

Paralympic Snowboarder Reaches New Heights



He watched the Sochi games from a hospital bed. Four years later he won gold.

Noah Elliott was just seventeen when his left leg was amputated due to a form of bone cancer called osteosarcoma. "Growing up I was an avid skateboarder," he says. "I lost skateboarding when I got my cancer diagnosis."

But that loss would soon transform into inspiration. During his time at the hospital, Noah watched the 2014 Sochi Paralympics taking place half a world away. Snowboarding made its Paralympic debut that year, and for Noah it was the beginning of a new dream.

When asked by a nurse if he'd like to go to Colorado to a camp for kids with cancer, Noah jumped at the chance. He was still undergoing treatment and hadn't lost his leg yet. He wasn't able to participate in sports, but he did meet a

girl at camp who was a Paralympic athlete. They remained in touch and as Noah followed her snowboarding successes online he saw his own future opening up.

After a year of in-patient treatment and an attempt to save the limb, Noah faced a difficult decision. "I actually amputated my leg to pursue this dream of becoming a Paralympic snowboarder."

He had always been a fast learner, but Noah soon discovered that transitioning to a prosthetic leg would not be easy. But he persisted and with the support of his family and a dedicated team of mentors, he found his footing, took to the boards and conquered the slopes. At the age of 19, Noah won a gold and a bronze medal at the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

Today, he continues to compete and is an advocate for the amputee and disabled community. He also works closely with the National Ability Center helping children with physical disabilities reach for their own dreams.

Noah finds inspiration in the kids, and loves nothing more than seeing the light of possibility spark in their eyes. His advice for anyone facing adversity is simple. "I would say set a goal and try to look forward to what can be tomorrow."

And his own goals for his snowboarding career? He smiles, "To do a back flip."

--Michael Flocker