

ONTARIO PARA NETWORK (ONPARA)

Executive Director's Annual Report

2025–2026 Annual General Meeting
November 17, 2026

Overview

The past year has been an extremely positive and productive one for Ontario Para Network (ONPARA). Across our core sports of wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis, we have continued to strengthen our programs, support athlete development and expand opportunities for participation throughout Ontario.

We have seen encouraging growth in our leagues and clubs, outstanding performances from our provincial teams and continued success in introducing individuals with disabilities to sport through new and innovative initiatives.

While challenges remain, particularly with respect to sustainable funding, there is much to celebrate and every reason to be optimistic about our future.

Wheelchair Basketball

One of our ongoing priorities has been rebuilding our provincial wheelchair basketball league to the level of participation and activity we enjoyed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have made significant progress in this area, supported by the commitment of our clubs, coaches, officials and volunteers. Strengthening our league structure and providing consistent competitive opportunities remain essential to the long-term development of wheelchair basketball in Ontario.

Our provincial high-performance programs also enjoyed outstanding success at the National Championships.

- **Men's Provincial Team – Gold Medal**
- **Women's Provincial Team – Bronze Medal**

These results reflect the strength of our high-performance programs and the dedication of our athletes and coaching staff.

Our junior provincial team continues to develop and is well positioned for a strong performance at the **2027 Canada Games**. We are excited about the potential of this group and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Wheelchair Rugby

Wheelchair rugby continues to be a tremendous success story for ONPARA.

Our clubs and teams are operating extremely well, providing athletes with strong training environments and regular competitive opportunities.

We enjoyed a successful Provincial Championship, highlighting the strength of wheelchair rugby across Ontario.

Ottawa also did an outstanding job hosting the National Championships, delivering an excellent event that showcased the quality of competition and the commitment of our wheelchair rugby community.

Of particular note, **all three of our provincial wheelchair rugby teams earned medals at the National Championships**.

This remarkable achievement reflects the depth of talent within our provincial programs and the dedication of our athletes, coaches and support personnel.

We are proud of the continued strength of wheelchair rugby in Ontario and look forward to building on this success.

Wheelchair Tennis

Our wheelchair tennis program continues to demonstrate positive growth and development.

We have a strong provincial team, supported by dedicated coaches and athletes who continue to represent Ontario with distinction.

Equally important is the continued delivery of wheelchair tennis programming in communities across the province.

These initiatives provide opportunities for individuals to discover the sport, develop their skills and pursue competitive opportunities.

Expanding access to wheelchair tennis remains an important priority, and we are encouraged by the progress being made.

Para Tough Mudder and Spartan Initiatives

One of the most exciting areas of growth for ONPARA has been our continued involvement with Tough Mudder and Spartan.

These initiatives are creating new opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in obstacle course racing, challenge themselves and experience sport in a unique and inclusive environment.

Participation and interest continue to grow, demonstrating the potential of these partnerships.

This year marked a particularly significant milestone, with **the first athlete using a wheelchair participating in our Para Spartan event**.

This achievement represents another important step in demonstrating that sport can be adapted to provide meaningful opportunities for athletes of varying abilities.

We are excited about the continued growth of these initiatives and the opportunities they will create in the years ahead.

Community Outreach and Sport Development

Introducing individuals with disabilities to sport remains a fundamental part of ONPARA's mandate.

Throughout the year, we have continued to strengthen our community outreach efforts through presentations at several rehabilitation centres, introductory sport sessions and Try-It Days.

These initiatives help connect individuals with opportunities to participate in wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis.

They also allow us to build important relationships with rehabilitation professionals, community organizations and other partners who share our commitment to increasing access to sport.

We recognize that the journey into sport often begins with a single opportunity to participate. Creating more of those opportunities remains central to our work.

Looking Ahead

As we look toward the coming year, our priorities remain focused on continued growth, development and sustainability.

We will continue working to rebuild our wheelchair basketball league, strengthen our wheelchair rugby and tennis programs, and support our provincial teams as they pursue success at the national level.

The upcoming 2027 Canada Games will be an important opportunity for our junior wheelchair basketball athletes, and we look forward to supporting their preparation.

We also intend to build on the momentum of our Para Tough Mudder and Spartan initiatives while continuing to expand community outreach and introductory sport opportunities across Ontario.

At the organizational level, securing sustainable and predictable funding remains an important priority. Our programs continue to demonstrate the value of investing in para sport, and we will work to ensure ONPARA has the resources necessary to support continued growth.

Acknowledgements

The accomplishments of the past year would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of so many individuals.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to our Board of Directors for their continued guidance and support.

I also want to recognize our staff, coaches, officials, volunteers, clubs and community partners, whose contributions are essential to the success of our organization.

Most importantly, I want to acknowledge our athletes. Their commitment, determination and achievements continue to demonstrate the tremendous value of sport and inspire the work we do.

Closing Remarks

When we reflect on the past year, there is much to be proud of.

Our wheelchair basketball league continues to rebuild. Our wheelchair rugby programs remain strong. Wheelchair tennis is expanding its reach. Our provincial teams have achieved outstanding national results, including **five medals across wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby**.

We are also introducing new participants to sport through community outreach and innovative partnerships such as Tough Mudder and Spartan.

These accomplishments demonstrate the strength of our organization and the dedication of the people who make our programs possible.

It has been a very good year for ONPARA, and I am excited about where we are heading.

Doug Hannum
Executive Director
Ontario Para Network (ONPARA)