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Wheelchair bodybuilder champ takes on ballroom dancing

By EDWARD M. EVELD
The Kansas City Star

Somehow Nick Scott thought he needed yet another challenge.

When we met Scott three years ago, he had composed an epic personal rebound. A car accident had left him paralyzed from the waist down, and the former high school athlete had grown depressed and obese. One day he looked in the mirror and vowed to whip himself into shape.

Scott hit the gym and transformed himself into a national champion power lifter. Then he transformed himself again into a national bodybuilding champion. In fact, he became the country's leading advocate for wheelchair bodybuilding.

The newest challenge: wheelchair ballroom dancing.

"It's totally different from power lifting and bodybuilding," says Scott, 28, who lives in Ottawa, about an hour southwest of Kansas City. "You've got to work together with your partner as one. The illusion here is that you have to make the wheelchair disappear, so you can see me for the dancer I am."

Scott continues to compete at, and win, bodybuilding championships across the country. Here's a sample of his other recent highlights:

- Scott and partner Aubree Marchione won first-place awards at the Atlantic Coast DanceSport Championships in June in Philadelphia and at the Heart of America DanceSport Championships in August in Kansas City.

- They competed (didn't win) in November in the Wheelchair DanceSport World Championship in Hanover, Germany.

- They performed in March at the Arnold Sports Festival in Columbus, Ohio. Check out the video of their cha-cha at www.nickfitness.com.

- Scott founded a nonprofit organization, Wheelchair Athletics Inc. (www.wheelchairathletics.org), to help children and adults with disabilities become involved in athletic and other activities.

- He wrote and self-published a book about his life, "Journey."

"It's not all about the bodybuilding and the ballroom dancing," Scott says. "It's showing people that you can overcome things, no matter what challenges you face, that you can really achieve your dreams."

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Dance partners Nick Scott and Aubree Marchione just competed in Hanover, Germany.

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kybo61 1 week ago

I have watched the vid & looked through this gentleman's web site. I am TOO freaking impressed!!! I am in the middle of a (way too long) process of acquiring some property in KCK where I hope to have an outdoor biology classroom for urban kids, and I have been pondering how to make it disabled-friendly, so far I have a plan for blind/low vision kids but I want advice on adding fun stuff like a wheelchair swing & a zip line (we're talking 5 years out) plus a half-court b-ball goal & etc. I'm def going to keep this man on my radar.

Like Reply



harriettlawrence 1 week ago

Glad to see this. There was a gentleman who did a showcase at Heart of America dance championships a few years ago. He danced with our instructor. They were sad that the STAR other media outlets didn't think his efforts were worthy of coverage after being notified of the event. Nice to see the paper is catching up with everyone else.

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