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ALUMNI

Former Gardner-Webb Swimmer Makes History at Tokyo Paralympics

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2021



Mallory Weggemann Comes Back from 2014 Arm Injury to Break Records and Bring Home Gold and Silver Medals

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Former Gardner-Webb swimmer Mallory Weggemann (<https://gwusports.com/searchresults.aspx?q=Mallory%20Weggemann>) not only won two golds and a silver medal at the Tokyo Paralympics, Aug. 24-Sept. 3, she broke two records. The 32-year-old swimmer finished first in the women's 100m backstroke S7 in a time of 1:21.27, 1:45 under the record of 1:22.72 set in 2016. In the 200m individual medley SM7, she broke the Paralympic record during her heat race. She won the silver in her final race of the games, the 50m butterfly S7 in a time of 34:30.

Weggemann, who became paralyzed from the waist down in 2008 following a series of epidural shots to treat shingles, was a member of the GWU team in 2009. She made her Paralympic debut in 2012, winning a gold in the 50m freestyle and was also on the medley relay team that took bronze.

She suffered an arm injury in 2014 and didn't medal in the 2016 games. Her highest finish was fifth in seven races.

After intense training and rehab, Weggemann made her return to the world championships stage in 2019, where she brought home two individual golds and a silver.

Following the medal ceremony in Tokyo, Weggemann posted her thoughts on her Instagram page ([malloryweggemann](https://www.instagram.com/malloryweggemann)). The message included her gratitude to everyone who had been part of her journey—husband, coaches, family, friends, and community supporters and sponsors.



▲ Mallory Weggemann's post on Instagram after the Paralympic Medal Ceremony.

Weggemann said: "DREAMS ARE RESILIENT. There aren't words that can adequately express the emotions I have felt the last 48 hours—admittedly, it still doesn't feel real. I have dreamed of this moment for the better part of the last nine years and as I sat atop the Paralympic podium and saw the American flag raise, I felt an immense sense of pride. That pride is rooted in the fact that despite circumstance we still showed up to the fight, time and time again and didn't allow our now to define what was to come."

She continued the post, "... whatever dream you hold in your heart—nurture it, fight for it, believe in it and know you are worthy of achieving it. And when adversity strikes and circumstance steps in, remember why you are fighting in the first place and allow that purpose to fuel you, to guide you and to carry you because dreams are resilient as long as you are willing to show up and fight for them. So keep fighting!"

Editor's note: Mallory Weggemann will be highlighted in an extended profile story in the next issue of Gardner-Webb The Magazine.