



**SPORTING  
WHEELIES**  
& DISABLED ASSOCIATION

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019



RESILIENCE | REACH | RESULTS

## CONTENTS



2

Sporting Wheelies have been delivering magic moments for more than 40 years.



4

Our Annual Award Winners for 2019 were recognised.



15

20 promising athletes travelled from all over the state to the Junior Development Program (JDP) held on the Gold Coast.

2 Who We Are –  
Purpose, Vision  
+ Mission

3 Overview –  
Sport Locations

4 Our Annual Award  
Winners 2019

6 Feature –  
Tom O'Neill Thorne

8 Feature –  
Alison Jones,  
Sporting Wheelie  
of the Year 2019

9 Welcome –  
From Chair + CEO

10 Our Year in Review  
– Health + Fitness  
– Sport  
– Junior Development  
– High Performance  
– Recreation

18 Feature Story –  
Wheelchair Dancing

19 Feature –  
Cameron Whittaker,  
Fitness Award  
Winner 2019

20 Feature –  
Samuel Thorne,  
Junior Male Athlete  
of the Year 2019

21 Community –  
Engagement + Education

22 Thank You –  
Supporters + Sponsors

23 Our People –  
Staff + Volunteers

24 Our People –  
Meet Our Board





# WHO WE ARE

---

Sporting Wheelies have been delivering magic moments for more than 40 years – those moments when people of all abilities enjoy recreation activities and play sport with their mates or stand on the dais at the Paralympics.

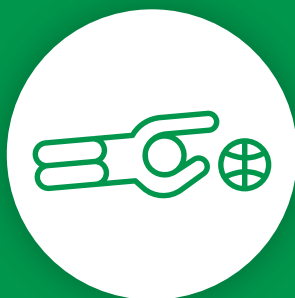
But in the background, we have also been quietly making miracles happen, assisting people to walk for the first time or relearn to walk after injury. We believe that all ambitions are equal and valid.

We support the full variety of active goals people have, from increasing their mobility and independence, improving their health, socialising, participating recreationally, through to representing their state or country. And, of course, we love it when our members score actual goals in their sports.



## PURPOSE

Our purpose is making active goals accessible.



## VISION

Our vision is that every Queenslander with a disability will have opportunities to live a more active and healthy life.



## MISSION

Our mission is to enhance the lives of people with a disability through health and fitness, sport, active recreation and building inclusive communities.



## OVERVIEW SPORT LOCATIONS



**1,494**  
MEMBERS



Fraser Coast

Hervey Bay

Sunshine Coast

Moreton Bay

Toowoomba

Brisbane

Redlands

Ipswich

Gold Coast

- Wheelchair Basketball
- Boccia
- Goalball
- Wheelchair Rugby
- Para Powerlifting

### TYPE OF DISABILITY (OLD)

Acquired Brain Injury	42
Amputee	49
Blind/Vision Impaired	43
Cerebral Palsy	116
Intellectual Disability	39
Les Autres	44
Other (Non-Functional)	41
Spinal Injury/Condition	204
Members With Disability	578
Able Bodied Members	914

### MEMBER LOCATION

Brisbane	852
Gold Coast	70
Darling Downs	47
Wide Bay (Bundaberg)	51
Sunshine Coast	50
Capricorn (Rockhampton)	60
Mackay	152
Townsville	125
Cairns	73
NSW	9
All Other Regions	5



## OUR ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2019

### 2019 SPORTING WHEELIE OF THE YEAR

Alison Jones

### OPEN MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Curtis McGrath

### OPEN FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Lakiesha Patterson

### JUNIOR MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Samuel Thorne

### JUNIOR FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Sarah Wallace

### MOST IMPROVED ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Katja Dedekind

### TEAM OF THE YEAR

Qld Goalball Teams

### OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

Christine Reimann

### COACH OF THE YEAR

Robyn Stephensen

### FITNESS AWARD

Cameron Whittaker

### COL AND PETER MARSH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Tom Kyle

### INCLUSIVE SERVICES AWARD

Heavy Metal Strength & Powerlifting Club

### PAUL BODINGTON MEDIA AWARD

Brendan Bowers – Fraser Coast Chronicle

### LIFE MEMBER

Alan 'Hammer' Bloore





ALISON JONES – 2019 SPORTING  
WHEELIE OF THE YEAR



SARAH WALLACE – JUNIOR FEMALE  
ATHLETE OF THE YEAR 2019



ROBYN STEPHENSEN –  
COACH OF THE YEAR 2019



2019 ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS







A photograph of Tom O'Neill Thorne, a wheelchair basketball player, in action. He is wearing a blue and yellow jersey with the number 23 and is in a wheelchair, reaching up to shoot a basketball. The background shows a gymnasium with other players and spectators. A large green circular graphic is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text about Tom's career.

