

Caledon's Alysha Newman captures bronze in Paris

By Jim Stewart

Caledon resident Alysha Newman made history last week in France at the 33rd Olympiad.

Newman cleared 4.85 meters to win Canada's first Olympic medal in the Women's Pole Vault.

The 30-year-old three-time Olympian improved her own national record en-route to a bronze medal in Paris on Wednesday.

The veteran Athletics team member, who has donned the Team Canada singlet in Rio (2016), Tokyo (2021), and Paris (2024), is Canada's first pole vaulter to win an Olympic medal in the sport in 112 years.

Newman took up pole vaulting at 16 years of age. Newman's meteoric rise in the sport?she was a gymnast prior to turning to track and field ? became evident when she started rewriting the Canada's track and field record books.

She became the first Canadian female high school student to clear four meters and set a national interscholastic record at 4.06 meters as a member of the Wolfpack Track and Field squad.

After a glittering high school career, Newman took her pole-vaulting talents to NCAA Division 1 Eastern Michigan University, but transferred to the University of Miami where she starred from 2014-2016 and still holds the school's pole vault record.

The gymnast-turned-pole vaulter achieved much international success after her stellar NCAA career by winning the gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia during which she set a Games record with a personal best leap of 4.75 meters.

Newman's soaring accomplishments in Queensland, Australia and more recently in Paris, France are particularly inspirational because she has overcome serious injuries in the last six years: a torn patellar tendon in 2018 and a severe concussion just prior to the COVID-delayed Tokyo Olympics in 2021 which hampered her performance significantly in Japan.

A unique aspect about Newman is her willingness to use cutting-edge methods of fundraising to support her financially while pursuing Olympic medals.

In a post-Olympics interview, Newman acknowledged that she has used earnings from OnlyFans to buy property and build up her savings.

?I never loved how amateur athletes can never make a lot of money,? she said. ?This is where my entrepreneurial skills came in.?

Entrepreneur, Olympic Games bronze medalist, Commonwealth Games gold medalist, record-setting Canadian pole vaulter, NCAA track star?Alysha Newman's place in the history books is secured after her timely performance in Paris.