

## Family support key for Invictus Games team

The New Zealand Defence Force Invictus Games Sydney 2018 team has returned home a different team to the one that crossed the ditch for the October event.

The people are the same but the experiences they've had has helped them all in their journey—and that's why Prince Harry, who with wife Meghan Markle travelled to New Zealand with the team, created the Games.

New Zealand brought home two medals—gold to Craig Wilson in the men's 1500m and bronze to Nu Filo in the shot put—while George Nepata won the Exceptional Performance of the Games award.

All three paid tribute to the support they've received from their families.

"They've been part of the journey. They have picked me up when I'm down and it's a celebration for all of us," said Mr Filo, whose supporters included partner Mary, his parents and two brothers."

Mr Wilson said winning was even more special as wife Lynda and sons Edmund, 12, Victor, 11 and Jonny, nine, were watching.

"I just wanted to show my kids what doing your best can achieve. I'm just rapt that it's got some results because you never know when your success is going to come and you've just got to keep trying," he said.

Mr Nepata, who was left a tetraplegic after he was injured in a training accident in Singapore in 1989, said he was humbled to receive the Exceptional Performance award.

It recognized his tremendous contribution to the NZDF's wheelchair rugby team; as the only team member fully dependent on a wheelchair he had to play all five games. He had another special moment during the game against Australia, when the Australian and New Zealand teams combined to ensure he scored a try.

"That's the Anzac brotherhood and the Invictus spirit. It was a humbling experience and I'll never forget it. I thank the Aussie guys and our guys for making that a special moment for myself," he said.

Date

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