

Good Things Happen, S4, E2: Para Sport Final Transcript

Jorian Murray ([00:01](#)):

Hello, I'm Jorian Murray, and welcome to Good Things Happen, the show that invites changemakers and enablers to share their inspiring stories of progress. Whilst change can be uncomfortable, unexpected, and at times disruptive, it's inevitable. And more often than not, change is for good. We'll be hearing from people from all walks of life who have been at the forefront of change, including their journeys to get there and their motivations. Because when people work together for a common cause, good things happen.

Lauren Steadman ([00:35](#)):

If I hadn't have been brave enough to make that decision to change direction, I wouldn't be sat here with a gold medal.

Ingrid Giordano ([00:41](#)):

We're more alike than we are different.

Lauren Steadman ([00:44](#)):

"I don't see myself as different or limited"

Jorian Murray ([00:56](#)):

On August 28th, Paris will host 4,400 Paralympic athletes competing in 23 sports in front of over 3 million spectators. The Paralympic Games are more than just a sporting event. They offer a unique opportunity to shine a spotlight on sport and disability, to inspire individuals bring about social change, and promote inclusive, professional and sports opportunities. Joining us today on Good Things Happen, we are thrilled to welcome gold medalist and former world champion paratriathlete Lauren Steadman MBE, who this year will compete in her fifth summer Paralympic Games. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, you heard that right. Five summer games in which she first competed as a swimmer and latterly as a paratriathlete.

([01:46](#)):

Our second guest is Ingrid Giordano, who is the Global Head of Early Career Talent Acquisition and Programme Management at Citi. Citi are a founding partner of Para Sport, the International Paralympic Committee's grassroots to high-performance programme that aims to change the narrative around people with disabilities and provide para athletes with a platform to drive societal progress. Before we hear more about what's involved in competing in and supporting the Paralympics, let's hear our guests' formative stories. Lauren, you first. Please tell us about your early life. What were your ambitions?

Lauren Steadman ([02:26](#)):

I did not know that the Paralympics existed. I just fell in love with the world of sport. I think when you are a young child and you're finding your feet in the world and making friends and working out what you want to be, it's a difficult place to navigate. And sport gave me that chance to show other children I am missing my arm, but actually I am capable of doing anything that you can do. So I was always the girl that was outside playing with the basketball, netball, hockey, rounders. Anything sporty I absolutely loved. And I think if you'd have asked me what I wanted to be, it was probably an air hostess, because I used to think they were so, so pretty when they were on the airplane. Or a vet. I think every child wants to work with animals.

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[\(03:15\)](#):

And then, yeah, I had no aspirations to be a Paralympian, let alone Paralympic champion, probably until I was about 11 or 12 when it started to get more serious. And then also with my academic career that's run alongside it, my parents always said to me, "You won't be an athlete. At one point, your body's going to fail you and you need to make sure you work hard at school," so I've gone down the psychology route. I really, really enjoy picking apart what happens in our heads, in our mindsets, and giving people confidence to do things that I guess I've gone forward and managed to overcome my fears. So I love to install a sense of overcoming fear in other people, and yeah, help as many people as I can, whether that be sport, giving them an inspiration to do so, or mindset training for any aspect of life.

Jorian Murray [\(04:08\)](#):

Amazing. Lots for us to unpack there. Ingrid, how about you? Tell us what you do nurturing and attracting young talent at Citi.

Ingrid Giordano [\(04:17\)](#):

Thanks, Jorian. When I was a young child, I actually dreamed of owning a flower shop, and I was the first person in my family to go to college. And with that came a lot of responsibility, a lot of hope for my family. And I've celebrated 27 years at Citi, and I've got the best job in the world, which is to engage and attract college students. As I meet college students all around the world, I just feel so much hope when I hear their stories and I hear about all the things they want to do in their lives. When I think about the hope I've seen with the para athletes, it's been nothing but really just a joy to get to know the athletes, to share their stories, and they've been so incredibly inspiring to all of our new hires coming in, and we've invited some athletes every year to share their stories, and it's always the most popular event that we have all summer.

Jorian Murray [\(05:10\)](#):

Lauren, so it's one thing going outside and shooting a few hoops with your basketball. Tell us how you developed to become an elite athlete.

