**July 2023**

**Che Fornusek**

1. What do you love about participating in sport as someone with a disability?
Playing disability sport allows you to challenge yourself at an appropriate level and you can
have more influence on the outcome. This teaches you about yourself under pressure and
your responses both good and bad; remember the good ones and learn from the bad ones.
Mainstream sport is fun too and can be an extra challenge but sometimes it is hard to find
team mates who can work with your abilities.

2. What made you get involved with physical disability rugby league?
I was one of the first players to join when the sport initially started. I enjoyed watching
rugby league but before this there was no opportunity for people with disability to play.
There are many skills in touch or rugby league which people with disability can excel at. I
really like showing people that rugby league isn’t all about how fast you can run or how
strong you are.

3. You are a member of CPSARA as a Health Professional so can you tell us a bit about what you do for work?
I work at the University of Sydney as a lecturer/researcher and teach into the Exercise
Science and Exercise Physiology Degrees. I enjoy bringing people with disability to class
practicals so students can understand the benefits and barriers to exercise disability can
present. My research involves enhancing exercise for persons with weak or paralysed
muscles by using electrical stimulated muscle contractions. Such exercise devices (like FES
cycling) were originally created for persons with serious spinal injury, but we have adapted
them to other disabilities like multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy and stroke.

4. What piece of advice would you give to others who have disabilities looking to get involved with sport and recreation?
There are many more sports for those with disability around these days so get in there and
try a few. We can’t control many aspects of our condition or disease, but we can minimise
the effects of aging by playing sport, exercising and not being sedentary. The biggest
advantage of sport is probably the friends and social contact you will make as well.

5. Would you like to share any other interesting facts about yourself with the CPSARA community?
I have Charcot Maree Tooth disease which affects the nerves in my legs and arms. Not heard of it?
It’s not as prevalent as CP but is the most common inherited disorder that involves the peripheral
nerves.