## TOM O'NEILL THORNE

Sporting Wheelie, Tom O'Neill Thorne is on track to represent Australia in the Tokyo Paralympics. Tom has been selected in the Australian squad and is training hard to achieve his goal. This will be Tom's second Paralympics, having played for Australia in the 2016 Rio Paralympics.

Widely considered the future of wheelchair basketball in Australia, Tom was the youngest to ever represent Australia in a World Championship.





WINNER

## ALISON JONES

### SPORTING WHEELIE OF THE YEAR 2019

---

Despite only playing Goalball for 4 years, Alison has worked tirelessly to make both the Queensland and Australian teams. Alison is determined to be selected to compete at the Tokyo 2021 Paralympics. Alison also dedicates time to mentor and assist our players to develop their skills.



# WELCOME FROM CHAIR + CEO

RESILIENCE | REACH | RESULTS

2019 was a year full of change and progress as we continued to provide new opportunities and experiences while holding true to our traditional values of providing active opportunities for our members.



ANNA LITTLEBOY  
PRESIDENT + CHAIR



AMANDA MATHER CEO

Amanda Boland, long standing President and Chair of the Board stood down after ten years of service to the Association. Amanda's commitment, integrity and compassion has seen the Association through many difficult periods. In addition, Tony Stapleton and Charles Gregory stood down as Directors during the year and we thank them for their leadership, service and outstanding contributions to the Association.

These changes set the scene for some significant renewal on the Board. In July, Anna Littleboy was elected President and Chair, Gary Linton was elected as Deputy Chair, Sandie Angus was elected Secretary and a new Board Director, Treasurer, Andrew Weeden was appointed.

2019 was a year of challenges and successes. A disappointing financial loss for the reporting year underscored the need to transition to a more financially sustainable operating model for the Association. We have identified and begun implementing a number of strategies to begin this transition. A detailed review of the operating model for the gym enabled new goals and targets to be set to improve its financial sustainability going forwards. Sporting Wheelies supported many members to achieve personal victories in their chosen sport and in their life goals.

Significant operational changes were made during the year including the outsourcing of financial services and the introduction of new IT systems. To support this, we transitioned to new finance and practice management systems and commenced moving the organisation to cloud-based technology. Following the sale of the building on Edmondstone Street, the Association

leased back the building while conducting a search for premises that were more suitable and fit for purpose for the Association's activities. Following the conclusion of the reporting year, we are delighted to advise that we have leased and moved into new premises that are much better suited to our future.

With the retirement of John Swete Kelly at the end of the 2019 calendar year, the Board conducted an executive search for a new CEO and appointed Amanda Mather to that role in November. As we farewell John, we thank him for his guidance and leadership during his time with Sporting Wheelies and wish him all the best in future endeavours.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank our many volunteers, your contribution is greatly valued and does not go unnoticed. Without your assistance we would not have been able to provide access to health and fitness and sport and recreational activities for so many. And finally, our thanks and sincere appreciation to our dedicated team at Sporting Wheelies who passionately believe in the importance of what we do. We ask a lot of our staff and it is through their **resilience** that we will **reach** our goals and achieve remarkable **results**.

As we look ahead, we are confident in our position, strategy and growth prospects to build on our achievements to grow our income and fundraising and increase our reach to more athletes and clients in the years ahead. We hope that you, our members, volunteers and supporters, will continue to work with us as we strive to continually better our services.

Anna Littleboy – President + Chair  
Amanda Mather – CEO

## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

# HEALTH + FITNESS

The commitment and tenacity of our members in their engagement with our Health and Fitness Centre services has inspired in us a great sense of admiration and community. Goal-building and continual achievement of increased personal fitness, improved strength and enhanced functional capability were not only reached, but redefined.

