

## Rolling Strong

This film tells the story of the first quad rugby team in Peru, where people from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds came together in December 2012 to play a new sport of which they knew little about. The film follows them for two years, showing their process of coming together as a team, the excitement of their first international tournaments and the goals, dreams and motivations that guide their daily struggle, both inside the court and in their personal lives.

**Themes:** sports; disabilities; teamwork

**Director(s):** Marianela Vega (2016)

**Official film website:** <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/rolling-strong-a-documentary-from-peru/>



### SET THE STAGE | THOUGHT-STARTERS

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Created in the 1970s by Canadian athletes, wheelchair rugby (originally murderball, and known as quad rugby in the United States) is a team sport for athletes with a disability. It is practised in over twenty-five countries around the world and is a summer Paralympic sport. Prior to the sport's existence in Peru, outlets and opportunities for those in wheelchairs to participate in society were limited to none. In general, access to buildings, pedestrian paths, and transportation is difficult for persons with disabilities. Few hotels are equipped for travelers with disabilities, and few restaurants, museums, and means of transportation make any special accommodations. However, with the growing tourism industry in Peru, an increasing number of businesses can be found that offer packages and facilities for travelers with special needs.

#### TALK ABOUT IT | DISCUSSION

- What is the significance of the title?
- Describe the challenges the athletes face in their daily lives.
- How do officials evaluate if an athlete is eligible to compete in quad rugby?
- Describe the various challenges the athletes face traveling to the tournament.
- What is the socio-economic background of some of the athletes?
- How has this film affected your understanding of living life with a disability?
- Describe how quad rugby has affected the lives of the athletes shown in the film.

### WORDS TO KNOW

- **Documentary:** A type of film that attempts to explain reality.
- **Quad rugby:** A sport incorporating elements of rugby, hockey, basketball, and volleyball, played by competitors who have a physical disability that requires the use of a wheelchair.
- **NGO:** A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a not-for-profit organization that is independent from states and international governmental organizations. They are usually funded by donations.

## GET CREATIVE | EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



## MAKE CONNECTIONS | ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### BOOKS

#### **Carry On: A Story of Resilience, Redemption, and an Unlikely Family**

By Lisa Fenn

In the spirit of *The Blind Side* and *Friday Night Lights* comes a tender and profoundly moving memoir about an ESPN producer's unexpected relationship with two disabled wrestlers from inner city Cleveland, and how these bonds—blossoming, ultimately, into a most unorthodox family—would transform their lives.

### FILMS

#### **Murderball**

Directed by Henry Alex Rubin and Dana Adam Shapiro

This 2005 Academy Award-nominated documentary follows the story of the US team as they train for the 2004 Summer Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece. Made up entirely of quadriplegic athletes, the team battle against the odds to become the best in the world, becoming firm friends along the way and discovering themselves beyond their disabilities. A chance to learn not only about an unusual sport, but also about the power of teamwork and transforming hardships in to personal strengths.

#### **Senna**

Directed by Asif Kapadia

A 2010 British documentary film that depicts the life and death of Brazilian motor-racing champion Ayrton Senna. The film's narrative focuses on Senna's racing career in *Formula One*, from his debut in the 1984 Brazilian Grand Prix to his death in an accident at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix, with particular emphasis on his rivalry with fellow driver Alain Prost.

### LOCAL CONNECTIONS

<http://www.sharp.com/services/rehab/quad-rugby.cfm>

Sharp Rehabilitation Services' wheelchair sports program is the proud sponsor of the San Diego Sharp Wheelchair Rugby Team, which took home the gold by winning the U.S. Quad Rugby Association Division II National Championship in April 2014. The quad rugby season is from November to April. The San Diego Sharp Wheelchair Rugby Team plays in the Federal Building at San Diego's Balboa Park several times a year. The rest of the season they are on the road competing across the country.

## BEYOND THE FILM | RELATED INTERNET LINKS

<http://www.iwrf.com/>

The **International Wheelchair Rugby Federation** is the governing body for the sport of wheelchair rugby (also called quad rugby or Murderball). The IWRF is a member of the International Paralympic Committee and a sport partner of the International Rugby Board

**Media Arts Center San Diego** offers project-based Youth Media classroom residencies where students can learn the art of digital storytelling. Contact Larry Da Silveira at [larry@mediaartscenter.org](mailto:larry@mediaartscenter.org) or (619) 230-1938 to learn more.