

Harvey Norman®

# PARA SPORT CHAMPIONS

## BAILLEY UNAHI

-  Wānaka
-  June 21, 1996
-  Paraplegia
-  Para alpine skiing

### Grassroots:

Kia ora tātou, my name is Bailey.

I grew up in the heart of Southland, Winton. Now I call Wānaka my home.

I wanted to be a health professional or a scientist when I grew up!

As a child my hobbies were playing sports (swimming, netball, basketball, touch and rugby), playing for hours on the monkey bars with my sister, or biking.

### My journey as a Para athlete:

Following an accident at age 19 where I sustained a spinal cord injury, I then needed to use a wheelchair to get around. Life looked a little bit different and I couldn't play the same sports I previously enjoyed. The first Para sport I tried was Wheelchair basketball in Dunedin with Parafed Otago. This included using a custom-designed wheelchair to help you travel fast, turn quickly and keep you from tipping over, which was way harder than I expected!



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 Watch

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If you are passionate about it, there is always a way.”



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I then tried sit-skiing in 2017 and couldn't imagine how it was possible to ski while paralysed as I struggled to ski with two working legs! But once I spent a day on the maunga (mountain) I was hooked.

I compete in Para alpine skiing in the women's sitting category. I have my own sit-ski which clips into standard ski bindings and I can switch ski's depending on what race I am competing in. I have suspension and a shock (like a mountain bike or motorbike) to absorb the bumps and jumps. I have outriggers (the little crutches on my arms) which help me move about on flat snow like pushing to the chairlift lines and getting up when I fall over but they also have a ski mode which helps keep me balanced when skiing down the mountain. The goal of my sport is to be the fastest skier down the race course! I train on the snow in all weather conditions two winters a year, as well as training in the gym to stay strong.

I first represented New Zealand last year in Canada when I had my first overseas competition. I felt extremely cold because it was -35 degrees celsius at Nakiska ski resort. I also felt proud to represent such a small country against competitors from both USA and Canada!

## Fun facts:

- My favourite food is blue cod.
- I loved snorkelling the Great Barrier Reef in the Whitsundays!
- My dream holiday would be skiing anywhere!
- My favourite time of the year is Spring because you still get to ski but the days are getting longer and warmer.
- I am definitely a night owl.

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