

## **Dancing Diamond aiming for three**

Paul Kent, shooting  
29 July 2004

### **The dance with history has begun.**

Michael Diamond has stepped up his shooting to three days a week now, hitting 148 targets from his last 150 shots, trying to keep the gun straight and his focus straighter.

This is more than another Olympic Games for Diamond, the gold medallist at Sydney and at Atlanta before that, the man even other shooters will stop to watch in Athens.

"There's so much on the end of this it's not funny," he said.

"Just that alone adds a bit more pressure to the significance of it all."

While a gold medal changes everybody's life in some way, and some more than others, gold in Athens could change Diamond's life beyond anything he knows.

If he wins gold he will become only the second Australian to win three consecutive gold medals in the same individual event, joining Dawn Fraser's 100m freestyle gold medals from Melbourne, Rome and Tokyo.

Yet, while remaining aware of what is at stake, Diamond is also trying to focus past it, to keep his eye on the target and not the horizon.

"As you get closer you tend to think a bit deeper about things, so it's probably an avenue I don't want to go down," he said.

"I just want to shoot it like any other event."

So he sticks to routine, picking up his gun jacket and heading to the range and shooting off the targets, walking from station to station with a quick economic walk before yelling, "Pull".

He shoots and they hit and he moves on. His moment is coming.