



Welcome back <<First Name>>, this quarter we have lots to share with you:

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### [Message from the Olympians' Commission Chair](#)

December has rolled up like a steam train and as the year draws to a close we bring you the final edition of the Olympians' Newsletter for 2019.

James Nation (#935) is our profiled Olympians' Commission member.



2019 was a busy year for the Olympians' Commission. We've continued our efforts to engage with the NZ Olympian family in different ways. We piloted an Olympian to Olympian mentoring program to assess the interest and resources needed to run an expanded program, which delivered valuable insights and contributed to a broader pilot study conducted by the World Olympians Association. The inaugural sustainability / tree planting day at Long Bay in May was a huge success. Following the World Olympians Forum and IOC Athletes' Forum in April we've consciously built closer ties with the NZOC's Athletes' Commission and are working together to create a clear pathway for Olympians from competition through to transitioning out of active competition and finding other opportunities to maintain their connection with the Olympic family if they wish to do so. Athlete representation and rights, athlete wellbeing, gender issues and integrity matters have been important continuing themes. We've been fortunate to have Kiwi Olympians playing leading roles in advancing some of these topics such as Sarah Walker's (#1101) Chairing of the Athletes' Rights and Responsibilities Declaration steering group and Ben Sandford (#991) recently being elected as the Chair of the WADA Athletes' Commission.

As we look forward to 2020, the year will kick off with the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne. New Zealand will be sending a team of 20 exciting young athletes. We wish them all the best as they compete on the world stage, many for the first time. A number of Kiwi Olympians will also be travelling to Lausanne for the IOC Commissions week meetings so New Zealand's voice will continue to be heard at these international forums. Undoubtedly, the highlight for next year will be the Games of the XXXII Olympiad – aka Tokyo 2020. Preparations for Tokyo are well advanced and excitement is building. Remember that if you are travelling to Tokyo, in addition to NZOC's NZ House,

as Olympians you have access to OLY House - the World Olympians Association's hospitality venue. OLY House will be located in the Nations Village right by the new Tokyo fish market and will be open throughout the Games for all Olympians. For more information and to register, check out <https://olympians.org/tokyo-2020/>.

Last but definitely not least, I would like to thank the staff of the New Zealand Olympic Committee, in particular Cathleen Bias, Tara Pryor and Rob Page for their ongoing support of the Olympians' Commission. I also thank my colleagues on the Olympians' Commission for their time, effort and enthusiasm on the Commission.

I hope you get to enjoy some down time with family and friends during the holidays. 2020 is going to be a big one! Merry Christmas!

**Chantal Brunner OLY (#692)**  
**Chair, NZ Olympians Commission**

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### [NZ Team Uniform Unveiled](#)

We are delighted to share the New Zealand Team village and podium wear for Tokyo 2020 with you.

The range was launched at the annual fundraising Gala by the incredible New Zealand choreographer Parris Goebel's Royal Family dance crew - the dancers were joined on stage by weightlifter David Liti, canoe sprint's Kayla Imrie and other athletes targeting Tokyo.

The uniform sees the silver fern remain at the heart of the New Zealand Team uniform for Tokyo 2020. With the traditional black, the range also includes flashes of Pacific blue while Aotearoa, New Zealand is written in katakana (Japanese script) to show our respect for our hosts.

With technical fabric designed for the heat and lighter colour options for those outside, the Olympic village and podium-wear will ensure the New Zealand Team to Tokyo 2020 is proud to represent our nation on the world stage.

A team-wear, supporters and fan range of kit and other merchandise will go on sale next year for supporters to show their support for the New Zealand Team to Tokyo. Click the image below to view the uniform.



## [Airbnb Opportunity for Olympians](#)

Share your passion and get paid

IOC through their Athlete365 programme have partnered with Airbnb. They are empowering you to get paid for doing what you love.

A new nine-year partnership with Airbnb has been designed with athletes in mind. It offers you the chance to **earn money through a brand new initiative: Airbnb Olympian Experiences.**

See how you could earn through Airbnb... If you have a passion to share, find out more and apply by [CLICKING HERE](#)



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### [JAMES NATION - Profile, Olympian #935](#)

A long-held dream and motivation to represent New Zealand at an Olympic Games became reality for James when he played for the Men's Hockey team at the Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 Olympic games, and the Melbourne Commonwealth Games in 2006.

