MATTHEW MITCHAM

b. March 2, 1988

OLYMPIC DIVER

"Being 'out' for me means being just as I am with nothing to be ashamed about and no reasons to hide."

> **In Beijing, Matthew Mitcham won an Olympic gold medal in the 10-meter platform dive. After his triumph, he leaped into the stands to hug and kiss his partner, Lachlan Fletcher.**

Australian diver Matthew Mitcham is one of the few openly gay Olympic athletes. At the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Mitcham won a gold medal after executing the highest-scoring dive in Olympic history.

Mitcham grew up in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. He competed as a trampoline gymnast before being discovered by a diving coach. By the time he was 14, he was a national junior champion in diving. A few years later, he won medals in the World Junior Diving Championships.

In 2006, after battling anxiety and depression, Mitcham decided to retire from diving. The following year, he returned to diving and began training for the Olympics.

In Beijing, Mitcham won an Olympic gold medal in the 10-meter platform dive. It was the first time in over 80 years that an Australian male diver struck Olympic gold. After his triumph, he leaped into the stands to hug and kiss his partner, Lachlan Fletcher.

Mitcham was the first out Australian to compete in the Olympics. There were only 11 openly gay athletes out of a total of over 11,000 competitors in Beijing.

Mitcham was chosen 2008 Sports Performer of the Year by the Australian public. The same year, Australia GQ named him Sportsman of the Year. After accepting the GQ award, Mitcham joked, "Oh, my God, I'm a homo and I just won the sports award!"

Mitcham competed in the 2010 Gay Games in Cologne. He is studying at Sydney University and training for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

"I look at the last 20 years as a long, winding path of lessons and some hardship," Mitcham said in 2008. "I hope I do have more lessons to learn. I look forward to that."

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