



**WHEELCHAIR
SPORTS**
NSW/ACT

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Contents

1. Our Vision, Mission and Values
2. From our Chair
3. Thank You and Congratulations
4. Our Sports
 - a. Wheelchair AFL
 - b. Wheelchair Basketball
 - c. Wheelchair Rugby
 - d. Wheelchair Tennis
 - e. Wheelchair Track and Road
 - f. Disability Lawn Bowls
 - g. Para-Powerlifting
5. Our Programs
 - a. HER SPORTS Festivals
 - b. Junior Wheelies Camps
6. Our Partners
7. Our Roadshows



About Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT

Our Vision

Everyone gets picked to play

Our Mission

To change the lives of people with a disability through participation in sport

Our Values

Dignity: We believe everyone has great value

Tenacity: We fight fiercely for inclusion

Resilience: We get up and go every day

Camaraderie: We are in it together



From our Chair

Welcome to our 2020/2021 Annual Report.

We have all lived through an extraordinary 12 months, with the COVID 19 pandemic changing the way we live. Our work at Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT has similarly had to adapt since the world changed in early 2020, however I'm pleased to say the organisation is navigating these unique times with the strength and resilience we have been known for since 1961.



Regardless of what is happening around us, we are always led by our Mission::

'To change the lives of people with a disability through participation in sport'.

I'm pleased to share that we passed 1,000 Members this year for the first time in our history. This means that we are changing more lives than ever before, and we will continue to reach more people in the coming years to invite them into our community.

Importantly, this year's Financial Result was a surplus after Depreciation. We have strengthened our Balance Sheet, providing confidence to our Members that we can continue to invest in wheelchair sport into the future, despite the economic headwinds COVID 19 has presented.

We would not be able to achieve this level of financial strength without the support of many generous stakeholders. Our loyal Donors stood by us through the year in response to our appeals, and played a significant part in helping us to keep rolling. Likewise, our Major Partner Suncorp and all of our other valued Partners continued to support us, despite facing their own challenges given the tumultuous external circumstances.

Regarding our sports, we had many moments of great camaraderie and competition throughout the year, despite periods where we weren't rolling. You can read more about these achievements in this Annual Report, suffice to say that we continue to admire the skills, tenacity and community spirit amongst all of our Members.

Finally, we thank the NSW Government and Australian Government for their important financial support during the year. Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT has many friends throughout all levels of Government, and we are grateful to have such fierce advocates who believe in the physical health, mental health and social benefits of wheelchair sport.

Sincerely
Nick Taylor
Chair of Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT

Thank you and Congratulations

CHRIS NICHOLLS

After 18 years on the WS NSW/ACT Board, Chris Nicholls has stepped down.

An accomplished Wheelchair Basketballer and much loved community member, Chris has made an enormous contribution to the Board after almost 2 decades of service.

We thank Chris for his contribution, on behalf of the entire wheelchair sports community.



EINO OKKONEN

At the recent NSW Community Sports Awards, our Life Member Eino Okkonen was awarded a Distinguished Long Service Award for services to Wheelchair Basketball in the Illawarra.

Eino is a warrior for inclusion, and is responsible for many of our Members getting involved in Wheelchair Basketball through the years.

We congratulate Eino on his award, and thank him for his enduring contribution to wheelchair sport.



Highlights from 2019/2020



**1,000
members**



**Introduced
Frame
Running
to NSW/ACT**



**\$1.9M
raised**



**Launched
HOW I ROLL
music video**

**Celebrated
our 32nd
GIO Oz Day
10k**



**22,500
students
reached
through our
Roadshows**



OUR SPORTS

Wheelchair AFL

Wheelchair AFL got underway this year with a hub in Sydney and multiple Come n' Try opportunities in Illawarra, Newcastle and Central Coast.

A strategic partnership with AFL NSW/ACT will see the sport continue to grow in the future with new hubs ready to begin in Albury and Canberra, with the ground work being put in to have hubs start up in Tamworth, Coffs Harbour and Central Coast.

Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic the National Championships were cancelled, so we will look to send our inaugural NSW team in 2022.



OUR SPORTS

Wheelchair Basketball

The framework is in place for more Wheelchair Basketball opportunities than ever before in NSW/ACT.

We offered 19 weekly training sessions all around NSW and ACT with more participants than ever attending the weekly opportunities. This year we saw the 2nd iteration of our Wheelchair Basketball Club Challenges, featuring 12 rounds played across the state which was heavily supported by our members.

We had over 80 players registered for the inaugural Wheelchair Basketball Waratah League which was to be co-delivered with Basketball NSW. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, this event had to be cancelled, however with such fantastic momentum in the sport we are excited to see the competition go ahead in 2022.



OUR SPORTS

Wheelchair Rugby

GIO and Cauliflower Club have again been excellent partners for our Wheelchair Rugby program.

This year we uncovered a number of new athletes in the sport who can be the future of the GIO NSW Gladiators.

We brought on a new Head Coach in Glen LeBeau who guided the GIO NSW Gladiators to be the undefeated National Champions. The team features Australian Steelers Ryley Batt, Andrew Edmondson and Richard Voris, as well as debutant Emilie Miller competing for the first time. In addition, developing athletes include Chloe Kennedy, Ash Treseder and Jayden Jackson.



