

25 Year Paraplegic Relearns to Walk, Inspired by Dolphin who Relearned to Swim

CEO David Yates Welcomes John Maclean, Who Completed Ironman During Yates' Tenure

Clearwater, FL (Nov. 30, 2017) – Australian athlete, author and motivational speaker John Maclean will visit Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) on Friday, Dec. 1 to visit Winter the dolphin who, just like him, defied all odds and thrived in the face of adversity.

Doctors told Maclean he would never walk again after he was struck by a truck in a near-fatal bike accident in 1988. Since then, the accomplished athlete has astonished the world with his recovery. Maclean became the first wheelchair athlete to compete in the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon. He won a silver medal at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games.

In 2013, Maclean took his first steps since his accident, achieving his dream to walk again. Although his wheelchair remains his primary mode of movement, he completed The Nepean Triathlon as a conventional athlete in 2014, his first conventional triathlon in 26 years.

Maclean connects with Winter the dolphin at CMA who lost her tail after it was entangled in a crab trap rope in 2005. Both Maclean and Winter learned how to stay active despite their loss, and inspired the world with their perseverance.

David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium, met John 20 years ago when Yates was CEO of the Ironman competitions.

“When I met John, doctors had told him he had no chance of walking again,” said Yates. “Seeing him walk into Clearwater Marine Aquarium to see Winter, who shares the same overcoming story, is absolutely incredible.”

Additional media information:

- When: Maclean will visit Winter on Friday, Dec. 1 at 1:30 p.m. Media advised to arrive by 1 p.m.
- Where: Clearwater Marine Aquarium: 249 Windward Passage, Clearwater, FL 33767
- Media invited to attend. Photos and video available upon request.
- For further information, contact Julia Anderson at janderson@cm aquarium.org or 727.686.3499

About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin's story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people's lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of marine life, environmental education, research and conservation.