

# WhyNot.

JUNE 2005

MAGAZINE



Chantal Petitclerc,  
2005 Women's  
Open Division Winner



*JUNE 18, 2005*

## THE ROLLING RAMPAGE

10K WHEELCHAIR ROADRACE

Ernst vanDyk,  
2005 Men's  
Open Division Winner

**WhyNot. Magazine**  
THE ROLLING RAMPAGE ISSUE  
June, 2005

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### **Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons**

*The Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, a charitable organization founded in 1985, assists people with physical disabilities to live fuller lives. Its mission is to create awareness in the public, business communities and government of the abilities of persons with disabilities and their needs in the areas of housing, employment, education, accessibility, sports and recreation and research. In the past twenty years, the Foundation has raised substantial funds, which it has distributed to a wide variety of organizations and events. These include the Terry Fox Hall of Fame, the Eternal Flame of Hope, the Rotary Cheshire Home, the Canadian Helen Keller Centre, the annual Great Valentine Gala (in cooperation with the Rotary Club of Toronto-Don Valley), the King Clancy Awards, the Corporate Awards, the WhyNot Marathon, the first Canadian Marathon for the Paralympics and Jeff Adams' CN Tower climb.*

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## MAGAZINE

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What an exciting experience this year's rolling rampage was. Where else could we see our outstanding paralympic athletes from Canada and other nations racing flat-out around Queen's Park, and feel the rush of air as they blew past to the finish line. And then there were the numbers of children, young people, and families going around the track, following the spirit of an excellence in sport and also learning that success and progress is possible every day in every life, no matter how young or old. It is a great feeling! Also there was a very real sense of common cause among the growing number of devoted fans, including people who are committed to the broader issues of disabled sport, and eager to pledge time and resources for a shared purpose that really matters.

I want to commend Vim Kochhar and the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the Rotary Club of Toronto-Don Valley for three years of developing this great event, and the Honourable Alvin Curling, speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for hosting the celebration. Their combined message of the joy and determination in the human effort to overcome adversity touches all of us. Warmest regards and I'll see you at the track next year!

**The Honourable  
Joyce Fairbairn**  
*Senate of Canada  
Rolling Rampage,  
Honorary Co-Chair*



If there was ever any question about the value or validity of paralympic sports in the minds of Canadians, those objections have long since been laid to rest. This nation has been blessed to produce some of the greatest paralympic athletes in the world and modern day champions like Chantal Petitclerc and Jeff Adams are garnering a level of public recognition and appreciation their predecessors could only dream of. With the advent of Toronto's Rolling Rampage, Canadians can finally watch these incredible athletes take on the world right here in their own backyard and that has to spell great things for the future of paralympic sport in this country.

The reach and impact of the paralympic movement is growing because athletes with a disability have proven they are powerful, compelling competitors and marquee international events like the Rolling Rampage will surely build on that success. I'd like to thank the Rampage's generous sponsors, volunteers and charitable partners along with everyone at the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the Rotary Club of Toronto-Don Valley for taking up the paralympic dream and helping to make it a reality.

Thank you one and all.

**The Honourable  
Consiglio Di Nino**  
*Senate of Canada  
Rolling Rampage,  
Honorary Co-Chair*



Here at the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons we have always been great believers in the power of sport to heal and inspire. For many people with disabilities sports and other recreational opportunities can be a lifeline and the CFPDP has contributed substantially to programs targeting their sometimes very specific requirements. Like the rest of the population, a significant percentage of people with disabilities are actively involved in sports and, inevitably, a special few exceed beyond all normal hopes and expectations. Elite events like the Rolling Rampage afford these exceptional people the opportunity to pursue their legitimate aspirations and share their gift with the wider world.

I want to pay special tribute to the Rolling Rampage's official sponsors, Scotiabank, Pfizer and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, whose faith and generosity have been so important to the growth and success of this event. Corporate and community support and involvement are essential to the continued success of paralympic sport and I commend our sponsors for their visionary leadership and commitment.

