



PROVIDING YOU WITH WHATS HAPPENING IN BOCCIA AROUND THE WORLD

Around the Courts

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Road to Rio in the Books

Well the Road to Rio is finally complete and as the Games fly behind our revision mirror we can now reflect on what was a highly successful campaign for Boccia in Australia. The Rio Paralympics were not just a game changer for Boccia but for the Paralympic movement as whole as it broke down barriers and generated social change in South America.

The quadrennial for the "Road to Rio" proved significant in the development of Boccia within Australia from grass roots to high performance. Over this time, we have seen Boccia Australia become a registered National Sporting Organisation (NSO) which gives the sport recognition by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), increased attendance at state and national events and Australia becoming a consistent contender on the international competition circuit.

The vast changes in the Boccia community have been a testament to the hard work and dedication of our athletes, their families and all support staff that help the sport remain sustainable in Australia.

The Rio Paralympics also saw the APC agree to contracts with Channel 7 earlier in the year which provided a huge boost to the

Paralympic movement in 2016. This agreement allowed the Australian community to view the Paralympics on mainstream television and also provided numerous opportunities for our athletes to promote their sport. Our very own Daniel Michel and Ashlee McClure were lucky enough to score one of these live interviews!

At the end of the Paralympics, Michel finished ranked 15th which is a fantastic effort in a first Paralympics, the only loss he had being to the eventual silver medalist. As a nation, Australia again punched above its weight finishing 5th on the medal tally which was also our target underneath the ASC's "A Winning Edge" which is crucial for funding purposes.

Overall the Rio Paralympics has been deemed as a huge success for everyone involved and we now look to achieve more on our way to "Targeting Tokyo".



Daniel Michel - Road to Rio

Our very own Daniel Michel shares his journey to Rio, the highs and lows and the experience of competing at a Paralympic Games.

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Think Big Challenge

The partnership between the APC and Optus has been working to change the way our Paralympians train by providing virtual training sessions across Australia with Coaches and Athletes.

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Boccia Equipment

An exciting opportunity has become available within Australia with the recently established Maxwell Pro in business! We sit down and chat to its creator.

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Optus Changing the Training Game



Our very own JP LaFontaine was recently invited to attend the Optus Think Big Challenge where he demonstrated how he trains with his partner Sarah in South Australia.

Major Partner of the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC), Optus has come up with an innovating challenge which will look to shape the direction of the Australian Paralympic Team in the lead up to Tokyo 2020.

Optus' 'Think Big' Team – an internal working team that builds on capability and culture at Optus, will for the first time develop a problem solving solution for an outside organisation.

Named the 'Think Big Gold Medal Challenge,' the team will look at developing technology to help develop a technological solution around limited funding and limited access to coaching, to better equip Australia's Paralympians to have a competitive edge at the Tokyo Games.

"We've been working on business problems over the last 12 months, but we really wanted to come up with an opportunity to get everyone involved and excited, and the Australian Paralympic Committee is something that everyone at Optus wants to contribute to," said Think Big Director, John Chan.

"One of the great things we want to do is really get people immersed in some of the challenges some of these athletes have. From that we can hopefully come up with solutions and better ideas."

Contributing \$50,000 to the winning idea, Optus and the APC are hoping to see the idea implemented which in turn will increase our medal success at Tokyo 2020.

Maxwell Pro Offering a Unique Opportunity

One man and a passion for the sport of Boccia in Australia has led to a unique and exciting opportunity developing for Boccia players around Australia. The Maxwell Pro offers more affordable Boccia equipment as opposed to international brands. This offers a fantastic opportunity to the grass roots and development athletes around Australia and not only do they supply ramps and balls but also training resources like target mats!

We caught up with the creator of Maxwell Pro – Russell to discuss how the idea came about and what he sees for the future of his brand.

"Hi Russell, it's great to see you have been getting involved in providing opportunities for Boccia equipment in Australia. What made you get into this?"

I noticed a while ago when I was introduced to Boccia through a client of mine that equipment was expensive and sometimes hard to get hold of.

I started doing research into what was needed and if I could manufacture or buy it in and sell it at a better price.

"What types of Boccia equipment are you offering at Maxwell Pro?"

At the moment I manufacture a BC3 Ramp, that I've been getting great feedback on. I am selling a set of Boccia balls that are just excellent quality for the price. Much cheaper than their counterparts. I also sell a vinyl practice target that has been doing exceptionally well. Apart from this I've been making some hand and head pointers for people as well.

"Do you supply Australia wide?"

Yes I'm happy to dispatch anywhere in Australia for the price of transportation. But again, this is much cheaper than importing costs.

"Where do you hope to see Boccia in Australia and Maxwell Pro be by the end of 2017?"

I believe given the chance to get equipment at better prices, Boccia in Australia can get the recognition for its athletes it deserves and the sport will grow with new and young player's year by year. Maxwellpro is only in its early days yet but I hope to become the trusted name to go to when people need equipment.

