

## **Hong Kong's Wonder Boy**

So Wa Wai, the most incredible athlete in Hong Kong, becomes a hero of Hong Kong because of his effort and perseverance.

So Wa Wai was born with spasticity, difficulty in hearing and poor balance. This became the reason that many other children of his same age always made fun of him. Nevertheless, he was really interested in running since he was a child even though many people had derided his dream and told him to give up. How did he become a famous athlete? How did he face the challenges? Let's dive into the story behind his achievements.

At the age of 15, So Wa Wai was encouraged to join the Athletics Training Course for the Disabled in 1996 by his mother. This had completely changed his life. At first, he was unadaptable to the training as he was at least five years younger than other teammates in the Course. Therefore, his physical fitness was not as good as theirs and the training was exhausting and difficult for him. Hence, he was lazy to train. For instance, he would run two laps when the coach asked him to run three laps. Nevertheless, the coach was very strict with him. The coach didn't accommodate him and make the training easier for him even though he was only 15 years old. So Wa Wai really wanted to give up as he thought the training was too hard for him. But of course, he didn't give up and kept on trying.

Later, he represented Hong Kong to join the Atlanta Paralympic Game in the same year and surprisingly won a gold medal in the 4x100m relay race. Since then, he has understood that all the goals can be achieved by hard work. He learnt the happiness of running in the exercise yard. Furthermore, he trained harder than before and running became his only interest. He kept training every day. No matter how difficult the training was, he would still persevere.

Afterwards, he even broke his own men's 100m world record and 200m world record with 12.5s and 24.65s at the Japan Disabled Athletics Championships respectively. In addition, he has also competed in the Paralympic Games on five occasions and won twelve medals. As a result, he has won thirty-nine medals in Men's Athletics. He is a hero in Hong Kong.

Unfortunately, he retired in 2016 due to his back injury. He really appreciated his coach, his mother and all the teammates in the Athletics Training Course for the Disabled giving him chances. Nowadays, he is called the 'Wonder Boy' by people in Hong Kong and there is even a movie about his life: Zero to Hero.

So Wa Wai once said" Although you lose when you are born, you will never lose forever." Even though he was born with sickness and many people laughed at him, he is committed to carrying on and he never gives up. He is courageous to change his life. And now, he is a hero who is respected by all people in Hong Kong.