Alberto’s childhood dream realised in Tokyo Paralympics perfection

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“IDPWD means a lot to me because we get to show what we are made of and what we’re capable of doing.” - Alberto Campbell, NDIS participant

Alberto Campbell is flying on track.

Whether it’s starring on Channel 7s Ultimate Tag or cultivating a life of independence off the track, the Jamaican-born 29-year-old from Brisbane is achieving his goals.

Last year, he raced to his Paralympics dream.

Alberto, who has an intellectual disability, was training up to 4 hours a day, as he prepared to represent his country of birth in Tokyo.

Alberto jetted out to Tokyo in August 2021, where he lined up in the heats of the T20 400m.

In the lead up to the Paralympics, Alberto, A T20 400m Australian track champion, used his NDIS plan to access the supports he needed for success.

“The NDIS has been really great for his running and training, and the physio has been vital in assisting him to warm up and down safely and stretch correctly,” Alberto’s mother Julie-Anne said.

“This allows Alberto to run at his best while keeping his body safe from injury.

“He also accesses a psychologist who assists him with social interactions, good healthy mindsets around competition, the events and winning and losing.”

Alberto was born in Kingston, Jamaica, before moving to Australia with his adoptive parents.

He accessed the NDIS with support from Partner In the Community, Carer’s Queensland.

Since then, Alberto has gained the confidence and skills for success. He has.moved into his own place and juggles training with a teachers-aide role at Citipointe Christian College.

“He moved out in January (2020) just before COVID hit, so it was terrifying for us, but he adapted so well,” Julie-Anne said.

“Alberto has a support worker who assists him with planning his shopping and tidying the house.

“His occupational therapist has assisted Alberto with meal support, groceries, and budgeting so he’s not confused with money, which he is learning to transfer to daily living.

“Their guidance and encouragement has made massive impacts on his self-confidence and ability to safely live independently.

“There’s a lot less stress and pressure than when we’re all living together and he’s celebrating. He’s a lot more functional and we’re a lot happier as a family.”

Alberto was able to apply these skills in his journey to Sydney during the COVID pandemic in October 2020 and during the filming of Ultimate Tag.

Alberto made his way into the competition’s finals while living independently, before 2 weeks of hotel quarantine on return to Brisbane.

Carrying that maturity into his teacher’s aide role, Alberto looks after groups of 6 to 7-year-olds who love him as much as he loves the job.

Wearing the yellow, green and black of Jamaica in Tokyo, Alberto grabbed the opportunity to realise his dream.

“He was crushed to miss out on Rio (2016 Paralympics) when numbers were cut, but he quickly set his sights on Tokyo,” Julie-Anne said.

“His selection on the Jamaican Paralympic team confirmed his 15 years of hard work are paying off.

“He’s a proud Australian, but he loves Jamaica and still has a lot of contacts there, and his childhood dream was to go to the Paralympics.

“The NDIS has changed everything for him and he’s feeling so good about himself. He’s at his peak now at 29, and he’s really focussed.

“We’re just so proud of him.”

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