

Patrick Halgren - Toland, Connecticut

In 2014, Patrick nearly died riding his motorcycle. Running late for work, he was speeding, didn't make the turn and hit a boulder that was hidden in the long grass. "I was thrown into a telephone pole," Patrick said. "I woke up a month later and I didn't have a leg." Patrick was in a medically induced coma for weeks. His pelvis was crushed, his ribs went through his lungs, his kidneys failed and his collarbone was smashed. "My parents didn't want me to lose my leg," he said. "But after two weeks, there were infections. I was dying, so they cut the leg off." And then Patrick said the damndest thing: "No leg, but it saved me. I've got to be pumped up about that." After his accident, he got into Paralympic sports almost immediately. He played with the Connecticut Spokebenders wheelchair basketball team. He played sled hockey. Skiing? No, he was afraid of more injury. He had started skiing at age 2, but essentially stopped at 14 as he got into high school sports. A year after his accident he could no longer resist and he headed to Mount Snow. Today, Patrick pushes on with his dreams. His goal is to make the 2022 Paralympics; he wants to compete in multiple para-alpine events. "The great speed, navigating slalom gates; it is both thrilling and entirely challenging. I think I get life now. How it works, I mean. The world keeps spinning no matter what. I get it. I live. That's it. I live. And it's so good."