



Special Olympics
New Zealand

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 3 November 2011

Special Olympics New Zealand announces 2011 World Summer Games Team

Special Olympics New Zealand today announced its team of 36 athletes that will represent New Zealand in Athens, Greece at the 13th Special Olympics World Summer Games, 25 June – 4 July 2011.

The team was confirmed following a Labour Weekend Selection Camp in Christchurch. It consists of 26 men and 10 women who will compete in aquatics, athletics, basketball, bowling, equestrian, golf and powerlifting. In addition, nine reserves have been named. These athletes will travel to Greece if confirmed athletes can not attend. Athletes range in age from 18 to 58 and are from throughout New Zealand. A full roster follows.

Rob Torrance, Head of Delegation, says, “Over Labour Weekend all the athletes and reserves were able to meet each other and the coaches and management team. We were able to confirm placements on the team based not only on athletic performance but ability to get along as a group and travel overseas for a month. The selected team gelled incredibly well and the athletes, coaches and management team will all now begin the hard-core training that will last for the next eight months.”

Mr Torrance, a fire fighter from Dunedin, leads the first all-volunteer management and coaching team. Mr Torrance was been appointed to the position after serving as the Otago Team Manager at the 2009 Special Olympics National Summer Games in Palmerston North. He was also the Special Olympics New Zealand basketball head coach for the 2007 World Summer Games in Shanghai; that team brought home a gold medal.

The team will leave New Zealand on 14 June and spend five days at a training camp in Loutraki, approximately 100 km from Athens. From there, it will spend five days on the island of Rhodes for a Host Town Programme.

Kathy Gibson, Special Olympics New Zealand Chief Executive, says “the Host Town Programme is designed to give the athletes an opportunity to learn about the culture of Greece. During the stay, athletes will also get to know each other better before the competition begins.

“Special Olympics is not about elite sport. We offer training and competition for all levels of sporting ability and our focus is on life-long participation. Attending a World Games is one part of an athletes’ sporting pathway.”

Representing New Zealand is a huge accomplishment for the athletes on the team, says Mrs Gibson. “Some of the athletes,” she says, “have not travelled outside New Zealand before. While this trip is a fantastic opportunity to compete in a world sporting event, when asked what they like most about Special Olympics, many of the athletes will say it is the camaraderie and friendship. Through Special Olympics sport, they have a chance to participate more fully in the community.”

The Opening Ceremony for the World Games will be on 25 June at the Olympic Stadium; the Closing Ceremony will be on 4 July at Kallimarmaron Panathinaikon Stadium. The 2011 World Summer Games will be the biggest sporting event in the world in 2011. It will draw 7500 athletes from 185 countries who will compete in 22 sports. Athletes will be supported by 2500 coaches, 3,000 officials/referees and 25,000 volunteers. The Games will be reported worldwide by 3,000 media representatives.

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About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organisation that changes lives by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to more than 3.5 million athletes in over 170 countries in all regions of the world, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and other related programs. More than 5400 children and adults throughout New Zealand participate in the 14 different Olympic-type summer and winter sports offered by Special Olympics New Zealand. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realise their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics New Zealand at www.specialolympics.org.nz

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Special Olympics New Zealand 2011 World Summer Games Team

Head of Delegation	Rob Torrance, Dunedin
Assistant Head of Delegation	Shayne Crabtree, Hawke's Bay
Team Doctor	Paul Johns, Dunedin
Additional Staff	Helen Johnson, Manawatu Margaret Baker, Hawke's Bay
Reserve Staff	Peter Makara, Waikato

Aquatics

Dave Burrowes, Head Coach, Hutt Valley
Maria Smith, Coach, Wellington

Edward Borkin	Tamaki
Sam Donaldson	Wanganui
Almitra Langton	Hutt Valley
Teresa Nicol	North Harbour
Jody Sanson	North Taranaki
Eru Whakatihi	Horowhenua

Reserves:

Aaron Craig	South Otago
Samuel Muir-James	Counties
Rachel Oemcke	Manawatu
Sherryl Saunders	Southland
Adam Shatford	Marlborough

Athletics

Max Brooking, Head Coach, North Taranaki
Paul Kirkwood, Coach, Wellington

Mitchell Brown	Tauranga
Scott Lilley	Canterbury
Hayley Long	Canterbury
Andrew Oswin	Canterbury
Rowena Perston	Manukau
Ryan Smith	Manawatu
Kwame Williams-Accra	Wellington

Basketball

Al Robson, Head Coach, Canterbury
Mau McClutchie, Coach, Waikato
Ken McEwen, Coach, Manawatu

David Anderson	Waikato
Neemia Auva'a	Auckland

Michael Banner	Kapiti
Craig Bennett	Canterbury
Michael Friend	Canterbury
Michael McGregor	Wanganui
Richard Parks	Wellington
Wirimu Pomare	Papakura
Peter Rielly	Otago
Richard Skinner	Nelson

Bowling

Ian Baldwin, Head Coach, Hawke's Bay

Alison Saunders, Coach, Southland

Cheryl Brieseman	North Taranaki
William Burr	Howick-Pakuranga
Naomi Jackson	Manukau
Adrian Rowe	Rotorua
Anna-Marie Stevens	Waitakere
Hamish Taverner	Manawatu
Christopher Tearle	Hawke's Bay

Reserves

Jason Boyce	Auckland
Matthew Caldwell	Southland
Alan Coleman	Rotorua

Equestrian

Amanda Bashford, Head Coach, Marlborough

Devon Tretheway-Koppers	Waikato
Thomas Sutton	Canterbury

Reserve

Amy Batchelor	Canterbury
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Golf

Brian Telfer, Head Coach, Hutt Valley

Nigel Old	Tauranga
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Powerlifting

Nigel Burgess, Head Coach, Nelson

Dominic Crowe	Southland
Leigh Donald	Manawatu
Clayton Marr	Nelson