

**THE WORLD
SUMMER
GAMES
START THIS
MONTH!**



We're all go for Stars on Pars!

It's less than a month now before we tee off at our first Stars on Pars event.

Entries are coming in thick and fast for this unique night-golf fundraiser, so if you haven't yet put in an entry, we recommend you do so quickly. Here are the dates:

- Tauranga—Mt Maunganui Golf Club on Wednesday 6 July 2011
- Feilding—Feilding Golf Club on Wednesday 20 July 2011
- Wellington—Boulcott Farm Heritage Golf Club on Wednesday 3 August 2011
- Hawke's Bay—Hawke's Bay Golf Club on Thursday 18 August 2011
- Auckland—Akarana Golf Club on Thursday 25 August 2011

We are excited to have some awesome sponsors on board including Holdsworth Charitable Trust, The Cut, NZ Golf, H2Go, Healtheries, not for me, Bed, Bath & Beyond, and the New Zealand Institute of Golf. The host Golf Clubs have also been very generous in their support.

To put in an entry or to find out more about Stars on Pars, please visit www.specialolympics.org.nz. We're looking forward to seeing you on the course.

From the CEO's desk

If you sense a different focus in our *Fanletter* this month, you are absolutely right! Following your very positive feedback, we have decided to highlight those areas that are most important to our readers.

Our athletes have many inspiring life changing experiences to share and through sport they gain confidence to take on new challenges. Please enjoy their personal stories of achievement and success!

As we develop the future plan for our Healthy Athletes initiative we will be highlighting new developments each month. While traditionally Healthy Athletes has been part of our National Summer Games, we believe that all individuals with an intellectual disability are entitled to positive health intervention, even if the public health system neglects their individual needs. In this respect we aim to work with our dedicated volunteer Clinicians to bring our health programmes into your local communities. Watch this space!

We are looking forward to pioneering some exciting new initiatives over the next few months including our new Stars on Pars Night Golf events and the inaugural Trans-Tasman Tournament in football and basketball.

In closing we wish our Special Olympics New Zealand team all the very best in their sporting endeavours in Athens. We know you will represent our country with immense passion and pride.

Kathy Gibson, Chief Executive Officer

Congratulations Sally!

Special Olympics New Zealand and sponsor Provender are delighted to announce Sally Hope from Oamaru is heading to Athens after winning the Special Olympics New Zealand/Provender World Summer Games promotion.

The promotion, open to all Provender customers around New Zealand, includes return flights to Athens travelling Emirates Airlines for two, accommodation, tickets to the World Summer Games Opening Ceremony, and €1000 spending money. Sally will take off on her Greek adventure on 23 June, returning around 3 July.

Provender operates vending machines, coffee machines and office 'snack boxes' around New Zealand and has been a Special Olympics New Zealand supporter for more than a decade.

Our Global Messengers share the excitement

Special Olympics New Zealand Global Messengers Fiona Strong and Ella Sharples were on hand for this special announcement at the recent Provender conference.

The Auckland-based athletes spoke to more than 150 Provender staff members about Special Olympics New Zealand and life as an athlete with intellectual disabilities.

By all accounts the audience was moved by the speeches and Fiona agrees, "they were really good".

"I really enjoyed it and Ella was great. They really looked after us. [Provender] gave us goody bags with chocolate bars, nuts and raisins, K-Time bars, chips and Mountain Dew and we had lunch with them. It was a wonderful day. I really enjoyed being there," says Fiona.

Fiona, who was part of the inaugural Global Messenger group in 2010, has presented to a range of groups including school groups, companies and Prime Minister John Key.

For Ella, who is part of this year's Global Messenger group, the conference was her first public speaking duty since entering the course.

"It was great to speak to one of our sponsors because without their support where would we be?" she says.

We look forward to hearing more from this duo over the coming years!

See page 3 for more on the Global Messenger programme

Here's to being healthy

In 1996 Special Olympics launched a global programme that has gone on to revolutionise the health and wellbeing of our athletes.

The Healthy Athletes Programme is an initiative offering medical screening and services to athletes delivered by medical professionals.

In New Zealand we currently offer four screening tests: Fit Feet (where we screen athletes' feet and biomechanics, e.g. their gait); Healthy Hearing (checking hearing ability and cleaning wax out of blocked ears); Opening Eyes (testing vision and educating athletes on the importance of eye protection); and Special Smiles (checking dental hygiene and oral health).

Screening has traditionally been carried

out at our National Summer Games, offering an opportunity to get to those athletes who may not realise they have an underlying health issue. At the last National Games around 73% of athletes took up the screening offer.

At the end of this month Rebekah Hanna (Opening Eyes programme), Jeanine Doherty (Healthy Hearing programme) and Sandra Knight (Healthy Hearing programme) will join their international colleagues in screening more than 7000 athletes at the World Summer Games in Athens.

