



# Norwood Football Club

2021

## Wheelchair Football Team

### The First Season



Compiled by Chris Brown, 2023

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## Acknowledgements

In 2021, the South Australian National Football League established a Wheelchair Football League for the first time. There were four founding SANFL clubs – the Norwood, Sturt, Central District and Woodville-West Torrens Football Clubs.

This publication is a record of the Norwood team's first season, in the first season of this new League. It also includes other information about the new League, which was published at the time. This record would not have been possible without the contributions of the following:

- Grant Leonard (Norwood's first Coach and Captain)
- John Emery (Norwood Football Club photography)
- Peter Argent (SANFL photography)
- SANFL (news releases)
- ABC News
- Novita (website)

## Novita backs SANFL Wheelchair Football League



Novita is proud to be the naming rights partner of the South Australian National Football League's inaugural wheelchair football competition.

The Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League will kick off in July, and will include teams from four SANFL clubs – Central District, Norwood, Sturt and Woodville-West Torrens.

Novita Chief Executive Officer Greg Ward says sponsoring the 2021 wheelchair football season is an excellent fit for the organisation, because as well as delivering the best services and supports for our clients, Novita also strives to improve disability awareness and inclusion.

“Our partnership with the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League will join our popular Wheelienet awareness program as frontline tools to promote accessibility and inclusion, as well as the health and social benefits of getting involved in sport for people living with disability,” he says.

Wheelchair football is played by teams of five on a basketball court with goal posts at each end. A handball is equivalent to a kick in wheelchair football, and an underarm throw is the equivalent of a handball.

The teams can be mixed gender and include players living with and without disability, meaning it's a fully inclusive sport that everyone can play and enjoy.

Wheelchair football is fun, fast-paced and tactical, and interest in the game has been growing strongly in South Australia in recent years, with our State team – captained by former Novita client Brodie Healy – winning four consecutive Wheelchair Aussie Rules National Championships between 2016 and 2019.

The SANFL, supported by Novita, has been conducting wheelchair football ‘come and play’ sessions at The Lights Community and Sports Centre to encourage people to try the sport and find recruits for the new League.

## Guide to Wheelchair Football

*There's so much to love about wheelchair football, an adapted version of Australian Rules Football. This fast-paced, skilful and inclusive game provides Australian Rules footy enthusiasts living with or without disability the opportunity to play the game in a way that has strong parallels with the traditional game. Learn how to play the game with this helpful guide!*

### The Rules of the Game

Two teams of five players compete on an indoor basketball court with goal posts at either end.

The court is divided into three zones: a centre zone and two scoring zones. Each team has two defenders, two forwards and one midfielder.

Handballing is the equivalent of a kick.

A tap from one player to an opponent is classified as a tackle and the player who has been tapped has three seconds to offload the ball.

A mark is awarded when the ball has travelled at least three metres.

The forward players on each team are the only players who can score, and they do so by handballing the ball between the goal posts.

### Prepping to Play

Erin Coutts, Novita exercise physiologist, provides some exercise preparation and recovery ideas below that can support wheelchair football players.

There are also some matching equipment suggestions.

As always, see your health professional for guidance before starting new exercises.





## **Pushing**

The movement of pushing the wheelchair to move around the court involves the use of arm and shoulder muscles.

Exercise suggestions:

- Overhead tricep extension with a resistance band
- Seated chest press with a resistance band with handles
- Seated front raises with a resistance band with handles or a slam ball

## **Endurance**

Playing wheelchair football uses the cardiovascular system. Here are some suggestions to assist in increasing cardiovascular fitness and exercise tolerance to support playing wheelchair football for four 10-minute quarters.

Exercise suggestions:

- Hand pedalling with pedalling exercise equipment
- Seated boxing (air boxing)

## **Core Strength**

Is important for maintaining upright posture in the wheelchair while playing.

Exercise suggestions:

- Seated twists with a slam ball
- Side bends in a seated position with a resistance band with handles

## **Hand Strength**

Finger and hand strength can be developed to support handling the football.

Exercise suggestions:

- Hand grip exercise with a tool such as hand grip loops

## **Ball Skills**

To improve hand-eye coordination and strength, alongside fine and gross motor skills to support ball skills.

