



## **KARSTEN WARHOLM**

**Media Title:** "ONLY SEE GREAT"

**Interviewer:** PUMA

### **What does greatness mean to you personally? How would you define greatness?**

I would probably define greatness as getting the most out of your potential and I think that's a good thing because everybody can do it. We all can fulfill our potential and and try to be the best versions of ourselves. And I think you can't ask for more in a person. We can all try to achieve greatness in our way.

### **On your journey, was there a moment where you realized the greatness of Olympic gold, world records... was there a moment where you thought 'yeah I can do this'?**

The journey is probably filled with some doubt, but I think deep inside you need to really believe it. For me it's been one of my secrets not to talk too much about it, but to do what has to be done to achieve greatness. And when you do those things, you feel very well prepared when you go to the starting line, you know that you have a good chance at winning.

### **Going into the 2017 season, was gold at the Worlds in London the aim? Did you know you were on the cusp of that clear greatness that early on?**

When I won the World Championships in London, I think that was a surprise to me and a surprise to everyone. That was sort of my breakthrough and I didn't expect it but I also knew I had a chance. I knew that the work was done and I knew I had results that could be good enough. That doesn't necessarily mean that you're able to do it – but yeah, a very special moment and probably one of the most memorable moments because the victories that you haven't prepared for mentally are probably the biggest surprises.

### **Fast forward to this summer, breaking the world record at home in Oslo, first race of the season. Did you know going into that race that it was on the cards?**

I knew that I was able to do it, but at the same time I knew that breaking the world record is a difficult thing. It's the reason why the record was standing for 29 years. I knew it was going to be difficult, but in training you could see that I have the potential to do it and also it would have been a dream of mine to do it on home soil.

### **And then! What about six weeks later? 45.94, I struggle to say out loud because it's just absolutely mindblowing. Is that the perfect race? Did you know that you had to do something that spectacular to win gold?**

If somebody told me that the silver medal would be handed out at 46.17, I would have lost my mind because that's just so crazy. But at the same time I knew it was going to

be a tough fight for the gold – everybody was just fighting for the medals. Seeing that number, I thought ‘this must be wrong’. But it was correct, so I’m happy.

**And that’s maybe one of the last times you went into a major championships without that pressure or expectation?**

London 2017 was definitely the last time going into a championship without any kind of pressure, I always enjoyed being a runner-up. Now I’m in a defending position, but after a while you need to be in that position if you want to do great things in your sport because, once you have achieved those things, people want to have your position and then you need to do everything to defend it. I’ve learned a lot from that journey as well because you realize that this is not a position that you will have forever. Everybody is coming for you and you need to do a lot of the right things to be able to maintain your position. You need to be willing to take some risks. Even though you are favorite, you need to attack every race like you’re not. Of course, I’m defending my titles, but in a race I’m not defending my position, I’m always attacking.

**You’ve reached world records, Olympic golds, so many major titles. Where does the motivation come from to keep going, season after season? What are the goals for next season?**

Right now I’m in a position where I kind of completed the game – I won everything that you can win in my career. Before I always had these goals: there was a gold medal that I didn’t have or a new record I could break.... I feel like I can let my shoulders down and try to find more of the motivation that I used way back when I just started. Now I just do this because I really enjoy it and the only thing that’s better than one gold medal is two. And that’s facts.

**How did you deal with the uncertainty when the Games were postponed, the season was disrupted, having to maintain or find a peak again the following season... How was that for you?**

Of course it was tough when the Olympics got postponed, because in our sport that’s the holy grail. That’s what you’re preparing for every day. But at the same time, the mindset comes back again because you need to try to turn the tables and see if you can make this an advantage. We were able to continue the training, and I think if it wasn’t for the pandemic, I wouldn’t have been able to run 45.94 at the Olympics. Even though I wouldn’t have wanted the situation, we managed to turn it into our advantage.

**What does it mean to be a part of Only See Great, and the PUMA Family? And do you feel inspired by that greatness around you?**

I think it’s always nice to be surrounded by people that do great stuff, but at the same time it’s also very cool to see what happens behind. We are always exposed to the results, but now I have a unique chance to see what happens also behind the curtains

and I think that's the most special thing. The result is always a product of the work that you put in and the people that are around you. So I actually like that very much.

**And finally, in ten, 20 years when you look back at everything you've achieved in the sport, what do you want the legacy to look like? That greatness that you leave in the sport?**

I would hope that people just can see that I enjoyed what I did and also that it comes through how much this means to me. Every time I step on a track I try to give it my all, and I hope people see that and get inspired by the way I'm attacking my races. I think attitude is something that we can all have, and we can all learn.