The allure of the Olympics came after watching hockey being played at the 1984 Los Angeles Games, and became the driving ambition for the hard slog to make it happen. It gets reinforced at random times how unique an experience it is to attend

Olympics, none more so than during a business conference of 300 people the speaker asked for any Olympians in the crowd to stand up. Duly standing, the speaker was blown away when James stood up as he was the first Olympian he had in five years of asking across New Zealand and Australia.



James is still involved in hockey, raising the average age of his club team in Dunedin to at least 23, and coaching school teams. Throughout James' hockey career there have been other Olympians within the sport who have supported his aspirations, but also the wider network of Olympians who are willing to lend a hand. This led him to get involved in the Olympians' Commission in 2015 to help leverage the knowledge of those that have gone before, to help those that are trying to achieve their Olympic ambitions.

The Olympians' Commission works to provide New Zealand's more than 1,300 Olympians opportunities to celebrate their Olympic experience and continue to be engaged in the Olympic movement and with each other. This is being

achieved through initiatives such as the annual Olympian functions, an Olympian to Olympian mentoring programme and offering networking opportunities to connect Olympians.

Aside from Olympians' Commission work James heads up a Dunedin technology company, The Tarn Group, which focuses on online learning. Many of the national sporting organisations use their platform, Bracken, to develop their coaches, officials and volunteers. James also sits on the Board of Trustees for Sport Otago, helping input into the sport and recreation sector across Otago. With children aged 7 and 10, James and his wife Sophie have their hands full with active kids enjoying the varied sports and recreational activities available in Dunedin.

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## [NZ WINTER YOUTH OLYMPIANS - Lausanne 2020](#)

20 New Zealand athletes will compete at Lausanne 2020, with competition starting on 9th January 2020.

11 New Zealand athletes competed at the previous edition of the Winter Youth Olympic Games, with four of those athletes going on to compete at the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games. See the full team of athletes [HERE](#)

Further information can be found on the [Games News Page](#) or through the NZ Team App.



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## THE ROAD TO TOKYO - by Dr Micheal Warren

### Episode 12: Athletics

We are now under 250 days until the Olympic Games kick off in Tokyo on July 24, 2020, and the New Zealand team continues to grow. Over the past few weeks, New Zealand gained quota spots in football and hockey as the men's team qualified in both events. Natalie Rooney also won the Oceania shooting champs gold medal in the women's trap event to qualify a spot for New Zealand at the games and Lizzie Cui also qualified a spot for New Zealand in the 3m diving event.

#### **New Zealand at the Olympic Games: Athletics**

This month's blog will focus on athletics, which is New Zealand's second most successful Olympic sport, winning 24 medals, including 10 gold. However, New

Zealand's first Olympic athletics medal came in 1908 as part of a combined Australasian team. Harry Kerr from Inglewood in Taranaki won bronze in the 3,500m walking event.



*Harry Kerr - New Zealand's first Olympic medal as part of the Australasian team.*

At the 1924 Paris Olympic Games, Arthur Porritt won bronze in the 100m, to date New Zealand's only medal in a sprint event. Porritt would go on to be New Zealand's team manager at the 1934 British Empire Games and the 1936 Olympics. Porritt was a member of the IOC from 1934 to 1967 and also served as New Zealand's 11<sup>th</sup> Governor-General from 1967 to 1972.

On the eve of World War II, Berlin hosted the 1936 Olympic Games, and Jack Lovelock became one of the stars of the game. Under the watchful gaze of Adolf Hitler, Lovelock won gold in the men's 1500m, winning in a world record time. In the final, Lovelock took the lead with 300m remaining and established a sizeable lead over American ironman Glenn Cunningham that he never relinquished, eventually winning in 3min 47.8s.



The 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki would also bring about the creation of another star from New Zealand. This time Yvette Williams would jump into the record books. Williams won the gold medal in the long jump, and her winning distance of 6.24 m was a new Olympic record. With this, Williams became the first New Zealand woman to win an Olympic gold medal. John Holland also won a bronze medal in the 400m hurdles, to round out a successful Olympics for New Zealand.



Four years later in 1956, the Olympic Games were held in the Southern hemisphere for the first time, when Melbourne hosted. Once again New Zealand would stand top of the dais in athletics. In perhaps the most gruelling event of athletics, the 50km walk, Norman Reid claimed the gold medal. The self-proclaimed Pommie-Kiwi won by more than two minutes over more fancied rivals from the Soviet Union.

