

## Matthew Mitcham

***Olympic champion, musical performer, keynote speaker and diversity advocate***

Matthew Mitcham made Olympic history when he achieved the single highest score for a dive in Beijing. Now, as well as being a Gold Medallist, he is an acclaimed cabaret performer, a compelling speaker and polished MC and an author. Matthew is a self-proclaimed perfectionist so his life to date has been a rollercoaster of incredible highs and inexplicable lows.

It is impossible to ignore Matthew's immense talent - a 'perfect 10' diver, a singing voice and stage presence that rivals experienced professionals and a keynote message that captivates its audience through storyline and execution. It's only when you read his 2012 biography *Twists and Turns* that it reveals that there is not always an equally unbreakable core beneath his seemingly flawless armour.

Matthew Mitcham came from humble beginnings, raised in a single-parent home in Brisbane. They often say that from adversity comes a burning desire for improvement. That is true of Matthew. From when he was very young he decided he wanted to be '... the best in the world at something.' That mission would first be geared to the sport of trampolining where he did in fact realise that goal in the junior ranks at least, winning the World Junior Championships in 1999 and 2001.

But it wasn't long before an Australian Institute of Sport diving coach identified Matthew's acrobatic talents. By 2004, he was on the podium at the World Junior Diving Championships, bagging three silver medals. Matthew qualified for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, finishing just out of the medals in fourth (3m springboard, 3m synchro) and fifth (1m springboard, 10m platform). It was the catalyst for a short break from the sport, before returning to train under current coach Chava Sobrino at the NSW Institute of Sport.

2008 would be Matthew Mitcham's breakout year. Entering the final round of the 10m platform of the Beijing Olympic Games some 34 points behind his fancied Chinese competitor Zhou Luxin, Mitcham delivered the single-highest scoring dive in Olympic history to take gold. It was undoubtedly one of the greatest come-from-behind wins in the history of Olympic competition. He was officially the best diver in the world on 10m platform and his lifelong quest for perfection was there on the scoreboard for the world to see - four perfect 10s.

Matthew continued his golden run, winning the same event at the FINA Diving Grand Prix, USA



that same year. Four silver medals at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games followed, with a disappointing semi-final round exit in London for the 2012 Olympic Games.

Matthew was battling personal demons at the time and penned an honest, raw account of his struggles in his 2012 autobiography *Twists and Turns*. It has proven to be the greatest therapy of all. A gold medal at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games and the creation of a cabaret stage show of the same name has given him renewed focus.

He also had a successful showing on the Seven Network's *Dancing with the Stars*, registering the highest score in five dance styles to qualify for the Grand Final. Matthew and his partner Masha Beshal finished Runner Up.

In January 2016 Matthew announced his retirement from diving to focus on his equally successful media and entertainment career.

Matthew Mitcham is a highly respected and popular individual who is admired globally not only for setting high standards and benchmarks in all areas of his life but also for constantly achieving them.

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