

# Fish Eagle Swimming Club



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## Swimmer Profile - Quinton Harris

Quinton Harris, at the age of 32 years old, currently holds 12 SA Disability Swimming Records in the S4, SM4 and SB3 categories. This is an amazing enough feat on its own, but when you hear his whole story it is nothing short of unbelievable!

When he was a toddler he drowned and was clinically dead, which left him with a severe reading and writing impairment. As a young boy his father was killed in a motor vehicle accident leaving his mother to support him and his 3 siblings.



Quinton has always given to the community, and although he was never in a position to give financially he gave his time, and lots of it. While doing an apprenticeship at Bell Equipment he was a volunteer life guard as well as a Reservist with the South African Police Service. It was during this time that Quinton was shot – twice and high jacked. Just over one month after passing his trade test (which was done orally as he cannot read & write properly) he had a motocross accident which left him paralyzed from the armpits down.

Not having a job he decided to start swimming to help with his fitness and get him out of his wheelchair, and he has not looked back! His first big Gala he only entered for breaststroke and broke the SB3 50m SA record, and in the last season broke no fewer than 15 South African Records; had 3 TV interviews and been in numerous newspapers. None of this has stopped Quinton from giving back to the community though and he is currently helping to teach the underprivileged disabled children from Thuthukani Special School, in the uThungulu District of KwaZulu-Natal, to learn how to swim.

### A note from Quinton's coach, Claire Swan ...

*"I have been coach to Quinton for three years now; it's been a hard working but fun time. I had never coached before so this whole swimming training was new to both of us. Not knowing Quinton at all and not even being able to swim myself was a huge challenge also. When first starting to train with him I had to get over the way he gets into the pool, just throwing himself in was quite a scary thing to watch, but how else do you do it when you have no feeling from your armpits down?"*

*At first all that Quinton could do was breaststroke, when your body is in a crawl position this is really a hard thing to do, but with sheer determination from Quinton, and a little nagging from me, and a lot of patience from both of us, he can now go pretty fast!! Over time, and just for challenge sake, we developed his backstroke and freestyle. All three he now competes in. We still deal with everyday problems e.g. cramps/spasms, shoulder injuries etc., but life has its challenges and it's your attitude to what you are dealt with that makes you stronger or weaker!*

*Quinton takes the stronger attitude and that I am thankful for. He has determination that whatever is thrown at him (even a coach that can't swim) he will do the best he can and never gives up. There is still a lot of hard work ahead for both of us to reach the goal which he has set himself; this is a minimum of one medal at the Paralympics – Rio 2016! This I truly believe he will achieve!"*

### A note from Fish Eagle Swimming Club's Chairperson, Erika du Plessis ...

*"Quinton has been a member of Fish Eagle Swimming Club for the past 3 years. We are honoured in having Quinton as part of our team! He is such an inspiration to all our swimmers and doing us all proud!"*

Fish Eagle Swimming Club

**"We Fly Thru Water"!**

