



APRIL - JUNE 2023

# PARAFED WAIKATO NEWSLETTER

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# WELCOME

*from your Parafed Officer*

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Hello and welcome to the second edition of the Parafed Waikato Newsletter for 2023. This newsletter celebrates the success of our athletes and shares their stories. I hope you are encouraged by the stories in this newsletter and are inspired to train hard and keep active.

I hope you're keeping well in this winter weather. This issue contains lots of uplifting articles to keep you going. It's great to see how Parafed is making a difference in peoples lives. That's why we do what we do and we love it. I've personally experienced how sport has changed my life in a positive way and I want to encourage you that if you haven't given sport a try yet to give it a go!

Remember we also have Ross Flood a roving reporter so if you have a story that you think needs covering let us know and Ross will get on to it.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. My email is [david@parafedwaikato.co.nz](mailto:david@parafedwaikato.co.nz) if you would like to share your sporting story in the next issue. Also if you know of anyone who would like to get this newsletter please email their details to [david@parafedwaikato.co.nz](mailto:david@parafedwaikato.co.nz)

## PARAFED WAIKATO

*on the web*

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If you haven't found our Facebook page yet go to [www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and search for Parafed Waikato. "Like us" and you will be kept informed of all of the latest Parafed events and information. All of our other information and membership forms can be found at our website [www.parafedwaikato.co.nz](https://www.parafedwaikato.co.nz)

# MESSAGE

*from the Board*

This time last year I tendered my intention to step down from the Board Chair role at the 2022 AGM. I was however convinced by the board and a few members to stay on for a further year. I agreed given some of the activities I was undertaking would be taken on by the board, and with agreement in place to employ an Operations Manager, he or she would take on many of the tasks that would become part of their job description.

At last months Parafed board meeting, I have again tendered my intention to stand down effective the next AGM. Francis is now well established in his role as Operations Manager and is doing a great job in managing the day to day functions of Parafed, establishing relationships with stakeholders and Regional Sports Organisations, and representing us well at various conferences and Hui.

This confidence in him doing a great job, and with Parafed well positioned to continue doing great work, along with Magical Bridge getting busier, the time is right for me to move on. There is no denying I will miss being emersed in this amazing organisation and rest assured I will continue to watch and follow what is going on. I won't disappear. Thank you to everyone, from past and present board members, staff, members and their families and our partner organisations for my amazing journey.

In the meantime, life goes on and there are no shortage of things to celebrate. Board member Wojtek Czyz's Paralympic dream as New Zealand's first Para-badminton representative is closer to fruition. His global rankings are improving, he is attending tournaments around the world, and his confirmation as a New Zealand citizen makes his dream of attending Paris 24 as a Kiwi more real. Also overseas at the moment is member Danielle Aitchison. She is attending various meets and training camps preparing for Paris 24. We wish her well on her stellar journey.

Closer to home, Wojtek and I were guests on member Caelan Harris's podcast he was producing as part of his studies at Waikato University, focusing on accessibility and support for disabled people and athletes in particular. What was intended to be a 15 minute conversation ended up being 50 minutes, as there was so much to talk about. Good luck with the studies Caelan.



# MESSAGE

*from the Board continued*

Francis has been doing some great work establishing and reinforcing our relationships with sports organisations and other partners. We now have an MOU in place with Basketball NZ to support the emerging 3 on 3 version of the game.

Parafed is also working alongside Paralympics NZ in putting together a Para-table tennis programme, and Francis and his team of Cathy and David are working on eventually creating a school programme. Great work team.

Also overseas recently was our very own Tiff Perry, competing in various hand-cycling events in Australia and Europe. She very clearly put her usual 150% into it as she came back a bit under the weather. Great to see she's come right and ready to continue being her usual ultra-competitive self.

Lastly, great to see our Powerchair Football team finally get some game time against the Auckland club. Remembering Auckland is effectively the New Zealand team, we played well and big ups to Coach Sandy for the great work he has done preparing our athletes.

Cheers for now,

Ngaa Mihi a nui.

Peter



# MESSAGE

*from your Sport Development Officer*



The 2023 Halberg Games were held at Kings College in Auckland on 14-16th April.

A BIG thanks to our Waikato athletes and supporters who attended the Halberg Games. The Waikato team was made up of 22 athletes and their families. We had five athletes with vision impairments which was fantastic. Our team captain this year was Jayden and he did an awesome job mentoring our kids.