Exercise suggestion:

- Seated bicep curls with a resistance band with handles
- Seated pectoral flies with a resistance band with handles
- Seated chest pass against wall with slam ball
- Single arm underarm toss against wall with a pilates ball

## **Recovery**

It's a great idea to repair and rebuild muscles following exercise.

Suggestions:

- Self-massage with a therapy roller or massage ball
- Upper body stretches eg shoulder flexion, where you move your arms anywhere from a resting position by your sides to straight above your head
- Apply ice packs for muscle recovery



## Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League set to begin

May 21, 2021

THE Norwood Football Club is pleased to announce that it is one of four teams competing in the newly created Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League.

Beginning in July, the inaugural competition will initially include teams representing four SANFL clubs – Central District, Norwood, Sturt and Woodville-West Torrens.

Played on a basketball court with goalposts at either end, Wheelchair Football involves teams of five facing off against each other with two defenders, two forwards and one midfielder.

A handball in Wheelchair Football is equivalent to a 'kick' and an underarm throw equates to a 'handball' as per regular Australian Football rules.

Teams can be mixed gender, including a blend of players with, and without, a disability, ensuring the sport is attractive for everyone to participate.

Norwood CEO James Fantasia said Norwood was delighted to be one of the founding teams in the new innovative Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League.

Fantasia went onto mention that being part of the league was something that ties in strong with the club's values of being innovative, community-minded and inclusive.

"Norwood is proud to be part of this fantastic new league set up by the SANFL and Novita," Fantasia said.

"As a football club, we are always looking to preach our values by involving the community through being innovative and inclusive to anyone interested in the game of football.

"Competitions such as the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League provide people living with disability an opportunity to get involved in organised sport, which is great for their fitness and wellbeing, as well as providing a community and social environment."

"We look forward to the start of the competition and cannot wait to see it grow into its own brand year by year."

Wheelchair Football in SA also is being supported by the Federal Government's Department of Social Services.

SANFL will host a Come and Try event this Sunday May 23, from 2pm to 4pm at The Lights Community and Sports Centre, Lightsvue, with sports wheelchairs available to borrow on the day.

## Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League Draft Combine

June 10, 2021

SANFL invites players to test their footy skills and wheelchair ability in the first Draft Combine.

The event will give players an opportunity to showcase their talent and register for the inaugural Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League set to commence in July.

Players will experience draft combine testing including 20m sprint and agility circuit, along with playing short matches.

Everyone is welcome to play this inclusive sport which involves mixed teams of five, including players with and without disability.

The Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League will have four SANFL Clubs competing: Central District, Norwood, Sturt and Woodville-West Torrens. The Combine will aid in the drafting of players into these competing SANFL Clubs.

Sport wheelchairs will be available to borrow on the day. Please wear sports/active clothes and bring your own water bottle.

Date: Friday 18th June

Time: 5.30pm to 7.30pm

Venue: The Lights Community and Sports Centre, Lightsvue



The poster features a photograph of two wheelchair football players in action, one reaching for a ball. To the right is the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League logo, which includes a stylized 'N' with a star and the word 'novita' above a shield containing 'SANFL WHEELCHAIR FOOTBALL LEAGUE' and a large 'S'. Below the photo, the text reads 'Draft Combine Test your skills' in a mix of bold and regular fonts. Underneath is 'Your chance to play for a SANFL Club' and '• Friday June 18th // 5:30pm – 7:30pm'. The venue 'The Lights Community and Sports Centre (cnr Hampstead Road and East Parkway, Lightsvue)' is listed at the bottom. On the right side, there are four small logos for SANFL clubs: Bulldogs, Norwood, Sturt, and Woodville-West Torrens.

**Draft Combine**  
**Test your skills**

**Your chance to play for a SANFL Club**

• **Friday June 18th // 5:30pm – 7:30pm**

The Lights Community and Sports Centre  
(cnr Hampstead Road and East Parkway, Lightsvue)

**BULLDOGS**  
**NORWOOD**  
**STURT**  
**WTT**

## 2021 Norwood Wheelchair Team Announcement

July 9, 2021

THE Norwood Football Club is pleased to announce that it is one of four teams competing in the newly created Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League.

