



Teddy Smith

## MATT EMMONS

*That medal you earned in London, had you smiling greater than perhaps any other medal you've won to date, can you please explain what the medal meant to you and your shooting career?*

That's a really tough question to answer! To be completely honest, my first thought when I looked down at the monitor displaying the results and saw that I was bronze was, "Ok, still good

enough for bronze. Thank God that's over with." Yes, I was happy and smiling, but it was more out of relief that I got through the day and was able to walk away with a medal. That was the toughest competition I've ever had to shoot in my life. The last four years have been extremely hard on me and my family for a variety of reasons. I had to overcome so many things just to make the Olympic team and once I made the team, it seemed that if something could go wrong, it did. On top of that, there was no hiding from my past Olympic history and I knew that there was a good chance I'd be in the same position once again. I knew that millions of people were going to be watching to see if I could overcome the past. I don't like to think that way, but you can't run away from the reality of it. I knew walking into London that my preparation was less than ideal because of all of the setbacks and obstacles and my success was going to be largely dependent upon my experience and toughness. I can't really say what the bronze means to my shooting career. It's too soon to have a good perspective on it. Right now, though, it's a symbol of my toughness. I know that very few other people in the world could have dealt with and overcome all the things I had to overcome and walked away with a medal.

***What will it take for you to continue to pursue excellence in this sport and make another run for Rio 2016?***

I can barely think about Rio right now. I'm still exhausted from London! What I can say, though, is that continuing in the sport as an athlete depends on a lot of things. I'm 31 years old and my primary responsibility and focus is on what's going to be best long-term for my family. I need to clearly see that continuing to compete will mean our lives are moving forward in a positive manner and that it will provide more good options for us (compared to now) when my wife and I decide to retire from the sport. Next, of course, I need to be able to take care of my financial responsibilities. I have bills to pay like any other adult.

Equally important, the situation needs to be right for shooting. I'll be honest - if next four years are going to be half as difficult and frustrating as the last four years, I'm not man enough to do that anymore. I do believe, however, that there is more inside of me that hasn't been unlocked yet. I know that I can't unlock that on my own and it's going to take a special individual, or individuals, to help bring that out. I'm not interested at all in continuing to shoot internationally simply to participate. If I'm going to spend the time doing it seriously, I'm only interested in trying to dominate and be the very best I can be.



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I need to see that it's realistic to achieve that goal. If I see that the things that need to be in place to get me there are in place, the goal becomes realistic and the motivation and excitement will return.

Lastly, I'm not sure if it's physically possible to do what I want anymore. I've had issues with my back in the standing position for the last couple years and we're still trying to figure out exactly what's going on with it.

Regardless, only time will be able to answer all of these questions, so for the moment, I just have to be patient and see what unfolds over the next several months.

***As your career begins to rapidly transition from full-time competitive shooter to now Dad, Husband and avid outdoorsman, how do all of them help feed who you are as a person?***

I've long said that while shooting might be what I do and something I care deeply about, it most certainly doesn't define who I am completely. There are a lot of other things I really like to do. I love being a dad and spending time with my family. I also love hunting and being outdoors. When you're so intently focused on one thing, such as preparing for the Olympic Games, it's easy to lose touch with some of the other things that make you a whole person. Now that the Olympics are over and I have some down-time, I'm able to reconnect with some things I've wanted to do (such as hunting more), as well as spend a lot more time with my wife and daughter.

***Outside of winning an Olympic medal, what was your favorite Olympic moment in London?***

There were a couple special moments, but my favorite moment was more special to me than winning my own medal. It was when my best friend, Jamie Gray set two new Olympic records on the way to winning Gold in 3X20. Like me, Jamie's had a couple issues with 10<sup>th</sup> finals shots, which have kept her out of medals before. She nailed a 10.8 on the 10<sup>th</sup> finals shot and I couldn't have been more excited at that moment if I wanted to be. There's hardly anything better than watching someone you care about achieve something they've worked so incredibly hard for, and do it in totally commanding style. She had

the perfect match on the biggest day, which is what I always strive for when I compete. It was so inspiring and just really cool to watch happen!

***What more do you want to achieve in this sport?***

I would love to experience the feeling of total preparation and command over what I'm doing in 3X40. It sounds funny, but I've never really had that. I want to experience the competition in 3X40 where I walk in knowing my coach and I have done everything possible, I'm totally prepared, and then everything comes together and happens the way I've dreamed. I'd love to do that in the Olympics. I'd also love to shoot 1190 someday.

I wouldn't call it an achievement, but I've always wanted to be able to affect the sport in a positive way and leave it better than I found it. That's always been a goal and as long as I'm still involved, continues to hold true. There are a lot of things that can be improved and I hope I can make a difference so that future generations have even more opportunities than I did.

***Tell us the biggest tip that's benefited you the most in this sport to date?***

I really can't think of a "one biggest tip." There are so many pieces to the puzzle and so many different things I've learned that have been important, it's nearly impossible to focus in on just one piece of advice.