OUR SPORTS

Wheelchair Tennis

Wheelchair Tennis has seen a resurgence in numbers of players over the past 12 months.

Working alongside Tennis Australia, we have some wonderful Weekly Training opportunities around the state with fantastic coaches and we have been loaning equipment out to huge numbers of new participants.

With international travel off the cards, we had to be creative with our tournaments. We combined our 2 tournaments into a fantastic single weekend. It was a huge success with 2 divisions in the mens draw, a strong womens draw, a juniors draw and our first ever red ball tournaments for juniors under 10.



OUR SPORTS

Wheelchair Track and Road

The sports team has been on the hunt for the next group of young athletes to join the sport of Wheelchair Track & Road. After a number of participants from our Junior Wheelies Christmas Camp loved the sessions with Louise, we now have a large group of juniors beginning their journey in Wheelchair Racing.

While the rest of Australia paused on Australia Day, our team worked hard to ensure the GIO Oz Day 10K would still go ahead. Despite international and state borders closing, one of the only events to go ahead on Australia Day was our great race. With athletes from NSW & ACT, it was a fantastic event including 8 live crosses from Sunrise, the number 1 breakfast show in Australia, ensuring our talented Members were seen by a national audience.

A big congratulations to Jake Lappin (Open Mens), Madison de Rozario (Open Womens), Paul Nunnari (Masters), Cormac Ryan (Junior Boys), Sarah Clifton-Bligh (Junior Girls) and Jono Tang (Quad) winning their respective divisions.



OUR SPORTS

Frame Running

In 2020 Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT took responsibility for Frame Running in NSW/ACT.

The sport has taken off instantly, with a great Weekly Training program in Sydney and Wollongong. There are plans for Canberra, Newcastle and Central Coast to get off the ground shortly.

Frame Running was introduced at the GIO Summer Down Under Series with a single day event featuring 100m, 200m and 400m. This was the first event of its kind in Australia, and the inaugural participants will never forget it.



OUR SPORTS

Disability Lawn Bowls

Lawn Bowls was hardest hit by COVID-19 with both events needing to be cancelled.

We are looking forward to our upcoming State Championships, and to selecting the NSW Wizards team to participate at the National Championships.

Despite our Disability Lawn Bowls competitions being cancelled, members were still able to compete at their local clubs and in pennants.



OUR SPORTS

Para-Powerlifting

The interest in Para-Powerlifting continues to grow, with three Come 'n' Try events in Sydney, Newcastle and Canberra in 2020/2021.

The Para-Powerlifting State Championships were held in Bulli and produced some great results for our members.



OUR PROGRAMS

HER SPORT Festivals

We had another fantastic year with our HER SPORT festivals and have seen the percentage of female members grow from 29% to 36%.

We ran the Wheelchair AFL HER SPORT night in November at Sydney Uni and had 60 girls and women come to give the sport a go.

The Wheelchair Basketball HER SPORT Festival coincided with NSW Womens Week and had great participant numbers, despite being limited by international and state border closures.

Sarah Stewart was again the driving force to grow participation for girls and women in wheelchair sport, and we all count ourselves lucky to work alongside such a warrior for inclusion.



OUR PROGRAMS

Junior Wheelies Camps

Following on from the success of our Junior Wheelies camps in Sydney, we introduced regional equivalents in Canberra and Newcastle. Both were a success and have continued each school holidays since their inception.

We grew participation in our Junior Wheelies Camps by 292% over the 12 months, which is a great credit to the Junior Wheelies Committee led by Yvonne Talbott and Judy Simpson.

Thank you to both Yvonne and Judy for your guidance and hard work leading us to deliver a wonderful year for our Juniors. We also thank Macquarie Foundation for supporting our Junior Wheelies Program.



OUR PARTNERS

Our Partners at WS NSW are a wonderful collection of organisations with shared values.

We thank GIO, our Major Partner, for their unwavering support for what we do. The partnership between GIO and WS NSW is one of the most enduring in Australian sport.

In addition to GIO, we work with a collection of like minded organisations who support our sports, programs and fundraising events. From our longest partnerships to our newest relationships, WS NSW appreciates the commitment our Partners have to change lives through sport.



MACQUARIE

Proudly funded by



OUR ROADSHOWS

We had another great year in 2020/2021 with our Roadshow Program. This long term program is funded by Transport for NSW, providing schools with critical road safety seminars to assist the NSW Government in their Toward Zero Strategy.

Thanks to Transport for NSW, WS NSW/ACT an amazing amount of students per year, sharing road safety messages and providing students the chance to jump in a chair for a game of Wheelchair Basketball or Wheelchair AFL.

This wonderful program has many additional benefits, including providing employment opportunities for people living with a disability.

We sincerely thank Transport for NSW for their ongoing support of the WS NSW/ACT Roadshows.







Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT
Hodson Building
241 Morrison Rd, Putney NSW 2112
02 9809 5260
wsnsw.org.au
facebook.com/wsnswact
@wsnswact

In 2021, we decided not to print our Annual Report.

Firstly, we wanted to do our bit to save paper.

But just as importantly, we wanted to save money and make sure we direct funds to what our Mission asks us to do - change lives through sport.