Beginning in July, the inaugural competition will initially include teams representing four SANFL clubs – Central District, Norwood, Sturt, and Woodville-West Torrens.

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"Competitions such as the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League provide people living with a disability an opportunity to get involved in organised sport, which is great for their fitness and wellbeing, as well as providing a community and social environment."

"We look forward to the start of the competition and cannot wait to see it grow into its own brand year by year."

Wheelchair Football in SA also is being supported by the Federal Government's Department of Social Services.

The Norwood Football Club is pleased to announce the inaugural team members led by Captain/Coach Grant Leonard.

**2021 Norwood Football Club Wheelchair Team:**

Richard Davis  
Ashlee Gould  
David Gould  
Holly Gould  
Danielle Hale  
Simon Hingston  
Danny Leonard  
Grant Leonard (Captain/Coach)  
Wayne McNamara

**SEASON LAUNCH & ROUND 1**

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July at The Lights

6.00pm start with an on-court welcome from SANFL CEO and Novita CEO to players and clubs, followed by team photos

6.30pm Sturt v Central

7.30pm Norwood v Eagles

All matches during the season will be livestreamed through Playsight (in-built system at The Lights). Links will be made available to share each week.

# Novita SANFL Wheelchair League Spins Off

July 15, 2021

By ZAC MILBANK



The inaugural Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League is set to spin off on Friday night, with a double-header to be played at Lights Community and Sports Centre.

With four SANFL clubs – Woodville-West Torrens, Norwood, Sturt and Central District – involved the competition is the first of its kind in South Australia.

A total of 32 players have been drafted by the four SANFL clubs, with each team consisting of 7-8 players of mixed gender and a blend of those with, and without, a disability, ensuring the sport is attractive for everyone to participate.

Speaking on SANFL Radio, Woodville-West Torrens defender Chris Simpson said he was eagerly anticipating the season-opener, having played the sport for at least five years.

The experienced backman initially took up Wheelchair Football to play alongside of his son Nathan, who has cerebral palsy and now treasures the 2016 National Championship title they won together playing for South Australia.

Played on a basketball court with goal posts at either end, Wheelchair Football involves teams of five facing off against each other with two defenders, two forwards and one midfielder.



A handball in Wheelchair Football is equivalent of a 'kick' and an underarm throw equates to a 'handball' as per regular Australian Football rules.

"It's a fast, fun, tactical and skilful game and we encourage everyone to give it a go," SANFL Disability Programs Coordinator Nathan Pepper said.

"South Australia has been a four-time champion at the Wheelchair Aussie Rules National Carnival from 2016 to 2019, so the new league will build on this success and create an opportunity to play regularly in a local competition."



2021 NOVITA SANFL WHEELCHAIR FOOTBALL LEAGUE

**SEASON**  
FROM 6PM **LAUNCH**

**FRIDAY 16 JULY**

**STURT** 6:30 PM **CENTRAL**

**NORWOOD** 7:30 PM **EAGLES**

THE LIGHTS COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE  
(cnr Hampstead Road and East Parkway, Lightsvue)

The poster features a man in a red and yellow SANFL jersey sitting in a wheelchair, positioned in the bottom right corner. The background is dark blue with a white, cloud-like graphic at the bottom left. The SANFL Wheelchair Football League logo is in the top right corner.



## Norwood Football Club Firsts

### The First Coach

**Grant Leonard**

Photo: John Emery



## The First Captain

**Grant Leonard**

Photo: Peter Argent



## The First Team

**Round 1, 2021. Norwood vs Woodville-West Torrens. 16 July, Lightsview.**



Back Row (L-R):

Wayne McNamara, Ashlee Gould, David Gould, Grant Leonard, Danny Leonard

Front Row (L-R):

Holly Gould, Richard Davis, Danielle Hale, Simon Hingston

Photo: Peter Argent



## The First Goalkicker

### Wayne McNamara



## 2021 Season Results

### NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 1

July 19, 2021

Last Friday night at Lightsview Community Centre was an exciting night for us all to represent the Norwood Football Club as the club's first Wheelchair Football team within the Novita SANFL Wheelchair League. We didn't get the desired outcome for the opening round of the season, with 6 out of our team of 8 playing their first wheelchair football game.