"Our athletes' health is of utmost importance to us and we want to ensure that all are healthy. While the National and World Games offer us the ability to screen large numbers in one place it means

we're only capturing the athletes who are competing," says Mike Freeman, who oversees the Healthy Athletes Programme within Special Olympics New Zealand.

"We're reviewing the programme to see how we can better deliver the screening to all Special Olympics New Zealand Athletes and we're in the process of building a new strategy around this. In addition, we're launching Health Promotion in August that will really put the spotlight on our health."

All this can only mean good news for our athletes. Here's to being healthy!

Over the coming months Fanletter will profile our four Healthy Athlete Programmes and of course, cover the new Health Promotion in detail. Keep reading.

"This is Ryan Smith, behind you, all the way"

Special Olympics Manawatu's Ryan Smith is on a mission to motivate all Special Olympics athletes and he's using Facebook to share his message.

Since Special Olympics New Zealand re-launched its Facebook page in February this year Ryan has been a regular visitor offering support and advice to fellow athletes and those overseas.

A recent post said: "To all New Zealand athletes going to the World Games, keep up the training—Athletics all the way to Golf. Do as much you can. I can't begin to explain how important this is for each and every one of you, every training session you skip or miss out on is one chunk of fitness or preparation for your goals. This is Ryan Smith behind you all the way :)"

He's a man who practises what he preaches. A champion athlete, Ryan is heading to Athens this month for the World Summer Games to compete in the 800m and 1500m events.

"I'm taking the mindset that this is my only chance to compete at the World Summer Games. I may not get the chance again so I have to give it my best shot. Ideally I'd like to come away with a nice personal best and a medal to really show for all the hard work that has been put in," he says.



Ryan and partner Evelyn Abraham

"Running began as a bit of a hobby for me. Then my personal trainer, Ian Carter, took me under his wing. With him I do mainstream training like what the Harriers do, running for 40 minutes and long reps," says Ryan.

In addition to his athletics training, Ryan works as an assistant cleaner at Palmerston North's Big Five Motel helping to ensure the motel makes "a good first impression".

He also just completed a two-year tenure as Athlete Representative on the Special Olympics Manawatu Board.

While he considers Facebook a "spare time activity", it's clearly something other athletes appreciate. So please Ryan, keep up the good work.

Congratulations Almitra!

A shout out to Almitra Langton (Special Olympics Hutt Valley) who won the Disabled Athlete of the Year section in the 2011 Hutt City Sports Awards last month.

She accepted the award in front of 300 people, including All Blacks Coach Graham Henry and performer (and New Zealand Idol Judge) Frankie Stevens.

Almitra is one of our star swimmers and is heading off to Athens later this month to compete at the World Summer Games. In addition to training two to three times a week in the pool, she also plays basketball and attends Riding for the Disabled.

If that wasn't enough to keep her busy, Almitra is also an award-winning artist. Her work has been exhibited around Wellington and she sold her paintings as cards and calendars to fundraise for the World Summer Games.



Spreading our message far and wide

Twelve Special Olympics New Zealand athletes are on a life-changing journey.

Ella Sharples (Auckland), Frank Green (Canterbury), Charlie Smith (Hibiscus Coast), Jason Donovan (Kapiti), Chris Tilley (Nelson), Christopher Rielly (Otago), Thomas Van der Lugt (Otago), Grant Mackenzie (Southland), Michael Conder (Tauranga), Kym O'Grady (Waikato), Judith Porter (Waitakere) and Athol Tipene (Whangarei) are our new Global Messengers (Class of 2011).

The Global Messengers course is a cornerstone of Special Olympics New Zealand's Athlete Leadership Programmes and provides specialist training to equip the successful applicants with the skills and tools to become ambassadors for Special Olympics and speak on behalf of their fellow athletes.

Special Olympics New Zealand partners with AUT Shine Sport to deliver this successful programme of workshops, which covers goals setting, public speaking, fundraising and sponsorship, media and communications, and development planning.

The programme is now in its second year with the Class of 2010 now on the 'speaking circuit', talking to community groups and sponsors on a regular basis.

This year's intake began its training in February and has since completed two workshops. Guest tutors from Attitude TV led the last workshop focusing on public relations, fronting up to the media and interview techniques. They were also given the task of putting together an 'elevator pitch' and practice it in front of the TV camera.

"This is a short 30-second speech that encapsulates everything they want someone to know about them and their message," says Julia Sanson, who manages the programme.

"It can be daunting to complete at first but is a very useful technique. Many of the Global Messengers from last year's class still use their pitch as the basis for their speeches."

The Classes of 2010 and 2011 will get together in August for a combined session to share experiences and to reaffirm their "buddy" system. They also have a Facebook page to liaise with each other and provide mentoring and support throughout the year.

We'll be calling for nominations for next year's class of Global Messengers in the coming months. In the meantime, have a think about who in your club could make a great future leader.

