

## **Handcycling - "I can't believe how much fun I have..."**

Hello my name is Zane Gray I am a bilateral amputee An AK (above-knee) and a BK (below-knee). Linda MacLaren the Clinical Resource Physiotherapist with the Amputation Team, asked me to relate an experience that I am now enjoying. I have just this week purchased a Varna handcycle (<http://www.varnahandcycles.com>) and what a riot this toy is. My wife and I saw our first handcycle in Osoyoos, BC last fall while traveling and we thought this might be something to help me to stay in some other shape than round! I freely admit, I was not really doing too much exercise as of late and other than walking I really didn't do much. I noticed that since I stood up from the wheelchair that I sat in for 3 years my upper body strength was not what it used to be.

I got a hold of my ICBC (Insurance Corporation of British Columbia) rehab coordinator last fall to see if this might be something that they could help me with. He was really excited about this prospect, and told us to look into it. We surfed the net and found a variety of different bikes but all were from the US and carried a hefty price tag. In the course of our searching we came across the Varna and found it was made right here in BC. I contacted the owner Georgi Georgiev by phone on Gabriola Island and found him to be very helpful in selecting the proper bike for me. The pictures that are posted on their Website do not do justice to the actual machine. I am 6 foot 4 and 210 lbs and I find this bike really handles me well. I would highly recommend this company and this bike as something all amputees should try. I always thought bike riders were a bunch of weenies but since I got this toy I can't believe how much fun I have missed all these years. If anyone is interested in how this adventure goes this summer I will try to keep Linda posted as to my progress.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my experience

Zane Gray.