Lauren Steadman [\(05:21\)](#):

Oh, it's been a journey and it's still a journey. I think people probably think that, and I think this goes across business or any walk of life, is that once you get to the top and the best in the world, that you know what you're doing and that you're very good at it. And that's not always the case. I'm still learning. I've been in this now for two decades, being an athlete, and I'm still learning so much about myself, so it's constantly changing. The parameters and the performance standards are constantly changing. So you, I guess, learn to adopt this mindset that is one for growth and one for adapting, and one for constantly pushing yourself because you cannot rest on being at one point in time the best in the world, because it just continues to move. So I think from being a young girl, learning what it would take to actually bring home a medal for your country, that was really interesting, and you dive into it and you learn to become disciplined, your time management, your commitment, sacrifices.

[\(06:24\)](#):

I left home at the age of, I was just 14 to go to boarding school because the swimming pool was 50 metres away from my bed, so I could just roll out in the morning at four o'clock straight in the pool, and then I'd be on site for school. So everything becomes very well-managed, very precise. I like to think I'm quite efficient with my time, but you change as a young person very quickly, because all of a sudden you're giving responsibility and I guess pressure that you need to deliver. But my journey was full of

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adventure, full of travelling the world, meeting people. And then being an experienced older athlete now to network, and to be a Citi athlete for me is... That was a dream when I was a young athlete, for a huge company to want to come and believe in me and work with me.

[\(07:20\)](#):

So yeah, I look back with no regrets and have had a really, really exciting career. And I think if I, when I have a child, to go down the route of sport and what it instals in you as a person and the qualities and the traits, I think it gives you so many opportunities. Even if you don't choose to follow that path, it sets you up for life. Happy memories, one that's fulfilling, challenging, sets a spark in me, so yeah.

Jorian Murray [\(07:52\)](#):

Ingrid, talk to us about the relationship between Citi and athletes, Paralympians particularly. What does Citi get out of it and why does Citi do it?

Ingrid Giordano [\(08:05\)](#):

So Citi had signed a global partnership with the International Paralympic Committee in 2018. And as I think about the athletes having participated in events in more than 30 countries and engaging with more than 45,000 colleagues, including the majority of all of our summer and also associate classes, I'm just filled with so much pride. And as they think about Citi and the opportunity we provide to young students, each year, Jorian, we have what are called summer intern programmes. And we have students all around the world that come and work at Citi and get a glimpse of what it's like to work at a large financial services organisation. And as part of that, there is training, there is networking, and there are events. We had heard about the athletes and we've brought them in and I've had the joy of having, I really feel like, a rock concert. Our auditorium that sits 400 people, standing room only, just to hear athletes talk about their stories, talk about their challenges.

[\(09:14\)](#):

And the one thing that I've learned and I've heard from our interns is we're more alike than we are different. And we just get filled with so much hope when we hear these exceptional athletes talk about how they get to practise, what it's like to compete. We had one athlete actually bring their medals to the building, and so there was a line of interns trying to take pictures with this athlete. So we've gotten so much out of it, and I look forward to us doing it again this summer.

Jorian Murray [\(09:48\)](#):

Lauren, let's talk about medals. It's easy with hindsight for us to introduce all the things that you've achieved, but when you are rolling out of your bed at boarding school at 14, is this something in your mind-

Jorian Murray [\(10:03\)](#):

... all of 14, is this something in your mind or are you being goaded to get in that pool and compete? Or was this always in you? Did you always think, if I'm going to do this, I'm going to win?

Lauren Steadman [\(10:15\)](#):

I think when you are a young athlete, there's a sense of naivety as well in that you train and you have to believe you are the best and you have to know that you're shaving off marginal gains constantly. Because at the end of the day, there's only one gold medal and every athlete that's going to go for that

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gold medal is going to have given everything they have. Like it's not just a case of, oh, you turn up because you can turn up.

[\(10:43\)](#):

So I think now that I'm older, I appreciate that and my advice if it was a younger athlete would be that, actually, it's the journey to get to that given point and not necessarily or you are not based as an athlete based on one performance. Because when you're getting into elite sport, like it's down to the smallest of seconds sometimes that people take a gold medal versus a silver one.

[\(11:06\)](#):

So when I look at it from the perspective as an older athlete now, you can appreciate actually how difficult it is to get a gold medal. But when you are that budding young 13, 14-year-old, that's just starting a journey, that vision that you hold in your head is so, so powerful. We talk about manifesting things and actually as an athlete, when you're starting out, like the gains that you make are huge because you're just starting out. But you learn all about how sleeping effects, nutrition effects, physio effects. And when I was a young girl, like I don't think I quite realised what it would take to win. It took me 17 years to get a gold medal at the Paralympic, 17 years. If you'd have told me that at the beginning, it would've been a bit like, oh my goodness, I'm still going to... and I'm still going now. But it's like I'm going to work 17 years for one medal that's going to like define my title as Paralympic champion.

