

Team Toyota Adds 14 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Summer Athletes and Hopefuls to its Roster

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PLANO, Texas (March 6, 2019) – For Team Toyota, mobility is more than just physical, it's facing challenges and chasing dreams. In advance of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, Toyota welcomes 14 new Team USA athletes and hopefuls and three returning U.S. Paralympians to Team Toyota.

From breaking down barriers to defying the odds and overcoming physical limitations, Team Toyota's newest group of athletes have challenged the status quo and inspire people across the world to do the same.

"Whether it's here in the United States or on the global stage, these Team Toyota athletes inspire others to believe in their own strength, determination, and ability to achieve their dreams," said Ed Laukes, group vice president, Toyota Marketing, Toyota Motor North America. "As the Human Movement Company, we have an opportunity through these athlete partnerships to show people that no matter the challenge, when a person is free to move, anything is possible."

After launching its global "Start Your Impossible" campaign prior to the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, Toyota has continued to emphasize its commitment to creating an ever-better society through the freedom of movement. In partnering with Team Toyota athletes, the company has been able to share in this dedication and encourage others to do the same.

"Each athlete has overcome his or her own limitations and provides a unique voice to our mobility message," said Dedra DeLilli, group manager, Olympic and Paralympic marketing, Toyota Motor North America. "By partnering with these incredible individuals, we're not only able to support them throughout their Olympic and Paralympic journeys, but we're also able to connect with people around the world and tell our Toyota story."

In addition to the 14 Team USA athletes and hopefuls who have joined Team Toyota, U.S. Paralympians Oksana Masters, Brad Snyder and Jarryd Wallace also continue to represent Toyota heading into the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.

"I could not be more proud or excited to have Toyota by my side as I prepare for Tokyo," said Oksana Masters, a four-time U.S. Paralympian. "Toyota is committed to providing mobility for all and that's something that is very personal to me. I can't wait to continue this partnership with Toyota and share my own story while encouraging everyone out there to get up and chase their dreams – no matter how big or small they may be."

Team Toyota summer athletes include:

Jordyn Barratt (USA Skateboarding): a two-time X Games medalist, Barratt began skateboarding at 11 years old. In 2016, she became the first female to compete in both skating and surfing at the VANS US OPEN where she podiumed in skateboarding. Now 19 years old, Barratt hopes to compete in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 where skateboarding will make its Olympic Games debut.

David Boudia (USA Diving): a three-time U.S. Olympian, Boudia has four Olympic Medals to his name, including a gold medal won at the Olympic Games London 2012. After his most recent Olympic appearance in Rio, Boudia took a break from diving before deciding in 2017 to begin competing again.

David Brown and guide runner Jerome Avery (U.S. Paralympics Track & Field): diagnosed with Kawasaki disease, resulting in Glaucoma, Brown lost his sight at 13 years old. He began competing in track while attending the Missouri School for the Blind and first attended the Paralympic Games in 2008 after winning an essay contest. Since then, Brown has become a two-time Paralympian. Brown won the gold medal in the 100-meter event at the Paralympic Games Rio 2016 alongside guide runner Avery, a four-time Paralympic guide runner, who began competing with Brown in 2014.

Caeleb Dressel (USA Swimming): competed in his first Olympic Games in Rio in 2016, winning a gold medal in the 4×100-meter freestyle and 4×100-meter freestyle and 4×100-meter medley relay. Dressel recently graduated from the University of Florida where he was named a NCAA Co-Swimmer of the Year in 2016 and most recently was named 2018 SEC Male Athlete of the Year.

Laurie Hernandez (USA Gymnastics): a two-time Olympic medalist, Hernandez overcame an injury in 2016 to make her Olympic Games debut in Rio in 2016 where she won gold (team) and silver (beam). She regularly volunteers for non-profit organizations and is a literacy champion, bringing young people together across the country to build literacy in their communities.

Daryl Homer (USA Fencing): a two-time U.S. Olympian, Homer won the silver medal in individual saber at the Olympic Games Rio 2016. He has partnered with several global non-profits to bring sports to the forefront of youth engagement, recently being named an athlete role model for the Summer Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018.

Jessica Long (U.S. Paralympics Swimming): the second-most decorated U.S. Paralympian in history with 23 Paralympic medals (13 gold), Long began competitive swimming at 12 years old. Born in Siberia and adopted at 13 months old, Long grew up in Maryland and had both legs amputated below the knee at 18 months old after having been born without fibulas, ankles, heels and most of the other bones in her feet.

