

## LAUREN BARWICK

The Athlete of the Year Award is given to the athlete who shows extraordinary talent throughout the year. When Lauren Barwick started riding horses at the age of seven, little did she know that it would be a relationship she would nurture her entire life. Attending Pony Club for many years, she started competing in three-day eventing, and progressed to show jumping. Lauren enjoyed the thrill of competition and accomplishment with her horse so much that she had dreams of becoming a professional stunt person specializing in horsemanship.

In 2000, when Lauren was 18 years old, she was working in the stables when a bale of hay from an unstable stack fell on her, breaking her back. She had to undergo surgery that inserted a metal bar, three screws and wire mesh around her vertebrae. She spent the next two months at a rehabilitation centre, learning how to adapt to life in a wheelchair.