

Transcript

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 Compere: **ADAM SPENCER** Summary ID: **S00027364539**

Item: **SPENCER TALKS TO MAX MENZIES, SILVER MEDALLIST AT THE INTERNATIONAL MATHS OLYMPIAD, IN HANOI.**

INTERVIEWEE: MAX MENZIES, SILVER MEDALLIST AT THE INTERNATIONAL MATHS OLYMPIAD, IN HANOI

Demographics:	Male 16+	Female 16+	All people	ABs	GBs
	59000	63000	122000	60000	65000

ADAM SPENCER: Now, Cadel Evans, who just came second in the Tour de France, isn't the only Australian who's just picked up a silver medal for an incredible performance recently.

Let's meet a fantastic young Sydneysider. Max Menzies, how are you this morning Max?

MAX MENZIES: I'm very well.

ADAM SPENCER: Congratulations on winning a silver medal for the Australian team at the recent International Mathematical Olympiad in Vietnam.

MAX MENZIES: Thank you. Thank you very much.

ADAM SPENCER: We spoke with Irene Lo, your team mate before she left and she explained the format of the exam, two exams back to back, three questions each exam, you've got four and a half hours in total. When you



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were diving into the exam, did you just look at the questions and go this is great or did you struggle with them. How did it go for you?

MAX MENZIES:

Listen, day one, I was really tense and for the first three hours I'd solved nothing because I was really tense. After that three hours, I kind of started to relax and then, thank God, I managed to solve one and two, which I was really pleased about.

ADAM SPENCER:

In solving these questions, was it a matter of just chipping away for ages or did you have some eureka moment where you made some beautiful little observation and it all sort of fell into line?

MAX MENZIES:

It's definitely always a eureka moment, in like all of the four questions I solved out of the six were little - I just suddenly thought, hang on, look at this and it just suddenly worked.

ADAM SPENCER:

Look, I should point out to the listeners in that you did six questions over two days. You got four of those questions exactly right, scoring seven out of seven -you didn't get any points in the others - to give you 28 points in total. Twenty nine marks would have got you a gold medal. Do you lie awake at night cursing some individual mark you missed?

MAX MENZIES:

Well, yeah, it was kind of - it was disappointing to hear that 29 was the gold because it - the 28 could have very easily been a gold and in fact was a gold last year. It's - I mean I was upset but then our



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leader and deputy leader told us that I've still done well and it doesn't really matter that much.

ADAM SPENCER: I can assure you Max, you should not be at all upset about winning a silver medal with the top possible silver medal mark at something like the IMO. And the Australian team moved up from 26th to 22nd position, passing some teams, Canada, Great Britain, Slovakia, Mexico, Israel, who we'd been in front of in the past. That's a great effort by the Australians.

MAX MENZIES: We were very pleased to beat the British because we had spent a lot of time with them and had become very good friends with them, so we had a little competition between us.

ADAM SPENCER: Oh, so there's a bit of an even - so both in Ashes test cricket and international mathematics, there's a bit of Aussie-English rivalry.

MAX MENZIES: Yeah definitely.

ADAM SPENCER: When did you first fall in love with mathematics, Max?

MAX MENZIES: Well I've always liked it but I guess I fell in love with it in year nine I think. With maths, when you solve something, you get this feeling of happiness that you don't in any other sort of subject. I mean when I finish an English essay, I don't think, oh that was really good to get out the same way when I



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finish a hard maths problem. In fact when I finish those essays I'm very concerned that I didn't make too many mistakes in it.

ADAM SPENCER: Is that because you can provide the perfect or best possible answer to a maths problem but you can't say I've written the best ever essay on economic theory there?

MAX MENZIES: Well there's quite actually a better answer you can give for a maths problem, there's always a - in the IMO there are all the problems they can - you can do them in the [indistinct] methods but you can also do them in really clever nice methods.

ADAM SPENCER: Where to from now for you Max? You've proven yourself at your age to be one of the elite mathematicians in the world, do you plan to spend your life in this field? Australia needs a lot of great mathematicians coming through Max.

MAX MENZIES: Maybe, maybe. I haven't really decided yet. There are other possibilities, maybe even music but - which I also very ... enjoy and which many people say is related to maths, but yeah definitely I will consider working with maths.

ADAM SPENCER: Well Max Menzies on behalf of all 702 listeners, congratulations. You should be exceptionally proud of your efforts, coming 40th in the world and picking up a silver medal at the IMO, the



International Mathematics Olympiad. Well done
Max.



MAX MENZIES: Thank you very much Adam.

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ABs = Managers, administrators, professions. GBs = Grocery buyers.
