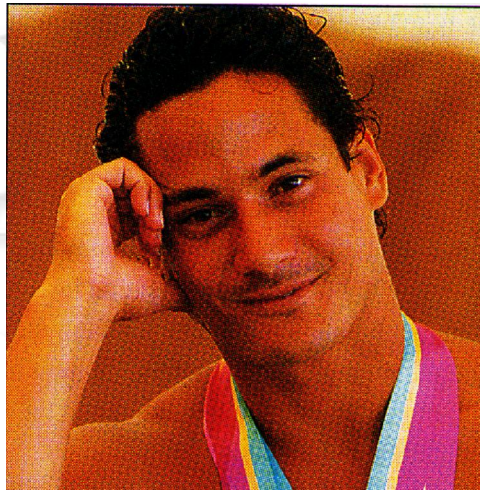


SPORTING LEGENDS: GREG LOUGANIS

SPORT: DIVING

COMPETITIVE ERA: 1976 - 1988

Gregory Efthimios Louganis (born January 29, 1960) is an American diver of Samoan/Swedish descent, adopted by a Greek-American family. He won back-to-back Olympic titles in both the 3 m and 10 m events.



At age 16, Greg Louganis took part in the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montréal, where he placed second in the tower event, behind Italian Klaus Dibiasi. Two years later, with Dibiasi retired, Louganis won his first world title in the same event.

In 1978, he accepted a diving scholarship to the University of Miami. He would later transfer to the University of California, Irvine in 1981, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts.

Louganis was a major favorite for two golds in the Moscow Olympics. But an American boycott of the games, instituted by U.S. President Jimmy Carter, in protest of the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, prevented him from participating.

Four years later, with the Games in Los Angeles, Louganis (who in the mean time had won two world titles in 1982) grabbed his revenge: with record scores and leads over his opponents, Louganis won both the springboard and tower event.

After winning two more world championship titles in 1986, he repeated his 1984 feat in the 1988 Seoul Olympics, although not without trouble. In one of his jumps in the 3 m springboard event, Louganis hit the diving board with his head, but the resulting injury proved not heavy enough to stop him from winning the gold medal.

SPORTING LEGENDS: GREG LOUGANIS



Louganisqgrace and agility were the best of his generation.

During his 1988 Seoul Olympics competition, he had an accident in one of his jumps in which his head hit the board and was injured and with a bleeding head he fell into the water. At that time he knew he was diagnosed with HIV, but at that time the scientific community didn't know that HIV cannot be transmitted by flow of blood in water.

He announced his retirement later in 1988, bringing to an end one of the most prolific and successful diving careers of all-time.

SPORTING LEGENDS: GREG LOUGANIS



Scott Burton's Final Thought

Greg Louganis inspired an entire future generation of divers with his incredible achievements.

If not for the 1980 US Olympic Boycott, he would certainly have won Gold Medals at 3 Olympics in a row.

In a sport reknown for bad blood between the USA, China and Japan, Louganis never reacted negatively to the banter of his opponents. He just kept calm, and let his diving do the talking.

The way he responded from injuring his head on the 3m springboard at Seoul 88 was truly magnificent. Lesser men would not have had the guts to come back from such a setback.

Once again, he just put it behind him, and nailed the dive perfectly on his next try. A true sporting legend, no doubt about it.



Ready For Take Offō The Elegant Poise Of Greg Louganisō