
ATHLETE ARTICLES

Poll the world's top wheelchair basketball coaches and players regarding about who they'd choose to build their ultimate dream team around and in the top five would be Duncan's Richard Peter, warrior on wheels.

A proud member of the Cowichan Tribes, community was a huge part of Peter's upbringing. Strength of family and his own determination helped him overcome a terrible injury at age four when a school bus backed over his chest breaking his hip and spinal cord below the ribcage. Adjusting to life in a small community with few wheelchair-accessible buildings wasn't easy, but Peter's strength of character more than met the challenges. He attended public school and tried virtually every sport available. One day his life changed forever.

In 1987, wheelchair awareness week brought a touring Victoria wheelchair basketball team to his school when he was fifteen. Joining them for a game in front of the entire school in his heavy, hard-to-maneuver chair, Peter held his own and caught the team's attention. They encouraged him to come to Victoria to train and a lifelong passion for the game was born.

In 1994, Peter debuted on the Canadian national team and has been a pillar of strength for Canada ever since helping elevate the program to among the best in the world. Beginning in 1996, Peter represented Canada at four Paralympic Games capturing two golds (Sydney 2000, Athens 2004) and a silver in (Beijing 2008). In world championship play, Peter was part of one gold medal-winning squad (2006) and three that earned bronze. Six times he led Team BC to the national championship. Individually, Peter is regarded as one of the world's fiercest defenders, an effortless scorer, and one of the game's most sportsmanlike players.

Still active on the national team, Peter plays professionally in Europe where he lives with wife and fellow BC Sports Hall of Famer Marni Abbott-Peter. Twice named winner of the Tom Longboat Award as Canada's Male Aboriginal Athlete of the Year, he is also a two-time Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association Male Athlete of the Year, and the 2008 Canadian Wheelchair Basketball Athlete of the Year.

Peter was inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame in 2010 and in 2012, lead his team to a gold medal win at the 2012 Paralympic Games. Retiring in 2012, Richard Peter was recognized for outstanding athletic achievement with a National Aboriginal Achievement Award.



RICHARD PETER

COWICHAN FIRST NATION



Indigenous Sports Gallery, BC Sports Hall of
Fame Photo credit: Kevin Bogetti-Smith