A Young Ozzie and a Road to Rio

Boccia Australia recently caught up with 2016 Rio Paralympian Daniel Michel to discuss his experience over in Rio and what it was like to compete on the Paralympic stage.

"In September last year, I was fortunate enough to be part of the Australian team competing in the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. The opportunity to compete in Rio was a long-awaited reward for the years of training and competing prior, and I felt as though that opportunity was something I had earned through lots of hard work and commitment.

I only qualified for Rio in March of the same year, so specific preparation for the games was limited to just 5 months. Consequently, this became the biggest 5 months of my life. My assistant, Ashlee, and I committed ourselves to training every day, some days as long as 8 or 9 hours, to ensure we were prepared for what would be the biggest moment of our lives. Rio was front and centre of my mind for every moment of those 5 months. I wanted to ensure I was perfectly prepared in order to do Ashlee, myself and our years of hard work proud.

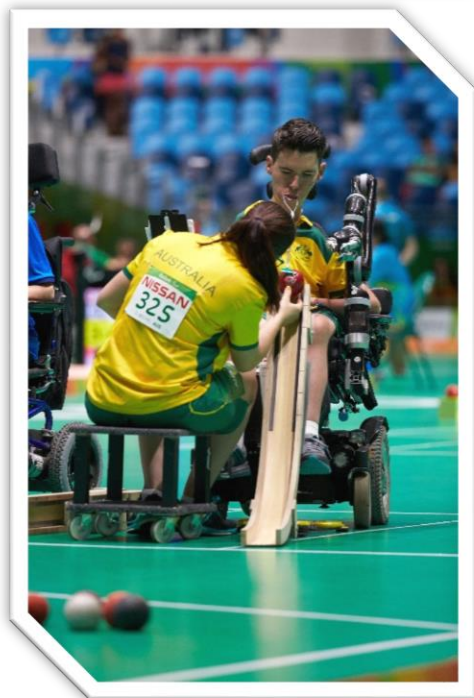
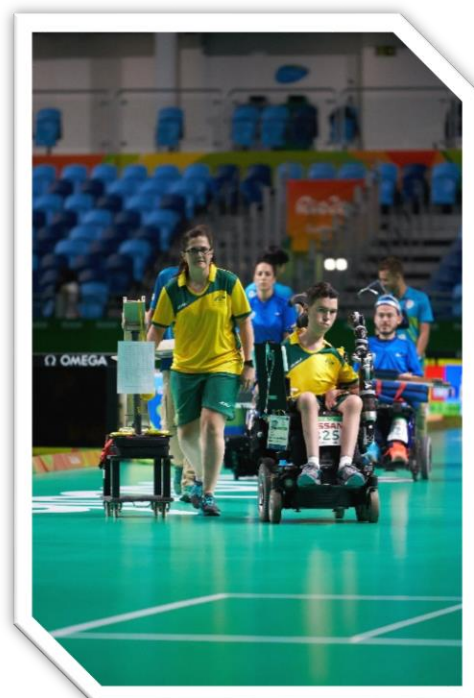
Coming into Rio, I really wanted to just absorb as much of the Paralympic experience as possible. Being amongst a highly motivated and very embracing team made me feel very comfortable in the Paralympic Village, and kind of allowed me to play a bit of a spectator role in relation to village life and also allowed me to settle in and soak up as much of the atmosphere as I could. There was a long lead up to my first day of competition from the day we arrived in the village. The individual event in Boccia was one of the last programs to begin, and my first day of competition didn't come until almost 2 weeks after we had touched down in Rio. I thought it may cause me to get a bit impatient watching all my teammates competing and having success whilst I had to bide my time for my event to begin. However, I found myself enjoying the many intricacies that are a Paralympic experience.

From the expansive cuisine choices in the dining hall, to the many entertainment quarters around the village, there was plenty to keep me busy and to keep my mind in a good space. When it was finally my time to take to the courts, I felt relaxed and ready to compete. I pride myself on being an athlete that prepares meticulously and is very confident in their abilities, and I think this helped me keep doubts at bay and feel as though the moment wasn't above me.

I knew I had a very tough draw, being in a pool with a very talented British player and the world number 3 from Greece, both games I would have to win in order to progress to the quarter-finals. My first game came against the Brit, Jamie McCowan. After a very hard fought 4 ends, I managed to come out on top, winning 3 points to 2. The moment I played my last ball, and realised I had won the match, was the best feeling I have ever had on Boccia court and is by far the highlight of my career.

The next day, I had to take on the Greek world number 3, Grigorios Polychronidis, in a winner-takes-all clash to determine who would progress to the quarter-finals. That night in the dining hall, I felt on top of the world knowing I had just won my Paralympic debut match, and was one win away from taking a step closer to my ultimate goal of winning Paralympic gold. When the time came to take the court, I was feeling excited about the opportunity that was in front of me. Being the underdog in a match against an athlete I had looked up to since the beginning of my career was an opportunity I want to grasp with 2 hands and enjoy. In the end, experience prevailed as I was defeated 7-2.

