**February 2019**

**Tamsin Colley**

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I am 16 years old, and I am a year 11 student at Randwick Girls’ High School. My athletics classification is T36, because I have ataxia affecting all four limbs due to a brain tumour I had removed when I was 18 months old. I am glad to have received the opportunity to compete in sport from a young age and hope to encourage other young kids with disabilities to do the same. When I leave school, I would like to study exercise physiology or sports science at Sydney University. After that, I aspire to become an athletics coach or sports administrator. I compete in athletics regularly representing the Hills District Athletics Club. I also go to Little Athletics every Saturday morning locally at South Eastern Little Athletics Centre, where I am the club captain for my last year of Little Athletics.

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I have been competing for almost ten years, with my first nationals being in 2012. My coach, Matt Rawlings has been working with me for around 5 years now and has had a big role my sporting achievements.

My goal in athletics is to win a medal at the Paralympic Games. My proudest sporting moment is when I won two silver medals at the inaugural World Junior Para-Athletics Championships in Switzerland, in the 100m and 200m (T35-T38).

My first Paralympics experience was the 2016 Paralympics in Rio De Janiero. Rio was an amazing experience that I will never forget. I was a late call-up to the team due to the Russian team getting excluded for doping, and I found out just two weeks before that I would get this opportunity to represent my country.

Due to this, I missed the pre-departure camp in Florida so didn’t receive the entire experience, but it was awesome nonetheless! I flew over with the wheelchair basketball and table tennis team, whom I knew none of, but quickly got over the intimidation and made some friends.

It was my fourteenth birthday two days before my race, and I was lucky enough to meet the governor general for a birthday handshake at the airport! The athletics team also threw me a surprise party over there, which was kind even though my roommate spoiled the surprise for me!

Standing on the start line, I was said to be ‘as cool as a cucumber’! (If you don’t know me, I love cucumbers). There was a Brazilian athlete in the lane next to me, and, as you can imagine, the crowd went wild. After a few mishaps at the start, we were off! I was on track to do a PB and make the final when I, unfortunately, fell over 20 meters before the line but managed to pick myself up and finish the race.

After my Rio experience, I was selected for the inaugural World Junior Para-Athletics Championships in Switzerland and the following year, I competed at the Melanesian Championships in Vanuatu. The atmosphere at both events was incredible, in a different way to Rio. They were much smaller-scale events, but I thoroughly enjoyed myself nevertheless. I won two silver medals at the World Juniors and two gold medals at the Melanesian Championships. Standing up on the top of the medal dais felt incredible, and I could not stop smiling.

Some interesting facts about me: I love cucumbers; I am very creative and like knitting and making things for my school craft club which I attend every Tuesday, and I am a nerd because I like school.

[Click Here](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/southern-courier/rio-paralypian-tamsin-colley-inspires-the-next-generation/news-story/eb0bf666b21eaaa827ef8f6348f96e67) for an article from the daily telegraph covering my organisation of the Eastern Suburbs Special Needs Athletics Carnival in late 2017 through my school Youth Frontiers Program. A number of CPSARA members and other athletes attended and helped out on the day.