



## CRAIG BLANCHETTE

2009 inductee Craig Blanchette was born in Springfield, OR. From an early age, Craig excelled in sport.

In 1987 a 19-year-old wheelchair athlete from Springfield, Oregon burst onto the national wheelchair-racing scene. At the time there was a national wheelchair racing circuit with a substantial prize money purse sponsored by Invacare. Blanchette placed first in 12 of 14 races, scoring eleven straight wins to grab the Invacare Cup title from George

Murray, the two-time winner. In doing so Craig set a new 15K world record (37:19), a 10K world record (23:56), and another nine course records in races ranging from 8 to 15 kilometers.

Craig would go on to win an Olympic bronze medal at the 1988 Seoul, Olympics. He was featured in a five-page Sports Illustrated article, obtained eight years of sponsorship from Nike, which included television commercials & press tours. Craig switched his focus to handcycling and won national championships in 2000 and 2001 and continues to be involved in both wheelchair racing and handcycling winning the handcycling division of last year's Portland Marathon. Craig set 21 world records and 8 world championships over the course of his athletic career. No American has ever done it better at more distances in wheelchair racing than Craig Blanchette.