

## Biography



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### Mark Zupan

Quadriplegic Rugby Player and Star of the Documentary Film  
*Murderball*

Zupan is the star of the film *Murderball*, winner of the 2005 Sundance Festival Documentary Audience Award. Paralyzed in a car accident during college, Zupan began playing quad rugby soon after, and most recently, won gold as part of the US team at the Beijing Paralympic Games in 2008.

Zupan has excelled both in academics and sports, playing varsity high school football and soccer growing up. His soccer prowess earned him a scholarship to Florida Atlantic University. A cold wet Florida night on October 14, 1993, Zupan had wandered from celebrating his soccer team's victory and sought refuge in a friend's pickup truck. Eventually his friend (Chris Igoe) left the college bar and preceded home not knowing that Zupan was nestled in the back of the truck.

Highway I-95 is notorious, but never more so then that fateful night. Igoe's erratic driving was noticed by an off duty policemen and his girlfriend. They proceeded to follow close behind him all the way to a fence post, which eventually claimed the truck.

For several hours after the accident no one saw Zupan, including the policeman who had witnessed the accident. It wasn't until 14 hours later that a passerby discovered him clinging to a branch in a canal.

Mark Zupan's ability to survive hypothermia and quadriplegia to become a Georgia Tech graduate, civil engineer, two time quad rugby national champion, 2004 quad rugby player of the year, world class Olympic quad rugby bronze medal winner, and spokesman for Team USA all show what a positive mind can do.

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Zupan was the featured subject of a documentary titled *Murderball* (July 2005). The film is a chronicle of quadriplegic rugby on and off the court. It features Zupan and his team's journey to the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, Greece. The film exposes the fast-moving competitions as they grapple, defend, and attack each other on the courts, and the challenges and accomplishments of their disabilities off the courts.

Zupan is also a hard-edged motivator who destroys the stereotypes about people with spinal cord injuries. His story was published in 2006 in the autobiography, *Gimp*.