

Shane Gould MBE

One of the world's greatest-ever swimmers

More than forty years after her golden triumphs at the 1972 Munich Olympics, Shane Gould is still a household name throughout Australia and wherever people take an interest in swimming.

Still the only person, male or female, to hold every world freestyle record from 100m to 1500m simultaneously and the only swimmer ever to win three Olympic Gold Medals in world record time, Shane's career was short but dramatic. She burst onto the scene as a 13-year-old. Four years and 11 world records later, she retired.

Shane's life has paralleled her swimming. It has been a never-ending series of tumble turns involving a complete change of direction and leading inexorably, towards new goals.

Qualifying for the Munich Olympics in seven individual events, Shane finished with three Gold, a Silver and a Bronze. Returning a national heroine, constant media attention created pressure on the Gould family and a much-publicised conflict between her father and coach. Feeling overwhelmed, Shane took refuge and meaning in God, surfing and an alternative lifestyle.

Turning her back on 'Shane Gould the swimmer,' Shane married and adopted a simple lifestyle on a farm in Western Australia. There she developed a love for horses and a passion for the environment.

During this time, Shane taught natural horsemanship, women's learn-to-surf classes and 16 seasons of learn-to-swim. Competitive urges were satisfied by unusual events. In 1993 and 1994 she was the WA state horse ploughing champion. Shane has always set high standards for excellence and technique accuracy. However what is most important to her is the 'feel' in a sport. Feel for the horse, feel of the water, feel of the ocean's power. Harmony and connection with the water or animal is a meditative thing for Shane, a practical outworking of her reverence for God and connection to nature.

After self-debriefing and integrating Shane-the-swimmer with Shane-the-person, Shane's 22 year marriage ended and she broke through a year-long depression. As a result, she re-emerged into the public eye, determined to help others.



Now a successful businesswoman, author, keynote speaker and swimming commentator, Shane speaks about goals, motivation, personal development, retaining energy and youthfulness, taking the rough with the smooth, moving forward positively and gaining the most out life's experiences.

She has returned to the swimming pool, where she trains 'to be fit for life' and competes occasionally in Masters events. She continues to contribute to sport and swimming and does postgraduate research on swimming practices. Social uses of swimming pools, swimming in contemporary art media and drowning prevention are some studies. Australia and Fiji where Shane grew up are major research practice sites. Shane is also a consulting advisor for the World Aquatic Research Centre based in Lund Sweden.

Shane was world sportswoman of the year and named 1972 Australian of The Year and a National Living Treasure in 1998. She was an Olympic Torch Bearer in the Opening Ceremony of Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Her autobiography Tumble Turns was published in 1999 and a new edition with 3 updated chapters was published in May 2003.

She was a recipient of the 2003 Centenary medal, was inducted to the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame in the pioneer category in 2006 and is one of 30 Legends of Australian sport.

Shane Gould is known for her generous heart, her compassionate and visionary perspective, and her ability to inspire others to do their best.

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