

= Ellie Cole =

Ellie Victoria Cole OAM (born 12 December 1991) is an Australian Paralympic swimmer and wheelchair basketball player . After having her leg amputated due to cancer , she trained in swimming as part of her rehabilitation program and progressed more rapidly than instructors had predicted . She began competitive swimming in 2003 and first competed internationally at the 2006 IPC Swimming World Championships , where she won a silver medal . Since then , she has won medals in the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships , the Commonwealth Games , the Paralympic Games , the IPC Swimming World Championships , and various national championships . At the 2012 London Paralympics , she won four gold and two bronze medals . After the Games , she underwent two shoulder reconstructions and made a successful return to swimming at the 2015 IPC Swimming World Championships winning five medals including three gold medals . She has been selected to represent Australia at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Paralympics .

= = Personal = =

Ellie Victoria Cole was born in the Melbourne suburb of Lilydale on 12 December 1991 . Her mother and grandfather were both swimmers , and her father was athletic . At two years of age , she was diagnosed with a rare tumour , a sarcoma that was wrapped around the nerves of her right leg . After unsuccessful attempts to treat her cancer with chemotherapy , her right leg was amputated above the knee on 14 February 1994 . Eight weeks after the surgery , as part of her rehabilitation , Cole 's mother Jenny enrolled her in swimming lessons . Cole 's instructors expected her to take up to a year to learn how to swim in a straight line , but it took her two weeks .

Cole attended Mount Eliza North Primary school and Frankston High School , both in the outer Melbourne suburb of Frankston . As of 2015 she lives in Sydney and trains at the Castle Hill RSL Swim Club while she works towards a Bachelor of Sports Coaching and Exercise Science at the Australian Catholic University . She has a twin sister , Brittany .

= = Swimming = =

Cole is classified in the S9 category in swimming due to her amputation , a classification that also includes swimmers who have joint restrictions in one leg and those with double below @-@ knee amputations . She began competitive swimming in 2003 and , at the 2006 IPC Swimming World Championships in Durban , she won a silver medal in the women 's 100 m backstroke S9 event . Also in 2006 Cole won the 100 m backstroke at the Telstra Australian Swimming Championships . Cole qualified for the Australian Paralympic Swim Team in 2008 and , in the same year , attended the Beijing Paralympics where she won a silver medal in the Women 's 100 m Butterfly S9 event and bronze medals in the 400 m Freestyle and 100 m Backstroke events .

On 12 August 2009 Cole participated in the 100 m freestyle multi @-@ disability event in the 2009 Australian Short Course Swimming Championships in Hobart , where she broke the world record with a time of 1 : 04 : 06 . This championship is the qualifying event for the IPC Swimming World Championships , run by FINA , the international organization for swimming . The same year Cole participated in the 2009 IPC Swimming World Championships 25 m in Rio de Janeiro , where she won bronze medals in the 100 m backstroke , 400 m freestyle , 4 × 100 m freestyle relay and the 200 m individual medley .

In 2010 at the IPC Swimming World Championships in Eindhoven , Netherlands she won bronze medals in the women 's 200 m individual medley and 400 m freestyle S9 events . In that same year she won bronze medals in the 100 m Freestyle S9 and 100 m Butterfly S9 events at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi . At the 2011 Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Edmonton , Alberta , Canada she won a total of six gold medals , emerging victorious in the women 's 50 m freestyle , 100 m freestyle , 400 m freestyle , 100 m butterfly , 100 m backstroke and 200 m individual medley S9 events . Cole has also participated in national championships such as the Australian Age Multi Class Swimming Championships and the New South Wales State Open

championships . The former competition is held in Canberra at the Australian Institute of Sport and is designed to prepare elite swimmers for international competition . She then participated in the 2012 New South Wales State Open Championships in multi @-@ class events .

Cole was an Australian Institute of Sport Scholarship holder . Her coach , Graeme Carroll , trained her in Canberra in preparation for the 2012 London Paralympics with an approach that combined swim training with aerobics and gym work . She trained with Teigan Van Roosmalen , a blind and deaf S13 swimmer . Cole also mentors young athletes . When not in high school Cole was undertaking ten or more swimming sessions a week but , while at school , she reduced her load . As of 2015 , her coach is Nathan Doyle .

At the 2012 London Paralympics , Cole participated in eight events and won six medals . In her first event , the 100 m Butterfly S9 , she finished fourth , while South Africa 's Natalie du Toit finished first . However , the following night , Cole won the 100 m Backstroke S9 , winning her first gold medal of the games in Australian record time . She told the press that it had " been a goal of mine ever since I was 12 years old to beat Natalie du Toit " who was " kind of like the Michael Phelps of swimming for me , she has been a great mentor and relaxes me in the marshalling room . She is my biggest hero . " Cole won a second gold medal in the 4 x 100 m freestyle relay 34 pts , this time in World Record time . In the 400 m Freestyle S9 , she was again beaten by du Toit , who finished first , while Cole took bronze . Cole won a second bronze in the 50 m Freestyle S9 , in which du Toit finished seventh , and then gold in the 100 m Freestyle S9 , in which du Toit finished third . Cole capped off the games , surprising even herself with a fourth gold medal , in the 4 x 100 m freestyle relay 34 pts , again in Australian record time .

After the London Paralympics , she underwent two shoulder reconstructions that threatened her swimming career . At the 2015 IPC Swimming World Championships , she won gold medals in the Women 's 100 m Backstroke S9 breaking the world record in the heats and final , Women 's 100 m Freestyle S9 and Women 's 4 x 100 m Freestyle Relay 34 points , a silver medal in the Women 's 4 x 100 m Medley Relay and a bronze medal in the Women 's 50 m Freestyle S9 .

Cole became the first S9 swimmer to break 29 seconds in the 50m freestyle in winning the gold medal at the 2016 Australian Swimming Championships in Adelaide in the 50m Freestyle Multiclass event . Her time of 28 @.@ 75 broke Natalie du Toit 's world record of 29 @.@ 04 .

= = Wheelchair basketball = =

Cole played wheelchair basketball for Victoria in the Women 's National Wheelchair Basketball League in 2013 and 2014 as a 4 @.@ 0 point player , taking out the league 's award for Best New Talent in 2013 . " I loved working in a team because swimming isn 't considered a team sport , " Cole told an interviewer in 2013 . " I definitely wanted a new challenge because when you 've been competing for a decade the increments of improvements are quite small . However , in wheelchair basketball I knew that I could make big improvements . I 've been chosen for the women 's national league team , which is great , so I 'm actually getting somewhere , which is a surprise . But my heart is definitely in swimming and I think it always will be . "

= = Recognition = =

During her time at Frankston High School , Cole received a Debbie Flintoff @-@ King award for the most outstanding sporting achievement from the institution three years in a row ; she was also nominated for the Junior Paralympian of the Year award . The award was received for winning silver and two bronze medals in the Beijing Paralympic Games , silver in 100 m butterfly and bronze in 100 m backstroke and 400 m freestyle . In 2009 she received an Outstanding Sporting Achievement Award from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development . In 2011 she was nominated for The Age 's Sport Performer Award in the Performer with a Disability category . In August of the same year she was voted International Paralympic Committee Athlete of the Month after winning six gold medals in Edmonton . She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2014 Australia Day Honours " for service to sport as a Gold Medallist at the London 2012

Paralympic Games . " In November 2015 , she was awarded Cosmopolitan Magazine 's 2015 Sportswoman of the Year .