I also want to thank our Rolling Rampage partners, the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the Rotary Club of Toronto-Don Valley and all of the Rampage's many participating organizations for helping us make this great undertaking a reality. Thank you one and all.

**Vim Kochhar,**  
*President and CEO,  
Vimal Group of Companies  
Chairperson,  
Canadian Foundation for  
Physically Disabled Persons*

# BRING ON THE WORLD

*Toronto's 3rd annual Rolling Rampage introduces sports fans across the country to some of the fastest wheelers on the planet*

**I**t was much more than just an exhilarating day of world class competition. With ten of the world's finest athletes on hand to compete for a share of one of the largest prize purses in wheelchair sports, Toronto's third annual Rolling Rampage served notice of its arrival as a true international showcase of Paralympic sport. Canada's premier international 10K wheelchair road race was let loose in downtown Toronto June 18, sounding the opening salvo for two-and-a-half weeks of paralympic wheeling on the prestigious America Series circuit, culminating July 4th with the historic Peachtree Road Race in Atlanta.

With racers vying for \$35,000 in prize money, the field put the hammer down on this scenic 1.4K loop around Queen's Park, wowing spectators as well as viewers coast to coast who caught the highlights later that day on CBC Sports Saturday.

Three of the Rampage's four divisions were decided in the final yards of the race. In the Men's Open division, South African star Ernst van Dyk claimed his third Rampage title in 21:53.9, nosing out legendary Paralympian and hometown favourite Jeff Adams by just 5/100ths of a second with inches to go to the wire. Third went to international tour veteran Saul Mendoza of Mexico with Athens double gold medallist Kurt Fearnley of Australia taking fourth in his Rolling Rampage debut.

In a homegrown thriller in the Women's Open division, two-time Rampage women's champ Diane Roy lost out in the dramatic final stretch to fellow Quebecer and first-time Rampage entrant Chantal Petitlec (25:00.0), Canada's Female Athlete of the Year.

Italy's Francesca Porcellato came third.

Thomas Geierspichler, of Austria (24:44.5), also nailed down three-time Rampage title status in the Men's Quad division after a nip and tuck seven lap battle with Spain's Santiago Sanz. Saskatchewan's Clayton Gerein finished a strong third.

In a Rampage first, junior division honours went to three women, Jessica Matassa (25:04.4), Shelly Woods of Great Britain, and Melanie Hawtin, respectively. (See Democracy in Motion, page 7)

With 11 nations represented, this year's race marked the most international Rampage to date. And organizers anticipate the race's global profile is sure to receive a further boost next year with the America Series' inclusion in the newly established World Series, which significantly extends North America's linkages with the European circuit and international athletic organizations.

At 34, the six-time world champion Adams has been wheeling at the top of his game this spring, placing fourth in the L.A. tour stop, second in London, England, and third at the World Cup in Manchester. Hopes were high that this might be the Toronto resident's year to win his home event following a photo-finish with van Dyk

in the inaugural Rampage and a disappointing fifth last year when he collided with another racer in the back stretch of the final lap. With the boisterous crowd cheering his every stroke, Adams put on a furious finishing kick with 150 yards to go to break from the pack, only to see van Dyk – a five-time Boston Marathon champion – take up the challenge, and edge him out in a final push at the finish.

"It was a bit of a heartbreaker," Adams told WhyNot after the race. "I knew coming into a downhill finish I had to have a bit of a gap, so I attacked coming off the turn and hit my sprint really, really well. But it just ended up being one of those days where five hundredths of a second made the difference – and I happened to be on the wrong end of it."

