

= Angie Ballard =

Angela " Angie " Ballard (born 6 June 1982) is an Australian Paralympic athlete who competes in T53 wheelchair sprint events . She became a paraplegic at age 7 due to a car accident .

She began competing in wheelchair racing in 1994 , and first represented Australia in 1998 . Over four Paralympic Games from 2000 to 2012 , she has won three silver and two bronze medals . Her current coach is Louise Sauvage and her training partner is Madison de Rozario .

Ballard held athletics scholarships at the Australian Institute of Sport from 1999 to 2001 , and The University of Sydney (while studying first commerce and then psychology) , and also represents the New South Wales Institute of Sport . She has been appointed by a number of organisations as a disability or sports ambassador , and currently sits on the board of Wheelchair Sports NSW .

= = Personal = =

Ballard was born on 6 June 1982 in Canberra . At the age of seven , she became a (T10) paraplegic after a car accident , when her mother lost control of the car through fatigue . Following the accident , her initial hospitalisation and rehabilitation was in Canberra for three months , among elderly amputees . Her rehabilitation was then moved to the Royal North Shore Hospital , where she met Christie Dawes (née Skelton) , who she would later race with in the Australian 4x100 m relay team at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics . Because her brother had spina bifida , and was already " in the [regular] system " , her parents insisted that Angie continue at a regular school , rather than one specifically for disabled students . She attended Lyneham Primary School and Lyneham High School in Canberra . Her physical education teacher was one of the people who first encouraged her to participate in wheelchair sports . After her rehabilitation she tried swimming and wheelchair basketball . Her first experiences of racing at the age of 12 resulted in blisters and a sore neck , but wheelchair athletics soon became her passion . At age 14 , after treatment for scoliosis , Ballard was unable to participate in sport for a year .

She was offered a scholarship with the ACT Academy of Sport and she then took up an athletics scholarship at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra from 1999 to 2001 . In 2002 , she moved to Sydney to attend university on a sports scholarship , initially studying commerce . As of 2011 , she was living in Liberty Grove , New South Wales and attending the University of Sydney studying for a Bachelor of Psychology , with the intention of practising as a psychologist . She graduated and received an Alumni Award in 2014 .

= = Athletics = =

Ballard is a wheelchair racing athlete , competing mainly in category T53 sprint events . Compared to T54 athletes , she has less use of her abdominal muscles , which means she cannot raise herself as much in her wheelchair to get the best angle to propel herself forward .

Ballard first entered competitive wheelchair races in 1994 , at the age of twelve . Her first racing wheelchair was bought second hand . By 1997 , she started taking the sport more seriously and began setting records in Australian athletics for her classification . A year later she was representing her country on the international stage . By 2000 , she held national records in the T53 100 m and 200 m events .

From 2002 she held a sports scholarship at the University of Sydney , where she was coached by Andrew Dawes (Christie 's husband) . At the time , Dawes also coached Louise Sauvage , and on occasion the two would train together . After Sauvage retired from competitive wheelchair athletics following the 2004 Games , she became Ballard 's coach . As of 2012 her training partner is Madison de Rozario .

= = = Paralympics = = =

Ballard competed in Sydney in the 2000 Summer Paralympics but did not win any medals , placing

fourth in both the 100 m and 200 m events ; she was also a torch bearer , and featured in the entertainment section of the opening ceremony , where she circled the track 12 @. @ 3 metres (40 ft) in the air , suspended by a blimp and giant inflated angels . In preparation for the 2004 Athens Paralympics , Ballard trained six days a week in 11 sessions . Her training included going to Centennial Park and training on the hills there . It also included track work twice a week and doing weight training at least three times a week . This training schedule caused a few injuries , so she reduced the training frequency for later Games .

Just before the Games , she competed in a warm up event in Switzerland , and set Australian records in the 100 m , 400 m and 800 m events . At the 2004 games , she won a bronze medal in the T53 100 m , behind Tanni Grey @-@ Thompson and Francesca Porcellato . Her goal for the 2008 Beijing Paralympics was to set a personal best , but she also had eyes on a medal . She took the year off her psychology degree to train six times a week . At the 2008 games , along with her team mates Christie Dawes , Madison de Rozario , and Jemima Moore , she achieved her best Paralympic result , winning a silver medal behind China 's world record in the T53 / 54 4x100 m relay . In the individual events , she finished fifth in the women 's T53 100 m event (a race won in world record time by Huang Lisha) , seventh in the women 's T53 200 m event (also won in a world record time by Huang) , seventh in the women 's T53 400 m event , and led out the women 's 800 m final , eventually finishing sixth . After a couple of sub @-@ par competition results in 2011 , Ballard made big changes to her diet , gloves , technique , chair position , and training regime . She entered the 2012 London Paralympics ranked world number one in both the T53 100 m and 200 m . At the games , Ballard participated in the T53 class events for 100 m , 200 m , 400 m and 800 m events . She won two silver medals in the 200 m and 400 m T53 events , and a bronze medal in the 100 m T53 event .

