



# SOCHI 2014 CANADIAN PARALYMPIC TEAM

## WHEELCHAIR CURLING THIRD



### DENNIS THIESSEN

<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	APRIL 20, 1961
<b>AGE AT SOCHI 2014</b>	52
<b>BIRTHPLACE</b>	CRYSTAL CITY, MANITOBA
<b>HOMETOWN</b>	CRYSTAL CITY, MANITOBA
<b>RESIDENCE</b>	SANFORD, MANITOBA
<b>COACH</b>	JOE REA
<b>TWITTER</b>	@thiessen_dennis
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	ENGLISH
<b>PARALYMPIC HISTORY</b>	NONE

Dennis Thiessen has been competing in wheelchair curling since 2005 and exhibited a steady progression in his skill level resulting to him being appointed to Team Canada in 2012 after an extensive two-year tryout process. He is a former national wheelchair curling champion (2011) and in March 2013, Dennis helped Team Canada win the 2013 World Wheelchair Curling Championships held in Sochi, Russia.

Dennis gets his inspiration to compete from a variety of sources including another well-known Manitoba athlete, Cindy Klassen. He calls Cindy the ultimate professional and a great representative of Canada and has always enjoyed listening to her interviews and motivation messages.

Dennis is proud of his off-ice accomplishments as well: he was instrumental in starting the provincial branch of Manitoba Farmers with Disabilities, an organization dedicated to presenting farm safety programs to children, youth and adults.

Dennis lost his leg in an accident on his family's farm when he was seventeen years old.

Speaking about his upcoming Paralympic debut, Dennis says, "It's a dream come true. I never thought it would be something that would happen to me and it gives me goose bumps 24/7."

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2013 World Wheelchair Curling Champion... 2011 Canadian National Wheelchair Curling Champion... 2008, 2009, 2010 Canadian National Wheelchair Curling Bronze Medallist.





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## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Canada won gold at the 2010 and 2006 Paralympic Winter Games.

## PERSONAL

### FAMILY:

Dennis is married to Helene and has two children, Mike (24 years) and Katrina (17 years), and daughter-in-law Rachael.

### GETTING INTO THE SPORT:

In 2005, Dennis was asked by a friend to give wheelchair curling a try. Being familiar with curling as an able-bodied athlete, he couldn't understand how someone could throw a rock down the ice while sitting in a wheelchair. And now, he is throwing consistently alongside the best in the world.

### ODDS AND ENDS:

Dennis says he likes to be early for everything and he's extremely stubborn. He is a fan of country music and if invited for lunch by any performer it would have to be Shania Twain.

Dennis describes himself as hardworking, dedicated, and optimistic.

## NOTABLE INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

YEAR	WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS	WORLD CUP	PARALYMPIC GAMES
2013	1 <sup>ST</sup>	--	--