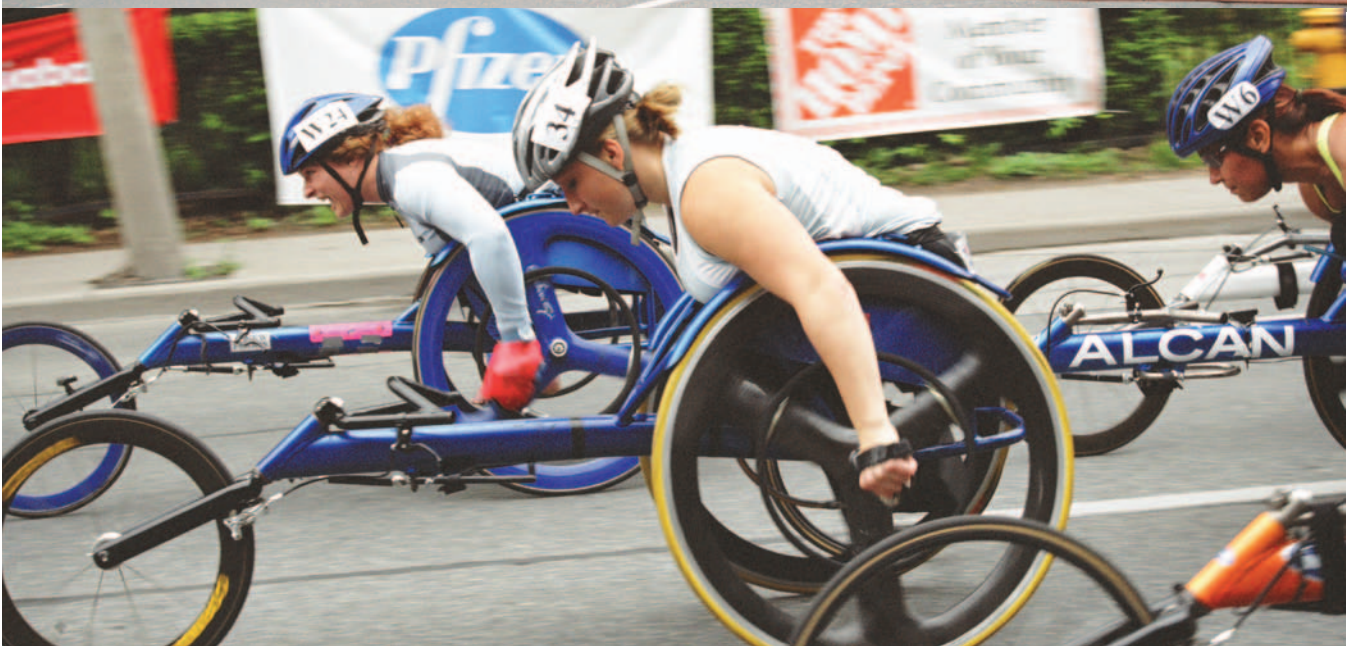
The last lap of the race was extraordinarily fast for the lead pack, according to Adams. "It was a full lap sprint. We hit the top of the hill at about 28, or 29 kilometres per hour. We hit 37, or 38 at the bottom of the hill. We held 33 all the way around, and we hit 39 again at the finish -- so there were no breaks in that last lap, it was just guns out, everybody doing it."

Heading into the race, said Adams, it was impossible to call. In an elite field where any one of four or five racers might prevail, he said "It can all come down to whether you miss one stroke or look the wrong way. Wins and losses are often determined by tiny mistakes that make a big difference."

And when the leaders choose to make their move can be everything.

"Some of the guys can put together a really good full 1K sprint. Other guys have a couple of hundred meters in them," he explained. "It depends on your training. It depends on your body





OPPOSITE PAGE: Petro Canada; Phil Churton, Howard McIntyre, Jon Hamilton and Steven Keith, CFPDP ; Dorothy Price TOP: Men's Open 10K Wheelchair Race World's Best Wheelchair Racers left to right; Josh Cassidy, Port Elgin, Mark Ledo, Maple, Michel Filteau, Quebec, Curtis Tom, Mississauga, Jeff Adams, Toronto, Kurt Fearnley, Australia, Ernst van Dyk, South Africa and Saul Mendoza, Mexico, two in behind Tushar Patel, England and Aron Anderson, Sweden MIDDLE: 45 skaters participated in the 10K Inline Skating Race BOTTOM: Women's Open 10K Wheelchair Race left to right; Francesca Porcelatto, Italy, Melanie Hawtin, Oakville and Chantal Petitclerc, Quebec



