

VareseNews

Arianna Talamona, from Malnate with a dream entitled Rio 2016

Pubblicato: Venerdì 18 Marzo 2016



Arianna Talamona is a 21-year-old Paralympic athlete from Malnate, who competes for the Polha Varese team, and in the Italian national swimming team.

For any athlete, 2016 cannot be a normal year. Indeed, **from 7 to 18 September**, there are the **Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro**, which, for all athletes, is a dream, which for Arianna is not far from coming true.

Arianna, tell us something about yourself.

“I was born with hereditary spastic paraplegia, and since I was little, I’ve practised swimming, although, at the beginning, I was reluctant to take part in competitions. Then, towards the end of middle school, someone convinced me, and I started to swim competitively. In 2009, I took part my first races, and since 2011, I’ve been on the Italian national circuit. Polha (a Varese-based company, which has been involved with disabled athletes for years, ed.) has been very important in my career, and even today, its involvement is essential.”

And you immediately began to achieve good results, didn’t you?

“That’s true, but it isn’t the medals that give me the most satisfaction. Over these years, I’ve changed a lot, personally. Swimming saved me, also on a relational level, and this is the greatest success I’ve had.”

Regarding sport events, which has brought you the most satisfaction ... so far?

“Without a doubt, the European championships in Eindhoven, in of 2014: that was the event in which I obtained the best results, and I won a medal.”

We're getting close to Rio 2016; what are the next steps in preparation for Brazil?

“I have to admit that, at this moment, I'm not feeling too well, because I've had some problems with my thyroid; but the next competition is the European Championships, from 1 to 7 May, in Funchal, Portugal. I hope to get some good results, although the last important trials will be in June.”

Regarding results, how do you get to go to Rio?

“This year the international federation made available ten places for women and ten for men on the Italian national team, and for London, five and seven. What counts is the performance during the year, and the ranking in the Italian team. At the moment, I should be eighth in my category so, fingers crossed, I should be one of those called.”

If you qualify, what will your objective be?

“It will depend on the competition: generally, I swim 400 metres front crawl, 200 metres mixed and 100 metres backstroke. I hope to reach the final at least in the “4 styles”, this would give me great satisfaction.”

The project “AcquaRio” is also linked to the next Paralympics. What is that about?

“It's a project that arose out of the need to train in Milan, to combine the university and work commitments of some athletes in Paralympic swimming. Apart from me, other people from Varese are involved, such as Federico Morlacchi, Alessia Berra and Fabrizio Sottile, as well as Arjola Trimi, Giulia Ghiretti, Francesca Secci and Giuseppe Romele. We train together at the “Saini” Sports Centre, near Linate. Polha had an essential role also in this project. The best thing is that we train together, everyone maintaining the original team.”

Chiara Vanzini, Alice Bogni, Gabriele Cataldo

di Translated by Bogni, Cataldo & Vanzini (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)