[\(12:00\)](#):

And that sounds like a really big deal. And most people, if you told them it would take 17 years to achieve something, probably wouldn't do it. So when I look at it in that sense, the little girl, how brave she was to step forward and challenge the best in the world. And I didn't have the easiest start to my career as a swimmer. Like I gave everything I had and I would always just miss out on being on the podium. And I think there was a lesson there in that sometimes your best isn't good enough, and that is okay because you're not actually in your field that's what you are best at. So my transferring into triathlon was probably the best move I made of my career, and I was reluctant to do it because I'm a swimmer and I need to finish what I started in swimming.

[\(12:46\)](#):

But if I hadn't been brave enough to make that decision to change direction, I wouldn't be sat here with a gold medal. I wouldn't be sat here with all the opportunities that have come from that. So a lot of it is you to take the opportunities when they're presented to you and recognise the opportunities that are being given to you. So yeah, from being that naive little girl that just had that dream to having navigated it, yeah, it's been an interesting journey and the cards fell in my favour. Some athletes never achieve that, but you're definitely not defined by that. Like you did your best and your best is all you can ever ask for.

Jorian Murray [\(13:25\)](#):

Not only did you do this in swimming, then you did it as a triathlete. So there's two more sports, but you're doing it again. I mean, tell us about your Winter Olympic ambitions.

Lauren Steadman [\(13:36\)](#):

I did the commentary at the Beijing Winter Paralympics, and I watched these crazy people ski uphill on these tiny, tiny cocktail stick-size skis, and I thought, that looks awful, that looks horrible, that looks really painful. I think I'd like to give it a go, which I don't think many people have that sort of mindset. As you said, I got an array of sports. Being a triathlete, we have a very big aerobic engine. We do three sports, we have to go and we have to hit that sweet spot for anywhere between an hour to sort of three

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hours depending on the race length. So I knew I'd have the engine, but would I have the skillset? And I approached GB Snowsports, and I've been on the snow for a maximum of about seven weeks, and I did my first World Cup three weeks ago.

(14:28):

I did not come last. I stayed upright. And on the current trajectory, I will manage to qualify hopefully if I work super, super hard for the Paralympics in two years' time. So I've cut a third off of the time that they said, two thirds of the time that they said it would take me to get there. It's not going to be an easy feat. I'm aware of that. And you definitely cannot expect to be an athlete that comes into somewhere where girls have trained for 20, 30 years to be an elite skier. But I would like to go to see how good I can become, how dedicated.

(15:03):

And I'm one for pushing boundaries, and I believe that everybody should just step into that fear bubble, for want of a better word, just for a little bit. If it's for you, continue. If it's not, you can come back out.

Jorian Murray (15:15):

Ingrid, I think there is a correlation here with the young talent that you wish to attract and you do attract to Citi. Talk to us more about what barriers there might be out there in people's minds who might not think joining Citi is the kind of job that they should do.

Ingrid Giordano (15:32):

Lauren, as I listen to you, I think about quotes I've heard from other athletes, like be yourself as everyone else is already taken, what gets measured gets done. And I think about the thousands of employees we bring into Citi, and we have a [inaudible 00:15:52] that we're a bank with a soul, and we would love every student around the world to aspire to work at Citi.

(15:59):

And I think about many of the students that I meet on campus or I meet via Zoom, and there's just so much pride they have when they get that first job and it's at an amazing company like Citi, and it's a place where you can be your authentic self. And so we truly do believe in supporting wellbeing, making sure that we're an inclusive organisation and encouraging the leadership opportunity. So as I think about Lauren's story, it just fills me with so much pride that we have the opportunity to be connected to you. So just thank you so much for everything you've done. You're an inspiration to women and other athletes and just to the world.

Jorian Murray (16:44):

Lauren, we could be kind of cynical about corporate partnerships with athletes, but I think your relationship with Citi goes a little deeper, doesn't it? Tell us about your studies because sport is just one part of your personality. Tell us about your psychology studies and where your ambitions lie there.

