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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Switzerland's most successful female Paralympian arrives in Australia

Paralympic Silver medalist and current 800m, 1500m and 5000m World Champion in the T54 Women's Wheelchair Track events, Switzerland's Edith Hunkeler has arrived in Australia in preparation for the 2008 Arrive Alive Summer Down Under International Wheelchair Road & Track Racing Series.

Hunkeler who won Silver in the 1500m and 5000m events at the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games was met at Sydney airport by close friend and mentor Louise Sauvage, Australia's most successful Paralympian.

Hunkeler is in Australia to compete in the Arrive Alive Summer Down Under Series hosted by Wheelchair Sports NSW with events to be held in Canberra and Sydney. The Summer Down Under Series commences Hunkeler's 2008 competition schedule and Paralympic preparation for the Beijing Paralympic Games.

In what will be the hottest contested category of the Series, Hunkeler will come face to face with multiple World Record holder and winner of 5 Gold medals at the Athens Paralympic Games, Chantal Petitclerc from Canada.

Sauvage who retired at the Athens Paralympic Games competed for many years alongside Hunkeler and the pair developed an enormous respect for each other as elite athletes. Now Assistant National Wheelchair Track and Road Coach in Australia, Sauvage recognised Hunkeler's potential, determination and work ethic some time ago and has been a strong supporter of and adviser to the Swiss Paralympian.

Arriving in Australia yesterday Hunkeler was already out on the track at Homebush early this morning under the watchful eye of her mentor Sauvage.

Canberra residents will be given the opportunity to witness Hunkeler and Petitclerc along with some of the world's most elite Paralympic wheelchair track and road racers in action as part of the 2008 **Arrive Alive Summer Down Under International Track and Road Racing Series**.

Series host **Wheelchair Sports NSW** and major sponsor the **NSW Motor Accidents Authority (MAA)** will bring two major events to Canberra - an international Track Meet to be held at the AIS Track on January 19 and 20 and an exciting Time-trial and Match Race around the Stromlo Forest Park Circuit on January 21.

It's FREE to see the world's elite athletes in action - the general public is invited to cheer on the Aussies as they compete against the world's best!

**International Track Meet** - AIS Track  
featuring current World Champions and World Record holders  
Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 January from 5.30pm – 8.00pm

**Time-trial and Match Races** - Stromlo Forest Park Circuit.  
Monday 21 January from 5.30pm

For further Information, Media Interviews and photo opportunities contact  
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[www.Arrivealive.com.au](http://www.Arrivealive.com.au)