The 1960 Olympic Games in Rome are known for the 'golden hour' for New Zealand when in the space of one hour New Zealand won two gold medals in athletics. First up was the men's 800m final where outsider Peter Snell surprisingly made the final. In the final, Snell would find himself boxed in for much of the race until the final 80 metres where he broke through to pass Roger Moens of Belgium and George Kerr of the West Indies to win a famous gold medal in Olympic record time. Next up was the final of the 5000m and Murray Halberg started as one of the favourites. In the final, Halberg employed his customary long kick for home with three laps to go. No one could stay with Halberg who ran away for the gold medal. New Zealand was the talk of the town but it wouldn't finish there. In the marathon event, Barry Magee won bronze behind the famous Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia who ran barefoot.



Snell was back four years later in Tokyo and successfully defended his 800m title, in commanding fashion. Snell also lined up in the 1500m, and the result was the same, a gold medal. Snell was joined on the podium by fellow New Zealander John Davies who won bronze. It was also bronze that Marise Chamberlain won in Tokyo, after finishing third in the women's 800m.

There was much discussion over awarding Mexico City the rights to host the 1968 Olympic Games, due to its high altitude, and it was at this high altitude

where Mike Ryan battled his way through the field to claim marathon bronze, behind Mamo Wolde of Ethiopia and Kenji Kimihara of Japan. The Munich Olympic Games of 1972 will always be remembered for the Munich Massacre. But was in Munich where Rod Dixon came to national prominence. Dixon lined up in the 1500m final and ran the race of his life to win the bronze medal behind Pekka Vasala of Finland, and Kipchoge Keino of Kenya.

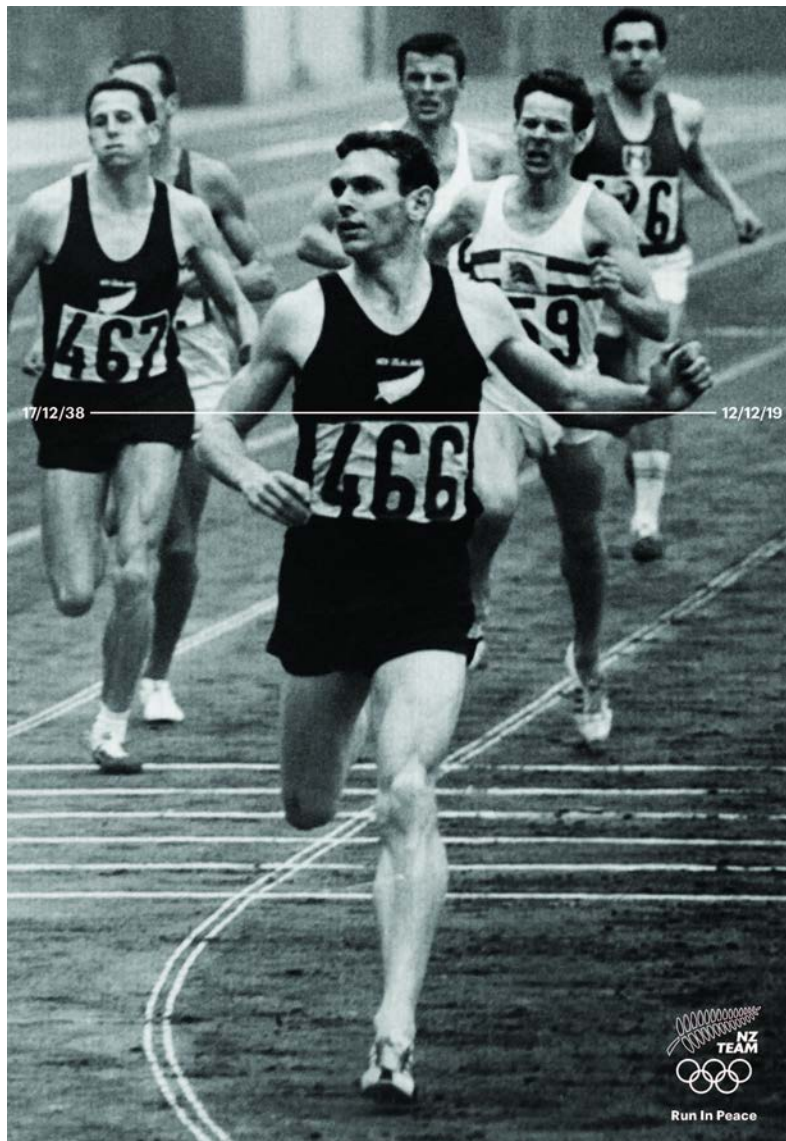
New Zealand found itself at the centre of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, due to the All Blacks rugby tour of South Africa. The tour led to more than 25 African nations boycotting the Games. In the 1500m Filbert Bayi of Tanzania, the world record holder was set to come up against New Zealand's John Walker who in 1975 became the first man to run under 3:50 for the mile. However, due to the boycott, the Bayi-Walker race would not take place, and Walker became favourite to claim gold in the blue ribband event. Walker ran a strategic race in the final, to claim the gold medal. Dick Quax also won silver in the 5000m with Rod Dixon pipped for the bronze in fourth place.