The opening ceremony at midday on Friday was a real buzz, especially for our first-time athletes. Our team paraded in wearing their Waikato team t shirts with lots of loud cheering from our supporters and parents. The Games finished on Sunday afternoon with the closing ceremony and some very tired Waikato athletes and supporters.

Our Waikato team made us very proud and it was great to watch you all achieving some pretty cool sporting goals as well as have a go at new sports with plenty of determination and positivity.

We were very grateful and fortunate to have our very own team professional photographer, Paul Sutherland. He immersed himself in with our team and captured lots of magic moments.

Thanks again to Vulcan Hamilton and DG Uniforms for sponsoring our team kit, our kids looked great in these. Congratulations to Mason for winning MVP for the Waikato team. Also congratulations to Cian who took out the boccia competition this year.



# MESSAGE

*from your Sport Development Officer*



We held our own Halberg Games prizegiving after the Games.

Congratulations to the following athletes who were awarded trophies as follows:

- Magic moment of the 2023 Halberg Games – Bennie
- Best Supporter of the 2023 Halberg Games – Katie
- Sports Excellence of the 2023 Halberg Games – Cian
- Personality of the 2023 Halberg Games – Niven
- Most Improved Athlete of the 2023 Halberg Games – Mason
- Scallywag of the 2023 Halberg Games – Justine



# MESSAGE

*from your Operations Manager*



Parafed Waikato was represented at 24th International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity (ISAPA 2023) held in Ōtepoti, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand from Sunday 25 June 2023 to Thursday 29 June. The symposium theme was “Global Innovation, Adaptation and Accessibility in a Changing World”.

I attended as part of my work as Operations Manager of Parafed Waikato. It was a great opportunity to network with APA practitioners, coaches, educationalists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, adaptive recreational providers, and those who access adapted physical activity as an end user.

It was a good opportunity to wear two hats at the symposium being able to present my PhD research at the conference as well as promote the activities and work of Parafed Waikato.

These opportunities don't come often being able to reconnect with stakeholders, share ideas and have the opportunity for constructive criticism about my research and also the activities and work we do as Parafed.

We constantly need to develop while making sure we are delivering programs and activities that align with modern practices, and ISAPA was a good platform to gain that knowledge.

At the ISAPA Annual General Meeting, I was nominated and subsequently approved on the board of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity as one of the two co-chairs of NESAPA. NESAPA is to promote collaboration, support, encourage the work and research in the field of adapted physical activity, and build relationships between early career and expert professionals.

Francis Asare  
francis@parafedwaikato.co.nz





## ROCK CLIMBING

*by Rebekah Graham*

We started attending rock climbing with Parafed to build Lily's confidence in trying new things and to support her physical development.

Climbing uses lots of using big muscle groups and is good for co-ordination and strength.

At our first session Lily wasn't very sure about this climbing gig, not at all. It took some encouraging to get her climbing more than half a meter off the ground!

Here we are, several sessions in, and she is having a blast! Each month she gets a little higher and feels a little more confident.

It has been great seeing her confidence grow with each session and also to find something else she enjoys.

Thank you Parafed!

Photo: Lily and Olive at Extreme Edge Indoor Rock Climbing Centre in their harnesses ready to do some climbing..

# SHOOTING

*by Elizabeth Charleston*

Easter 2022 was a turning point in my pursuit of sport. Despite numerous head injuries and spinal operations, my love for horse riding has never diminished. My passion for horses has given me opportunities to compete internationally in various disciplines, adjudicate, run national events and take on team management duties for New Zealand squads overseas.

However last Easter following a publicity shoot on a friends horse for The Naked Challenge (my global brain injury awareness campaign) I managed to flare the injuries to my neck and back. I was in need of hospitalization however during that fateful Easter I happened to have Covid so I had to stick it out at home. The reality was staring me in the face that perhaps for the foreseeable future horse riding wasn't such a good idea.

Even reaching for my cell phone caused screaming, but I diligently started typing on the device and brought up the website for Parafed Waikato. I scrolled through all the various sports on offer and came across Shooting Para.

I've done a bit of shooting if you count things that go on at a farm like a turkey needing to be shot out in the paddock, throwing old dinner plates off the deck for target practice (it's a thing) or having a crack at clay shooting. These experiences taught me that I'm a reasonable shot and that it was something I would like to do in a more organized capacity.