TOP LEFT: 1K Wheelchair Relay teams ready to show their muscles. Centre of the group the Hon. George Smitherman. TOP RIGHT: Alexander Waugh, Chair of Toronto Grant Review Team of Ontario Trillium Foundation, speaking at the Reception at Queen's Park. MIDDLE: Awards ceremony for the Men's Open 10K Road Race left to right; Mendoza, (bronze) Fearnley, Zanotti, Ledo, Patel, Filteau, van Dyk, (gold) and Adams (silver) standing, left to right; Hon. Alvin Curling, Wendy Hannam, Senator Joyce Fairbairn and Vim Kochhar, BOTTOM LEFT: Barry Coke, CFPDP Board Member carries the torch for the Opening Ceremony BOTTOM RIGHT: Winners of the Women's Open 10K Road Race left to right; Francesca Porcelatto, (bronze) Diane Roy (silver) and Chantal Petitclerc (gold) standing, left to right; Hon. Alvin Curling, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Wendy Hannam, Ex. VP. Scotiabank, Senator Joyce Fairbairn and Vim Kochhar,

type. It depends how much you put into the front end of the race. There are guys who are going to try to push from the beginning. And then there are guys like me, who are going to sit back and wait for the sprint. I generally wouldn't want to go with more than 500 meters to go, or maybe 600, where as somebody like Mendoza might want to go with a K to go."

Three-time Paralympian and Rampage M.C. Rob Snoek had high praise for this year's Men's and Women's open divisions.

"Just to watch Jeff put it all together like that with 150 yards to go, and then see Ernst van Dyk respond the way he did and pull it out with inches to go, it was an incredible show. There were six in that pack and that was exciting just to see that big of a group out front. Those front four are arguably the best racers in the world. I mean, the guy who came fourth, Kurt Fearnley, won two gold medals in Athens last year in the marathon and the 5000. It just goes to show how deep the field was, that he was fourth."

Snoek said it also spoke well to the depth of the Canadian team that Quebecer Michel Filteau finished fifth, hard on the heels of the front four. "Michel has obviously climbed a tier to the next level, and that was very exciting to see."

Of the Women's side, Snoek observed that the addition this year of quintuple Athens gold medallist Chantal Petitclerc has been a huge boost to the caliber of the women's open event. As one of the world's most recognized and admired paralympians, Petitclerc brings real heft to the women's open field, said Snoek, and stacks up well against Diane Roy who has a growing reputation as one of the world's premier distance wheelers.

"Chantal has an incredible sprint, and Diane needed to get out ahead more in the early laps, and she just couldn't do it this time around," said Snoek. "Every time they came around Chantal was right there with her. Because of that it came down to a sprint at the end. Chantal has the best top-end speed of any woman wheelchair racer in the world. And Diane knows that. If

she's not leading with 200 meters to go, unless Chantal gets a flat tire, it's sayonara."

After the race, the gracious Petitclerc complimented race organizers and promised she would return next year to defend her title.

"I was very happy (with my race). It's a great course," she says. "It's very exciting to have so many laps, because people can actually see what's going on."

More of a sprinter by temperament, Petitclerc said the relatively flat Queen's Park course is well suited to her style of racing. The short, gentle uphill and downhill stretches mean none of the more experienced distance wheelers have a chance to get away from her and the downhill finish favours her renowned sprinting ability.

"I knew if I was just able to stay with the pack for the whole race, then I would be okay for the sprint," she says.

Although most Canadians would recognize her as a track athlete, Petitclerc said she has always kept a hand in road racing, especially late in the season when she is back home in Quebec. However, this year she's ratcheting up her road race commitment, and had signed on for the four city America Series tour.

Petitclerc said the Canadian women are becoming a real presence on the international paralympic circuit, and that's good for the sport here at home. She and Roy clash often in international competition. If there's a rivalry developing between the two, said Petitclerc, it's a healthy one.