► Meet Chris Rielly

Chris is the first to admit he "leads a busy life". The Special Olympics Otago athlete plays basketball, ten pin bowling and soccer (in both Special Olympics New Zealand and mainstream teams) and indoor rowing; coaches bowling and indoor soccer; and recently took over running his local ten pin bowling league.

Chris lives with his partner and their two-year-old daughter Sophie in their own home. Oh, and he works full-time at New Zealand Wood Moulding Company in Mosgiel from 5.30am-2.30pm.

Now he has added Global Messenger training to his list of activities, something Chris is "quite excited" about and is "loving learning new stuff." Chris has already presented to the community earlier in the year with some of last year's Global Messengers and is looking forward to "get around the country more to meet new people."

His goals for the next year are to push himself further in indoor rowing and set a new personal best and to return his average bowling score to 152.

► Meet Judith Porter

Becoming a Global Messenger is "really good fun", according to Special Olympics Waitakere's Judith Porter. "The Global Messengers are a good group."

In her new role Judith is on a mission to help people learn to swim. Swimming is something that she has found very rewarding over the past 20 years and she wants to share the experience. Judith swims for Special Olympics New Zealand and trains once a week at West Wave Aquatic Centre in Henderson, Auckland.

She's also a gung-ho skier and will be heading to the National Winter Games in August to compete with other Special Olympics New Zealand athletes at Cardrona.

► Meet Frank Green

Special Olympics Canterbury athlete Frank Green is half the man he used to be, literally. Over the past four years he has lost 112kg, a feat he is incredibly proud of.

"It got to the stage I couldn't play sport anymore. It was time to make a change."

Now the 54-year-old is back playing ten pin bowling and better than ever.

As a Global Messenger he is keen to spread the word that everyone can achieve what they want if they are willing to try.

He's a living testament to this message.

Frank is an active member of the Christchurch community. From Saturday to Tuesday he can be found at Homestead Ilam Home and Hospital and Hop On. On Wednesday and Thursday, he works at Wai-ora Nursery and Landscapes, and has just completed a Level 2 Horticulture course.

Frank is also a member of the Christchurch South Lions Club and has presented at Rotary.

In his spare time Frank breeds cockatoos and budgies and collects caps, pens and salt and pepper shakers (none of which was damaged in the Christchurch earthquake!).





BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROFILES

Brian Finn—our resident communications specialist

Last month Special Olympics New Zealand welcomed Brian Finn to the Board of Trustees.

While you might not have heard his name before, you have probably watched, read or heard some of his handy work.

Brian has worked in corporate communications and sports and sponsorship marketing throughout Asia and Australia and, for the past seven years, has managed the New Zealand Rugby Union's Communications unit, and previously handled the All Blacks' media liaison.

Brian also managed communications for the NZRU's successful bid to host Rugby World Cup 2011 and helped the organising committee, Rugby New Zealand 2011, with communications until the end of 2009.

Brian has attended and been involved in the last three Rugby World Cups and was Deputy Chief of Staff for Host Union Public Affairs for the 2003 Rugby World Cup. He also worked with sponsors and other organisations on activities around the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

We're excited to have him on our team.

Peter Makara—a passionate supporter

While Peter is relatively new to the Board of Trustees he is no stranger to Special Olympics New Zealand.



He originally worked on staff as our Central North Island Regional Sports Coordinator before becoming Chair of Special Olympics Waikato.

His day job is now Student Capability Manager at Wintec in Hamilton and he also holds a number of other governance positions including a directorship on the Student Residential Trust Board.

But he has kept up his involvement with Special Olympics New Zealand as Regional Chair of Special Olympics Central North Island, and, in that capacity, sits on our Board of Trustees.

Passionate about working with people with intellectual disabilities, Peter is travelling with our World Summer Games team as Assistant Staff, helping the athletes (and coaches and other support staff) to achieve glory in Athens.

"Watching athletes succeed is a highlight of working with Special Olympics New Zealand; and seeing the passion and commitment of the volunteers. It's a really good bunch of people," he says.

Providing legal counsel

Over the past three years Special Olympics New Zealand has been fortunate to have the support of legal eagles Minter Ellison Rudd Watts on a pro-bono basis.

The relationship between our two organisations was initially forged by a professional friendship between former Special Olympics New Zealand CEO Alastair Hutchens and Minter Ellison Partner John McCay. This friendship has since extended across the Special Olympics New Zealand family and is one that we value highly.

Minter Ellison, which has offices in Auckland and Wellington and abroad, has provided counsel on many of Special Olympics New Zealand management areas including our corporate structure, governance structure and how we can best work as a national body with regional branches.

"Minter Ellison Rudd Watts has a strong focus on youth and education and Special Olympics New Zealand fits into this really nicely," says John McCay.

We think so too and look forward to working together for many years to come.

Our newest sponsor

Special Olympics New Zealand welcomes Infinity Foundation as our newest sponsor. Based in Hastings, the gaming machine company provides grants to community groups around New Zealand.



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