**April 2024**

**Karina Grigorian**

1. How old are you and are you currently studying?

I’m 19, currently studying at UTS doing a Bachelor of Communications (majoring in social and political science) and am in my 2nd year.

2. How did you first get into Cerebral Palsy football?

I got in CP football in around 2014 with the beginning of Cerebral Palsy football camps at Cerebral Palsy Alliance based in Allambie Heights. It was my first time being involved with CP football and it was such an amazing experience that I went there twice a year until COVID hit, now I go there as a volunteer.

3. How was the experience of competing in the 2023 IFCPF Asia-Oceania Championships with the ParaMatildas?

It was seriously one of the best moments of my life. It was a surreal experience to not only be surrounded by CP athletes, but to also compete in front of my family and on home soil. The competition was a big time for us to prove ourselves and get prepared for the World Cup this year. I’m forever grateful for that competition where I developed as a player on and off the pitch.

4. What are some of your future goals?

Definitely within the near future I’m determined to be selected for the team going to Spain for the World Cup. After that, I aim to maintain my position in the team and be able to compete with them at every competition that follows.

5. What advice would you give to other young people wanting to give Para Sport a go?

I think you essentially need to believe in yourself first and foremost. You cannot rely on others to push you, nor should you let the negative attitudes that people have bring you down. There is always a place for new players in para sports and if you keep up with it and stay devoted to your passion, I believe that people can achieve anything.

6. Do you have any interesting facts about yourself or hobbies that you would like to share?

While I represent Australia, I love to devote my sport to my ethic roots of being Armenian, a small country located in between the Middle East and Asia.  I think it is something magical to be able to devote to my motherland and where my values come from, and wearing my last name on my jersey represents the cultural diversity of Australia.

Travelling is also such a dream of mine. I’m so happy to say that I’ll be going to Madrid, Spain on a university exchange this year at the end of August. I’m extremely invested in the cultural structure and political differences in countries so am excited to be studying humanities at the Universidad of Carlos III.

I am also keen to see the amazing football culture in Spain and hope to develop my skill and knowledge of football further whilst I’m over there.