

All eyes set on Paris

It takes a strong and dedicated person to come back from disappointment and go again but it's only the beginning for young para-athlete Kailyn Joseph.

A Cherrybrook local, Kailyn already has so much to be proud of in her athletics career at the young age of 19. She has a para classification of T37 due to cerebral palsy in her left side and the main event she competes in is long jump.

At 15, Joseph won the bronze medal in long jump at the World Para Juniors in Switzerland.

The following year in 2018, she achieved another major step in her career by competing in the Commonwealth Games held on the Gold Coast where she finished in 5th place in long jump in the T38 classification.

"I was so young, I was the baby of the field and in awe of the experience with thousands of people in the stands watching," said Joseph.

"I was shocked I even got there. It was a big scary thing at such a young age, the experience still gives me goosebumps when I think about it and the honour of wearing the green and gold – it makes me want to chase it even more."

Kailyn unfortunately missed out on the opportunity to represent Australia in Tokyo last year at the Paralympics, however, while it's an early setback, it's being used as positive motivation to push towards the Paris games in 2024 as she shows maturity beyond her years.

"I was devastated at the time but now

I reflect that what is meant to be, will be. I am only 19 so my time will come, I can't be too hard on myself."

The 2020 Kurt Fearnley Scholarship winner is currently training with new coach, Andrew Murphy as she pursues her goal of being able to travel around Australia and internationally to compete. Outside of her training and competing, the 19-year-old is also dedicating time to study exercise physiology and sports science.

She was also recently announced as Athletics NSW and Valour Sports Ambassador.

"I am really excited and humbled to have been offered the role of ambassador with Valour Sports and NSW Athletics," she said.

"It is a great opportunity and Valour seems amazingly supportive and enthusiastic about the athletes. I am looking forward to the role and being part of the team, especially among such fabulous athletes."

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