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**Marita Morgan**

Can you give us a little background on your experiences in recreational sport as an adaptive athlete?

My actual sport history is not just recreational based. I grew up, like many people with Cerebral Palsy, getting into swimming at an early age. I was swimming at the age of four and by the time I was about 10 years of age, I was starting competitive swimming. And then by the time I was 14, I was involved in swimming for athletes with a disability, that was the first time I heard about it. I did competitive swimming for people with a disability through to the end of high school where I then went off to university.

However, all my life, I've been a skier. I never went into ski racing or anything like that, skiing was purely recreational for me. And then, recently in the last five or six years I've got into wheelchair tennis. I played tennis as a child, but always struggled, and then I got involved in wheelchair tennis and I do that recreationally as well in a couple of fun competitions throughout the year.

What has the highlight of your sporting journey been so far?

There's two, when I was a teenager making the National Junior Disabled Games and going off and competing in Brisbane then again in Adelaide. I was doing one-to-two-hour training sessions a day, and then I finally made a team and got to meet other people from around Australia and compete against them and just built friendships from there.

And I think the other highlight is getting involved in tennis and meeting people of all ages, of all abilities who just want to play tennis and have fun at a recreational level and then go and catch up afterwards. So, I think they're the two highlights, as a competitive athlete and swimming, and then recreationally would be just being a part of the tennis community.

What made you get involved with teaching adaptive tennis?

I think it was more that I working at a tennis centre, they wanted everyone to be a tennis coach to understand what it's like teach tennis. So, I went off and did my ATPCA tennis coaching course just before Covid hit, and already I’d been involved in the Adaptive Hub at City Community Tennis, but then I got involved as an adaptive tennis coach. On Saturday mornings, I coach athletes with a disability and it's just very rewarding. I enjoy sharing the experience of how to push around in a tennis chair on the court with the little kids, just seeing them grow and learning a sport, and having fun. On Wednesday afternoons, I coach a couple of indigenous kids with disabilities which is also just really rewarding.

What piece of advice would you give to others who have disabilities looking to get involved with sport and recreation?

Just give it a try, it doesn't matter what the sport is, just go out there and give it a try. It changed my life and I think it changes the lives of many people with a disability. Whatever it is, whether it's Frame running; Tennis; Swimming; Boccia, just give the sport you like a try.

What did you do to keep healthy and active during the covid lockdowns, did you keep up your tennis and other sports?

Yes, we were very fortunate because you could exercise with one other person, so tennis was one sport I could keep up during the lockdown. I continued having one-on-one lessons with a tennis coach, but then I was also able to contact my friends that played tennis within the 5K radius and have a hit with one of them on the court. So, that's one way I kept active, by still playing tennis. And then also by going just for walks around the neighbourhood. We also got a little mini gym set up downstairs in the garage so I kept  active on my exercise bike, and kept in touch with my Exercise Physiologist. I didn't do Telehealth, but just keeping in touch with her and having programs to do at home. As a bit of fun we put a little mini net up in the garage, so I could hit on the wall, play tennis a bit. So that's how I've kept active during lockdown.

Now you’re involved a bit with CPSARA, what made you get involved with the organisation and what do you love about it?

I was involved in CPSARA when I was a swimmer, as editor for a while. Then when I was asked to come on as the Community Sport person for CPSARA on the committee, it was just giving back really and getting kids with a disability involved in sport from a recreational point of view. I think it's so important that kids get involved in sport, whether you have a disability or don't have a disability, that it’s important to be active, but more so with a disability. So being involved in CPSARA and seeing these Connect Days evolve every couple of months is really a big thing because when I was a child, we didn't really know what was out there for people with disabilities. So being able to share the Connect Days with people and get people involved, I find is really important. And also working with a fantastic committee, sharing common thoughts around getting people with disability in sport.

Would you like to share any other interesting facts about yourself with the CPSARA community?

I guess most people know me as a skier, so I think a fun fact about me is as well as doing downhill skiing and ski resorts and stuff, in the last couple of years I've got involved in Back Country with the support of Disabled Winter Sports Australia and family and friends. Just going out the back and hiking out with my crutches and seeing the beautiful world out there behind the mountain. So, I think I’ve had my swimming career, I’ve had my recreational skiing. But yeah, I do Back Country, and I have kite skied with Murray before as well.