# SHOOTING

*by Elizabeth Charleston*

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I emailed Parafed Waikato to say I'd seen they had recently held an open day for shooting and enquired if they would they be doing another one that year. I was delighted to get a reply from Cathy Wooller to say that a course would be starting in the second term and I was invited to join Parafed Waikato.

The journey I've been on since joining Parafed Waikato last year has been a huge highlight for me as well as for my family and friends who have been happy to see me enjoying myself so much taking part in this sport.

My fortnightly trips to the Hamilton Pistol Club have been a lifeline to me whilst battling both the spinal injuries and my TBI.

The duo of coaches last year consisting of Dave Sheely and Rene Eales have helped me learn much needed techniques to improve my shooting. What I can't get over is how both cathartic and exhilarating Shooting Para can be. The breathing required to master a bullseye and sensation of control over a weapon have given me a sense of self during a time in my life when it felt like I had no real control over my protracted health issues.

The drive home after a night at the range would see me buzzing for hours and result in some very happy posts on social media as my loved ones shared in my joy of having found something I could do and be good at.

There has also been the social side of Shooting Para that I've enjoyed. I'm now known amongst the crew as the lady who turns up with a box of chocolates or a bag of lollies to get the party started. I've made new friends and the thing about Para is that everyone has been on an unusual journey be it the athletes themselves or their family members that are there to support them. This makes for some interesting and enlightening conversations that adds to the experience and life education.

At the moment whilst I'm not able to compete at horse shows, or run them, it has brought great joy into my life to have Shooting Para as an outlet. Following my spinal fusion in November last year it was my inspiration to get walking so I could get back to the shooting range and it took me less than 5 weeks to achieve that goal. It was slow going but I got there - and I loved it!

Thank you to all those people that have made this sport accessible to me when I needed it most. My appreciation to those that have been so welcoming and helpful on the nights at the shooting range.

We all need a sense of purpose in life and to be good at something. Shooting Para has certainly fulfilled both of those in the past year and I'm extremely grateful for the help, support and encourage I've received.



## SNOWSPORTS

*by Nikita Howarth*

I'm Nikita and I have competed in many international competitions over the years including 3 Paralympic games where I secured a gold and a bronze medal.

I am now retired and am working most of the time. In my free time and on weekends I decided to give snowboarding a go with the Parafed program and have now taken it up as a hobby.

I also participate in the odd Para-Shooting evening and am having a blast just cruising along.

Photo: Nikita at Snow planet.



# POWERFOOTBALL

by Emma Sweetman

I had a part-time management position. I thought I knew exactly what was important. I had just employed someone to help me out. I was helping kids that were identified as 'gifted' throughout the Waikato region by providing an alternative education program one day a week. Everything changed.

I remember going back to bed and the husband taking the kids out as I had a headache. I remember helping the kids to put stickers in their books. I remember having to sit down because I felt like I could no longer do it. I remember trying to ask my youngest son (who was 3) to please get dad. I remember my husband running and asking if he needed to call an ambulance. I remember telling him not to be silly I would be fine to go to the local doctor. I remember him driving up onto the footpath and asking if someone could take the kids because he thought his wife was having a stroke. I remember seeing a wheelchair.

On the 9th of February 2020 I had a stroke at aged 33 (reason still unknown). When NZ was heading into its first major lockdown for Covid I was on the way to rehab. I spent around 10 months in rehab before I was back home with the kids. What I thought was important!, really was not.

Somehow I managed to find Sandy and powerchair football (I am not entirely sure how). Everyone has their own story and it doesn't matter who it is or what they are currently going through but it is nice to have a supportive family to help you forget everything else and just get lost in the game.

Sandy is incredibly patient and kind. We have been fortunate enough to host Auckland a couple of weeks ago for our first proper game. We went back up to them to play too. We were totally thrashed each time but that doesn't matter because we can learn and have fun.

Photos:

Emma sitting in her competition wheelchair with the Waikato and Auckland Power Football team.

Emma with her family.



# ACCESS

*by Access Community Health*

We are one of New Zealand's leading healthcare providers, specialising in home-based healthcare and support, and have been at the forefront of community health since the 1920s. Working with the Ministry of Health, DHBs and ACC among others, to provide support for over 40,000 people around the country. Our skilled team of nurses and support workers provide a range of services to help clients maintain an independent lifestyle in their homes and communities.

