

APRIL 2022

# JUDO ALBERTA ATHLETE NEWSLETTER



## RECAP: JUDO'S ONES TO WATCH AT THE TOKYO PARALYMPIC GAMES

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=5YNETQAYSRY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YNETQAYSRY)

Nearly 140 athletes competed in judo at the Tokyo Paralympic Games over three days from 27-29 August. Watch this recap of the returning champions and medallists, and an introduction to some new faces. The International Paralympic Committee's vision is to make for an inclusive world through Para sport. The mission is to lead the Paralympic Movement, oversee the delivery of the Paralympic Games and support members to enable Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 8/9: Regional Training Camp
- April 16/17: Pacific International
- April 18-20: Pacific International Camp
- April 22-24: Edmonton International
- April 30-May 1: Girls Camp

# PRISCILLA GAGNÉ: PARALYMPIC MEDALIST

<https://paralympic.ca/team-canada/priscilla-gagne>

Priscilla Gagné was Canada's flag bearer at the 2020 Tokyo Games where she captured Canada's first paralympic Judo medal.

Overcoming challenges is nothing new for Priscilla Gagné. In 2020 she underwent hip surgery and throughout the pandemic had continued to train despite the restrictions including the number of partners she could train with.

Just before the pandemic, Gagné won the bronze medal at the German Open in February 2020 and gold at the Pan Am Para judo championships in January 2020. In 2019, she took the silver medal at the Parapan American Games.

Gagné earned her first major title in 2018 when she won the women's 52 kilos title at the Pan Am Para judo championships in Calgary. That same year she became the first Canadian woman to win a medal in Para judo at the world championships, with a bronze.

She produced her first big international success in judo in 2015 when she won the bronze medal at a Para judo World Cup in Hungary which featured nearly 200 competitors from 31 countries. A few weeks later she added a silver at the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games. The following season she was fifth in her Paralympic Games debut.



Priscilla Gagné

## PRISCILLA GAGNÉ: INTERVIEW

Q: Why did you take up Judo? What was your inspiration?

A: I began Judo at a local YMCA under sensei Bob Sing. I started Judo because there was no wrestling in the Paralympics and I love combat sports. My inspiration was always to be in the games. I started Judo when I was 23 years old in 2009 in Sarnia Ontario.

Q: What is a favourite judo memory you have?

A: One of my favourite memories is probably Andrzej putting the silver medal around my neck in Tokyo on the podium.

Q: What is a valuable lesson learned from Judo?

A: A life lesson I'd pass along is: It's not solely the destination, but it's the gifts and the people throughout the journey to the destinations that matter, and that nothing is impossible for the one who believes. A lesson specific to judo: no matter our differences we can all work together. We can't do anything on our own, we can't train in Judo without partners, we can't compete without an opponent, and we cannot reach our goals and dreams without others in our lives.

Q: What advice do you have for other women and para-athletes in Judo?

A: To other women and para-athletes: Follow your heart with everything you have in you. Live with no regrets and do not allow obstacles to permanently stop you. Sometimes we go around the obstacles, sometimes we go through them. But we're never alone, my faith and God assures me I'm not. My faith has been so encouraging to me both in the good times and challenging times.

Judo Alberta is excited to have Priscilla Gagné attend the 2022 Girls Camp (April 30-May 1).  
Registration is open online.

