


**My  
Idol**



**Alexander Popov**

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A photograph of Alexander Popov, a Russian swimmer, celebrating a victory. He is wearing a blue and red tracksuit and is holding a large Russian flag (white, blue, and red) above his head with both arms. He is smiling and looking slightly to the right. In the bottom right corner, a hand is visible holding a bouquet of red flowers.

Russian swimmer, 4- fold Olympic champion, 6-fold world champion, 21- fold European champion, the fastest swimmer at the world level in the 1990s. He was awarded the Order of "For merits before Fatherland", "Order of Friendship". **Owner of the Prize International Swimming Federation (FINA) for outstanding achievements in swimming (1996). Member of the International Olympic Committee**

*Russian Rocket Alexander Popov*

He was born November 16, 1971 in Sverdlovsk. In the pool, Alexander went to the 8 years, but up to 13 years he is not showed special talent. Perhaps because he started swimming with the wrong style - he swam on his back. And when he changed his mentor and going to Gennady Turkish, He rolled over on his stomach and swam freestyle.

The first triumph came when Popov was not yet twenty years old. In August 1991, in the European Championship in Athens, Alexander won three gold medals, on the individual distances of 50 and 100-meter freestyle and two relays.



It makes no sense to list all the medals that earned Russian swimmer Alexander Popov, in the following years.

As they say fans of other team sports, it was a "win-win series.«

Let's say the main thing:

And in 1996, at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, he again took part in his favorite distance - 50 and 100 meters. And he won at these distances Olympic gold. His victory was a shock to the game owner. According to experts Popov was not supposed to win.

His main rival, American Gary Hall at that time was in better shape and he is in the preliminary swims showed a higher speeds.



In the final day of the competition arrived even President of the U.S.A  
Bill Clinton



This swim is called  
“The swim of the Century«

Alexander Popov 48.74  
outstrips  
Gary Hall 48.81  
seven hundredths of a  
second.

Bill Clinton so impressed  
Popov victory that buys a  
watch from his autograph.

Now he's a fan of the Russian  
athlete.



The head coach of the US national team swimmer Richard Quick said of him:  
"Popov refers to the most troublesome for us opponents type. When he gets to the starting nightstand, thinks not about the opposition, not about how much he would be paid for this victory, and that after a few minutes of the pedestal will raise the flag of his country".

He returned to Moscow in triumph. But at home he got into such trouble. One can see rightly say that the fate, **всегда заставляет человека платить** always causes a person to pay for the stellar moments. But who knew that the price would be so high



It happened on Saturday night, August 24, 1996. Street fight ended when the bad guys hit him with a stone on the head and stabbed in the back. Next to him was only Dasha Shmeleva, also an athlete, a famous swimmer. Popov was bleeding, a few more minutes and he could die. Dasha managed to catch a taxi to take him to the hospital.



After the injury already passed 40 minutes. Blood was a loss from Popov of 2.5 liters, the knife entered the body by 15 centimeters hurt his kidney and lung. The duty surgeon without delay sent the patient on the operating table. The only thing that could say Popov to the doctor until he was conscious that he was a swimmer, the Olympic champion. The operation was lasting for 3 hours. Surgeon Avtandil Manvelidze remembers the words of this guy. He's an athlete, then it is necessary to do the impossible, not just to save his life, save his muscles and internal organs. On the contrary to all the rules the surgeon made an incision with a scalpel not across but along muscle to prevent damage to muscles.



The surgeon did not cut any muscles, giving Popov a chance to return to the sport.

In the morning at the hospital a crowd of fans, journalists, just passers and everyone was asking one question.

This question asks Alexander Popov just waking up from the anesthesia: I asked: "Are all the organs in my place and I will be able to swim?"

At 3 months after surgery, Alexander Popov for the first time comes to the pool. Цитирую: I quote: "I jumped into the pool and was horrified that in which I was able to. I could neither bend nor straighten up. I jumped and went just to the bottom. " Best swimmer decades, Olympic champion realizes that he can not swim. And here again as 8 years old Alexander is necessary to learn to swim. To start training Popov flies to Australia for his coach.

Together with the Turkish Gennady they come up with the recovery program. 1st stage: return the physical form. All the time Popov and his coach spent in the gym. He made the most simple exercises squats, push-ups. Each exercise was causing him excruciating pain in the abdomen.



After 9 months Popov already swam 20 kilometers each day. His goal was to get to the European Championship in Spain. Popov statement about his return to the sport has become a sensation. But his victory few people believed in.



August 1997 Sevilla European Swimming Championships.



The first serious start after Alexander injured.





A beep sounds and a swim begins Popov is immediately in the center of attention. He is not just swimming fast, unusual. He has a new special technique. Big smooth strokes Alexander instantly forging ahead and come to the finish line first in 49.9 seconds.

In the Seville, he won 4 gold medals, one year after surgery. Since then, the world fell in love with him completely. The world believed that this Russian guy can do everything.

This is the triumphant return of the great swimmer. A year after Seville in 1998 Popov once again become a world champion. In 2000, at age 28 Popov puts a new world record in the 50 meters: 27.64 sec.



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Smile widely and openly taught by psychologists and your life will miraculously change for the better.

Maybe from the fact he was so successful in the sport, that smile is more often than frown.





**Thank you for your attention.**