= = = World championships = = =

In August 1998 , Ballard competed at the International Paralympic Committee World Championships in Birmingham , England , where she was part of the gold medal winning Australian women 's 4 x100 m and 4x400 m relay teams . Both relay wins set long @-@ standing world records . In the 2002 World Championships , she won gold in the 100 m . At the 2013 IPC Athletics World Championships in Lyon , France , she won silver medals in the Women 's 100 m , Women 's 200 m and Women 's 800 m T53 and a bronze medal in the 400 m T53 .

At the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha , Ballard won gold medals in the Women 's 200m T53 in a championship record time of 29 @. @ 33 and the Women 's 400m T53 . After winning the 400 m , Ballard said : " This is the one I wanted . I was so nervous coming in , you try and tell yourself that the worst thing that can happen is a loss and starting again tomorrow , but the reality is that this matters so much . I was so scared before the race , perhaps it gave me the adrenalin to get it done . I ? ve just worked so hard for this for so long . " She also won a bronze medal in the Women 's 800 mm T54 behind gold medallist Madison de Rozario .

= = = World Cup = = =

In the inaugural Paralympic World Cup in Manchester in 2005 , Ballard placed third in the Women 's T53 100 m .

= = = Australian titles = = =

Ballard won the 100 m women 's wheelchair open title in 1998 , 2001 , 2002 , 2004 , 2005 and 2008 , and finished second in 2000 , 2003 , 2010 , and 2011 . In the 200 m event , she won gold in 1998 , 1999 , 2001 , 2002 , 2004 , 2008 and 2010 , silver in 2000 and 2005 and bronze in 2006 . In the 400 m , she won gold in 1999 , 2000 , 2001 , 2005 , 2008 and 2010 , silver in 2004 and bronze in 2002 and 2006 . In the 800 m , she won gold in 1999 and 2001 , silver in 2000 and 2005 , and bronze in 2002 and 2004 . In the 1500 m , she won gold in 2005 and 2010 .

In 1999 , she competed at Australia 's Junior Wheelchair Nationals . She won five gold medals at those games and was named the event 's Female Athlete of the Games .

Ballard won a gold and silver at the 2011 Sydney Track Classic . At the 2012 competition , Ballard set personal bests and Oceania records for the 100 m (in a time of 17 @.@ 27 s) , 200 m (30 @.@ 12 s) and 400 m (56 @.@ 89 s) events .

= = = Long distance events = = =

Ballard also sometimes competes in longer distance events , in which the disability classifications are usually combined , so she competes against athletes in the higher T54 classification . She represented Australia in the 800 m (T54) at the 2006 Commonwealth Games , placing 6th in the final . At the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games , she won a gold medal in the 1500 m T54 . She has also raced in and helped organise the 10 km Oz Day wheelchair race , placing 2nd in 1999 , 3rd in 2005 , and 3rd in 2012 . In 1998 , together with Louise Sauvage , Christie Skelton , and Holly Ladmore , she completed an 845 @.@ kilometre (525 mi) relay from Byron Bay to Bondi Beach , which raised \$ 200 @.@ 000 for disabled athletes .

= = = World records = = =

29 May 2015 at the IPC Athletics Grand Prix in Nottwil , Switzerland ? Women ? s 400m T53 world record with a time of 54 @.@ 73 seconds .

4 June 2015 at IPC sanctioned Daniela Jutzeler Memorial Para @.@ athletics Meet , Arbon , Switzerland ? Women ? s 400m T53 world record with a time of 54 @.@ 70

4 June 2015 at IPC sanctioned Daniela Jutzeler Memorial Para @.@ athletics Meet , Arbon , Switzerland ? Women ? s 800m T53 world record with a time of 1 : 47 @.@ 48 .

5 June 2016 at Indy Invitational Meet in Indianapolis , USA - Women 's 400m T53 world record with a time of 54 @.@ 69 .

= = Advocacy and patronage = =

Ballard has been appointed as an ambassador or advocate by a number of organisations with an interest in people with disabilities , sport , health , or exercise . In 2000 she was selected for Team MAA (Motor Accidents Authority) , to discuss road trauma with other young people . In 2005 she was appointed as an ambassador for Technical Aid to the Disabled . She helped recruit volunteers , attended fundraisers , posed for photos and showed them her medal . Later that year she also visited patients at the Westmead Children 's Hospital alongside a number of celebrities to help them celebrate Christmas . In 2007 Ballard was chosen as an ambassador for Walk to Work Day . She is on the board of the Wheelchair Sports Association of New South Wales .

Alongside a number of other university @.@ affiliated athletes , Ballard attended a press conference to oppose the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism .

= = Recognition = =

1999 ? ACT Academy of Sport Athlete of the year in the Disabled Category

2013 and 2014 ? Athletics Australia Female Para @.@ Athlete of the Year

October 2014 ? Awarded the Nigel C Barker Graduate Medal for Sporting Achievement by a recent graduate of the University of Sydney .