

CAN

## John Przybyszewski

I started playing standing Volleyball in 1989 in Toronto, Ontario Canada I was recruited onto the men's standing volleyball Team in 1989, at a time when the team was managed through the Canadian Amputee Sports Association. As is the case with many high-performance athletes with a disability, I was 'discovered' by word of mouth through my activity in another sport, downhill skiing.

My wife, Stephanie (who was my girlfriend at the time) was my biggest influence in this sport. Stephanie was a highly skilled volleyball player, playing club volleyball at an elite level. I had been playing recreational volleyball throughout my teens and early 20's. When I had started dating Stephanie, she pushed me to pursue this sport at a higher calibre. I started to play club volleyball (able-bodied) as well as competitive sand and co-ed volleyball events in Canada. Her passion for volleyball was infectious and I just fell in love with this sport (and Stephanie).

I had a late start playing competitive volleyball and was not part of the Canadian club volleyball system until my early 20's. I quickly became obsessed with the sport and focused all of my energy in becoming the best player and teammate I could be.

Although I was playing a lot of volleyball in Canada, my first exposure to World ParaVolley standing volleyball was at the 1989 World Championships tournament in Las Vegas. This tournament inspired and motivated me as an athlete. Team Canada had a long path ahead of them to progress to become one of the top teams in the world. I was determined to be part of that journey and success.

#### Events and Results:

7th Place – 1989 World Championships

8th Place - 1991 World Championships

6th Place - 1995 European Cup

4th Place - 1996 Canada Cup

SILVER - 1997 Canada Cup

5th Place - 1998 World Championships



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BRONZE - 1999 Pan Am Cup  
BRONZE - 2000 European Invitational  
SILVER – 2000 Paralympics  
GOLD - 2002 World Championships  
SILVER - 2003 World Cup  
GOLD - 2004 World Championships  
GOLD - 2005 World Cup

In addition I take great pride in contributing to my team and the sport of standing volleyball in other areas. Below are a few examples:

In the lead-up to the 2000 Paralympic Games, I raised \$50,000 in sponsorship funds and secured additional products (i.e. volleyball apparel, gear and equipment) to help the team prepare for the Games. For this achievement, I was honoured by Volleyball Canada as Contributor of the Year in 2000.

In 2001, I was selected as a Paralympic athlete representative on the 2008 Toronto Olympic/Paralympic Bid Committee, promoting the bid within the City of Toronto and with representatives of the IOC.

In 2005, I travelled to Cambodia with five other Canadian team members to compete in the Asia-Oceania Developmental Cup – a tournament that Canada could not win, as they were an out of zone team. The purpose of my participation was to provide volleyball instruction to the players and coaches of the Cambodian National Volleyball League for Disabled, a league in which 75 per cent of the athletes on the 14 teams are landmine survivors.

I have provided countless free volleyball clinics to youth players both in Canada and the San Francisco Bay area where I currently reside.





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Awards received:

1999 Pan Am Cup – named Best Defensive Player

2000 – Volleyball Canada – Contributor of the Year award

In 2000 and 2002, Recognized by the City of Mississauga, Ontario Canada as Disabled Athlete of the Year.

2002 World Championships - named Best Defensive Player

2003 World Cup – named Best Serve Receiver

2005 World Cup – named Best Serve Receiver

2012 – Inducted into the Volleyball Canada Hall of Fame (the first Paralympian athlete to be inducted)

After winning the 2005 World Cup in my home country of Canada, I made the difficult decision to retire from Team Canada to focus on my family and career.

