2016 Rio Paralympic Games Athlete Profile: Karen Darke





Date of birth 25 June 1971

Home town Hebden Bridge / Halifax, Yorkshire

Based in Inverness

Occupation Athlete and adventurer, speak and author

Sport Handcycling

Classification Womens H3

Events Time trial and road race

Club Inverness Cycling Club

Coach <u>John Hampshire</u>



Personal Bests

- Silver in London 2012 Paralympics Time Trial
- World Paratriathlon Champion 2012
- Fourth in London 2012 Paralympic Road Race
- Second in 2014 World Championships Time Trial

How and when did you become involved with your sport?

I first got into sport as a teenager when joining a youth expedition to China (Yorkshire Schools Exploring Society) as a 16 year old. This led onto climbing and an adventurous lifestyle, but I didn't start competing in handcycling until 2010, inspired to try to get to the London Paralympics.

Sporting Highlights

- Winning silver in the Women's H2 Time Trial in 2012 London Paralympic Games
- Crossing the finish line holding hands with my team mate in third position in the Women's Handcycling Road Race in 2012 (although my team mage was given bronze)
- World Paratriathlon Champion in 2012
- Completing an Ironman Triathlon in 2014
- Adventures: sit-skiing across the Greenland icecap; sea kayaking from Canada to Alaska; handcycling across the Himalayas; climbing El Capitan in USA

Sporting Goals

- Gold medal in Rio 2016 Time Trial
- Podium in Rio 2016 Road Race
- Handbike around the world!

One piece of advice for an aspiring athlete?

Believe in yourself and never give up. Failing is the best way to learn and get better.



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