---

Accessibility improvements in a client's everyday life were accomplished, including but not limited to; unassisted wheelchair transfers, standing without mobility walkers, the first assisted steps, stubborn weight-loss or skill acquisition for independence. The most profound goal for most was an improvement in their quality of life, where elevated happiness and health was one of the most basic benefits of routine exercise and movement. Our dedicated team met the needs of clients through one-on-one and group exercise physiology, personal training and supported general gym sessions.

With the increasing demand for our services growing each week, the news that exercise physiology would be recognised by the NDIS under multiple support categories mid-way through the year, was a welcome progression. We now have the opportunity to deliver services to more participants, while also further expanding the business. The cohesion of the team, alongside the determination of our members, have become attributable to our growth mindset and our ability to transform complex problems into an opportunity for progress.

During the year we continued to collaborate with Spinal Cord Injury Australia to deliver the Neuromoves program in Queensland and worked closely with other key organisations including Spinal Life and Princess Alexandra Hospital to support our members' journeys.







JOHN CATANIA  
GAINING STRENGTH IN THE GYM

## HEALTH + FITNESS



26

STUDENTS

6

UNIVERSITIES

5,339

HOURS

3,716

TOTAL THERAPY HOURS

3,608

TOTAL GYM VISITS

173

TOTAL MEMBERS  
ACCESSING SERVICES

54+

DISABILITY TYPES  
USING THE GYM





WHEELCHAIR RUGBY OLD TEAM



# OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

## SPORT

Sporting Wheelies coordinates opportunities for athlete development through local programs, competitions and representative teams. Members to progress through to a national representative level, with the athletes having access to specialised equipment. With help from relevant sporting associations, we were able to host state and national competitions around Queensland in 2019. Our aspiring athletes receive additional support through funding and development programs with specialised coaching.

### BOCCIA



77  
PLAYERS

6 COACHES  
4 OFFICIALS

### WHEELCHAIR RUGBY



35  
PLAYERS

6 COACHES  
4 OFFICIALS

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Hervey Bay and Ipswich established
- National Titles hosted by Association in partnership with Boccia Australia in November (first time out of Sydney in over a decade)
- The Tri Series Boccia regional tournament

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Gold Coast established
- The Wheelchair Rugby State Championships were held in June at Boondall

# OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

## SPORT

(CONTINUED)

### WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL



140  
PLAYERS

12 COACHES  
9 OFFICIALS

### GOALBALL



43  
PLAYERS

5 COACHES  
6 OFFICIALS

### PARA POWERLIFTING



5  
PARTICIPANTS

7 COACHES  
7 OFFICIALS

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Fraser Coast established
- For the first time ever, in partnership with Basketball Australia, we hosted a joint NWBL/WNWBL Finals series in August at Carina
- 3 Queensland teams sent to Kevin Coombs Cup (National junior championships in April)
- Help the annual Southern and Northern Challenges

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Townsville established
- Queensland State Championships, Hells Bells, held in Cairns in April

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Opened hubs in Rockhampton, Mackay and Hervey Bay





“

The camp provided a valuable opportunity for athletes to get to know other young people with disabilities and fast-track their development.

Nick Such

SPORT DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

”

## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

In July 2019, 20 promising athletes travelled from all over the state to the Junior Development Program (JDP) held at the Tallebudgera Leisure Centre on the Gold Coast. With support from the JDP Coordinator Nick Such and six coaches, the athletes were able to enjoy their various training sessions. In between training sessions, the athletes were fortunate enough to attend presentations on Strength and Conditioning, Anti-Doping information updates and a special presentation on building how to engage and work with media as an athlete. A special thank you to Sporting Wheelies Stakeholder Engagement Officer Martin Grose for leading this session.



QUEENSLAND COMETS

WOMEN'S NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL LEAGUE



## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The High Performance Program (HPP) supports athletes training and preparing for National Competitions and leagues throughout the year. Out of the 56 athletes training for National's, 27 were successful and invited to National team training camps, 14 of which represented Australia in their selected sports.

