



JANUARY - MARCH 2025

# PARAFED WAIKATO NEWSLETTER

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# WELCOME

*from your Parafed Officer*

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Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Parafed Waikato Newsletter for 2025! Already we step into autumn, with its crisp air, vibrant leaves, and cooler temperatures, it's the perfect time to reflect on all the things that happened over summer and set new goals for the season ahead.

In this edition, we're looking at our surf day, water sports day and all of the other fun activities that have been going on lately. With our training sessions ramping up and competitions just around the corner, I'm looking forward to seeing what our teams and athletes can achieve in 2025.

Grab a cup of coffee and dive into the newsletter - I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed putting it together for you.

Don't forget 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](http://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](http://www.parafedwaikato.co.nz)

We also now have a YouTube channel so don't forget to subscribe!



# MESSAGE

*from your Sport Development Officer*



Kia ora Parafed Waikato whānau!

Wow—2025 is off to a flying start, and we've already packed in a ton of action!

Our sports teams are back in training, working hard towards upcoming tournaments, and our youth club has nearly completed a full term of swimming and athletics. Excitement is building for the Halberg Games, happening April 24-26 during the school holidays! With 30 incredible athletes representing Waikato, we'd love to see you up at King's College to cheer them on.

A massive thank you to CCS Disability Action for their generous support, helping fund our Waikato youth to attend the Halberg Games and keeping our equipment in top shape. We couldn't do it without you!  
Action-Packed Start to the Year!

🏀 Wheelchair Basketball Success! – Our wheelchair basketball team has already smashed out a six-week social league, raising substantial funds to support the team and the exciting year ahead. Ka pai, team!

🏄 Adaptive Surfing Day (Jan 18 @ Waihi Beach) – What a day! Sunshine, waves, and an amazing crew of volunteers from Live Well Waihi Beach and Waihi Beach Surf School made for an unforgettable experience. Don't miss Gemma's write-up on this awesome event!

🌊 Water Sports Day (Mar 1 @ Epworth Park) – We made a splash with 150 members and their families getting involved! Check out our members' feedback—this day was a huge hit and just keeps getting bigger and better every year.

Waikato Players Shine on the International Stage! – Huge shoutout to Emmet and Sam, who have just returned from playing at the 2025 Australian Club Championships! They had an epic time and are bringing home some awesome new skills to share with the team.

Coming Up Next...

🎾 Adaptive Tennis & Squash Day @ Cambridge Racquets Club – Don't miss out! Time 2-4pm. Open to Parafed members and their families. Register with Cathy now and get ready to hit the court.

🥊 Adaptive Boxing Have-a-Go Session – Keen to try adaptive boxing? Get in touch! Email Cathy@parafedwaikato.co.nz for more details. Date TBC.

Let's keep this energy going—see you out there!

Cathy Wooller -Parafed Waikato Sport Development Officer

# SURFING

by Gemma Semmens

Gemma Jade Semmens

Age: 11

Today I am going to talk about a Parafed day I participated in.

At first, I was a little nervous, but I faced my fear and tried anyway!

I am glad I did because it was such a good experience.

It was a surfing day!!

I felt like the waves were lifting me to the clouds. I could hear the waves crashing and the laughs and screams filled the air.

I remember the waves coming towards me and me getting ready to ride the waves.

I was so happy, thanks to the Parafed team for letting me have the experience.

I had an awesome time.





# WATER SPORTS DAY

*some snippets of feedback*

Samuel (Mr 7) had never been kayaking before, but within 30 mins of arriving, was out on a tandem kayak with a new friend, and a smile from ear to ear. He wasn't at all self conscious as he usually is and thoroughly enjoyed the whole day! He is usually glued to me and shy about trying new things, so I was completely blown away. Robyn

So many highlights seeing so many smiling faces but a stand out was an adult member who had bought his whanau along. He was the first to have a go on our giant paddle board and when he came off, he said it was just magical, he felt like a king out there. Clare

