

Co-op backs Para Athletics contender with store fascia message

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The Co-op shows its support for one of its staff members who is competing in the Para Athletics Championships

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ATHLETICS
By **SHELDAN KEAY**
@MENSports

PARA Athletics star Carly Tait is relishing the chance to represent her country in the London Stadium later this month - five years after being inspired to begin training by those who competed in London.

Tait suffers from cerebral palsy, and is part of the GB squad taking part in the World Para Athletics Championships beginning on Friday, racing in the T34 100m, 400m and 800m.

The Manchester athlete only decided to take up the sport after watching the London Games in 2012, and has gone on to compete for GB during a number of competitions.

With that in mind, Tait is now excited about the opportunity to go back to where it all began.

"The London 2012 Games was where it all started for me so this is sort of bringing it full circle," she told M.E.N. Sport.

"I had watched the Olympics and Paralympics on TV and it was amazing. I was really inspired and thought if they can do it then I definitely can.

"I competed at the Anniversary Games in London and that was great but it was just one race, so I didn't really get time to take it all in.

"It's going to be a nice experience to have more than one race this time. When you do 100m it's over before you know it, so I'm looking forward to competing in other

aces." Tait has been busy in the weeks leading up to the Championships, and recently visited students at Bury Grammar school to talk to them about the event.

"I really enjoy the school visits. The young children are so excited and really appreciative of you going to tell them your story," she said.

"They listen and are engaged and ask so many questions, even some that adults don't ask that really makes you think!

"It's good to go there and not just talk about disability sports but to also try to inspire any young girls or able bodied people to get into sport.

"I didn't start until I was 27 so it's never too late to have a dream and realise that dream. I had no confidence when I was younger but if you can get that belief then you can achieve anything."

Tait has received plenty of support during her career, especially from those she works alongside in her job at the **Co-op**.

The company are continuing to back her by announcing a world record attempt for the largest number of online selfies, which are then displayed on a mosaic of Tait.

Anybody who uploads a selfie to support Tait has a chance of winning four VIP tickets to the World Parathletic Championships, with more information available on www.goodluckcarly.com

