



EXPERT BIO

MATILDA (TILLY) KEARNS

OLYMPIAN & WATER POLO CHAMPION

BEING AN ELITE ATHLETE TAKES COMMITMENT, SACRIFICE AND STEELY DETERMINATION – AND THANKFULLY, TILLY KEARNS HAS ALL THOSE ATTRIBUTES (AND MORE) IN SPADES.

The water polo champion, who was named best centre in the world at the 2023 World Championships at Fukuoka in Japan, grew up watching her father – former Wallaby Phil Kearns – competing on the world stage and was determined to become a global champion herself. Observing how much other people looked up to her dad taught Tilly the importance of leading and inspiring by example, which is an approach she brings to the water and her day-to-day life. A charismatic role model for young women, Tilly is dedicated to helping lower the barriers to sport for girls.

Growing up active, Tilly was 12 when she first encountered water polo, and by 15 she knew she wanted to turn her deep love for the game into a career. At 19, Tilly qualified for the Aussie Stingers (our national side), making a splash at the FINA World League Finals. The following year, she was a key member of the Stingers squad that finished fifth at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The key turning point in Tilly's career was deciding to move to the USA in 2019 to get more intensive training as a member of the University of Southern California (USC) squad. It was a bold move that required her to give up a relationship, friendships, family time and the Sydney lifestyle she loved,

but one that demonstrates Tilly's resolve to succeed. And it paid off – last season, she was USC's top scorer, nailing 64 goals.

Her down-to-earth approachability has made Tilly a hit on social media, where she shares insights into the realities of life as an athlete to her highly engaged followers. She's amassed 400k followers on TikTok and 28k on Instagram, and her posts are sometimes picked up by the media, making Tilly a highly influential voice. In every post, Tilly's fun-loving side and natural delivery are palpable, as well as her devotion to a sport that often doesn't get the recognition it deserves.

Tilly's philosophy is balance. She knows all too well how important it is to balance training (and study) with pleasure, and that groundedness has given her a great foundation to weather the ups and downs of professional sport. It also means she approaches every match with a desire to have fun, rather than letting the pressure overwhelm her. The ability to turn nervousness into excitement is one of Tilly's superpowers, and is a valuable learning she instils in followers and audiences alike.

Tilly is available for media and PR opportunities, corporate hosting and speaking as well as brand partnerships.



For more, contact hello@thelifestylesuite.com

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