Louganis Inspires Olympic Medalist to Disclose HIV Status

August 8, 2012 By Shawn Decker

An interview last week with Greg Louganis by Piers Morgan has inspired a fellow Olympian to come out of the AIDS closet. A trampolinist in the 2000 Games in Sydney, Ji Wallace of Australia penned a letter to the Star Observer **disclosing his HIV status.**

After seeing Louganis discuss his experiences as a gay man, Olympian, and someone living with HIV, Wallace was compelled to speak out: “It made me think and think and I couldn’t sleep, so I wrote.” Kudos to Wallace for following his heart. In an attempt to show that HIV is still out there, his willingness to speak up now is as perfectly timed as the athletic skills that propelled him to the silver medal at the 2000 Sydney Games.

Especially since there was speculation that, just as the athletes were arriving in London, the servers for the same-sex hook-up app, Grindr, grinded to a halt due to the influx of athletes from around the world. Of course, that story seemed to be rubbish or a PR stunt from Grindr. But the heart of the story, which is young people in the best shape of their lives looking to blow off a little steam with a post-Games hook-up, can’t be denied. Single athletes of all orientations would be crazy not to troll the Olympic Village for a willing gymnast.

Hopefully, with Louganis and Wallace shining a spotlight on sexual health, some of these seemingly impervious physical specimens will realize that when it comes to HIV, they are just as vulnerable as the rest of us.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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