After attending the water sports day and meeting so many new people. Harper came away from that experience talking non stop about his experiences with all the amazing activities. The people he met with disabilities that were doing everything, and how amazed he was when he would see people with similar challenges as him do things he thought he wouldn't be able to do. He's come alive again and we absolutely love it!!! He is always asking about what's coming up and when he's going to "Hang Out" and "Meet more of his people". So thank you for bringing this community together, and helping these kids build confidence and courage. Also allowing my fully able bodied children to engage in such a wonderful community too. They were also blown away with what so many people could do with their challenges. Jamie

It was so wonderful to witness the non stop smiles, laughter and squeals of delight from the kids...and adults alike. To see everyone challenging themselves with the activities and witnessing their sense of achievement was so heartwarming. The entire day was EPIC! We cannot wait until next year. 😊 Paula



# WATER SPORTS DAY

*some snippets of feedback*

That was soooo cool Nana and Granddad." Our 7 year old has a love of water and going fast, she got both. Her disability of being in a wheelchair often stops her from participating in some school sports but not this day. Nothing was too hard. Someone was always there to help. Later in the day she was given a challenge from a special person to do three off water activities. This special person pushed her in her wheelchair to Archery. Pushing her up the hill to these activities is not something I could do so we would have missed out. Thank you special person. As Suzie would say " that is because you are old Nana".On the way to archery she is saying " I cant do it I tried on my brothers bow and arrow and I couldn't do it." Brother is aged 3 and it was his toy. She was told she can do it. She did it. The next was the water slide but due to an accident on one a few years ago slides are not her favourite. The next came the zip line. "I cant do it." Yes you can. She did it. Achieving new challenges gives our children the ability to have an I can do if I try. I can do it. I did it attitude. Many thanks for such a great day. Jill

Many thanks to Waikato Parafed, Cathy and team for organising this excellent event. I moved to Cambridge in December last year (from Wellington) and joined Waikato Parafed at the start of this year. I'm a wheelchair user (spinal cord injury, quadriplegia), five years post injury. I've been wanting to try kayaking since my injury but haven't had the opportunity until last weekend. The Waikato Parafed water sports day gave me the opportunity to experience a lot of 'firsts'- my first kayaking, archery and ziplining experience since my broken neck. For me, navigating disability is hard, frustrating, limiting and sometimes very boring - opportunities like this are golden and precious and I sincerely hope funding continues to support events like this for people like me. Jane





# WATER SPORTS DAY

*photo collage*



# BLACK MAMBO

by Chris Harvey

After nearly 40 years of dismantling my chair to get it in my car and the last 24 years with Tiff's chair into the boot, or the trailer or the boat we finally have a very easy solution to our adventures.

Our new modified van thanks to ACC has been life changing for us. It saves us a lot of time and energy with a quick shuffle into the drivers seat I can leave my chair whole.

Tiff can also shuffle into her seat and leave her chair whole. We can do Roadies in the seats or one of us can stay in their chair and just hold on tight!

Going out for dinner, to the mall, the supermarket and the movies just became a whole lot easier.

As the kids are now departing or departed from the nest it is perfect timing for us to explore many more adventures together.





## TEAMWORK & BRAGGING RIGHTS

by Access Community Health



“Wheelchair basketball is an experience and it’s an honour to play alongside such amazing people.”

These are heartfelt words from Tiffany Scoble, Senior Care Coordinator at Access Community Health who, with a group of her colleagues, entered two teams into a social league playing wheelchair basketball. The teams are The Mighty Midlands and The Blue Sharks, captained by Access Regional Manager, Jo Southwick.

“Cathy Wooller from Parafed has given us the opportunity to not only play against some pretty amazing players but to welcome those players, people who we work with, into our teams”, says Tiffany.

It’s not just basketball that Tiffany has got involved in through Parafed. She also volunteered to help with the Goalball Tournament at St Johns College in Hamilton last November.

“The strength that the players had was incredible,” says Tiffany.

“The tournament sparked my interest in the game, enough that every fortnight, my colleague Esther and I head to Berkley Intermediate and train to play. So far, it’s just been practise, but the Goalball Nationals are during the Matariki weekend in Auckland, so I’m excited to see what is in store”.

