

SOLDIER ON



SANS LIMITES

Biography

Andrew Knisley

A native of London, Ontario, Corporal Andrew Knisley grew up loving the outdoors. As a young man at school, he loved camping, hunting, fishing and mountain biking. So it was no surprise that, upon graduating from London Central Secondary School in 2003, he became a landscape technician.

But Andrew also had a draw to military service. When he was just 12, he joined the London 27 Royal Canadian Air Cadets where he learned marksmanship among other skills. He joined the Canadian Forces full-time in 2007, following in the steps of his grandfather – a combat engineer in World War II.

Andrew's connection to motorsport was made through a Christmas gift when he was 10 – a go-kart.

Once he completed his military training in 2007, Andrew was assigned to the 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment and was deployed to Afghanistan in September of 2008, assigned to a unit that consists of military police and infantry combined to provide 'on the job' training to the Afghan National Police (ANP). Difficult and dangerous work, the small units conduct foot patrols in some of the most sensitive areas in Afghanistan.

It was on one of those patrols in the Panjwai district where Andrew suffered the wounds that nearly took his life. In his own words:

“On January 19, I was hit by an IED while on dismounted patrol which resulted in the amputation of my right leg at the hip, and significant tissue and nerve damage to my right arm. I was the only one injured in this explosion and that is a testament to how well we understand the threat and have measures to avoid casualties.

“After spending some time in Kandahar Airfield and Germany, I returned to Canada on January 26. I spent nearly a year in hospital in Ottawa, where through rehab and physical therapy, I learned to walk with a prosthetic and drive using my left foot.

“In May of this year I re-joined the battalion just in time to see them deploy to Afghanistan as the Battle Group. I remained in Canada as part of the rear party where I've been employed in the Casualty Cell, looking after the guys currently being wounded in Afghanistan. I have the opportunity to share the lessons I have learned along the way, and occasionally speak with wounded and amputee soldiers, giving them a perspective only a fellow soldier can provide.”

Andrew was born on March 22, 1984, to parents Ken and Heather. He has an older sister, Ruth.