Our team had some good moments throughout the game but we were outplayed by a more experienced and taller side. We will look to make some positional changes for the next game on Friday night against Central District. We are all very eager for the challenge ahead.

Norwood: 9.7. (61)

Eagles: 17.2 (104)



David Gould.

Photo: Peter Argent





Ashlee Gould.

Photo: Peter Argent



Simon Hingston.

Photo: Peter Argent





Grant Leonard.

Photo: Peter Argent



Richard Davis.

Photo: Peter Argent

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 2

August 9, 2021

Waiting for what seemed like months to get back on court after our Round 1 loss, was worth the wait. Our team got the job done against Central District on Sunday, at the Lightsview Community Centre.

It was a good start for the team as we got a few early goals in the first term to regain some confidence. It was a four-quarter effort for us as we didn't want to ease up on our pressure - this game can turn around very quickly with multiple goals within seconds.

We know we have an extremely hard challenge this Friday night against the undefeated Sturt team, who have shown their strength and dominance early. This will then be followed up by a quick turnaround with Rd 4 just two days later, when we replay Woodville West Torrens and hope to equal the ledger with them.

Norwood: 12.8. (80)

Central District: 2.4 (16)

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 3

August 16, 2021

Friday night's Round 3 for Norwood was always going to be a hard game. Playing the undefeated Sturt after they beat the Eagles by 48pts, and also beat us in Round 1 by 42 points.

Sturt got out to an early lead and at times it was hard not to panic thinking that this could blow out early.

At the first break, we knew to take a deep breath, stick to our plan and keep the pressure on. Some early goals and saw Norwood slowly reducing the margin.

Credit is due to our mids and backs that were able to defend the strong goal scoring of Sturt and to send it forward to give our forwards the opportunity to convert, which they did.

We knew that winning this game may have been unrealistic but we wanted to focus on being within the margins of Sturt's other winning games. To only lose by 10 points was nothing we could be upset about. I couldn't have been prouder of how our team kept the pressure on and made it a tough task for Sturt. We now play the Eagles on Sunday after a very short turnaround, another tough game where we want to square the ledger after the Round 1 loss to them.

Sturt: 15.4 – 98

Norwood: 14.4 – 88

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 4

August 16, 2021

After last Friday's narrow loss, we knew we had to work extremely hard if we were to reverse the results from our last encounter with the Eagles.

We had a lead going into the first break but we knew the job wasn't done. We knew the Eagles would try to adjust and come back hard, which they did. We led by five points at the main break and then by just 4 points heading into the last quarter. We kept working hard and scored 3 goals to their 4 points in the last quarter, to come away with a 19 point win.

It was a gutsy win coming up against a side that had beat us by 40 points previously. To come away with this win was credit to the team for sticking to our processes; withstanding the immense pressure; and turning the game in the final quarter.

The standard of the games has increased so much already. We now play Central District this Friday night at Lightsvue and look forward to this challenge.

Norwood: 10.4 – 64

Eagles: 6.9 – 45

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 5

August 23, 2021

Round 5 was held on Friday night against Central District. With the inclusion of some new players, we knew this was going to be a very quick and fast game. To come away with another win was a credit to all.

The scoreboard may not reflect how much of a defensive game this was, as we had to work extremely hard to get the opportunity to put the goals on the board. This game was not won in any particular part of the ground and was a complete and full team performance where we were all put under pressure. When Central did get the ball they were very clean and that made our backs work even harder to defend. The backline and mids then had to be precise to get the football back through the middle to where the forwards were, again always under pressure. We had to maintain our focus throughout the whole match as we knew how quickly this game could turn.

We now head into the busiest week of the fixture with 3 high intense games in just 5 days. Sturt is next for us on Wednesday night and we know how tall, fast and clean they are. They are currently undefeated. We want to remain competitive, knowing what we can do and applying sustained pressure.

Norwood: 13.5 83

Central District: 4.4 28

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 6

August 30, 2021

On Wednesday night Norwood played Sturt. Sturt is still undefeated so we knew this would be very hard. We were able to challenge them the last time we played so we were hoping to replicate it again this round. Unfortunately, we were just completely outplayed and had a convincing loss.

