



GREG SMITH – Wheelchair Rugby

STATISTICS



Date of birth	19 August 1967
Sport	Wheelchair Rugby
Classification	2.0
Disability	T2 Quadraplegic
How acquired	Car accident
Residence	Murrumbeena, Victoria
Occupation	Full time Athlete
Sport highlights	3 gold in athletics at Sydney 2000
Paralympic Games experience	Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000
Personal honours/awards received	Order of Australia Medal, Australian Sports Medal
Heroes/role models	People who set goals and achieve them
Favourite quote	Old age and treachery will always out do youth and skill

BIOGRAPHY

At 19, Greg Smith was a qualified Physical Training Instructor in the Australian Army, when a motor vehicle accident left him a quadriplegic in 1987. With a break to his lower neck and paralysis from the chest down he was told by doctors that he would spend the rest of his days in a wheelchair, sitting at home with a blanket on his lap. His life as he knew it was over. However Greg has never been a person who listened to the words 'you can't do it' and after three months on his back in bed in traction, he got on with the job of living again.

Shortly after completing rehab, Greg was introduced to wheelchair racing and with a new set of goals in his life that involved pushing himself to the limit, he was soon representing Australia. By the end of his career, Greg was ranked number one in his class in the world, cementing this ranking with two world records and three Paralympic gold medals in 2000 in the 800m, 1500m and 5000m.

Retiring from athletics in 2002, Greg had a two year break from elite sport until he played some local wheelchair rugby for fun. By the end of his first season in 2004, he had won the NSW state league Most Valuable Player Award and the National League best new talent. At the end of 2005, he was awarded the National League Most Improved Player award, New Zealand National Tournament Rookie and had earned a place on the Australian National Squad. In 2006, Greg competed for Australia for the first time in wheelchair rugby at the Canada Cup International Wheelchair Rugby Tournament. Now, as the oldest member of the squad, many of his team mates will look to Greg for inspiration as they work towards a gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games.