

# Australian Sailing Team

We just love this from Tom Slingsby on the eve of the next King of the Laser's coronation  
#GoAusSailors #TokyoTogether #Sailing



+2

## Tom Slingsby

Apologies for the long winded post coming up...

I just wanted to say a huge congratulations to Matt Wearn on winning his gold medal with a day to spare! A beautiful display of racing especially after a tough first couple of races. I still remember meeting Matt as a 14 year old in Mandurah and my old coach Arthur Brett saying, "this kid has got it". I totally agreed after coaching him and Arthur and I both said he would be a Olympic Champion one day. Today is that day. Well done!

However this post is not just about Matt. It's also about the guy who the cameras won't see when Matt collects his gold medal. A legend of Australian sport that most of the public do not know. Matt's coach, Michael Blackburn.

Blackers has now coached 3 back to back Olympic champions and has created a legacy in Australian sailing and the Laser class in general that 'Australia will win gold in the laser class'. That's all Blackers. He coached myself to gold in 2012, Tom Burton to gold in 2016 and now Wearn to gold in 2021. When Blackers joined me, I had just come off choking as the favourite in the 2008 Olympics. I was not in a great place. Over the course of 2009 I started with a 57th place in France, and a 19th at the worlds. It's safe to say I was confused and had lost my motivation to win.

Blackers was instrumental in helping me get my drive back and helped set me on my path to 2012. Between 2010-12 we won 3 world titles, world sailor of the year and an Olympic Gold medal together. I say we, because he is just as much a winner as I was and I could not have done it without him. His passion, technical and mental skills make him one of the best coaches I have ever seen, hands down.

So when Wearn gets to collect his Gold medal on Sunday, stand up, cheer and applaud him. He deserves it. But also stand up, cheer and applaud Blackers, because he deserves it. And while you are doing both of those things, spare a thought for all of the coaches out there who go unnoticed, behind the scenes working tirelessly, helping their athletes strive to be the best they can be... because they deserve it too!

I have also attached the [viral video of Ariarne Titmus' coach Dean Boxall](#) celebrating because A, it's epic.... and B, it shows how much passion coaches have helping their athletes. Stand up Australia!