Sturt: 16.10 106

Norwood: 5.6 36

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 7

August 30, 2021

Round 7 on Friday night at the Lights was against the Eagles. We came into this game with a win and a loss against the Eagles and both clubs knew that this was probably the most important game of the minor round. The game was certainly passionate and even a little heated at times, with both teams knowing how much this game meant. We took the game on and they did so as well. We needed to be focused and switched on for the full four quarters.

The Eagles were extremely strong from the first quarter. They had an early lead and led at every break. We had to come from behind in the last quarter knowing that the season was literally on the line. We kicked a couple of late goals and then two more points in the last minute to win by just two points.

As Captain and playing Coach, I was extremely proud of our team. This was a good hard competitive game.

Norwood: 9.9 63

Eagles: 9.7 61

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 8

August 30, 2021

Round 8 was played on Sunday against Central District. This team are improving their defensive work so we needed to be accurate with our passing and moving....for the whole game! This was another must-win game as other results can still knock us out of second position on the ladder, where we currently sit. We worked extremely well together today and everybody played a great game. We had our lead from the first quarter but knew we had to continue for the full four quarters and not leave anything to chance. It was a nice and well deserved win for our team.

With other results from Round 8, Norwood has secured a Grand Final berth leading before the final minor round game. It has been a massive battle for this second position. I am so proud of this team as we have had all the challenges put to us and we have dug deep to hold our ground.

Next Friday night we play the undefeated Sturt.

Norwood: 12.7 79

Central: 2.5 17

## NFC Wheelchair Match Report – Round 9

September 6, 2021

Friday night's Round 9 game against Sturt was the last of the minor season for the Novita Wheelchair Football League.

With a Grand Final berth against Sturt already assured for this coming Friday, it was a good chance to try a couple of things before the real deal, knowing the overall result would not affect the ladder. Sturt has shown all season that they are the team to beat, as they are still undefeated and have such a strong all-around side.

Our team has worked so hard after our Round 1 loss to put ourselves in this Grand Final match. We know we are major underdogs, but we only need to beat Sturt once... so let's make it this Friday night!!

Sturt: 17.12. (114)

Norwood: 9.5. (59)

Thank you all for your support thus far. It would be awesome to have you cheer us on, on Friday night, as we take on Sturt in the first ever Novita SANFL Wheelchair Grand Final.

Grand Final match – 7.00pm on Friday night at the Lightsview Community Centre.

## 2021 Minor Round Ladder

POS	TEAM	P	PTS	%	W	L	D	B	F	A
1	Sturt	9	36	231.11	9	0	0	0	936	405
2	Norwood	9	20	104.07	5	4	0	0	613	589
3	Woodville-West Torrens	9	16	90.91	4	5	0	0	620	682
4	Central District	9	0	34.7	0	9	0	0	262	755



2021 The (first) Grand Final



## **2021 GRAND FINAL**



## **& 3RD PLACE PLAY-OFF**



**Friday 10th September, 2021**  
**The Lights Community and Sports Centre**

## The Grand Final Teams

	
<b>AVERY</b> Steven (c)	<b>1</b> <b>LEONARD</b> Grant (c)
<b>BARKER</b> James	<b>3</b> <b>GOULD</b> Holly
<b>CHITTY</b> Hallam	<b>4</b> <b>HALE</b> Danielle
<b>DANH</b> Giang	<b>6</b> <b>GOULD</b> David
<b>GREEN</b> Xavier	<b>8</b> <b>HINGSTON</b> Simon
<b>GREGORY</b> Mathew	<b>9</b> <b>DAVIS</b> Richard
<b>PITMAN</b> Chris	<b>10</b> <b>GOULD</b> Ashlee
<b>SALOTTI</b> Chris	<b>11</b> <b>McNAMARA</b> Wayne
Team Manager: Jackson Lane	Team Manager: Grant Leonard / Rick Shrowder

## NFC Wheelchair Grand Final Match Report

September 15, 2021

Last Friday night at the Lights Community & Leisure Centre, we took on the undefeated Sturt Football Club Wheelchair Team.

