

SUPPORT TEAM USA

Need some inspiration? Let me tell you about the United States Wheelchair Curling Team.

This story begins with a life-changing event that few of us can fully comprehend.

Imagine you're living the life you've always dreamt about. And then, out of, nowhere, something happens to change all you have going for you. Hours, days, maybe even weeks pass and then one day you wake up and are told you're never going to walk again. Think about that for a minute...**YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO WALK AGAIN.**

Each individual on the US Wheelchair Curling Team has experienced this life-altering event. But not one of them let that event define who they were nor what they would become. They are the brave people who found a will to continue...not just to live but to thrive. Each of them is courageous in their own right. They represent the best of each and every one of us. And they do it while competing on the grandest of stages, representing the USA at World Championships and Paralympic Games. And they need your help.



Many of us are not aware of the sacrifices that are made by athletes who have the honor of representing the USA as an Olympian or Paralympian. To be the best in the world requires a little extra. These athletes need more. The sacrifices these athletes make are amazing. Time away from family, financial strains, and daily travel for training are just a few examples of what these athletes go through.

And for what? For the pride, joy, and honor of wearing the Red, White and Blue while representing the greatest country in the world!

The USA Wheelchair Curling Team competes against the best teams in the world once every year at either the World Championships or the Paralympic Games. And although the team has seen improvement in the recent past, they have yet to reach the podium. That NEEDS to change NOW! We need to help them become one of the very best in the world!

What does the process look like to become one of the best? You put yourself in position to travel, train and compete against the BEST as much as possible. The best teams are not found in the USA. International competition provides critical experience, promotes confidence, and breeds success.

Unfortunately, the majority of international wheelchair curling competitions take place in Europe and the significant associated travel expenses limit the team's ability to participate and maximize the athletes' fullest potential.

For Team USA, they NEED to travel abroad as much as possible. It's going to take more than the commitment of the players and the staff. We need to support them! The athletes on Team USA are doing all they can to earn Gold every time they compete and we should all take pride in assisting them along the way.

Support of the USA Curling Wheelchair National Team Program will enable Team USA to compete on a regular basis against the highest ranked nations in the world. Without question, this added experience will have a profound impact on the ability of the team to medal at future World Championships and Paralympic Winter Games.

Let's rally behind these athletes and give them the best chance of bringing home the Gold!

MEET THE TEAM



Steve Emt

Steve is the most tenured member of Team USA, entering his 10th year on the team. In 1995, Steve was a drunk driver and crashed on the way home after a night out. The crash left him paralyzed. Steve is now an accomplished motivational speaker sharing his presentation about the dangers of drinking and driving, the importance of good decision making, and overcoming adversities in life with audiences of all ages all over the country. He resides in DeForest, Wisconsin.

In 2005, while doing something he loved to do, Matt fell from a tree stand as he was hunting in the woods. The fall broke his back and the spinal cord injury left him paralyzed. Matt has been with Team USA for 7 years now and currently lives in Wausau, Wisconsin where he works as an accountant for Denyon Homes, Inc.



Matt Thums

Shawn is a resident of DeForest, Wisconsin and is self-employed. He has been with Team USA for 5 years. In 2014, after a long day of work, while driving home, Shawn was distracted by his phone and lost control of his vehicle. The accident resulted in a spinal cord injury for Shawn.



Shawn Sadowski

MEET THE TEAM



David Samsa

Dave suffered an injury back in 2002 when the vehicle he was driving was hit head on by another vehicle driving the wrong way on the highway. Dave has been with Team USA for 5 years now and most recently earned a Silver Medal at the 2023 World Championships in Mixed Doubles with his teammate Pam Wilson. He is retired and currently resides in Suamico, Wisconsin.

As a passenger in a car back in 1979, the vehicle Pam was riding in was involved in an accident which left her with a spinal cord injury and paralyzed. After her accident, Pam decided to go to medical school to become a doctor, becoming just the 4th person in a wheelchair at that time to do so. She worked with disabled children for 25 years and is still employed as a doctor in Denver, Colorado where she resides. Along with her teammate Dave Samsa, Pam earned a Silver Medal at the recent 2023 World Championships in Mixed Doubles.



Pam Wilson



Oyuna Uranchimeg

Oyuna currently resides in Burnsville, Minnesota and has been a member of Team USA for 5 years. She is a native of Mongolia and during a visit here to the United States in 2000, she was involved in a car accident that left her paralyzed. After the accident, Oyuna decided to stay in the United States and gain her citizenship. She is currently employed by the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN as an Academic Coordinator.

MEET THE TEAM



Dan Rose

Dan is a resident of Denver, Colorado. In 2011, while serving his country in Afghanistan, the truck he was on patrol in was hit by approximately 1,000 pounds of explosives that were buried under the road. The explosion left Dan with a spinal cord injury. In his words, “I sustained the worst injuries out of everyone in the truck, so as bad as that day was, it could have been a lot worse.” Dan has been with Team USA for 3 years.

One day back in 2012, Laura was enjoying the outdoors and working as a landscaper when a 25-foot-long tree branch snapped from above and landed directly on her causing multiple injuries including a broken back which left her paralyzed. She was introduced to the sport of curling in 2019, earned a spot on Team USA almost a year later, and has been with the team ever since. Laura currently lives in Hartland, Wisconsin.



Laura Dwyer

About USA Curling

Founded in 1958 and headquartered in Eagan, Minnesota, USA Curling is the National Governing body for the Olympic sport of curling and the Paralympic sport of wheelchair curling in the United States. The mission of USA Curling is to grow, strengthen, and advocate for the Olympic and Paralympic sport of curling in the United States by prioritizing accessibility and programmatic development from grassroots to podium. USA Curling is sponsored by Columbia Sportswear, Twin Cities Orthopedics, Training HAUS, Toyota, ISS (Ice, Sports & Solar), Rock Solid Productions, Jet Ice, and Laurie Artiss. USA Curling is a proud member of the World Curling Federation and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee. USA Curling is a non-profit organization with 501(3)(c) status. All donations are tax-deductible. To learn more, visit usacurling.org.