

# Our Paralympic Champions: the Aussie Belles and Chad Perris



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## Three PWA in the Australian Womens' Goalball team – Aussie Belles.

Three goalballers with albinism were vying for selection in the team for Tokyo, which was named in May. **Jenny Blow** (1), **Tyan Taylor** (2) and **Meica Horsburgh** (8) have competed in the last 2 Paralympic Games, along with retired goalballer Nicole Edsdale (who left the team after Rio to have a baby).



Thanks to Jenny for sending the following information on behalf of the group:

"We are all legally blind, the minimal disability for vision impairment is 6/60 or a visual field of less than 40 degrees.

Covid 19 has delayed the Tokyo Olympics and individual selection for the team, but selection will be based on previous performances, and improvement shown leading up to Tokyo. Meica, Tyan and I were all on the team that traveled to USA last year for the qualifying tournament.

We all train pretty much daily in our home states. Each week this is a mix of goalball sessions, strength sessions and conditioning/cardio sessions. The biggest challenge is that goalball doesn't receive much funding so we all need to work full time on top of our training load to support

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ourselves. About once a month, when Covid restrictions allow, we come together for a national training camp.

I have attached a cool photo of us playing in Rio – Meica (8), myself (1) and Nicole Esdaile (3) who also has Oculocutaneous Albinism (she retired after Rio to have a baby and is also in the AFA group).”



#### **More about our Aussie Belles**

##### **Jenny Blow (Number 1) Vic (ex NSW)**

Jenny was diagnosed with Oculocutaneous Albinism at birth, the only known one in her family. She grew up playing mainstream sports, mostly netball, and it wasn't until she was in uni that she discovered goalball. Jenny was completing her education degree at university when NSW Goalball approached her and childhood friend Tyan, about running some school goalball demonstrations. The next year they were both selected in the National squad and represented Australia at their first international tournament in 2010 and competed in the last two Paralympic Games (London and Rio). In March she attended the Australian training and selection camp and is hoping to be named on the team for Tokyo.

Outside of goalball, for the last six years Jenny has been teaching English, Drama and Media at a high school in Sydney and then Melbourne where she now lives. She is currently the education manager at Paralympics Australia, developing their education program. Jenny says she will probably go back to teaching but this job is perfect for her training schedule at the moment.

##### **Tyan Taylor (Number 2) NSW**

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Tyan has Ocular Albinism and met Jenny at a camp for students with a vision impairment through the NSW Department of Education. She began her journey in goalball with Jenny at University, representing Australia at an international tournament in 2010 and at the London and Rio Paralympic games. Tyan has previously worked as a teacher's aide at a high school and early intervention preschool and now works for NSW Goalball. Along with Jenny and Meica, she attended the Australian training and selection camp and is hoping to be named on the team for Tokyo.

### **Meica Horsburgh (Number 8) Qld**

Meica has Oculocutaneous Albinism, as do her brother and sister. She started playing goalball in 2004 and represented Australia that year and at the London and Rio Games. She wears a bandana when she plays so is easy to spot in photos. Along with Jenny and Tyan, she attended the Australian training and selection camp and is hoping to be named on the team for Tokyo. Meica currently works as an administration officer at a hospital in Brisbane.

### **Chad Perris – T13 100 metre athlete “White Tiger - Fastest Albino in the World!”**



Last November Chad won a silver medal in the T13 100 metre sprint at the Paralympic World Championships, placing him in good stead for selection and a medal at the Tokyo Paralympics. At previous World Championships he has won a bronze in 100m and silver in the 200m (not an olympic event). Chad, who is known as “The White Tiger”, was a member of the Rio Paralympic team, bringing home a silver medal. T13 is a classification for legally blind athletes.