Simone Manuel (USA Swimming): competed in the Olympic Games Rio 2016 where she won two gold medals (4×100-meter medley, 100-meter freestyle) and two silver medals (4×100-meter freestyle, 50-meter freestyle), becoming the first African-American to win an individual Olympic gold medal in swimming. Manuel is passionate about inspiring children and encouraging all people to pursue their dreams.

Oksana Masters (U.S. Paralympics Cycling): a four-time U.S. Paralympian, Masters returns to Team Toyota after winning five medals at the 2018 Paralympic Games. Masters has competed at the Paralympic Games in both the winter and summer in Nordic skiing, cycling and rowing, winning eight medals overall. As a child, Masters had both legs amputated above the knee after she was born with birth defects as a direct cause of the nuclear accident at Chernobyl in Ukraine.

Michael Norman (USA Track & Field): an Olympic hopeful, Norman competed on the University of Southern California's (USC) track and field team from 2017-18 where he won NCAA indoor and outdoor titles in the men's 400-meter dash and set an indoor world record and outdoor collegiate fastest time in the same event. Norman continues to pursue his undergraduate degree at USC while continuing his track and field career.

Lakey Peterson (USA Surfing): became the first female to pull an aerial maneuver in surfing competition at age 14. Peterson has competed with the World Surf League since 2010, most recently winning the Roxy Pro Gold Coast competition in Australia in 2018, and is currently ranked No. 2 in the world.

Steve Serio (National Wheelchair Basketball Association): a three-time Paralympian, Serio won the gold medal in wheelchair basketball during the Paralympic Games Rio 2016. Serio was paralyzed after undergoing surgery at 11 months old to have a spinal tumor removed and began playing wheelchair basketball at 15 years old.

Brad Snyder (USA Paratriathlon): a returning Team Toyota athlete and two-time U.S. Paralympian, Snyder grew up swimming and was the captain of his swim team at the U.S. Naval Academy. In 2011, while serving in the U.S. Navy in Afghanistan, Snyder was blinded by an improvised explosive device. He made his debut at the Paralympic Games London 2012 and won gold medals in the 100m freestyle and 400m freestyle.

Melissa Stockwell (USA Paratriathlon): while deployed in Iraq with the U.S. Army, 1LT (ret) Stockwell lost her leg after her vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb, becoming the first female to ever lose a limb in active combat. She went on to compete in the Paralympic Games Beijing 2008 in the sport of swimming and turned to the sport of triathlon soon after. Stockwell won a bronze medal in the PT2 paratriathlon division at the Paralympic Games Rio 2016. Her favorite job is being a mom to her two young kids.

Jarryd Wallace (U.S. Paralympics Track & Field): a two-time U.S. Paralympian, Wallace returns to Team Toyota. Wallace has competed in track and field since high school and in 2007, during his junior year, he was diagnosed with compartment syndrome. Three years later, following complications from surgery, he had a below-the-knee amputation. In addition to training, Wallace is an executive producer on a documentary called “Race to Tokyo.”

Alise Willoughby (USA Cycling): a two-time U.S. Olympian and World Champion in BMX racing, Willoughby began racing at the age of six. Willoughby has had a storied career, winning a silver medal at the Olympic Games Rio 2016, and several other notable accolades along her journey as the winningest rider in USA BMX history.

In March of 2015, Toyota became a TOP (The Olympic Partner) of the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee in the newly created mobility category for 2017 through 2024. In addition to its relationship with the IOC and IPC, Toyota is a partner of Team USA; the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Association; US Speedskating; U.S. Figure Skating; USA Hockey and the U.S. National Sled Hockey Team; USA Curling; USA Skateboarding; USA Surfing; USA Swimming; USA Track & Field; USA Triathlon; the National Wheelchair Basketball Association; U.S. Paralympics Alpine Skiing; U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing; U.S. Paralympics Snowboarding; U.S. Paralympics Cycling; U.S. Paralympics Swimming; and U.S. Paralympics Track & Field.

Beyond the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Toyota strategically uses its relationships with sports properties and athletes as a way to connect with consumers in the United States. The brand has relationships with more than 40 major sports teams and nearly 30 major sports.