

PETER COWAN

 Hastings

 June 22, 1995

 Above knee amputee

 Para canoe

Grassroots:

Kia ora, my name is Peter Cowan.

I grew up in Bridge Pa, Hastings located in the heart of Hawke's Bay.

I really look up to my family, particularly some who were in the army and this inspired me to follow their path when I grew up. Some of my hobbies I had growing up were camping, playing bullrush, biking and gaming with my siblings and cousins.

My journey as a Para athlete:

I was always really into sport and being active. When I was 15 I had an accident on a bike where I injured my leg when I was training for the Iron Māori triathlon and had to make the difficult decision to amputate my leg. In my last year of high school, I discovered paddling and soon fell in love with the sport.



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 Watch

<https://youtu.be/Rs8YOT6YeTs>

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My advice to anyone wanting to pursue high performance sport would be to set your goals, find your people and get after the grind and enjoy the journey.”



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I first started exploring the world of Para sport back in 2016 when I attended a running clinic run by Ottobock Australia where I had the opportunity to learn how to run. This event was facilitated by a successful Paralympian in the Para athletics world from Germany. My Para sport is Para canoe. There are 2 disciplines in Para canoe being Kayak and Va'a. My discipline is the Va'a commonly known as outrigger canoe or Waka ama. I specialize in the 200m sprint event.

The first time I represented New Zealand was in 2017 (age 22) in Tahiti where I was selected to race for our adaptive W6 crew at the world long distance championship. This event is one of my favourites to date, as Tahiti is home to some of the world's best Va'a paddlers and all round a beautiful place to enjoy paddling lifestyle. In order to be the best I can be, I roughly train 6-7 days a week on and off the water.

The Paralympic values are a great guide in my journey and are good foundations to circle back to when the road gets hard. The road to the Paralympics is no easy feat as it takes courage to take up the challenge, determination to achieve and inspiration to fuel this passion.

An achievement I'm really proud of is my two children. They're at the stage where they can wake up early and watch me compete overseas and support me. It's always humbling and rewarding to make them proud.

Fun facts:

- My favourite food is Korean BBQ.
- My funniest sporting moment would be my paddle slipping out of my hand mid stroke and smacking my forehead in the middle of a race.
- My favourite movie is Nacho Libre – it's a timeless classic and full of great one liners.
- My favourite book is Alan Duffs Māori heroes.
- A food I don't like is squid.
- My go to karaoke song is 'Take me home country road' – John Denver.

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