



Dan Michel

- ◆ Tokyo Paralympic Bronze Medallist
- ◆ 2022 RIO World Event, 2x Gold Medallist
- ◆ World #1 Boccia Player
- ◆ Waugh Foundation Recipient



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Dan Michel

Daniel Michel is an Australian Paralympic boccia player and Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist. He was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy, which is a neuromuscular condition that leaves him with little strength and mobility throughout his body. He has used an electric wheelchair since he was 5 years old. Despite his disability, he has always had an extremely keen interest in sport and, as a kid, dreamed of representing his country on the international stage. For most of his childhood, he never thought this dream could become reality. He was never able to play sport alongside his friends and was relegated to the sidelines as a perennial spectator. As a result, he became a lonely and depressed kid with very little hope and ambition for the future. The idea that he would never be able to play and pursue his biggest passion was devastating. Luckily that all changed when he stumbled across the sport of boccia at a come-and-try day when he was 15 years old.

At the age of 18 he made his international debut for Australia; a lifelong dream had been achieved. Over the next 3 years he went on to represent Australia at events all over the world. Ultimately, he accumulated enough ranking points to qualify for the Rio 2016 Paralympics as Australia's first boccia representative in 16 years. The pride he felt representing his country on sport's grandest stage was indescribable.

After progressing from the pool group in Tokyo and winning the quarter-final, he was beaten in the semi-final by the eventual champion and went into the winner-takes-all bronze medal match. He won in convincing fashion and became Australia's first ever individual medallist at a Paralympic Games, a true "pinch yourself" moment.

If he could go back and tell the miserable 15-year-old kid that all this would become his destiny, he would never in a million years have believed it. He went from being an underachieving and unmotivated teenager to a passionate and dedicated adult, and all it took was the ability to pursue his passion. Today he is passionate about conveying this message through his story and inspiring people to be brave and pursue their passions in life.

Location: Sydney, Australia



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