---





Not only does the HPP support these athletes, coaches and team managers are an integral part of the program. This year, 7 of our coaches were involved with National teams. We are proud of the dedication, effort and success of our athletes and supporting staff, all of which would not be possible without the funding and support from our partnership with the Queensland Academy of Sport.

### PREPARATION FOR TOKYO PARALYMPICS

We had 12HPP athletes highly likely to represent Australia at the Tokyo 2020 Games. All of these athletes were devastated by the postponement of the games, but in the true spirit of resilience, commitment and dedication to their sport, each athlete has pivoted critically in their thinking and actions. They are all now working hard and will strive to be even better prepared for Tokyo 2021.



# OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

## RECREATION

Our recreational activities continue to be popular with members providing many experience opportunities for members.

- 
- Wheelchair Dancing
  - Blokarting
  - Sailing
  - 4WDDriving
  - Fishing
  - Shooting
  - Tennis
  - Water Skiing



WHEELCHAIR DANCING

## FEATURE STORY – WHEELCHAIR DANCING

The Sporting Wheelies dance team delighted retirement village residents in Mackay with their routines. The team looks forward to these occasions as much as the residents do.

Determined to wow the audience at the Mackay Eisteddfod as competitors, the team focussed their training on this goal. Instructor, Pauline McMurtrie ensured all the hard work paid off and *Strictly Wheelchair* once again received standing ovations from the packed house of 1,000 at the Eisteddfod, as well as second place in the Mature and Motivated section.

There was more to come. On the back of the Eisteddfod performance, the team was asked to perform at *Crossroads Arts' Loose Ends* concert. Crossroads Arts provides inclusive arts experiences through performances, workshops and events. *Strictly Wheelchair*, with a larger performance group than at the Eisteddfod, shone again on this very entertaining evening.





WINNER

## CAMERON WHITTAKER

FITNESS AWARD WINNER 2019

Cameron has worked hard in the gym to achieve success. He can now deadlift 175kg and has lost over 50kg in the last 4 years. Not only is Cameron a champion in the gym, he is also a member of the Queensland Cyclones Wheelchair Rugby team.





WINNER

## SAMUEL THORNE

JUNIOR MALE ATHLETE  
OF THE YEAR 2019

Samuel is a Queensland Champion in Boccia. He went on to win a Bronze medal in the Nationals. Samuel hopes to represent Australia at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + EDUCATION

It is imperative for us as an organisation to remain strongly connected and intertwined with the community around us. We love to watch as people of all abilities evolve, develop and grow through our sport and recreation programs.

We value each and everyone's contribution to the community we created here at Sporting Wheelies, as well as the communities spread throughout Australia that we can nurture and grow.



## HOSPITAL ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the last financial year, 312 patients at the Princess Alexandra (PA) Hospital Spinal Injury Unit and the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit, experienced a variety of sport and recreation opportunities. We also commenced engagement with the Townsville Rehabilitation Unit, with 30 patients supported.



## CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

Thank you to Alliance Community, APM Employment Services, Rotary Club North Mackay and River2Reef for your engagement, contributing almost \$37,000 to our organisation.



## SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

We love visiting schools to embrace the sporting culture we display here at Sporting Wheelies. During the Disability Action week we visited various schools, growing support for our junior basketball athletes.

# THANK YOU SUPPORTERS + SPONSORS


To our donors, partners, friends, families and the community, we are grateful for your continued support to help us make active goals accessible for people with disabilities.

---

- Dalwood-Wylie Foundation
- RDT Angels Fraser Coast
- Cerebral Palsy Australian Sport & Rec Federation
- Dazcorp Investments Pty Ltd
- Epic Assist
- Grill'd Pty Ltd
- Jones Lang LaSalle Advisory Services
- MAX Employment
- Minecraft Consulting Pty Ltd
- PPM Tax and Legal Pty Ltd
- St Josephs College Gregory Terrace
- Brisbane Broncos 50/50 Fundraising Initiative
- Alliance Community
- Disabilities Sports Australia
- Motorama City Holden
- APM Employment Services
- Acquire Insurance Group
- Reben Mobility
- Gordonvale Physiotherapy
- Remedial Plus
- Joblife Employment
- Magenta Community Services

## QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

- Department of Housing and Public Works, Sport and Recreation, Active Industry Fund
- Department of Housing and Public Works, Sport and Recreation, Queensland Academy of Sport
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Community benefit funding programs



Through our **GOLD CHOICE** lottery we were able to raise funds to continue our work across Queensland. From donations to corporate partnerships, workplace giving and bequests, Sporting Wheelies is proud to share the sporting journeys of our members with our supporters and the community. All contributions, large or small, make a significant impact on Sporting Wheelies and our members' futures.

