

Athletes with an Intellectual Disability Ready to Take on the World

13 March 2017 | Today 12 Australian athletes with an intellectual disability departed for the experience of a lifetime at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria.

From 18-25 March 2017 the Special Olympics World Winter Games will feature 3,000 athletes with an intellectual disability from 117 nations who will compete across nine wintersports disciplines.

Team Australia consists of 12 athletes who will compete across two disciplines: Alpine skiing and snowboarding. They will be supported by five volunteer officials and cheered on by a small group of families and supporters at the Games and many more at home via social media.

Sara Molloy, 28, will compete in Alpine skiing and can't wait to wear the green and gold. "All my life I have watched Australian sporting teams wearing the green and gold and now I'm going to join them."

"It will be the best experience of my life. I know my family, friends and all Australians will be cheering for me."

This will be only the second-time that Australian athletes have competed in snowsports at a World Winter Games.

Special Olympics Australia CEO Corene Strauss congratulated the team on their achievement.

"We are delighted to send our largest wintersports team ever to a World Winter Games. For our athletes this is the culmination of years of hard work and dedication through regular training and competition."

"Our wintersports program has grown significantly over the past few years, providing more opportunities for people with an intellectual disability to participate in sport."

At the last Special Olympics World Winter Games in PyeongChang, Republic of Korea in 2013 our team of five athletes returned home with an extraordinary 13 medals: 3 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze.

Team Australia for Austria 2017 is:

Alex Cherny, 20, Alpine skiing, VIC	Kristian Sandercoe, 29, Alpine skiing, ACT
Amanda Kozik, 33, Alpine skiing, VIC	Luke Forster, 33, Alpine skiing, QLD
Ben Pearce, 35, Alpine skiing, VIC	Olivia Sayers, 30, Alpine skiing, VIC
Brenton Heslehurst, 30, Alpine skiing, QLD	Perrin Richardson, 21, Alpine skiing, VIC
Craig Muhlbock, 32, Snowboarding, NSW	Sara Molloy, 28, Alpine skiing, VIC
David Campion, 31, Snowboarding, ACT	Shaun McKee, 26, Alpine skiing, QLD

Australian audiences can catch action from the Games on ESPN, the official broadcast partner or by following Special Olympics Australia on social media and visiting specialolympics.com.au/teamaustralia.

About Special Olympics Australia

For 40 years, the volunteers of Special Olympics Australia have been creating accessible sports training, coaching and competition opportunities for people with an intellectual disability so that they can reach their personal best, in sport and in life. Sports training is offered week-in and week-out in local communities across the country, and competition occurs regularly from local, state, national and international level.

Media Contact

Paul Wiggins
Special Olympics Australia
0437 438 423
media@specialolympics.com.au

Photos

Photos available on request. See gallery at
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/specialolympicsaustralia/albums/72157679672995120>

Connect

Website: www.specialolympics.com.au
Facebook: SpecialOlympicsAustralia
Twitter: @SOAustralia
Instagram: @SOAustralia
YouTube: SpecOAustralia
Flickr: SpecialOlympicsAustralia