**Aiming to compete in 2020 Paralympics**

Twelve of Canada’s top male wheelchair basketball athletes are headed to Rio for the Paralympic Games which start next week. Garrett, one of the youngest players on the team, didn’t make it to this year’s competition but he aims to be there in four years time.

“When I first started playing wheelchair basketball I had no idea I’d have the opportunity to go to the Paralympics one day,” says Garrett, “I’m very excited, by the opportunity to compete in the 2020 games in Tokyo, Japan.”

Garrett has been playing wheelchair basketball at a high level for almost three years. As a member of Team Saskatchewan, he was invited to an under-19 men’s national junior team training camp in 2014. The following year he was invited to play with the junior team.

Every so often, the senior team would need a spare player and Garrett would help them out. He was then invited to a senior team tryout camp, and has been with the team ever since.

“Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be in this situation. Some of these guys are grown men in their 40s,” says Garrett. “The first time I played with them was scary. I thought I was going to be terrible! But it wasn’t that bad.”

**Radical surgery on the horizon**

Garrett is planning to have both legs amputated.

“Basically, doctors will be cutting off my lower legs and I’ll be left with my thighs and knees,” the teenager explains. “Why? Because, right now, my lower legs just get in the way. I walk on my knees when I’m at home. If I got prosthetics, it would still be like walking on my knees, except I’d be taller! I think I’d be really good at it.”

Garrett says once his immediate commitments to Team Saskatchewan are met, he expects to have the surgery, which doctors anticipate will take place at the Canada Shriners Hospital.

Garrett says the support he has received from everyone at the hospital has had a tremendous impact on his life. “The team at the hospital has been there for me for as long as I can remember,” says Garrett. “Their support has been huge. When I was a little kid, I had this one surgery and, without it, I probably wouldn’t be able to play basketball and I wouldn’t be as driven as I am now.”

“Don’t stop,” says Garrett. “It’s as simple as that.”