The Spanish city of Barcelona hosted the 1992 Olympic Games, and Lorraine Moller who first represented New Zealand at the 1974 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch competed in her third Olympic marathon. On a hilly course, Moller prospered, winning a famous bronze medal. New Zealand failed to win medals in athletics in 1996, 2000 and 2004. However, in 2008 Valerie Adams won New Zealand's first gold since 1976 winning a dominant gold medal in the women's shot put. To add icing to the cake, Nick Willis won a surprise bronze medal in the men's 1500m event but was later upgraded to silver after original gold medallist Rashid Ramzi of Bahrain failed a subsequent drug test.

Four years later in London, doping would once again be at the centre of athletics. In the women's shot put, Adams was favourite to win gold and defended her title beating Gong Lijiao and Li Ling of China after Belarussian Nadzeya Ostapchuk failed a drug test and was subsequently disqualified. Adams received her gold medal several months after the London Olympics in an emotional medal ceremony at the Cloud in Auckland in front of 2,500 Kiwis. It is the only time an Olympic gold medal has been presented to an athlete on New Zealand soil.

Adams was back four years later in Rio and led for much of the competition before Michelle Carter of the United States threw a huge personal best in the final round to beat Adams into the silver medal. Adams is in training to qualify for Tokyo, which would be her fifth Olympic Games. Three bronze medals were also won in Rio, with Nick Willis becoming the oldest ever 1500m Olympic medallist and the first New Zealander to win multiple medals in the blue riband event. Tom Walsh won bronze in the shot put, becoming the first New Zealand male athlete to win a field medal. The third bronze medal came in the women's pole vault, where Eliza McCartney stunned the field and perhaps herself to win a bronze medal.

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Olympian [Sir Peter Snell](#) #151 - Run in Peace

## OBITUARIES (July-December 2019)

### Remembering those New Zealand Olympians that have left us

#### **SIR PETER SNELL - Olympian #151**

It is with great sadness that the New Zealand Olympic Committee acknowledges the passing of Olympian number 151, Sir Peter Snell.

New Zealand Olympic Committee President Mike Stanley said today Sir Peter was responsible for some of the finest moments in New Zealand sport.

"His achievements are at the heart of New Zealand's sporting history and have helped share our national identity. The Golden Hour in Rome 1960 was followed by back to back gold medals at the Tokyo 1964 Olympic Games. These incredible races stand out in many Kiwi's minds as among our greatest sporting achievements.

For a FULL tribute click [HERE](#)

#### **Sir Peter Snell**

- Rome 1960 Olympic Games: Men's 800m (GOLD)
- Perth 1962 British Empire & Commonwealth Games: Men's 1 Mile (GOLD), Men's 880 Yard (GOLD)
- Tokyo 1964 Olympic Games: Men's 1500m (GOLD), Men's 800m (GOLD)

#### **KEVIN PERCY - Olympian #144**



Acknowledging the passing of another New Zealand Olympian number 144, Mr Kevin Percy who competed with the New Zealand Men's Hockey Team in Rome 1960. Kevin represented New Zealand in 1955, 1958 and between 1960-1962, a well recognised centre-forward from the Wairarapa.



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## MERRY CHRISTMAS

The Team at the New Zealand Olympic Committee and the NZ Olympian's Commission would like to wish you all a very safe and enjoyable festive season. We look forward to further updates in 2020 as our team prepare for Tokyo 2020.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



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