

# ALANNAH DID US PROUD!

Thank you to everyone who supported Alannah to swim for Australia at the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles. Whatever you gave - whether it was your interest, financial support, encouragement or good wishes - we felt buoyed by the wave of support given to her before, during and after this once-in-a-lifetime event.

Alannah trained hard before she left to ensure she was fit and competition-ready. We are proud to tell you that she swam TWO PERSONAL BEST TIMES in her events, despite coming down with an LA summer cold.



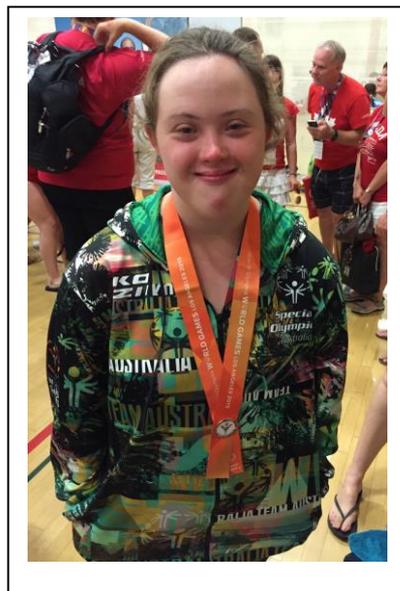
The competition was tough in the 50 metre freestyle with only 5 seconds between the first and last swimmer. Alannah came seventh in that event. In the 100 metre individual medley Alannah swam well and came home second. We were expectantly awaiting her presentation of the silver medal when she was stood to one side – disqualified on a technicality in the breaststroke portion of the medley. We were heartbroken but Alannah was stoic and accepted her participation ribbon graciously. The Special Olympics Athlete Oath is “Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt”. Alannah certainly lived up to that motto that day.

Unfortunately Alannah’s relay was cancelled as one of the team had returned to Australia with a medical condition.

Alannah kept telling us she was “having the best time”, constantly smiling and happy. The Aquatics Head Coach said the group was the best she had ever taken away to a competition. The Host Town events were creative, inclusive and fun. The atmosphere in the athlete village, the competition venues and around the campus was positive, friendly and full of energy. Alannah also visited Disneyland, Universal Studios and Hollywood. Thank you for supporting Alannah to experience all of that.

On a personal note, going to LA also meant that Alannah was able to spend time with her brother who lives on the USA East Coast. He made the trip across the country to see Alannah compete. It’s been 10 years since we’ve seen him. Thank you for helping make that dream come true, as well.

Los Angeles certainly turned on an event to remember and everyone in the city knew that the Special Olympics World Games were in town! Banners at the airport, huge posters along the freeway, signage on every public bus, daily coverage on ESPN and articles in the LA Times – no one was being shy about the biggest sporting event in the world for 2015. We were so proud to be part of that. Again, our sincere thanks for your support for our favourite athlete – Alannah McKeown.



Kind Regards,  
Judith, Alan and Alannah McKeown  
August, 2015