Total Care Health Services is a division of Access Community Health, with a unique focus on wound care management and other specialist clinical services such as catheter care, and IV treatment. We'll tend to your needs in your home, workplace, or place of study, meaning you can continue your day without the need for a visit to a clinic or hospital.

Your health and wellbeing are our priority, and our holistic approach considers your lifestyle, whānau, family, friends and social connections. Trust us to be part of your journey. You can contact us to learn more about how we can support you.

Enquiries about Total Care Health services  
Call 0800 426 877 / 0800 4 A NURSE  
Email us at [info@totalcarehealth.co.nz](mailto:info@totalcarehealth.co.nz)  
[Access.org.nz](http://Access.org.nz)

Enquiries about Access Community Health  
Call 0800 284 663  
Email us at [info@access.org.nz](mailto:info@access.org.nz)  
[Access.org.nz](http://Access.org.nz)

Our Values:  
Kaitiakitanga: Care for our community  
Kotahitanga: Work together  
Tū Tika: Do the right thing  
Manaakitanga: Look after each other

 **Access**  
community health  
Hauora Tara-Ā-Whare

 **Total Care**  
health services

# WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

*by Peter Klinkhamer*

On Friday the 16th of June we flew down to Wellington to participate in the second round of the WRC Competition.

DG Sport Waikato Stampede played four games that Weekend. Our team played really well and some of our newer players contributed a lot to our games. It was the first tournament away from home for our new player Keenan Alexander.

We played in the toughest division, which was against Canterbury, Auckland and Dsport Wellington who have really improved recently, We came fourth.

In division two another four teams entered. They were Manawatu, Bay of Plenty, Otago and a team of Invictus players looking for a challenge.

All in all it was a great weekend of rugby and reconnection with the rugby family from throughout New Zealand.

On the way home our flight got cancelled as we waited to board so we had to stay in a hotel for an extra night but we made it home next morning.

Photo:

Keenan in wheelchair rugby chair ready to get into the game.



# TIFFS TRAVELS

*by Tiffiney Perry*

It's been a few years since we could all travel and compete in our chosen sports so this year I decided to reinvigorate my competitive nature and signed up for some comps. I was hoping to compete against some females in my class instead of the same old comp I get in NZ.

First off I felt I needed some new kit to get me the edge so I set off to Spain to get measured up for a new Carbon Master handcycle. It was a whirlwind trip as I had a purpose in mind. I took my daughter for company and had a couple nights in Dubai on the way cause I had never been. Very accessible, fun, safe place if you are thinking of a stopover – do it!

Interesting exercise in Bilbao, Spain as the company building the handcycles was in the middle of nowhere really in a nondescript factory with not a lot of signage. It was a wintery 7 degrees so not a holiday destination at that time of year. We had to meet after work at night as the son who spoke English worked a full time job. In fact it was only a father and son duo producing very nice bikes I understood but very slowly... suffice to say I still don't have it yet J

Luckily I have quite a nice back up bike that I bought during 2020 Covid but never really settled into it. It was time to give it another crack which I have now done and suffice to say I actually quite like it. Probably should have done that before I went to Spain but there you go...impulsive me!

I then went to a PNZ Camp at the velodrome and learned of some comps ahead. I signed myself up for Oceanias in Brisbane at the end of March. Quite hot in Brisby at that time (opposite to Spain you could say)... bit of a shock to the system. Lucky the first event was morning but the Time Trial course was pretty hilly. I completed it competing against another girl half my age and ...ok half my size. You guessed it – she blitzed me. Still nice to compete against another female in my class.



# TIFFS TRAVELS

*by Tiffiney Perry*

If I thought that was hilly the Road Race was just outright scary. We opted to drive the narrow winding course which was going to be around 48km (2 laps of a 24km loop).

It was also scheduled for 2pm the next day (the hottest time of day - 31 degrees – Aussies do it hard I thought).

After inspecting all the very steep hills I thought what the actual F^#\* are these guys on? Or maybe I'm just too old for this .. So I made the decision to fly home.

After all it was my birthday and I don't have to put myself through that on my birthday right?

Tail between my legs I flew home the next day. Bonus points I got an upgrade cause the aisle chair didn't fit down to my seat. More bonus points I got bubbles!! Birthday not turning out so bad so far.

