

= Kayla Clarke =

Kayla Clarke (born 6 August 1991) is an Australian swimmer who represented Australia at the 2012 Summer Paralympics in swimming , and has medalled at the 2010 Australian Disability Age Group Nationals , and 2010 International Paralympic Swimming World Championships , 2009 Queensland State Championships , 2009 Queensland Secondary School Titles , and 2009 Global Games . She competes in a number of events , including the 100m freestyle , 100m backstroke , 100m breaststroke , 100m butterfly and 200m individual medley .

= = Personal = =

Clarke was born in Silkstone , Queensland . She has an intellectual disability . She attended Ipswich Central High School and Bremer State High School , and was named the 2009 ? 10 Ipswich News YoungStar Sports winner .

= = Swimming = =

Clarke started swimming competitively in 2007 , and competes in the S14 classification . She was a member of the Woogaroo Swimming Club , and was coached by Tony Keogh , who became her coach in 2008 . She has a swimming scholarship with the Queensland Academy of Sport , is involved in the Australian Institute of Sport program , and received A \$ 20 @, @ 000 in Australian Government Direct Athlete Support (DAS) funds in the 2011 ? 12 financial year . One of her major swimming rivals is fellow Australian swimmer Taylor Corry .

At the 2009 Queensland State Championships , she won five gold medals in her classification races . The Queensland Secondary School Titles that year ended with her winning seven first place finishes , and she earned five gold medals , a silver medal two bronze medals at the 2009 Global Games .

In 2010 , she won eight gold and two silver medals at Australian Disability Age Group Nationals , and competed in the International Paralympic Swimming World Championships , where she finished second with a personal best time of 1 : 11 @. @ 13 in the S14 100m backstroke event . She also finished fourth in the 200m freestyle and fifth in the 100m breaststroke .

Clarke became affiliated with the Yeronga Park Club in 2011 in an effort to make the Paralympic Games , and switched coaches , taking on Rick Van Der Zant as her new coach . The 2011 Australian national championships saw her win six golds in seven events , including the 100m freestyle , 100m backstroke , 100m breaststroke , 100m butterfly and 200m individual medley . She competed in the inaugural 2011 Para Pan Pacific Championships , where she finished first in the S14 200m freestyle event , and at the 2011 Can @- @ Am Swimming Open , in which she posted first place finishes in the 100m backstroke and 200m freestyle events .

Clarke was selected to represent Australia at the 2012 Summer Paralympics in the S14 100m backstroke , 200m freestyle and 100m breaststroke events . These were her first Paralympic Games , and she was the only female swimmer from Queensland . Going into the Games , she was ranked second in the world in the 100m backstroke . She trained for the Games in China in order to acclimatise , and participated in a two @- @ week @- @ long national team training camp in Cardiff prior to the start . Support for her Paralympic efforts came from sponsors including TogTastic Racing and Training Swimwear . She made the finals in all three events , but finished outside the medals , being placed fourth in the 200m freestyle and 100m breaststroke , and sixth in the 100m backstroke .

= = = Personal bests = = =

Personal bests as of 16 September 2012 :