiety. Degenerative joint disease right knee.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has enabled me to re-enter the community and leave the house. My chosen sports keep me active and have me on the road to being happy and healthier than I have been for a long time. It has provided a goal to remain focused on.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Graduating from recruit school in front of family and friends. Growing up, all I ever talked about doing was joining the ADF and this was the start of that journey for me.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

After not being selected for Invictus Games 2017, I knew there were a lot of things I had to go away and work on. I decided to re-apply in 2018 to challenge myself and to show I am more capable than my negative self-talk allowed me to be. I have come back stronger and with a little more self-confidence.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

It will be walking away knowing I have done my best, had fun and found a new group of people I can call friends and family.

The person I most admire is...

Not just one person. It's the person who never gives up but keeps moving forward. It's the person who makes mistakes and learns from them and keeps going. It's the person who makes time for others, does not judge but listens, supports and gives strength to them through the good and bad times.



Private Nathan Whittington

Age 26, from Goulburn, NSW, lives in Wagga Wagga, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2010. Currently instructor at Army Recruit Training Centre, Recruit Development Wing.

Competing in: Athletics, sitting volleyball and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Below knee amputee after water skiing accident.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Within five months of having my amputation I was recognised as an elite competitor within the ADF and trained for the 2016 Paralympics. But, because of injury, I was unsuccessful in being selected in the 2016 Paralympics team. However, being part of that elite sport crowd enabled me to walk properly and have a lot deeper understanding of my body and its biomechanics. This massively aided my rehabilitation.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Completing the Kokoda Track in 2015 with a prosthetic limb.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

After failing to meet the required standards to become a Physical Training Instructor in 2017, I needed something else to train for. Invictus Games has not only given me a new training focus, but has also given me a new mental focus which, in turn, has made me happier and taken me into a much more positive head space.

What will 'winning' look like for you at Invictus?

In a way I have already won – just being selected in the team to represent my country and the ADF is, for me, a huge achievement. Naturally everyone wants to be standing on the podium with a gold medal around their neck, and that's something I'll definitely be trying to do.

The person I most admire is...

I don't admire just one person. I've had a lot of positive role models in my Army career and my short sporting career. So I guess I'm just taking all the good from those members and trying to emulate those traits.



Andrew Wilkinson

Age 40, from Karratha, WA, lives in Glenfield, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Navy 2003 as aviation technician airframes. Posted HMA Ships Manoora, Kanimbla and Success. Deployed Timor Leste; Fiji; Christmas Island. Medically discharged 2014.

Competing in: Cycling and swimming.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Two back operations for bulged discs left sciatic nerve squashed, causing left foot drop and left side body muscle atrophy.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

From a very young age, I have always been involved in sport. It started with swimming when I was five, then cycling and triathlons when I was 12. Sport gives me a way out. It gives me the chance to turn everything off, including the brain, and hiding away from the world. It gives me a chance to shut out all the people who told me I was too unfit to serve, who told me I would never compete again. Through sport, I can – and do – prove people wrong. The fitter I am, the happier I am – about my injuries and about my life.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

For the opportunity to train and compete with like-minded people. After I was medically discharged from the ADF, it was a difficult time and a lot of people I used to work and socialise with just disappeared. Being part of the Invictus Games team is a chance to connect, if only for a brief period.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Proving to the people who told me that I can’t compete, that I can – and I did.

The person I most admire is...

My father. He started me on the sporting path, with us training and competing together in triathlons for many years. After surviving two rounds of different cancers, he’s still competing, showing that anything is possible if you have the drive to go out and do it.



Marcus Wilson

Age 47, from Brisbane, lives in Broken Hill, NSW.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1988 as gunner and medic. Deployed Bougainville 1998. Joint Incident Response Unit Sydney Olympics. Discharged 2002.

Competing in: Cycling and sailing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Musculoskeletal injuries and damaged spinal cord.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has become a major part of my rehabilitation. It was easier to stay at home and not exercise or socialise, which isn’t a healthy strategy. By nominating for Invictus Games and being selected, I have turned that around and am now on a much more positive pathway. This is entirely due to sport.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Rescuing five passengers from a crashed helicopter in Kabul, Afghanistan, and being awarded the Bravery Medal for that.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

My efforts at joining the Invictus team started when I returned from Afghanistan in 2017 where I had worked for 10 years, setting up and running a civilian air ambulance service for the UN and other aid workers. I needed a way to reconnect with veterans and a reason to exercise. Getting out of my comfort zone has paid dividends and now sport has become a major focal point. I have joined a number of clubs in the Broken Hill area and this has also meant widening my social circle, which has been a wonderful benefit.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

It was being selected and, now that I am in the Invictus Games team, it is for the sailing team to make the finals competition and to post a good result. For cycling, it is to better my personal records.

The person I most admire is...

My immediate family – my wife, kids and parents. They have given me unwavering support throughout the past five years, which have been some of the most difficult in my life. My kids show me that the future is bright. They give me a reason to get up every day and challenge myself to be better. I sincerely hope that, by competing in the Invictus Games, I will similarly inspire them to chase their dreams, no matter what obstacles they may face.



Jeff Wright

Age 50, from Bendigo, Vic, lives in Townsville.

ADF Service: Joined Army 1986 as driver. Deployed Timor Leste 1999. Discharged 2003.

Competing in: Wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Medically discharged after training accident knee injury. Paraplegic and vision loss after post-discharge motorcycle accident. PTSD.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

It has been the catalyst to revisit the camaraderie and competitive nature of sport, allowing for aggression, skill, teamwork and overall enjoyment. Sport helps me stop thinking that I am a person with a disability. Health and fitness are major benefits.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Serving my nation in the Army and serving my community as a police officer. My biggest achievement was surviving and thriving after a motorcycle accident.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

I was a member of the Invictus Games 2017 team and had a most rewarding and fulfilling experience. I felt I had unfinished business and wanted to compete again to better the results from last year and to experience the thrill of all that the Invictus Games are about.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

More of the same from last year. I saw others grow and prosper – even those who did not make the team. It is a unique opportunity and I want to be the best I can be.

The person I most admire is...

My father, a hard working farmer who never had anything unless he went out and got it or made it for himself. He provided all he could for our family. He would help others all the time, showing me the balance between hard work and having great friendships that last forever. Dad was a great teacher and he always let us learn at our own pace. Dad passed away a couple of years ago and I feel that I missed so much of him by being in the Army for so long – but I know he was proud of what I achieved.



Benjamin Yeomans

Age 27, from Adelaide, lives in Adelaide.

ADF Service: Joined Army 2011, infantry. Medically discharged 2014.

Competing in: Athletics and indoor rowing.

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Traumatic brain injury and eye muscle dysfunction.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

Sport has played a huge role in my rehab, both mentally and physically. The competitive nature of training to the highest standard possible is a driving force each day. Being able to rub shoulders with some amazing people who have been through hell and come out the other side has been truly inspiring for my own development and understanding of injuries.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Becoming a husband and a father.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games 2018?

To prove a point to myself that you can still do what you love, regardless of the mental and physical challenges thrown your way.

What will ‘winning’ look like for you at Invictus?

Having a sound understanding of my injuries, pushing myself through boundaries while training and making my family proud.

The person I most admire is...

My beautiful wife. She has had to put up with me throughout the whole process of my injury. Her strength and resilience have helped me progress throughout my rehabilitation while she has listened to me whinge and moan behind closed doors.

INVICTUS

By William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me,
black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
for my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
my head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
looms but the horror of the shade.
And yet the menace of the years
finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
how charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.