Knowing full well we were underdogs, we still gave ourselves a chance as we had earned our spot in the Grand Final against them. For the full first half, we were always in touch and went into the main break only 3 points down. The pressure and defence on both sides was really intense and when Sturt got a few goals late in the third we knew it was going to be hard. To our team's full credit, we all gave it everything and even when down with minutes to go we made it as hard as possible for Sturt to not gain a bigger lead.

Our players are so appreciative of all the support we have had from the club this year, from James Fantasia, Paul Di Iulio and especially to Rick Shrowder and Shenae Walker who are always by our side. Also, for the support we have received from our team's Major Sponsor PQSA.

Thank you to all the Norwood faithful that have been out to our games, sent support and good wishes and especially to those that watched us on the Grand Final night. For us to play this modified version of footy is one thing but to represent Norwood Football Club as the Wheelchair Team, has been an honour for us all.

We gave it our all in the Grand Final and I am super proud of our team as we fought to the very end.

Sturt: 12.8. (80)

Norwood: 6.2. (38)



#### **Norwood's 2021 Grand Final Wheelchair Team**

Back row (L – R):

Ashlee Gould, David Gould, Wayne McNamara

Front row (L-R):

Holly Gould, Danielle Hale, Simon Hingston, Richard Davis, Grant Leonard (Captain/Coach)

## Third Place Play Off



1	SIMPSON Chris (c)
3	JARRETT Trevor
4	KNIGHT Stephen
6	McKENZIE Matt
7	SICOLO Mark
8	KOUTS Alex
9	JOHNSON Jet
12	STEHNIAK Adam
13	JOHNSTON Chris
14	CRANSTON David

Team Manager: Chris Simpson



1	GREENSLADE Nigel (c)
2	PETERS Darren
3	HABIB Soraj
4	HEALY Brodie
5	HOOKE Michael
6	HUGHES Ben
7	BANWELL Lloyd
8	NITSCHKE Matt
10	WHITBREAD Shaun

Team Manager: Nigel Greenslade

Woodville-West Torrens 11-9-75

Central District 3-5-23

## 2021 Season Match Results – All Norwood Games

### WHEELCHAIR RESULTS

ROUND 1 V WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	
NORWOOD	9.7.61
WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	17.2.104
ROUND 2 V CENTRAL DISTRICT	
CENTRAL DISTRICT	2.4.16
NORWOOD	12.8.80
ROUND 3 V STURT	
STURT	15.8.98
NORWOOD	14.4.88
ROUND 4 V WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	
WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	6.9.45
NORWOOD	10.4.64
ROUND 5 V CENTRAL DISTRICT	
NORWOOD	13.5.83
CENTRAL DISTRICT	4.4.28
ROUND 6 V STURT	
NORWOOD	5.6.36
STURT	16.10.106
ROUND 7 V WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	
NORWOOD	9.9.63
WOODVILLE-WEST TORRENS	9.7.61
ROUND 8 V CENTRAL DISTRICT	
CENTRAL DISTRICT	2.5.17
NORWOOD	12.7.79
ROUND 9 V STURT	
STURT	17.12.114
NORWOOD	9.5.59
GRAND FINAL V STURT	
STURT	12.8.80
NORWOOD	6.2.38



# The first SANFL Wheelchair Football League is more than just a competition for players

August 11, 2021

By Patrick Martin, ABC News



Nigel Greenslade said it meant the world to him to be playing for the team he had supported since he was a child. (ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

## Key points:

- South Australia has its first wheelchair football league
- It welcomes players from all backgrounds
- The teams are aligned with existing professional teams

For former army engineer Nigel Greenslade, wheelchair sport isn't just a pastime, it's a lifesaver.

"Wheelchair sport has saved my life, it's lifesaving" Mr Greenslade said.

He led an active sporting life and played rugby for South Australia before a workplace accident changed his life.

"We were building a bridge and some panels collapsed on me ... I thought I was going to die," he said.

As he went through his recovery and realised, he would not return to his sporting endeavours, his demons grew.



"I have had thoughts about getting off this planet, I locked myself away in my house for a few years," he said.

Despite those challenges, he recovered in-part through the help of wheelchair sports.

After his long journey back, he has been named captain of Central District Football Club's inaugural wheelchair football team.