Lauren Steadman (17:04):

Yeah. So I did an undergraduate in psychology and I've always loved, if someone comes to you and they're looking for advice or they're unsure, like I've always loved installing a sense of encouragement or courage or a little bit of resilience in that person. Often, even myself, when I'm going forward for a race, we believe a lot in what other people see in us. I do like to build up how I see myself and how others see themselves.

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[\(17:33\)](#):

But psychology has been really powerful for me, and I've been an athlete for long enough now that I sit back sometimes and I observe. We've seen athletes that are at the top of their game and they come forward and they say, "Do you know what? Hands up, I'm struggling right now. I'm just going to back off a little bit." And we have this preconceived ideas athletes are mentally tough, they're super resilient. They can handle absolutely anything and rightly so. We are built for that. We are built to go to dark places, stay there and deliver and handle lots of pressures, but we're only human. And sometimes that can become a little bit overwhelming, daunting, and especially if your career is lasting, as mine has, over five games. Like we're talking 20 years now of holding the pressure of the world on my shoulders and wanting to deliver for my country.

[\(18:23\)](#):

So it does get a bit much, and mental health has been flagged a few times for athlete, and there is research out there, but there's not as much as there could be. And I decided that actually I wanted to look into this. I wanted to help create change for future athletes. I doubt it will happen in my time, but I don't want any of the younger athletes that we have coming through the ranks to ever feel they can't perform or do the job they love because they're struggling mentally.

[\(18:51\)](#):

So I wanted to do a PhD to study or map out the, we're calling it the narratives of Olympians and Paralympians. So I'm just talking with athletes, I'm getting their perspective. I'm using this Olympic cycle that we're currently in right now to map out what it looks like over this year, the highs and the lows. And I just approached Citi and said, "I would be super, super grateful and honoured if you guys would be part of this." They're so passionate about future of Paralympic sport. They got on board with me and I was surprised. I was just humble and everything about it.

[\(19:26\)](#):

So I am an athlete for Citi and I do my best as an athlete, but I'm also researching with the help of Citi what we can do to make mental health better for our Olympians and Paralympians.

Jorian Murray [\(19:39\)](#):

Love that. Absolutely love that.

[\(19:40\)](#):

Ingrid, let's use this opportunity to do a little commercial break for attracting people to come to one of your programmes. Tell us about the internship programmes you have and what kind of people are you looking for.

Ingrid Giordano [\(19:56\)](#):

We actually do have an athlete mentorship programme. What we've learned are athletes that are going to school are busy practise-

Ingrid Giordano [\(20:03\)](#):

Our athletes that are going to school are busy practising for various activities, and at times are not able to participate in events that are recruiting related. And so, we have created an athlete programme where we have mentors, and those are people at our firm who may have been athletes at college, and they'll mentor students. And that's been a really great opportunity for us to be able to attract students.

[\(20:28\)](#):

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As I think about the person, the whole person coming to work, and we think about the various affinities, whether it's underrepresented minorities, or first generation college students, or social mobility, anyone can apply to any of our roles. And I definitely encourage everyone to think about Citi as an opportunity.

[\(20:50\)](#):

When I think about your question as to what are we looking for, we want students who want to be part of our organisation, who want to make a change in the world, who are willing and brave to be able to work on the largest, most complex transactions. We want individuals who have a risk and controls mindset, people who want to be leaders.

[\(21:14\)](#):

And so, as I think about the thousands of people we bring on each year and the stories that they come with, many of them, we have a very high conversion rate of people who are summer interns and then join us full time. And I think they all have choices. And my personal humble opinion is they choose Citi because of the organisation that we are. And so, it's just been really fascinating for me over 27 years to see people that I had coached and mentored years ago running businesses here. It's just the most heartwarming thing.

Jorian Murray [\(21:49\)](#):

So, Lauren, give us an insight. Tell us about your training regime and give us an insight into your day.

Lauren Steadman [\(22:04\)](#):

Well, I'm currently out here in Florida, escaping the awful British weather. I've had people tell me that, I think last week there was snow on the ground. So, when you do a very outdoorsy sport... Swimming, we do do indoors, but I'm out here and I've got the most beautiful, clean 50 metre pool. I'm getting a sun tan as I swim, to wear shorts when you are running and cycling, and be outside on your bike. I think vitamin D and being in the sunshine, and I think the winter blues is a big thing for a lot of people, it especially is for me. And when you are trying to be a super-duper athlete, it's very difficult in winter, when it's getting dark at four o'clock, it's not getting light until sort of half seven. I'm out here and I'm getting in great mileage. So, yeah, it's great just to be with the friends, be somewhere warmer.

