

Cathy Cadieux Biography

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Biography

Catherine (Cathy) Cadieux – WWR Hall of Fame Inductee 2022 (Builder Category)

Catherine “Cathy” Cadieux is one of the most dedicated and influential behind-the-scenes leaders in the history of World Wheelchair Rugby (WWR). With 19 years of continuous service on the Board of Directors—from 2002 to 2021—Cathy holds the distinction of being the longest-serving Board member in the organization’s history. Her commitment, foresight, and strategic leadership played a foundational role in transforming WWR into the professional, independent global sports federation it is today.



Cathy’s journey into wheelchair rugby began in 1998, when she attended the World Championship in Toronto. Instantly captivated by the energy, intensity, and community of the sport, she made a personal commitment to help grow and support wheelchair rugby in Canada and beyond.

Two years later, at the 2000 Paralympic Games in Sydney, Cathy attended the IWRF Annual General Meeting and voiced concern over the Board’s plans to pursue independence from ISMWSF without a clear business plan or strategy. With her trademark pragmatism and clarity, she led the group through a thoughtful review of the pros and cons of such a move—ultimately persuading the members that it was not the right time.

That moment sparked a groundswell of support for her leadership. In 2002, Cathy was elected Treasurer of the IWRF Board at the AGM in Gothenburg, Sweden. From the outset, she made an immediate impact—modernizing the federation’s financial systems, implementing computerization, and instilling a transparent, accountable, and team-driven governance structure.

While balancing a demanding full-time job and raising a young family as a single mother, Cathy made a deeply personal decision to dedicate her limited volunteer time exclusively to IWRF (later WWR), with just one exception—her local condominium board. This extraordinary commitment enabled her to help guide the organization through its most transformative years.

Over nearly two decades, Cathy was a driving force in:

- **Developing strategic plans and long-term vision** for the organization
- **Guiding IWRF’s transition to independence in 2010**, ensuring the federation had the financial and organizational foundations to succeed

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- **Evolving IWRF into World Wheelchair Rugby (WWR) in 2020**, aligning the organization with the modern demands of international sport
- **Championing governance and risk management**, ensuring that when she stepped down, her successor would hold a certified accounting designation—reflecting the professionalism she had helped instill

Her retirement in 2021 marked the end of an era. True to her character, Cathy reflected not on her contributions, but on the gratitude she felt for the sport and community she had served. In her own words:

"It was a bittersweet decision to step away from WWR. I have made so many good friends over the years and I will really miss seeing them on a regular basis, but it was the right time. I have to say that whatever I have contributed to WWR over the past nineteen years has been returned to me one hundred-fold. I have received so much more than I have given to this community. I love the people and the sport. Wheelchair rugby is special and unique, and I cherish my wheelchair rugby family."

Cathy Cadieux's induction into the **WWR Hall of Fame (Builder Category)** honours not just her longevity of service, but the profound and lasting impact of her leadership. Her legacy is woven into the very structure of the federation, and her spirit of integrity, commitment, and collaboration continues to inspire those who follow.