"I remember back into the 80s — all I wanted to do was play for Central District when I was a kid," he said.

"To be able to put on this strip, the same strip that some of those legends had, is outstanding.

"From being depressed at home, doing nothing, to thinking bad thoughts to getting out here and having a go, to pushing my boundaries, trying to get fit, to chase the kids, to see the expressions, to share some joy — it's been great."



Nigel Greenslade is the first captain of the Central Districts wheelchair football team.(ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

### **'It opens their eyes'**

As a familiar red ball flies through the air, the thud of body-on-body is replaced with the clattering of metal-on-metal.

It's football, just not as you might know it.

The game is played on a basketball court with goals at each end.

Players chase each other along a sprung wooden floor, as shouts of encouragement battle umpires' whistles that echo around the stadium.



Nigel Greenslade leads a team of players each week as part of the SANFL wheelchair competition. (ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

Four South Australian state-league teams — Sturt, Norwood, Woodville West Torrens and Central District — have squads in this year's competition.

Five players take the court at a time. A throw is a handball, a handball is a kick, and a touch is a tackle.



Wheelchair footballers can tip over in their chairs in the heat of battle.(ABC News: *Lincoln Rothall*)

There's holding the ball and participants put everything on the line with players tipping their chairs in the heat of battle.

From war veterans to refugees, the league welcomes all.

Lloyd Banwell lost his leg in a workplace accident after playing more than 400 amateur football games for Salisbury North in Adelaide's northern suburbs.





Wheelchair footballer Lloyd Banwell. (ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

For him the opportunity for people with disabilities to play alongside those who did not provides an opportunity to educate.

"It opens their eyes up as well you know, how hard it is you know to get around in a wheelchair," Mr Banwell said.



Players have to contend with catching the ball and controlling their wheelchair while competing. (ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

The opportunity to share experiences goes even further for war veteran Darren Peters.

After multiple overseas deployments to wars including Iraq and Afghanistan, his injuries left him unable to play sport.

Wheelchair sports have given him the outlet he needed to recover from his service.

"I came out of there and I had chronic injuries, and chronic PTSD and depression, which I openly talk about," Mr Peters said.





Darren Peters said wheelchair football required a unique skill set that included speed, coordination and chair control.(ABC News: Lincoln Rothall)

He said the unique nature of the game helped people share in a love of sport and a special camaraderie.

"On here, everyone's the same. So, we chat about the same problems, if someone's got mental health problems we say, 'hey, this is what I did, it may work for you' and it just gives them ideas about how to potentially change their lives," he said.

"That's why I love playing this sport with everyone on the court at the moment."

*Posted 11 Aug 202111 Aug 2021, updated 12 Aug 2021*

## 2021 Profiles



### Grant LEONARD

#### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 1

Player Number: 1

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 56

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2022

Norwood Coach: 2021

Norwood Captain 2021

Leading Goalkicker 2021 (56 goals)

Joint Runner Up to 2021 Best and Fairest



### Richard DAVIS

#### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 9

Player Number: 2

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 0

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2021



### Ashlee GOULD

#### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 10

Player Number: 3

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 1

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2021

Joint Runner Up to 2021 Best and Fairest



## David GOULD

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 6

Player Number: 4

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 4

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvie) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvie) 10th September 2021

Best and Fairest winner, 2021



## Holly GOULD

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 3

Player Number: 5

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 17

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvie) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvie) 10th September 2021



## Danielle HALE

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 4

Player Number: 6

2021 NFC Games: 20

2021 NFC Goals: 0

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvie) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvie) 10th September 2021



## Simon HINGSTON

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 8

Player Number: 7

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 8

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2021



## Danny LEONARD

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 7

Player Number: 8

Career: 2021

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 0

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16h July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2021



## Wayne McNAMARA

### STATISTICS

Guernsey Number: 11

Player Number: 9

2021 NFC Games: 10

2021 NFC Goals: 14

Debut: v WWTF (Lightsvision) 16th July 2021

Finale: Grand Final v Sturt (Lightsvision) 10th September 2021



## Team Managers

Grant Leonard



Rick Shrowder



## 2021 Guernsey

The guernsey used in the inaugural season was the Men's League team guernsey with one exception. The Men's guernsey had a Schiavello sponsor's logo on the left breast below the Redlegs logo. (These were used during the 2021 guernsey presentation night). The 2021 Wheelchair Team Guernseys had a PQSA (ParaQuad South Australia) logo below the Redlegs Logo. These were used in all matches.