[\(22:58\)](#):

I've got a couple more training camps lined up before the games, just because, again, warm weather training and being... The UK is great, but it's not always the best for getting long mileage in without finding a traffic light that you have to stop at. So, getting out to some islands that you can go for miles and miles, a bit of hands on time with my coach.

[\(23:21\)](#):

I have two weeks until I race my first race of 2024. I'll be out in Abu Dhabi. It's just what we call a training race, not tapering for it, just so my coach can be like, "Well, this is where we're at and this is what we need to do."

[\(23:35\)](#):

As you rightly said, I think we're down to something like 27 weeks. So, we're working on smaller numbers now. And it sounds like some people might be like, "Oh, that's a lot of time." But if you take into account any days off you have, any illness, any slower days because you've got a bit of a niggle, so, time starts to eat away. So, there's not much time left.

[\(23:58\)](#):

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But it's also exciting because things build up. I've done quite a bit more with Citi recently. I've got some other brand work. And it's just the hype coming around. And I think this will be my fifth game. So, my head space is very different in that I'm embracing this journey. This may well be my last summer game. So, actually, if this is the last time you tow a line wearing your country's colours, let's enjoy this journey, regardless of the outcome.

Jorian Murray ([24:26](#)):

And you've done it in many different continents. Once you're in the zone and you're competing, whether it's the track or the pool or on the road, does it all blend in or do you need to get acclimatized to different environments?

Lauren Steadman ([24:44](#)):

So, before any games, your country will always do what's called a holding camp. So, we are going to the south of France, I think about 10 days before the 28th of August, just to... I guess, we don't really need to acclimatise because France is very similar to the UK and it's only an hour ahead. So, again, time difference isn't a thing. When it was Tokyo, you were talking a huge time difference. And also humidity was something we really had to train for because it was vastly different to the UK. But this time, it's probably more so just because you need a quieter zone, you need to be able to control absolutely everything. So, sleep is on cue. We have a specialist chef coming in for those 10 days before because things as simple as eating the wrong foods or your digestive system... Those sorts of things really do affect you. Anything three weeks before your race has a huge impact on you.

([25:36](#)):

So, we go into a holding camp more so just to become in our own safe space. And then, we'll fire up to Paris. I think we're going in four days before the race. I will not attend the opening ceremony, just because two days later is my race and the lateness of that being on my feet, my legs need to be rested.

([25:56](#)):

But you did say it's five different continents. And actually, each games has its own special feeling about it. So, we go from Beijing to London, London to Rio, Rio to Tokyo. Each of the games was just... Rio had a carnival feel, but London was home, and just to have a home advantage. And then, Tokyo was... I always think of them as being futuristic. Each of them are just so vastly different. And I think Paris itself, we know it as the city of love, but just when you think about everything that it is, Paris and France, it's going to be special as well. So, yeah, I'm looking forward to it.

Jorian Murray ([26:38](#)):

Ingrid, I always like to think that we do have some young ears listening to this. Tell us about the programmes that you offer, and how do people apply for them? Where should they look? What should they do if they're intrigued?

Ingrid Giordano ([26:52](#)):

So, we have programmes across multiple businesses. My favourite interns or analysts are those English majors or those music majors or the science majors. And so, anyone can apply to our roles. They can go to our website. There are six simulations on our website that any candidate can look at, that gives you a glimpse into what is the life of an intern across our different sectors. And so, I would definitely encourage the team to look for us on campus, to go to our websites and really hear about the journeys and the stories of our candidates.

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[\(27:31\)](#):

The other thing that I would say that I think is important is I think about when I've talked to students and they think about applying to financial services, there's also training that is provided when you come on board. And we believe in what's called an apprenticeship model, where you come to Citi and you'll have a mentor and there will be training that will be provided to give you the skills that you need to do your roles. And so, as I think about the story about adaptability and teamwork and collaboration and leadership-

Jorian Murray [\(28:02\)](#):

Lauren, let's talk the psychology of someone who's now an experienced Paralympian. I guess, it must be a double-edged sword. The more you know, the more you got to worry about what keeps you awake at night.

Lauren Steadman [\(28:17\)](#):

If I look at the 14-year-old Lauren versus the 18-year-old one, the 22-year-old one, the one that was in Tokyo, she has changed so, so much. And I think one of the biggest things that anybody in any walk of life can learn is you really cannot control anything else that happens but yourself.