As a Parafed volunteer, Tiffany has also gone to other events like Surf to adapt and Redwoods Trail.

And is Tiffany competitive about her sports?

“It’s mainly just fun. But in our office it’s also about the bragging rights and having a great team building experience”.

Access Community Health | Uru Ātea provides community health care services including home care services, disability support, nursing services, injury support and rehabilitation and is a proud supporter of Parafed Waikato.



# SWIMMING

by Rylee Sayer

It has been a busy year for me since I competed at my first ever Halberg Games last April.

As my health has improved and I have adapted to my new disability swimming has become a big part of my life. While I love to swim and compete, swimming is also incredibly important to my rehab and continued development after my right forequarter amputation.

In October I was very lucky to be added to the New Zealand Swimming Tri Series Swimming Team as a Para. This was really fun as I met my para friends from New Zealand but also new para swimmers from Victoria and Perth. It was very humbling to win the Top Para Swimmer from this meet.

Next up for me was the Queensland State Swimming Championships. Cameron Leslie led a team of 6 development Para swimmers to Brisbane for 8 days of racing. It was a fantastic meet. I swum two qualification times for the World Para Swimming Championships in Singapore 2025 and also won some age group medals and a Bronze in the 100 Breaststroke Open class.

I also connected with more Para swimmers from Australia and really love being part of this community.



# SWIMMING

by Rylee Sayer

From here I was asked to join the High Performance Para Swimming team as a developing athlete. This was super exciting and also a bit scary as I know it is a huge challenge. In February I attended my first High Performance Camp in CHristchurch before we all flew out to the Melbourne World Para Series. The camp was tough and I have lots to learn but I know that with my usual hard work and resilience I will get used to it.

The World Para Series was also where I gained my International classification for Swimming. It was a crazy process and is probably one of the most stressful things I have ever done. I am and S7/SB7/SM7 but have to do it all again in a year. The swimming here went better than I could have imagined. The highlights were making the finals in the 50m free and 50 m Fly and then winning the Youth Gold medal and the Open Silver medal for these events. Swimming heats then having to swim finals and go faster again was great practice and I can not wait to take what I have learnt to New Zealand Age Groups in a few weeks time.



# FOR SALE

by *Tiffiney Perry*

For Sale: 2017 Mercedes Benz C-Class C 200 Station Wagon

Asking Price: \$28,000

If you're looking for a nifty, versatile car that blends the practicality of a station wagon with the luxury of a Mercedes, this blue 2017 C-Class is perfect. It's an ideal mix of space, style, and function.

- Mileage: 81,846 km
- Color: Blue
- Hand Controls: Fitted with Fadiel hand controls, featuring a cool trigger system for easy accessibility
- Additional Features: Tow bar, making it perfect for hauling
- Condition: Very good interior, with just a few wheelchair scratches on the exterior (hardly noticeable)

This Mercedes has been well-maintained and offers a smooth ride with plenty of space for both passengers and cargo.

For more details or to arrange a viewing, please contact Tiffiney at 021 522 735.



# GIRLS IN WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

by David Klinkhamer



Wheelchair rugby is often thought of as a male-dominated sport, but women have been making their mark on the game and challenging stereotypes. As the sport evolves, more female athletes are rolling onto the court, showcasing their talent, determination, and resilience.

As of January 1, 2025, World Wheelchair Rugby (WWR) implemented several rule changes aimed at enhancing the game's fairness and inclusivity:

Previously, each female athlete on the court added 0.5 points to the team's classification total. The new rules increase this to 1.0 point for female athletes classified as 2.0 and above, acknowledging the strength disparities between male and female players. This means that with a girl or a couple of girls on your side your team can be very strong.

So now is a fantastic time for girls to get involved in wheelchair rugby. Come and play—you'll be joining an inclusive, dynamic community, where everyone's strength, passion, and energy matter. Let's show the world how powerful female athletes in wheelchair rugby can be.

