



THE 17th Outeniqua Cycle Challenge, a wheelchair race which attracts athletes from all over the world, including local mother Justine Asher, will take place in George on September 14. | ROAD RACE FOUNDATION

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Para-cycling champ ready for challenge

STAFF WRITER

JUSTINE Asher describes herself as a wife, mother, artist, dreamer, Paralympian para-cyclist and double world champion.

Although this may not exactly be the life she once envisioned, she has become an inspiration to all women.

Fresh out of high school and with a blossoming modelling career ahead, Asher dreamt of visiting exotic locations and walking the ramps of the fashion capitals like Paris, Milan and New York.

However, while still only 18, she

was injured in a car accident and left a quadriplegic.

Doctors told her she would never walk again, but that did not quite resonate with her.

By the end of her months of rehabilitation, she had regained the use of her arms and some use of her hands.

Having always been fitness-conscious with a love for running, swimming and just being outdoors, she decided to embark on a new challenge when she turned 40.

"I started para-cycling in 2012 when I got my first-hand bike.

"In early 2013 I competed at Out-

eniqua Cycle Challenge (OCC) winning my first 42km race.

"In a few years I rose from rookie para-cyclist to competing internationally winning many world cups and eventually being the world champion in 2015 in Switzerland," she said.

Justine was named the 2014 South African sportswoman of the year with a disability.

The 17th OCC, a wheelchair race which attracts athletes from all over the world, will take place in George on September 14.

Organisers said the number of entries increased dramatically.