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# Paralympian swimmers Lili-Fox Mason and Gabriella Smith recognised with Paralympic Pin Presentation

Theme:  
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 Paralympian swimmers Lili-Fox Mason and Gabriella Smith recognised with Paralympic Pin Presentation

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Co-authored by Steve Landells, Paralympics NZ

 Paralympics New Zealand

The 2024 ParaFed Canterbury Awards Function provided the ideal setting as Christchurch-based teenage duo [Paralympian #235 Lili-Fox Mason](#) and [Paralympian #237 Gabriella “Gaby” Smith](#) were presented with their official numbered pins by Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ).

An official numbered pin is [presented to every individual](#) who represents New Zealand at the Paralympic Games. A Paralympian receives their number once they have competed at their first Paralympic Games. PNZ first introduced the numbers in 2019 to give official recognition to Paralympians who had represented New Zealand.

Lili-Fox, who made her Paralympic debut at Paris 2024, said: “To have represented New Zealand and be presented with my Paralympic Pin is a dream come true. Competing at Paris 2024 was such an incredible experience, and I feel so honoured to be a part of the New Zealand Paralympic family.”

Diagnosed with leukaemia at the age of three-and-a-half and struggling with a virus during treatment, Lili-Fox was left with limited movement from her hip and down her right leg. Her lack of mobility left her struggling to play sports which required running, but she found freedom in the swimming pool, starting out in primary school competitions before joining the Wharenui Swimming Club at the age of 12.

Making her international debut in 2022, the 19-year-old, who works as a lifeguard for Christchurch City Council, finished 11th in the Women’s 400m Freestyle S10 and 13th in the Women’s Butterfly S10 at Paris 2024.

For Gaby, who made her Paralympic debut at Paris 2024, she said: “The pin means a great deal to me and my family – something I will be forever proud of. Every milestone I have reached has been possible thanks to the unwavering support of ParaFed Canterbury, my coaches, teammates, family and friends.

“From the early days of learning to swim the ParaFed Canterbury community has been my backbone, encouraging me through challenges and celebrating my successes. That’s why it is so special to be presented the pin at this prizegiving.”

Gaby, who was born without a left hand, was introduced to competitive racing through ParaFed Canterbury as an 11-year-old. Making her international debut in 2022, the 18-year-old competed in three events at Paris 2024, finishing seventh in the Women’s 100m Breaststroke SM9 final and eighth in the Women’s 200m Individual Medley SM10 after setting a personal best of 2:38.82 in her heat. She also placed 12th in the Women’s 400m Freestyle S10.

Paralympics New Zealand CEO Greg Warnecke said: “It is always a source of enormous pride when Paralympians are presented with their Paralympic pin. Lili-Fox and Gaby very much represent the next generation, and we look forward to watching their progression in future.”

Congratulations to [Paralympian #208 Will Stedman](#) for winning the ParaFed Canterbury Sportsperson of the Year award. Will enjoyed a fabulous year winning Men’s 400m T36 gold and Men’s Long Jump T36 silver at the Kobe 2024 Para Athletics World Championships before later taking silver in the Men’s 400m T36 at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

-Ends-

**Notes:**

## About the New Zealand Paralympic Team

- NZ Paralympic Team strives to challenge perceptions towards disability, showcasing high performance athletes who prove anything is possible.
- Since Tel Aviv 1968 Paralympic Games, 237 New Zealand Paralympians have been part of New Zealand Paralympic Teams competing at 27 Paralympic Games (15 summer and 12 winter) winning a staggering 245 medals (210 in summer and 35 in winter).

## About Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ)

Paralympics New Zealand is the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) for New Zealand. We are a charity and our overall vision is ‘Transforming lives through Para sport’. As a member of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), we are part of a worldwide social change movement, which uses the power of sport to positively influence community perceptions of disabled people and to promote a more diverse and inclusive society.

- To do this, we support and celebrate the achievements of Para athletes at international and national competitions all year round. Every two years, we lead New Zealand teams to the Paralympic Games. We also work in the local community to advocate for sport to become more accessible for disabled people and to support the creation of more systems and programmes to enable participation in Para sport.
- Our funding comes from a mix of public donations, fundraisers, philanthropic partners, commercial partners, plus government and community grants, which together make our Para sport, community and advocacy programmes possible.
- To find out more about us, please visit [about us](#)
- To support Paralympics New Zealand click [here](#)
- Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

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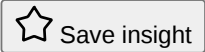
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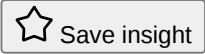
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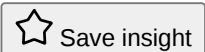
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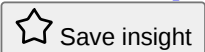
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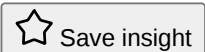
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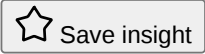
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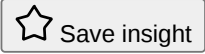
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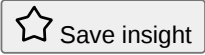
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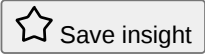
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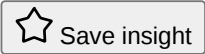
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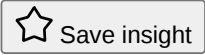
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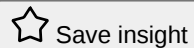
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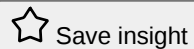
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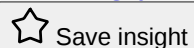
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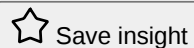
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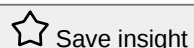
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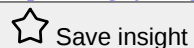
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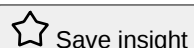
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