Despite being disappointed, I felt as though I had had a very enjoyable and successful first Paralympic campaign, and had garnered invaluable experience to carry forward with me into the next Paralympic cycle. My motivation to become the best athlete I can be remains strong, and I am looking forward to using the incredible experience I was fortunate enough to accumulate in Rio as a platform to spring forward towards Tokyo 2020."



Daniel Michel and Ramp Assistant Ashlee McClure in action at Rio

The Green and Gold – International Boccia

As the new quadrennial for Tokyo 2020 begins, so does the international Boccia calendar. Our high performance athletes have a busy year ahead with 4 tournaments alone in 2017 including one in which they arrived home just hours before the start of our National Titles.

This year our athletes will compete at a range of different locations which include:

- **BISFed 2017 Dubai REGIONAL OPENS – Dubai, UAE – 14th to 21st of April 2017 - COMPLETE**
- **BISFed 2017 Asian and Oceania Championships – Hong Kong – 21st to 29th May 2017 - COMPLETE**
- **BISFed 2017 Kansas City WORLD OPEN – Kansas City, USA – 22nd to 29th September 2017**
- **BISFed 2017 Bangkok WORLD OPEN – Bangkok, Thailand – 2nd to 11th October 2017**

Dubai Regional Open Recap:

Australia saw history be made in Dubai earlier this year as our BC3 and BC4 athletes claimed their first ever International medals. The BC4 pairs team claimed the Bronze medal whilst our BC3 team claimed Silver. To top off an excellent competition from our team young gun Spencer Cotie shocked the Boccia world when he was able to claim the BC3 Individual Bronze medal. Spencer lost 4 on the first end to his Korean opponent but was able to fight back to force a tie break and win.

Overall these were some fantastic results from our Australian team and sets them in good pace for the Tokyo quadrennial.

Hong Kong Asia/Oceania Recap:

Arguably our most competitive competition of the year, the Asia/Oceania tournament challenged our athletes but they were able to achieve some impressive results. Whilst there were no medals won at this event each athlete showed promise.

We are now beginning to compete for medals at tournaments and winning our pool groups is becoming a regular achievement.



Running an Event - Become NRS Registered

If your local competition or club is running an event and want to include in the National Ranking System (NRS), be sure to have your club connect with your state member or coordinator to apply as a local NRS event. With a number of clubs across NSW for example including Northern Beaches and Hunter already involved, we are keen to see and support your club run their very own NRS event.

Registering as an NRS event goes a long way to BA being able to properly manage the calendar year to avoid event clashes and to also increase the value of athletes attending events throughout Australia.

For further information contact admin@boccia.com.au



Increasing Accessibility to Training Resources

As a part of the appointment of Reece Wilson to the Executive Officer role there has been an increased emphasis on offering Boccia Australia members greater access to training resources for the betterment of our athletes around the country.

To assist with this, we have begun providing training resources to our members on the website whereby you can access and download things like training drills/skills, ramp blueprints for a beginner BC3 and also information vital to a BC3's development – the ability to calibrate and understand the need for calibrating.

This is also a part of increasing the benefits of becoming a Boccia Australia member. You cannot access these resources without a Boccia Australia membership so we actively encourage everyone involved, from athlete to coach and parent to simply register with their respective body and take full advantage of the opportunities available for our members on our website.

You can access these resources via the website in **Our Sport**.



2017 Boccia Australia National Titles

The 2017 Boccia Australia National Titles is over for another year. This year saw up to 65 athletes compete for the titles of Nations best at the Sydney Academy of Sport in Narrabeen. The competition even saw athletes from New Zealand attend this year to begin there quadrennial.

"The event has been great and always provides a great opportunity for our athletes to compete against the best the Nation has to offer including on occasions some International talent like New Zealand."

"It's just a great event to showcase what we can offer as a Paralympic sport but to also offer people the chance to meet up with old and new friends that create long lasting relationships between our members" Executive Officer, Reece Wilson said.

The results of each classification and event are as follows:

BC1/2 teams:

- Gold- **New Zealand**
- Silver- **New South Wales**
- Bronze- **Victoria**

BC3 Pairs:

- Gold- **New South Wales 1**
- Silver- **Victoria/Tasmania**
- Bronze- **New South Wales 2**

BC4/5/EMU Pairs:

- Gold- **New South Wales/South Australia**
- Silver- **New Zealand**
- Bronze- **Queensland**

BC1 Individuals:

- Gold – **Neil Dalton (NSW)**
- Silver- **Tyler Ellis (VIC)**
- Bronze- **Chris Allerdice (NSW)**

BC2 Individuals:

- Gold – **Scott Elsworth (NSW)**
- Silver- **Jeremy Morriss (NZ)**
- Bronze- **Aaryan Shah (NSW)**

BC3 Individuals:

- Gold- **Daniel Michel (NSW)**
- Silver- **Spencer Cotie (NSW)**
- Bronze- **Greig Jackson (NZ)**

BC4/5/EMU Individual:

- Gold- **JP LaFontaine (NSW)**
- Silver- **Adam Alcorn (NSW)**
- Bronze- **Jocelyn Powell (WA)**



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