[\(28:42\)](#):

So, yes, I could sit and I could worry about puncturing, I could worry about illness, I could worry about so many things, but they are really out of my control. I think a lot of us go through life concerned with what could go wrong instead of what we are in control of and what actually could go right. And also, the perceptions and judgments of others.

[\(29:04\)](#):

So, I think I'm going into this games... I was quite cool as a cucumber for Tokyo, actually, even though I really knew what I wanted. But at the same time, I got to the point where I was like, "I really have done everything I can." And when you can say to yourself, "I've put myself in the best position possible," no stone unturned, your best on that day, you can only be proud of yourself and happy with yourself. You cannot feel defeated. It was just that actually somebody else had a better race on the day, or you made one decision in the race that, yes, it did affect it, but... And I think when you get to that point, you race with a sense of control and you race in a happy place. You enjoy it because you're not panicking.

[\(29:49\)](#):

Once you get 10 days before your race, actually probably even a month before your race, there is nothing you can do that will affect that race. That you can do things wrong, but there's nothing else you can do to gain. And you learn that. You learn that with time. You learn...

Lauren Steadman [\(30:03\)](#):

... do to gain, and you learn that. You learn that with time, you learn that with experience. So yeah, I feel pretty cool right now.

Jorian Murray [\(30:09\)](#):

You come across remarkably cool. Let's talk a little bit about dancing. For those who are not in Great Britain, they wouldn't be aware of maybe Strictly Come Dancing, which is a celebrity professional ballroom dancing show, which is the biggest show in the UK. Lauren stepped up to that and competed. Tell us about that experience and how hard was it?

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Lauren Steadman ([30:37](#)):

I can remember my management calling me and asking me, and my initial thought was, "Yes, this is going to be so much fun." And then I was like, "Oh my goodness, I've got to speak to my coach." Because then I was like, "What's he going to say?" This was sort of September through to the following March that I needed to give up, not necessarily being an athlete, but give up the day job. And I was like, "Oh, I think he's going to say no." And then I was a bit disheartened. So I knew it was something that I wanted to do. And I rung him and he was like, "Yes, this is incredible." And I was quite surprised because, obviously, he has a job to do as well, which is to make me the best athlete I can be.

([31:18](#)):

But we went in as a partnership and it was quite strange because I had the World Championships four days before the first Strictly Live TV show. So I got three days less than everybody else to learn my first dance because my coach was like, "That's the one thing I will say is you will train all summer as an athlete. You will go, you will take the world title, and then you will fly home immediately and you'll go into London and you'll dance." And that probably stressed me out more because doing a triathlon in the Worlds, that was fine, but giving me three days to learn, I think I had a waltz, I was like, "I've never waltzed in my life." But actually, it was good fun. I found out that on week one as well, you can't get voted off because it's the first week. So even if I did a really bad job, I was okay.

([32:03](#)):

But the one thing I have learned about myself is, and I don't know if this comes from having one arm and it's my personality, but I want to find out where my limits are. And I guess I've always had question marks on certain things. As a young girl, can I do this? Can I do that? I don't see myself as different or limited, but I think I've probably got question marks for myself. So going on Strictly was an opportunity for me to see can I apply my skillset, my personality, my strengths to another walk of life? And I've got the furthest out of any Paralympic athlete that's been on there. So I got to the semifinals and I was so, so proud. I was not the best dancer, but the one thing that Strictly for me and my dance partner, we knew that I wasn't the best, but we stood for anybody at home that had ever doubted themselves or felt they had a physical limitation. And I don't mean disability, I mean somebody that's got a sore ankle or struggles to walk, anything. That's what we wanted to represent was this sense of an I-can-do attitude and hope. So we would go out and we would make the routines as risky as we could or as challenging as fun and everything we could. And every week that we got through, we were just surprised, is probably the first word that comes to mind. But then grateful that everybody was choosing to keep us in. So, I had a lovely time on Strictly and I'd like to think that I helped change a few perceptions in people's head spaces. And then I also decided to go on, we have a show in the UK called SAS: Who Dares Wins. It's a TV show that puts you through, I guess, selection for what would be for our special forces.

