

Wheel to Wheel **B1**

Chase sat in his bedroom looking out the window. It was a beautiful day, and he wanted so much to run along in the sunshine with the other kids his age.

He loved this time of day. It made him think of the days he used to spend in the park running with his two brothers while their father ran after them through the trees. Chase was always the last to be caught. He was the youngest, but the fastest. When his father did catch him, he would say, "You're going to be in the Olympics one day!"

A tear rolled down his face. He wanted so badly to run in the park, and be on the school track team..

A year ago Chase was in a terrible accident. He was crossing the street when a drunken driver hit him. Chase's legs were paralysed, permanently. He hadn't been to school since, but now he knew it was time.

A month later Chase became a student at Mount Harmon High. Principal Peters met Chase and his parents. "There is a special bus for all students in wheelchairs," he said. "Also, I hope you will participate in the sports we offer disabled students."



Chase's face lit up. "Sports?" How could he play sports in a wheelchair?

"We have a basketball team and a track team. They compete against other schools just like regular sports."

Chase's father turned to him. "You hear that, Chase? Track!"

Chase smiled at his father's enthusiasm, but he still didn't understand how he could be on a track team.

"Ah, a track fan I see." Principal Peters smiled. "Well what they do is race around the track in their wheelchairs. Not electronic wheelchairs. You must use your arms to make the wheels go as fast as you can."

There was something about track that made Chase love living. He signed up for the team, and lifted weights to strengthen his arms.

It was the day of the first track competition, and Chase was more than ready. He would be racing a mile against a champion from another school. Chase could see his two brothers and his parents watching. He would win this race for them.

The whistle blew... They were off...

Chase was moving his arms faster than he ever imagined they could go.

By the third lap, Chase and his opponent were wheel to wheel. Chase pumped his arms faster and faster. They

were on the fourth lap now. Chase slowed at the last bend because he was going to spin out of control. His opponent raced ahead of him. Instead of being sad, or upset, Chase was angry.

He could see the finish line. He thought of his father's words, "You're going to be in the Olympics one day."

With that he went faster than he had ever gone before. He flew ahead and broke the white ribbon.

He had won the race.

When he wheeled over to his family, he saw tears in his mother's eyes. Tears of joy. They were all so proud of him. His dad told him, "You made it, son, you're on the high-school track team!"

Chase had finally realised his dream.

Lauren, 15, from Pennsylvania, U.S.A., wrote this story.

Help

be off (exp) to start

bend (n) curve, where the track turns

disabled (adj) nicer word for *handicapped*

light up (v) here, to appear very happy

mile (n) 1.6 kilometers

proud (adj) showing or feeling satisfaction

and pleasure

strengthen (v) to make stronger

tear (n, pronounced *teer*) liquid in your eyes

track (n/adj) athletics (U.S.); the oval path on which athletes run. One circuit of the *track* is called a *lap*.

weight (n, pronounced *wate*) here, a heavy object (10kg, 20 kg, 30 kg)

would (modal, pronounced *wood*) here, used to show an action done regularly in the past