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Traveling Independently**After four years with his Paravan vehicle, Josia Topf gives a positive assessment.**

Four years ago, Josia Topf received his customized vehicle—and with it, a great deal of independence. Since then, the 22-year-old has driven more than 30,000 kilometers without an accident. The para swimmer, law student, and former Paravan driving student recently returned to the Aichelau Mobility Park for a service appointment and discussed how much the car has changed his life.



Four Years of Mobile Freedom: Paraswimmer and law student Josia Topf reflects on 30,000 accident-free kilometers in his customized Paravan vehicle, accompanied by sporting successes, independence, and active inclusion. Photos: Paravan

"I am much more flexible and can live independently," says Josia. "I can stay as long as I want. That was already an issue in high school. Mobility is essential for growing up."

The Path to Mobile Independence

It all began at the Paravan Driving School in Aichelau. Josia completed his driver training there before having his BMW 116i customized to his needs. The vehicle is controlled via the digital Space Drive driving and steering system with two joysticks: one for steering and one for acceleration and braking. The controls are positioned for optimal ergonomics and can be used without causing fatigue.

He operates secondary functions, such as the turn signals, horn, and sun visor, via Paravan Touch or voice control. The tailgate and driver's door have also been adapted so that he can operate them independently.

Josia uses his car not only to get to university or training but also to run errands independently and attend therapy appointments. "In winter especially, the car gives me a sense of security — much more so than public transportation," he says. "When I'm in the car, I feel safer than when I'm on foot." And: "In the last four years, there has never been a problem with the car. It has become a reliable partner."

Athletic achievements and personal freedom.

Since becoming mobile, Josia's athletic career has taken off. He won gold, silver, and bronze at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris and two gold, one silver, and one bronze at this year's World Championships in Singapore. He proudly brought his medals with him to his appointment for the service.

Despite his successes, the law student remains down-to-earth. He says, "My car means freedom to me — and a huge relief in everyday life. I can cook for myself, go shopping, and simply get things done when my parents aren't around. This independence is directly related to my mobility." However, he also faces challenges. "The biggest mobility killer is the lack of disabled parking spaces in the city. That often means long distances."

To become more familiar with his vehicle, Josia completed a driver safety training course. "I wanted to know how the car feels when it reaches its limits — and to see that my car can keep up with any other." His conclusion: "I didn't feel unsafe because of the car, but because of the circumstances. You can do anything."

An example of how self-determined mobility works

For Paravan GmbH, Josia Topf is a prime example of how innovative mobility solutions can enhance quality of life. "His story demonstrates the possibilities that arise when technology, determination, and passion converge," says Roland Arnold, the company's founder and CEO.



A Strong Team: Paravan technician Daniel and Paralympic swimmer Josia Topf share a passion for technology and the joy of success, both in sports and on the road. Photo: Paravan



Golden Results: Para swimmer Josia Topf won multiple medals at the World Championships in Singapore, proving that mobility and sporting success go hand in hand. Photo: private



Trust that goes the distance: Paravan technician Daniel, affectionately known as "Gyro Gearloose" at the Aichelau Mobility Park, has looked after Josia's vehicle from the beginning. Every inspection is followed by a traditional test drive. Photo: Paravan.

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About Paravan GmbH:

PARAVAN GmbH is the global market leader in customized vehicle solutions for the disabled people. About 160 employees at the Pfronstetten Aichelau and Heidelberg sites develop and produce customized vehicle conversions, electric wheelchairs and even specialized driver training. PARAVAN pursues a holistic approach with its "one-stop shop" concept. The technological highlight is Space Drive, an intelligent digital control system based on the drive-by-wire principle. Thanks to the active redundancy of the servo motors, it is completely fail-safe and the first to be approved for road use. This innovation enables severely disabled people, some of whom have no arms or legs, to drive independently and safely. It is not possible for these drivers to simply take control of the steering wheel. Over the past 20 years, Space Drive has been proven on more than one billion kilometers of roads worldwide and is used by numerous industrial customers for test vehicles in the field of autonomous driving. The system is available as a retrofit kit with an open interface for all known vehicle types. www.paravan.com