---



## OUR PEOPLE STAFF + VOLUNTEERS

The dedication, passion and enthusiasm our people show is the very essence of our organisation.

Our staff show immense courage and support to the Sporting Wheelies members and the organisation. Without the help from our volunteers we would not be able to function at the level we do. Thank you to each and every one of the people who put countless hours of their time into our organisation to help us reach our goals and change the lives of our members. Without you, Sporting Wheelies would not be possible.



64  
STAFF



704  
VOLUNTEERS



23,537  
VOLUNTEER HOURS



OUR VOLUNTEERS CHANGE LIVES  
AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

## OUR PEOPLE MEET OUR BOARD



### ANNA LITTLEBOY (CHAIR)

As the new Chair of our organisation, Anna brings with her extensive experience, having contributed to numerous boards, advisory committees, working parties and expert panels. As CSIRO's Research Director, Anna is an experience leader, specialising in strategy, foresight and risk for the resource sector. Having lived experience of disability within the workplace, Anna understands the duty of care within organisations.



### SANDIE ANGUS

Sitting on numerous Boards in the disability and sporting sectors, Sandie provides extensive experience to the Board. Sandie displays strong leadership qualities, being part of multiple mentoring programs. Having experience with legal, governance and risk management, Sandie is a valuable member to the Board.



### GARY LINTON

As a professional CEO/ Managing Director with over 30 years' experience successfully managing and growing a diverse range of companies in Professional Services and System Integration, Gary provides a wealth of knowledge to the Board. Gary is a founder and Managing Director of Linton Howard, Non-Executive Director/ Chairman of companies in the education, IT, financial services and construction sectors, providing invaluable experience to the Board.



### ANDREW WEEDEN

Focusing on financial oversight, risk, compliance and strategic issues and initiatives, Andrew has a vast array of experience working on Boards. Andrew has national and international experience in the IT, technology, professional services, financial services and resource sectors. With over 25 years' experience at PwC, Andrew provides broad knowledge of potential issues in commercial and finance areas.

## FORMER DIRECTORS

Sporting Wheelies wish to thank the former directors of the Board for their commitment and service to the organisation. All three directors have made a huge contribution and it will not be forgotten. All the best for the future.

- **AMANDA BOLAND: 2009-2019** – Completing her 10-year tenure on the Board of Sporting Wheelies, Amanda resigned effective at the end of 2019. Serving as the President, Vice President, Member of the Audit and Compliance Committee and a Member of the Board, Amanda has truly made an outstanding contribution and influence on the organisation. We would like to sincerely thank Amanda for her service and wish her all the best in the future.
- **TONY STAPLETON** – Treasurer 2013-2019
- **CHARLES GREGORY** – Member 2018-2019





## MICHAEL JOHNSON

With experience in the international Asian markets, Michael provides experience sitting on multiple national and international Boards. Michael has interest in trade, tourism and financial services, however, is particularly passionate across the sporting, cultural and entertainment sectors.



RYAN AT THE 2019 BOCCIA BATTLE

## DATES OF DIRECTOR RESIGNATIONS + APPOINTMENTS

- TONY STAPLETON – resigned effective 17 July 2019
- AMANDA BOLAND – resigned effective 17 July 2019
- ANDREW WEEDEN – appointed effective 17 July 2019
- ANNA LITTLEBOY – elected Chair effective 17 July 2019
- CHARLES GREGORY – resigned effective 22 August 2019



**Sporting Wheelies & Disabled Association**

31 Dover Street, Albion Qld 4010  
Phone: (07) 3253 3333 Fax: (07) 3253 3322  
Email: [mailbox@sportingwheelies.org.au](mailto:mailbox@sportingwheelies.org.au)

[sportingwheelies.org.au](http://sportingwheelies.org.au)

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT FOR IMAGES USED  
THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT –  
JOEP BUIJS PHOTOGRAPHY