Next trip was not so far as Spain or Brissy but off to Timaru to the Age Group Para Cycling Road Nationals.

I did better here on our rural undulating roads. Great courses but only 2 of us as usual me and a Timaru Local chap. Bring on more handcycles I said. Guess what I got 2 gold medals.



# TIFFS TRAVELS

*by Tiffiney Perry*

Next stop Oostend, Brussels. More travel, more wear and tear on the bod but hallelujah there were heaps of para cyclists in sight. The hotel was like a mini paralympic village with the start of both races right outside. Para athletes everywhere! My first Time Trial there was 18 women in my class which was amazing!!! And it was a flat course I was happy! I pedalled my butt off and managed a 15th. Still happy as only seconds off 14th 13th 12th etc and that's not what it was about for me. I just wanted to feel and see the competition again.

Next event was the Road Race – again 18 female competitors from many countries on another flat street course made for some exciting racing and I got to draft in a mini group with twists and turns and even be at the head of a bunch for a bit. Totally loved it. Another 15th and I was happy with that. Couldn't have done any better. For that you kind of need to live and race all the time like these girls do. What also made me feel good was the Aussie girl at the Oceania's earlier this year won gold so yeah... she was that good!

Adventures over for now, back to local training and racing. Gotta love cycling its got to be one of the easiest and fun sports for fitness and competition. Next stop the ASB Marathon in Auckland and have decided to give New York Marathon one more try this year and see if I can beat my last time in 2017.



# BASKETBALL

by David Klinkhamer

I was quite surprised when the basketball coach emailed and asked if I'd consider helping out the team at the North Island Wheelchair Basketball tournament. I've played wheelchair rugby for a long time so was interested to see how my rugby skills would transfer into the game of basketball.

On turning up I found that the Waikato team had more than enough players so I was asking the coach if I was really needed when the Northland coach overheard and asked if I could hop on their team as due to some illness they had a need for an extra player.

I happily said "Yes" and joined the Northland B team. They were a great bunch of guys and we had lots of fun. I wasn't much good as a shooter but my rugby experience came in useful for screening and getting my high pointer in a good position to take the shot.

A big thanks to Francis from Parafed Waikato for organising everything and to Rapid Relief and all of the other awesome volunteers for the team effort in making this event happen.

Don't forget anyone is more than welcome to come down to our team trainings at The Peak Rototuna, Monday nights 6-8pm.

Photos:

Waikato wheelchair basketball team.

David in rugby wheelchair

Francis and some awesome volunteers.





# FITNESS REVOLUTION

Get Fit



Fitness Revolution is for physically disabled people, including those with visual impairments, to improve their fitness, coordination and overall well-being.

The programme runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30pm until 2:30pm at Snap Fitness Hamilton North, 6/697 Wairere Drive, Hamilton.

For more information on the programme or to register for a session please contact David Klinkhamer, 027 212 5496 or [david@parafedwaikato.co.nz](mailto:david@parafedwaikato.co.nz)

The programme is sponsored by Access Community Health. For more information on Access Community Health and their range of services visit [www.access.org.nz](http://www.access.org.nz)

## MEMBERSHIP

If you are not already a member or to renew your membership please go to our website [www.parafedwaikato.co.nz](http://www.parafedwaikato.co.nz)

Full Membership \$35

Junior Membership \$20

Social Membership \$20

Become a member!





# PARAFED RADIO

*On the Air*

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Tune in to Graeme "Minty" Meads radio show on Saturday mornings. The Waikato All Sports Breakfast show 7-9am Saturdays on 97.0FM.

# SPORTS CHAPLAIN

*Need some Support?*

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Remember we have a Sports Chaplain, Heather Turner. Her goal is to provide mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing support to our teams and individuals. If you'd like to speak to Heather please contact her on 027 516 6598.

# BEQUEST

*Leave a Legacy*

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Our organisation started operating when one of our member's left a bequest to Parafed Waikato. A bequest is your special gift to help Parafed Waikato to facilitate opportunities to Waikato's physically disabled and visually impaired that are global, national, local, competitive and social. Help to create a lasting legacy for generations of disabled people to improve their life quality through active participation.

Maybe you could consider leaving a gift to Parafed Waikato in your will. We would like to invite you to visit the following link:

<https://parafedwaikato.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Bequest-Intention-Form.pdf>



# PARAFED WAIKATO

*would like to thank our major supporters*



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