# FLYING FPV

by David Klinkhamer

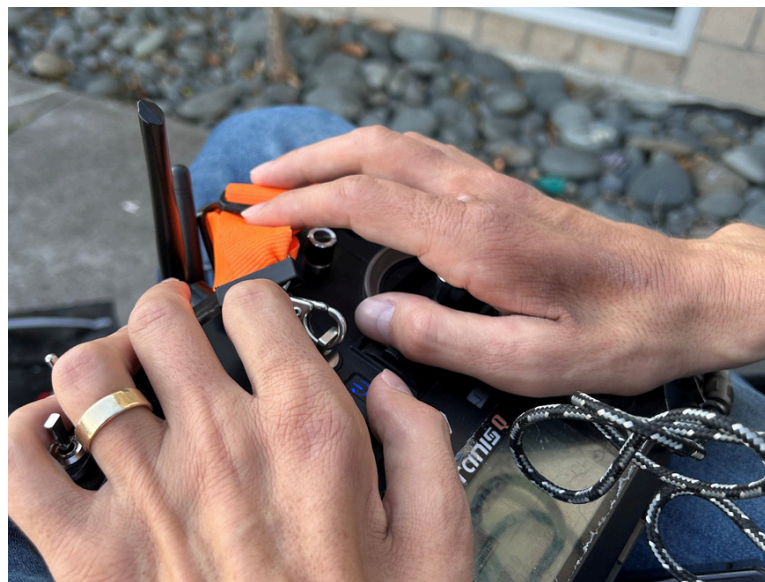
If you've ever seen a drone buzzing around at our Parafed events, that's probably me behind the controls, trying to capture the essence of the day and turn it into a video that tells a story.

You can check out the videos I've created on the Parafed Waikato YouTube channel. While you're there, don't forget to hit that subscribe button! Flying drones, editing the footage, and sharing the final product has become such a nice hobby for me.

My journey with drones actually started after my dad bought me one from K-Mart for my birthday. At the time, I had never even considered flying drones, but I'm so glad he did because it's turned into something I absolutely love.

I mostly fly freestyle, pulling off flips, rolls, and power loops, which is fun but learning it hasn't been easy—especially as a quadriplegic with no finger movement. Instead of using my fingers, I rely on my palms to control the sticks. It took a lot of practice to get to where I am now, but it's been incredibly fun and rewarding.

Drones are versatile, offering endless possibilities. There's cinematic flying, where you can create breathtaking videos and capture footage from angles you wouldn't normally be able to access. Freestyle flying is about pushing your limits and learning new tricks that keep you on your toes. Drone racing is not just a hobby—it's a legitimate sport and it adds another level of excitement, where you can challenge your friends, improve your speed, and sharpen your reflexes. And then there's drone building—something that's almost as fun as flying itself.



# FLYING FPV

by David Klinkhamer

The kind of flying I do is FPV (First-Person View), which means I wear goggles that show me exactly what the drone sees. It's an incredible experience, one that's hard to describe unless you've tried it yourself. It's like becoming the drone—flying through the air, weaving through obstacles, and feeling completely immersed in the moment. The best part? It lets me experience places and events I wouldn't normally be able to reach. For instance, while my family is out kayaking on the lake, I'm sitting on the shore, but through my drone, it feels like I'm right there with them, soaring above the water, sharing the view from their perspective.

I highly recommend drone flying as a sport or hobby for anyone, especially those with a disability. It gives you a sense of freedom and control that you don't always get elsewhere. It's fun, it's challenging, and it's a fantastic way to stay engaged and keep learning. What I love the most is flying with others, sharing tips, and learning about the gear they use. There's always something new to discover, whether it's a trick, a better way to fly, or a piece of equipment that takes your setup to the next level.

I've gotten pretty serious about the hobby—I now own eight drones. It's a bit of an addiction, but it's one I love. Every new drone offers new opportunities to explore and new challenges to conquer. Whether I'm tweaking the settings on my latest drone or trying out a new freestyle trick, I always feel like there's something new to learn, and that keeps me coming back for more.





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

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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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