

# MEDIA RELEASE



**FREEMASONS**  
ON THE CENTRAL COAST

Page 1 16 June 2021

## District 21 - Central Coast

# Go Tahlia Go!

Having arrived in Adelaide for the Australian Swimming Trials, Tahlia is full of nervous energy hoping to secure a spot in the Australian Paralympic Swimming Team and fulfil her dream of representing Australia in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

Tahlia Blanshard is a 20 year old competitive swimmer from Jilliby.

"I am hoping to make my Paralympic debut at the Tokyo 2021 Paralympic Games later this year"

She is currently training six days a week at the Toukley Aquatic Centre and competes for Woy Woy Swimming Club.

"I have been competing in swimming events since 2014 and only two years later, in 2016, I went to the Australian Trials for the Rio Paralympic Games in Adelaide. I made the finals in both the 50m Butterfly and 50m Backstroke, my first national finals. I am currently on the Australian Paralympic Development Team, NSW Para-Performance Squad and am a member of the NSW Institute of Sport."

Due to her disabilities she requires someone to assist her to stand on the blocks, and hold her still before she dives in. She has spent years adapting her swimming techniques, allowing her to compete, including learning to swim Butterfly and Breaststroke using only one arm, and using a bent "half arm" in Backstroke.



---

Promoting Freemasonry on the Central Coast through community action, charitable relief and the advancement of education.

Freemasons on the Central Coast is a trading name of Karagi Court Limited ABN: 92 002 044 500.



**KARAGI COURT**  
LIMITED

## MEDIA RELEASE

Page 2

16 June 2021

"I also have a support person who assists me to exit the water when I finish my race."

Internationally she is currently ranked 1st in 100m Butterfly, 3rd in 50m Butterfly, 5th in 50m Backstroke, 7th in 100m Freestyle and 8th in 100m Backstroke.

"When I race, I wear a technical race suit which my mum helps me put on (this takes up to 40 minutes). These are designed to reduce drag, increase buoyancy and repel water, which helps me swim faster. The suits I wear cost around \$750 each and only last for around 6-10 races - I could swim six races at a single competition - but affording new suits this frequently isn't possible for my family especially on top of my medical expenses."

Commencing on Monday 14 June Tahlia will compete in the MC 100m Butterfly, MC 100m Freestyle and finally the MC 50m Butterfly.

She will be eagerly awaiting the announcement on 16 June 2021 - will she be representing Australia at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games?

Freemasons on the Central Coast have assisted Tahlia by purchasing four of the technical swimming costumes she requested to help her compete. We wish her the all very best in her endeavours and, whatever the outcome of the trials, Tahlia will always be a champion in our eyes.



"Go Tahlia!"

### UPDATE - 17 June 2021

It was down to the wire - Only 35 athletes can be chosen and it came down to Tahlia and another competitor who were neck and neck. The last place to be filled was the breaststroke leg of the Women's Relay Team. Each competitor was given the pool by themselves and the middle lane - 50m breaststroke. Tahlia swam first with a time of 36.33 seconds, however the other girl swam 36.23 seconds. Unfortunately, Tahlia was not selected for the Tokyo 2020 Summer Paralympics.

Photographs by Trudy Blanshard. Reproduction of any photograph shown in this media release is allowed, **for editorial purposes only**. For any other usage, permission must be approved, in writing, from the copyright owner.

Hi-resolution versions of all photographs shown in this Media Release can be downloaded by following the link below:

- [15Jun21\\_GoTahlia](#)

Contact [media@FreemasonsCC.org](mailto:media@FreemasonsCC.org) for more information relating to this Media Release.

[www.FreemasonsCC.org](http://www.FreemasonsCC.org) [f FreemasonsCC.org](https://www.facebook.com/FreemasonsCC.org)