"I think the 10K is maybe where we meet a little bit," she comments. "I think it's very healthy. I mean, I was alone for a very long time. I've been racing for 17 years, and it's just in the last three years that Diane has come along and made some good competition for me. It has forced me to turn everything up a notch, and that's good. And now we have Jessica (Matassa, another Canadian and the Rampage's Junior winner, who came in just behind third place finisher Porcellato). She was right there in the pack the whole time, and I think that's very positive for the Canadian women's team."

## Democracy in Motion

The Rolling Rampage is not just a forum for elite paralympic competition. It's also an all too rare opportunity for other athletes with a disability to meet and compete – an exciting chance to test their mettle in hot pursuit of their own brand of personal excellence.

Unlike internationally sanctioned events like the Paralympics or Paralympic World Cup where only elite, nationally ranked athletes are allowed to compete, road racing is typically open to all comers, explains the Rampage's 10K race chairman Michael Clarke. What that means, says Clarke, is that different competitors come to the event with different expectations. While elite wheelers like Jeff Adams and Chantal Petitclerc come to the race looking to take home a share of the prize money, others attending the meet may be younger or less seasoned racers looking for experience on the road to future paralympic glory or weekend warriors who are just there for the thrill of testing their wheels against the best racers in the world.

"Any time you have an athletic event like this everybody has their own drama that is playing itself out on the track. It can be a little confusing but it's great for the development of the sport," says Clarke. "Saul Mendoza, Jeff Adams, Ernst van Dyk, Kurt Fearnley, these guys are absolutely the top of the pyramid in wheelchair racing. So being able to race in a race with those guys or just be there to watch them is something fairly unique. And that motivates a lot of the local racers."

Accommodating the different classes of racers on a level playing field sometimes gets a little complicated, concedes Clarke. This year, for instance, the Rampage offered for the first time a junior division. Because there were only seven entries, young men and women ranging in age from 11 to 19, Clarke decided to run them together as one division, handicapping them against the men's and women's paralympic records for 10,000 metres on the track. Because the women clocked in closest to their respective record, they claimed the top three positions on the medal podium.

"It's a little bit like comparing apples and oranges but it was as close to an even playing field as we could get," says Clarke. And without that kind of novel accommodation for the racers' differences, Rampage fans might never have experienced the joy of watching 11 year-old Isaiah Christophe compete in his first 10K road race, finishing in an awesome 30 minutes.

"He's quite amazing," remarks Clarke. "A 30 minute 10K at 11 years old is extraordinary. There's a huge amount of potential in that kid."

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# Thank You

The Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons together with the Rotary Club of Toronto – Don Valley and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, organizers of The Rolling Rampage, wish to acknowledge the participation of the organizations and corporations below.



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# Taking it to the Streets

*Elite wheelchair road racing makes for awesome spectator sport but it also happens to send a powerful message about ability, says Rolling Rampage founder Vim Kochhar ~*

Toronto's Rolling Rampage is another proud initiative of the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, administered in partnership with the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the Rotary Club of Toronto Don Valley.

Since its inception in 1984 the CFPDP has launched and overseen a far-reaching campaign of fund raising and support for essential community services, numerous national awareness projects and other major public initiatives aimed at helping people with disabilities play a more active and rewarding role in the life of their communities. Increasing the public's awareness of the demonstrable wealth of talent and accomplishment in the disability community has always been a central focus of that campaign and Canada's paralympic athletes have played a prominent role in helping the CFPDP drive that message home. Indeed, Canada's Paralympians have figured front and centre in many CFPDP projects, both as compelling, articulate advocates and as the kind of inspirational role models Canadians have always admired. In fact, says CFPDP chairman and Rolling Rampage founder Vim Kochhar, Canada's Paralympians have probably done more to advance the cause of people with disabilities than most of them will ever know.

