



International Shooting Sport Federation
Internationaler Schiess-Sportverband e.V.
Fédération Internationale de Tir Sportif
Federación Internacional de Tiro Deportivo
ISSF • Bavariaring 21 • D-80336 München • Germany
Phone: +49-89-5443550 • e-mail: munich@issf-sports.org
Fax: +49-89-54435544 • internet: <http://www.issf-sports.org>

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Germany's Engleder wins women's 50m Rifle 3 Position final and retires

The 33-year athlete beat the two Chinese teammates Zhang Binbin and Du Li, and announced she will retire after today's victory.

Today's 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women final turned into a stage of success for Germany's 33-year old Barbara Engleder, who claimed Gold at the end of a thrilling final with a 0.2-point margin on her followers, after a spine-chilling 9.0 last shot.

Engleder led the Kneeling position with 310.2 points, and finished the Prone position in third with 408.8 points, before climbing back atop of the scoreboard with 458.6 points at the end of the Standing series.

The German athlete duelled neck and neck with Italy's Petra Zublasing (27) throughout the Prone and Standing series. But the Italian athlete, ranked fourth in the world, fired a 9.2 that landed her in 4th place with 437.7 points after the 43rd shot, recording her best Olympic finish.

Engleder continued shooting for the medals, facing China's Zhagn Binbin (27) and Du Li (34).

2008 Olympic Champion Du fired a frustrating 8.6, closing her medal match in third place with 447.4 points, and securing her second Rio 2016 medal five days after the 10m Air Rifle Women's silver.

In the following and last shot, the 45th, Zhang shot a great 10.4, but Engleder's 9.0 was enough to win the brightest medal with 0.2 points of advantage due to the safe head-margin she had built through the final.

"It's unbelievable, really it is. I can't breathe anymore right now," said Engleder.

"A few days ago, I was fourth at the air rifle competition and I thought, 'I hate Rio'. But right now, I love Rio," she added laughing.

"On the last few shots of course there was a lot of pressure and a lot of pulse, but I got used to and I managed it. I'm so happy that that works. On the very last shot, I knew I was anyway guaranteed a medal, it has been hard to keep the focus and that's why I shot a 9.0."

The German athlete then made a shocking announcement. After being in the sport for more than 20 years, and winning an Olympic gold, a world championship title in 2010, a world cup title in 2011 and a European title in 2005, she will retire at the end of this year.

"I'm quitting after this victory. This is my fourth Olympic and I feel I should dedicate more time to my family and to my son, now. I will compete in the ISSF World Cup Final in October, and that will be the last one."

"Then I will have to search for a job," she added smiling. "So if you get to know any interesting job openings please let me know."

That's something she has in common with today's Bronze medallist, Du Li of the People's Republic of China.

"I am also quitting," Du said. "I don't think I will be at the Tokyo Olympics, however Rio really taught me what a real Olympics is. I really feel part of it and am enjoying every part of it."

The Chinese athlete, who won two Olympic gold medals in 2004 (10m Air Rifle) and 2008 (50m Rifle 3 Positions), walks out of Rio with a bronze and a silver medal around her neck.

"I really feel this may be the last Olympics I will attend, so I'm enjoying every moment. In 2008, it was in Beijing, so I felt more pressure because it was right in our hometown. In 2012 it was in London and I was at the breaking point. I experienced immense pressure. But this time, I feel like I am more relaxed and I've been travelling around with my husband and we've been taking photos and we feel happy no matter what we do," she concluded.

She will now fly back to Beijing with her husband Pang Wei, who won a 10m Air Pistol Men's bronze here in Deodoro on the opening day of Rio 2016.

Notes for the editors:

The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events, and it has over 160 affiliated National Federations worldwide. Shooting is an Olympic sport since the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Find out more about the International Shooting Sport Federation at www.issf-sports.org.

ISSF Media Contact:

Marco DALLA DEA, ISSF Communication Manager, marco@issf-sports.org