

Aussie colours inspire our champions

THE suit and the smile say it all.

Maroochy-dore swimmer Marayke Jonkers leaves for the Athens Paralympic games on Friday, and she believes the team will have as much support as her able-bodied Olympic Aussie teammates.

The 22-year-old, who made her paralympic debut in Sydney in 2000, said she was overjoyed by the support that paralympic sport now had. The 142-strong Australian team will compete in Athens from September 17 to 28. Jonkers said the Australian team had been provided with official team uniforms for Athens, just like their able-bodied teammates. The team will also have a large support crew travelling with it.

Jonkers said that even something as simple as having swimming caps showed the athletes something. "In my first team (Sydney 2000) we had plain yellow caps. Now we have our names on them and the Southern Cross," she said. "It's incredible. It just really inspires you to be an Australian and walk out and wear it all."

Wheelchair basketballer Alison Mosely and sports scientist Brendan Burkett are also heading for Greece.