"These aren't people who set themselves up as role models but they are real leaders. I've always felt we owe our athletes a tremendous debt. What they've managed to accomplish, their incredible character and commitment. They set an example for us all and the Foundation has always tried very hard to honour that example," says Kochhar.

It's that example that inspired and informs CFPDP creations like the Terry Fox Hall of Fame and 1996's WhyNot Marathon, an 11,000 kilometre national torch relay and tribute to the Paralympic dream. And it's why the CFPDP has been an active contributor to the development of local and national sports and recreation programs as well as a loyal sponsor of Canada's Paralympic team. The pursuit of excellence, notes Kochhar, is a birthright and athletes with a disability deserve the same



Vim Kochhar, Chair, Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons – who keeps the torch lit.

opportunities as their able-bodied peers.

"Over the years this country has produced some of the most recognized and admired athletes in the world – pioneering heroes like Eugene Reimer and Arnold Boldt, Terry Fox and Rick Hansen and modern heroes like Jeff Adams and Chantal Petitclerc. These athletes defy all the old preconceptions about disability. They've broken the disability barrier. What the rest of us need to do is get with the program and support the kind of opportunities they deserve," says Kochhar.

Like most CFPDP undertakings, the Rolling Rampage was conceived as a means of addressing a particular shortfall affecting the disability community while also providing a platform for addressing or underscoring broader issues. Although Canada has long

been recognized as one of the pioneering forces behind the international paralympic movement, serious competitive opportunities in this country for athletes with a disability remain few and far between and elite international events have been virtually non-existent. The CFPDP chairman credits Terry Fox Hall of Famer and six-time world champion middle distance wheeler Jeff Adams with floating the original idea of hosting an annual road race in the heart of Toronto. And when the idea took hold, says Kochhar, there was no turning back.

"Wheelchair road racing is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. They're doing it in cities like Tokyo, Paris, London. Why not Toronto," wonders Kochhar. "These are fierce competitors and they put on a great show. Canada should be right there in the front ranks of the paralympic movement and an event like the Rolling Rampage might get a lot more Canadians involved."

The Rampage made its debut in 2003, drawing some of the biggest names in wheelchair sports. It also caught the eye of America Series officials, organizers of what has been billed as the most lucrative tour in wheelchair sports. Series officials invited the Rampage aboard for 2004. It was an auspicious beginning for the fledgling event and the second Rampage went off with a field of over 30 international racers and live national



coverage on CBC Television's Sports Saturday, the kind of well-earned recognition Paralympians have coveted for years. With the third annual Rolling Rampage, June 18th, organizers believe the race is establishing itself as a truly international showcase – and that bodes well for the race's future, according to International Paralympic Committee member and Rampage volunteer Pawel Zbieranowski.

"This year we had athletes from 11 nations represented and that's tremen-

LEFT: 1 K Relay Volunteers left to right; Students, Yoko Murphy, Don Mills C.I., Lauren Kilgour, York Mills C.I., Kaylie Flynn, Don Mills C.I. and Rebecca Ramsey, Don Mills C.I.  
RIGHT: Jeff May of Windsor, Ontario

dously exciting. It was great to see so many of the stars who just attended the World Cup in Manchester and now they are coming here. That speaks to the quality of our event," says Zbieranowski, who coordinated the 1K Wheelchair Relay, the Rampage's entertaining fundraiser and awareness event pitting teams of rank amateur wheelers in heated and often hilarious competition.

"I think the relay has a great future too. We had a record number of participants this year, 27 teams, up from 16 last year. We had Petro Canada, Telus, the Canadian Urban Institute. We even had Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman here with a team, and that makes it special. It was a lot of fun. It's great fun for the participants and it's great fun for the spectators too."



**ROLL FOR PLEDGES** Residents and friends of the Bellwoods Centres for Community Living turned out in force June 18 raising \$5,000 in the Rolling Rampage Roll for Pledges. Other supporting organizations who rolled out for the cause include Variety Village, Sunny View Public School and the Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre. To learn more about the Rolling Rampage visit: [www.rollingrampage.com](http://www.rollingrampage.com)



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