



Gary Connor

Wheel Talk Presenter Profile

INTRODUCTION



Date of Birth:	11 August 1955
Sport:	Handcycling
Discipline:	Road Events
Disability:	Paraplegia
How acquired:	Workplace Accident
Residence:	Donvale, Victoria
Occupation:	Wheel Talk Presenter & Corporate Speaker

BIOGRAPHY

As a typical outgoing teenager, Gary loved motocross, waterskiing, snow skiing, and wind surfing – the kinds of sports that make your heart beat a little faster and take you to the edge!

At the young age of 22 on (March 10 1988) Gary's day started like any other, but a three metre fall on a worksite would change his life forever. Breaking two vertebrae in his lower back, his spinal cord was severed, causing him to become a paraplegic.

Painful and intense mental and physical rehabilitation was the only way forward. Gary's attitude towards living life to its fullest played a major part in helping him accept his disability in order to move forward.

At 37 years of age, 15 years after the accident, he purchased his first hand cycle so he could enjoy bike riding with his kids on the weekends. One of life's basic activities that we all tend to take for granted.

"The look on their faces was incredible because I was riding with them, doing what other dads do with their kids."

Typically, his will power and determination quickly saw this become a sport for him and he has competed in hand cycling events around Australia. Gary earned the title of Victorian Champion in 2006, and later a 2nd in both Queensland and Australian championships.

For the past 6 years Gary has travelled throughout Victorian primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions as part of the Wheel Talk program, inspiring, motivating and educating participants of all ages on spinal cord injuries and life as a disabled husband, father and athlete.

Today Gary has also embarked on a new challenge. Speaking to large corporations all over the country about workplace safety, he addresses the challenges of life in a wheel chair with some wonderful anecdotes along the way.

Gary says:

"My passion for life gives me the strength to help me overcome adversity and show others that life can still go on irrespective of their circumstances..."