

## Steve Plain

***Australian Geographic 2018 Australian Adventurer of the Year & Western Australian of the Year finalist 2019***

Steve Plain was born in Albury, New South Wales, Australia. Coming from a large family with an older sister and four younger brothers, life was never dull. Now residing in Perth, Western Australia, Steve is still proud to call Australia home.

Growing up Steve was called many things, but an angel was not one of them. His eagerness to push the boundaries combined with his mischievous adventurous spirit frequently landed him in trouble. At school, if he wasn't stuck in detention, then he'd be out running around with the Scouts, hiking in the nearby national parks, sailing, playing rugby or various other activities attempting to keep out of (or get into) trouble. It was a trek to Everest Base Camp when Steve was 16 years old with the Venturer Scouts that captured his imagination and inspired dreams of the big mountains.

At the end of high school Steve borrowed a friend's road bike and did his first triathlon. Despite barely surviving the swim, he was hooked. He took all his savings from packing shelves at the local supermarket, bought his own bike and started training. His subsequent university years were spent swimming, biking and running, clocking up countless kilometers training and racing, while also balancing the rigors of an Engineering / Commerce degree.

Plagued by injuries, mainly as a result of over training because Steve knew best and wouldn't listen to anyone, he never fully achieved his ambitions in triathlon. Unbeknownst at the time, it did however provide a solid base endurance level for adventures to come.

Whether it's bad luck, stupidity, fate or a combination of all the above, Steve has had his fair share of challenges and set-backs. Contracting Ross River Virus; two broken wrists; subsequent surgical osteotomy on one wrist to correct alignment; and a broken neck. These are just some of the challenges Steve has faced in the past few years alone. But it was the broken neck, the most serious of all, which was the turning point.

Early Saturday morning 13th December 2014 while swimming at the beach Steve was dumped in a wave and went head first into the sand. If you saw how big the wave was you'd ridicule him for life, but nevertheless it happened. Momentarily unconscious he cannot remember the impact, but when he came to, he was upside down in the water, partially paralysed, trying to figure out where his next breath was going to come from. The quick response from a friend, Dave Field, and two surf life savers, Lara and Gary Matier, undoubtedly saved his life.



Rushed to hospital under full spinal precautions, Steve was sent straight in for scans and then lay there staring at the ceiling. The news eventually came from a very matter of fact doctor, “you have a Hangman’s Fracture”.

Steve had sustained multiple unstable fractures to the C2, C3 & C7 vertebra, contorted spinal cord, ruptured disc, dissected arterial artery, torn ligaments.... the list went on. In layman’s terms, a broken neck. Injuries representative of the type sustained when someone is actually hung, hence its colloquial name. Doctors told him he should be in a wheel chair, if not worse.

It was a very low time for Steve, filled with self-pity, frustration and anger. But somewhere amongst that, refusing to accept the doctor’s prognosis, Steve made himself a promise. He was going to walk out of that hospital and he was going to climb the 7 Summits. Project 7in4 was born.

Initially for Steve, Project 7in4 was just a dream. From the lows of lying in hospital with a broken neck, the enormity of the task was unfathomable. Nevertheless, Steve dared to dream. And it was that dream which motivated him throughout his recovery and rehabilitation.

Rather than focusing on the overwhelming enormity of the seemingly insurmountable end goal, Steve set himself progressive objectives, stepping stones to initially get back on his feet, and then to build the skills, experience and confidence he’d require in order to attempt the 7 Summits safely. This took him to some of the most famous mountain ranges in the world on a series of “Practice Runs”.

Steve took the same “step by step” approach in completing the 7 Summits, simply focusing on one mountain at a time.

Now with Project 7in4 complete, Steve is looking towards bigger challenges, bigger adventures. The most common question he is now being asked is, “what’s next?”

## Client testimonials

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“ I thought Steve was excellent and truly inspiring. A wonderful presentation and so humble about extraordinary achievements. His synchronisation of his own story telling and his presentation and videos worked really well, and his breakdown into the 6 key components to success resonated very well with us.

- *Woodside group presentation*

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