([33:47](#)):

And it was like going from the glitz and the glam and loveliness here to the opposite end where we didn't shower for 10 days and I was really smelly and gross. But actually, it was easier for me to switch into that headspace because it's very similar to sport in that you're stripped bare and it's just you versus you. So that was great for me, but again, I had so many question marks. As a 16-year-old girl, I went to a career's festival when they say, "Go work out on your GCSEs what you want to become." And I always knew that I've got a quite dicey mindset, or I have the ability to be very focused and directed in whatever I'm doing in front of me. So I thought I'd be very good in the military, but I was told as a young 16-year-old girl that I wouldn't be accepted because I have one arm by all four of our forces.

([34:40](#)):

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And I accepted that. I was like, "Okay, fine. Well, that's valid. If you're going to go and do something, that's fine." So then when I went on this special forces show, I think it was more so a case of I need to know because I believed that I would be a valuable asset. So I needed to know for myself that, actually, I was right and that those guys at the career festival were wrong. So when I got through the course and I passed it and they congratulated me, it was a sense of, "Yeah, I knew that I would have been good at that and I had what it took." So that was a big sense of achievement for me. But I think it also encouraged other people that, actually, I pushed a lot of boundaries in that. If you told me I could fall headfirst, backwards 25 metres in a hovering helicopter into the sea, no, but I did. I just did it and I was really proud, and yeah.

Jorian Murray (35:33):

I was going to ask a really lame question of proving doubters wrong, but I don't get that impression about you. The two words that jump into my head listening to you is what's next? What was the inspiration for all that you've wanted to achieve?

Lauren Steadman (35:49):

I'd say I've literally had the best parents that a young girl or a young adult now could ask for in that my parents have given and provided the opportunities. My dad has always said he'll give the advice, whether I choose to take it or not is up to me, but he will always pick up the pieces if I choose wrong, which is a fail-safe parenting method, I'm sure. But actually, yes, I really enjoy representing the family name, Steadman, and all that we are. But I think it's more so a case of me being an overachiever. I'm starting to get to the point now though, where I have achieved so much in my 31 years.

(36:29):

There's a couple more things that I'd like to do, feats that I'd like to achieve. And when I'm, I don't know, an 80-year-old grandma, I can sit down and tell my grandchildren about that. One of them is to do Kilimanjaro, and I don't think I'd do Everest, but just some different things in life just to experience them. But I just really enjoy the idea of pushing myself and my limits and experiencing things that people don't dare to do. And actually, it was strange you said this yesterday, I was swimming along and I could see the moon as I was swimming. And about three years ago, I applied to the European Space Agency to be sent to the moon just-

Jorian Murray (37:09):

Of course you did.

Lauren Steadman (37:10):

... because I think that is just like, I know, that classic Lauren, but I was looking at it and I was like, "I would really love to go to space. What can I do to get there?" But just because I think it would be so cool to do. So there has to be a point where I slow down. I do want to find the special someone and have a family and be a great mom and all those things, and it's coming. I can feel it coming. But until that point, I definitely know that I'm just going to keep doing things that are fun for me and challenging.

Jorian Murray (37:40):

You do them. Most of us walk around thinking, "Oh, wouldn't it be cool if we did that?"

Lauren Steadman (37:45):

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Maybe one time we can have a podcast call from the moon. If I get up there and I'm in a spaceship, we can do it from there, okay?

Jorian Murray ([37:51](#)):

You're on. You are absolutely on. Ingrid, tell us about the importance of having ambassadors like Lauren at Citi.

Ingrid Giordano ([38:00](#)):

Oh, having an ambassador like Lauren is just a dream come true. I think that the work ethic, how she thinks about her sport, how she's able to balance all the things in the world, I think is just so inspiring to all of our employees around the world. And as I think about all of the athletes and the ambassadors, what I love about Lauren's story is, Lauren, I can't wait to see what you're going to do next.

Jorian Murray ([38:27](#)):

So true.

Lauren Steadman ([38:27](#)):

Me too.

Jorian Murray ([38:29](#)):

Exactly. Thank you so much for joining us today. It's been an absolute pleasure. Lauren, best of luck in all that you do. I will be following your career even more closely than before. Ingrid, thank you for joining us, and it's brilliant all the work that you do at Citi. Thank you for joining Good Things Happen.

([38:51](#)):

On the next episode of Good Things Happen, Kristen Bitterly, head of North America Investments, and Andy Sieg, Global Head of Wealth, will join me to talk all things wealth.

Speaker 1 ([39:06](#)):

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ENDS [00:39:31]