

# Garett Hickling Biography

worldwheelchair.rugby

# Biography

## Garett Hickling – WWR Hall of Fame Inductee (2018)

Garett Hickling was one of the most iconic and influential figures in the history of wheelchair rugby. A powerhouse on the court and a mentor off it, he helped define the sport for over two decades and left a lasting impact on the global wheelchair rugby community.

Born and raised in Mica Creek, British Columbia, Hickling was a gifted multi-sport athlete with a love for ice hockey, football, and baseball. In 1987, at the age of 16, his life changed forever when he suffered a devastating spinal cord injury after falling from a 300-foot cliff during a nighttime hike—a tragic accident that claimed the life of a close friend.



Refusing to let his injury define him, Hickling turned to adaptive sports. After playing wheelchair basketball and street hockey, he was introduced to wheelchair rugby in 1993 by Duncan Campbell, one of the sport's founders. He quickly excelled and by 1995 was recognized as one of the top players in the world.

From that point forward, Hickling became the cornerstone of the Canadian National Wheelchair Rugby Team. He competed in every major international tournament from 1995 to 2015, earning a remarkable list of accolades:

- **4 Paralympic medals** – 3 silver, 1 bronze
- **5 World Championship medals** – 1 gold, 2 silver, 2 bronze
- **1 Parapan American Games gold medal** – Toronto 2015
- **MVP at the first three World Championships** – 1995, 1998, 2002
- **Team Canada Flag Bearer** – London 2012 Paralympic Games
- **BC Sports Hall of Fame Inductee**

Hickling was inducted into the **World Wheelchair Rugby (WWR) Hall of Fame** in 2018, during the World Championship in Sydney, Australia. He was one of the first four individuals to receive this prestigious honour.

Known for his strategic brilliance and relentless drive, Hickling was often compared to a chess master—always anticipating the next move, always leading by example. His trademark blonde hair, fierce intensity, and total commitment to his team made him a fan favourite and a respected rival around the world.

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Beyond his achievements on the court, Hickling was a humble leader, always lifting those around him. Players from every corner of the sport looked up to him—not just for his skill, but for his generosity, mentorship, and unwavering sportsmanship.

Garett Hickling’s legacy goes far beyond medals and accolades. He was a trailblazer, a teacher, and a beloved figure in the wheelchair rugby community. He shaped the sport’s history and inspired generations of athletes. He will forever be remembered as a pioneer, a warrior, and a true legend of the game.

## In Memoriam

In June 2025, the sport received sad news that Garett had passed away. He will be forever remembered and his loss reverberated through the wheelchair rugby family.