## 2021 Awards

Best and Fairest

David Gould

Photos: John Emery



## Runner Ups – Best and Fairest



Grant Leonard



Ashlee Gould

Photos: John Emery

## 2021 SANFL Annual Report

Page 26 of the 2021 SANFL Annual Report, under the heading “SANFL Programs”, reported the following:

“Disability Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League In 2021, SANFL launched the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League to create a regular, sustainable program primarily focused on enabling people with a physical disability to get active and connect with the football community. A total of 35 players were drafted into four SANFL Clubs: Central District, Norwood, Sturt and Woodville-West Torrens. Teams had players, both male and female, with and without disability, and an age range spanning eight to 61 years. All matches were livestreamed to allow all club supporters, family and friends to watch the competition if they could not attend due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Grand Final was attended by more than 200 people, including the Premier, The Hon. Steven Marshall, who presented inaugural premiers Sturt with the winning trophy. The success of the competition was recognised by winning the Active Inclusion Award at the 2021 South Australian Sport Awards. “

# Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League wins Active Inclusion Award

November 15, 2021

By ZAC MILBANK

The inaugural Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League has won the Active Inclusion Award at the prestigious Sport SA Awards announced on Sunday.

Introduced in 2021, the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League was played weekly at the Lights Community and Sports Centre in an exciting and team-orientated environment.

Played from July through to September, the competition included teams representing four SANFL clubs – Central District, Norwood, Sturt and Woodville-West Torrens.

“Winning the Active Inclusion Award is great recognition for the success of the Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League in its first season,” SANFL Disability Programs Coordinator Nathan Pepper said.

“The success of the competition was due to the manner in which the four SANFL clubs embraced the concept and the players, along with the dedication and support of our team captains.

“We are looking forward to working with the clubs in 2022 to continue to build the competition and the profile of the sport.”

Played on a basketball court with goal posts at either end, Wheelchair Football involves teams of five facing off against each other with two defenders, two forwards and one midfielder.

Teams were made up of players of mixed gender, including a blend of those with, and without, a disability, ensuring the sport is attractive for everyone to participate.



SANFL Disability Programs Coordinator Nathan Pepper (centre) with SANFL Head of Football Operations Sean Toohey (left) and SANFL Talent Manager – Female Programs Robbie Neill. Picture – Hannah Howard

## 2021 SANFL Wheelchair Football All-Stars Match

December 6, 2021

By ZAC MILBANK

SANFL's Wheelchair Footballers are set to play an inaugural exhibition match against members of the Invictus Pathways Program on Wednesday night.

Following the outstanding success of the first Novita SANFL Wheelchair Football League this year, the exhibition contest is set to provide another avenue of interest for prospective Wheelchair Football players.

The Invictus Pathways Program is a well-being program to assist current serving and veteran defence force personnel and first responders who have physical, emotional and/or psychological conditions often suffered as a result of traumatic events.

"There are a lot of parallels between our programs, particularly using the power of sport as a tool for social inclusion and mental well-being," SANFL Disability Programs Coordinator Nathan Pepper said.

"We hope this is the start of a fantastic partnership and we can support more players through playing wheelchair footy."

Spin off is from 6.30pm at The Repat's Tim Hughes Stadium in Daw Park. Unfortunately due to COVID restrictions spectators are limited to invite only. However a livestream of the match is available on the SANFL Disability Programs Facebook page.





Back Row (L-R), South Australia Guernseys

Shaun Whitbread (Central District), Nigel Greenslade (Central District), David Gould (Norwood), Jim Carroll (Umpire - standing), James Barker (Sturt), Lloyd Banwell (Central), Richard Davis (Norwood)

Front Row (L-R), Blue and white Invictus ADF shirts

Wayne Hale (Norwood), Steve Avery (Sturt), Darren Peters (Central), Danielle Hale (Norwood), Jamie Smythe (Central District)