

= Mark Soyer =

Mark Soyer is an Australian para @-@ alpine LW11 classified skier . He dealt with leukaemia twice as a child . At the age of 26 , he severed his spinal cord during an accident while riding his motorbike on his parents ' farm , and subsequently tried several different sports . Working as a manufacturing jeweller and gemologist in Melbourne , he has also been involved with para @-@ skiing as a volunteer , and serving in administrative roles for various organisations . In 2007 , he was a finalist for the Pride of Australia awards for courage .

Soyer took up skiing following his accident after attending a camp in Australia . He then travelled to Colorado to attend another camp , before coming back to Australia to attend another camp . In 2007 , he was ranked as Australia 's second best sit @-@ skier , and was in the top 50 skiers in the world . He attempted to make the 2010 Winter Paralympics . He earned bronze medals at skiing events in New Zealand in 2011 . In 2012 , he was a member of the Australian Paralympic skiing team , based out of the Australian Institute of Sports , and was trying to secure a spot for the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi , Russia .

= = Personal = =

As a three @-@ year @-@ old , Soyer was diagnosed with leukaemia , and doctors were pessimistic about his chances for survival . Despite being declared cancer free by the age of six , the cancer came back when he was eight years old . As a child , he played Australian rules football and was a member of Little Athletics . He attended Benalla College .

In November 2004 , at the age of 26 , Soyer severed his spinal cord during an accident while riding his motorbike on his parents ' farm . He was keen to exercise as soon as he could during his rehabilitation . He tried several sports , including wheelchair tennis , wheelchair rugby and wheelchair basketball , following his accident in an attempt to find one that made him feel able @-@ bodied . He drove dune buggies and tried kayaking , and in 2007 was learning how to para @-@ glide .

In 2007 and 2008 , Soyer worked as a manufacturing jeweller and gemologist in Melbourne . He volunteers for Disabled Winter Sport Australia as a ski guide . From 2005 to 2008 , he raised more than AUD \$ 7 @,@ 500 to assist other Australian para @-@ skiers afford equipment to compete . At the same time , he also gave skiing lessons . He is also on the board of Able Management Group , an organisation assisting people with disabilities to get into para @-@ alpine skiing , where he serves on the Fundraising Committee . He was involved in the founding of the AMG Free Ride Team . He is also part of the Australian Paralympic Committee 's WorkCoverSA Paralympian Speakers Program . In 2007 , he helped conduct three adaptive skiing camps in Victoria , and was a finalist for the Pride of Australia awards for courage .

= = Skiing = =

Soyer is an LW11 classified skier , who skied before his accident . He took up sit @-@ skiing while rehabilitating from his injuries , and was able to adapt to a mono @-@ ski within the first day of trying it at a Disability Wintersport Australia camp at Falls Creek . Before the year was out following that camp , he went to Colorado and participated in a skiing camp specifically for people who use monoskis . During the following Australian ski season , he participated in a learn to ski race camp at Thredbo .

Soyer trains at Mount Hotham and Falls Creek in Australia , and in Colorado in the United States . In 2007 , he was ranked as Australia 's second best sit @-@ skier and was in the top 50 skiers in the world . In December of that year , he competed at the Hartford Ski Spectacular at the Beaver Run Resort in Breckenridge , Colorado where he finished thirteenth in the giant slalom , with a time of 1 : 09 @.@ 12 in his first run , and 1 : 08 @.@ 67 in his second run for a combined run time of 2 : 17 @.@ 79 .

In 2008 , Soyer was trying to qualify for the 2010 Winter Paralympics . At that time , he was the

second ranked skier in his class in Australia , and ranked in the top 60 in the world . Going into the 2008 / 2009 ski season , he needed to raise AUD \$ 20 @, @ 000 to allow him to compete internationally to qualify for the Games . In August 2009 , he competed in the Winter Games NZ at Coronet Peak in the men 's sitting LW11 slalom event . At the 2011 New Zealand Winter Games , he finished third in the men 's sitting giant slalom event with a time of 1 : 46 @. @ 08 . Arriving late to the event , he did not have much training time to learn the course . At another skiing event in 2011 in Mt Hutt , New Zealand , he finished third in the Super G. He competed at the 2011 IPC Alpine Skiing Noram Cup at Copper Mountain , Colorado , where he earned three fourth @- @ place finishes and one seventh @- @ place finish . Early in his trip , prior to competing , he broke his race ski and had equipment difficulties at the Noram Cup as a result . He had a time of 2 : 00 @. @ 69 in the giant slalom race . In 2012 , he was a member of the Australian Paralympic skiing team , based out of the Australian Institute of Sports , and was trying to secure a spot for the 2014 Winter Paralympics . In January 2012 , he was in Austria to compete at the Abtenau IPCAS . That year , Liberty Skis Corporation signed him to its professional team .