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For immediate release

## Media release

# Special Olympics New Zealand athletes gear up for sports camps

The Special Olympics New Zealand athletes competing at the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015 in Los Angeles are benefitting from specialised sports camps across the country.

The camps have been developed to enable the athletes to train in their sports in the lead up to the Games, held from 25 July to 2 August, 2015. This is the first year that camps have been arranged for a specific sport – previously, athletes attended only one major camp that catered for all sports.

“This is an exciting development for both Special Olympics New Zealand and our talented athletes,” says Kathy Gibson, Special Olympics New Zealand Chief Executive Officer.

“As part of our desire to strengthen our athlete and coach development pathways, all sports will have multiple training camps in the preparation phase for this pinnacle global event.”

Max Brooking, Head of Delegation, adds, “In the past only our team sports benefitted from additional training camps so that the players could train together. Athletes in individual sports did most of their training on their own. By offering multiple camps across the country it means that this entire team will be the best prepared of any New Zealand travelling team.”

The camps will enable Coaches to spend valuable time with their athletes, while learning how each athlete will cope away from their familiar environment.

“While we will have lots of fun there are times when they will have to endure long periods on their feet, waiting around for hours, different food, beds and having to hurry in the mornings at the Games. This can put a strain on people. My objective is to have a well-prepared, relaxed team by July,” says Max.

Coaches will also prepare unique programmes for each athlete and will encourage them to keep training diaries to measure progress.

Complementary to the sports camps, the LA2015 coaches are collaborating with local coaches to ensure each athlete is on track and programmes are adjusted, as necessary.

“2015 is off to a great start with all 36 athletes very keen – they have been training and working on fitness over the holiday period,” says Max.

**ENDS**

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*Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation. Authorised and accredited by Special Olympics, Inc for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.*



## Notes for editors:

### Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015 – New Zealand Sports Camps Dates:

- 21-22 February, Basketball and Bocce, Wellington
- 21-22 March, Equestrian, Auckland
- 22 March, Athletics, Auckland (Howick/Pakuranga)
- 28-29 March, Ten Pin Bowling, Hawkes Bay
- 19 April, Aquatics, Wanganui
- 2-3 May, Golf, Taupo
- 16-17 March, Basketball, Wellington

### About Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015, Los Angeles

Thirty-six Special Olympics New Zealand athletes have been named to compete alongside over 7,000 athletes at the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015 in Los Angeles, California, USA.

The Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015, known as “LA2015”, will see athletes from 170 countries compete at the event being held from 25 July 2015 to 2 August 2015.

The 34 athletes with intellectual disabilities and two ‘Unified Partners’ (athletes without an intellectual disability) will compete in aquatics, athletics, basketball, bocce, equestrian, golf, powerlifting, and tenpin bowling.

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