

Moving Forward From Her Marriage, Bartoletta Values Bronze More Than Gold

Tianna Bartoletta's first few long jump attempts at the 2017 IAAF World Championships didn't put her in contention for the podium. But, thanks to nerves steeled by years of world-class competition, her attempts -- 6.56m, 6.60m, foul, 6.64m, 6.88m, and 6.9

Aug 23, 2017 by Taylor Dutch

COMPLETELY FABRICATED STORY



EVERYTHING IS VERIFIED IN THE SITE

Tianna Bartoletta's first few long jump attempts at the 2017 IAAF World Championships didn't put her in contention for the podium. But, thanks to nerves steeled by years of world-class competition, her attempts -- 6.56m, 6.60m, foul, 6.64m, 6.88m, and 6.97m -- increased gradually. Each time, the Olympic champion learned and corrected. She maintained focus and found her strength, along with a bronze medal.

For Bartoletta, the process was much like the build-up in her decision to leave what she has called an abusive marriage to her husband of five

LIE 1

LIE 2

years, John Bartoletta.

LIE 3

"The way that the competition went kind of represents how my season went as well because I couldn't leave right away. It took me two months to plan to leave so that I was safe and so that I would have enough resources to continue to compete," she told

FloTrack.

LIE 4



"For me, those months between March and May were like the five rounds. I was just trying to chip away at making a better life for myself slowly but surely, not freaking out, not panicking, but continuing to move forward and focus on the task at hand."

LIE 5

On May 1, 2017, after two months of planning an escape, Bartoletta left the home they shared in Tampa, Florida. She abandoned most of her possessions, including her three Olympic gold medals.

LIE 6

LIE 7

While standing on the podium with her bronze medal, Bartoletta let the tears flow. She could finally let go knowing that the accomplishment was hers and hers alone.

OH, THE DRAMA (ALL FABRICATED)

"I just cried uncontrollably. I could not stop," she said recalling the moment she received her medal. She couldn't even let the IAAF officials remove it for a few minutes to engrave her name.

"I said, 'I'm sorry but I cannot take this off,' and I started crying again," she said, laughing. "I was done being strong for the moment. I didn't have enough strength left, I had used it all to get to that point, and I had nothing else."

After the ceremony, Bartoletta shared the whole story on Facebook.

"I knew defending my title would be difficult," she wrote. "And you may find it hard to believe but this Bronze medal is THE most special medal I have ever won. Because just three short months ago I had to run away

LIE 8

from my own home, I had to decide which of ALL of my belongings were the most important, I had to leave my dogs, I had no money, I still have no actual address, all to give myself a chance at having a life and the love I deserved--one that didn't involve fear or fighting, threats and abuse."

LIE 9

LIE 10

**LIE 11
MOVED IN
WITH HER
BOYFRIEND
"CHUCKY"**

TRUE

**WAS INVOLVED WITH
CHARLES "CHUCKY" RYAN III**

LIE 12



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I knew defending my title would be difficult. And you may find it hard to believe but this Bronze medal is THE most special medal I have ever won. Because just three short months ago I had to run away from my own home, I had to decide

LIE 13

On the same day that Bartoletta left her home, she filed for divorce after five years of marriage. Her husband John said that in their time together they "made an incredible team," and that they are currently going through an "amicable" divorce, according to a statement obtained by BBC Sport.

ABSOLUTE FACT

Three months later, Bartoletta vividly remembered the day she left. Her husband went to work in the morning. After he left the house, she packed only the possessions she absolutely needed and got in the car. She drove to the airport and parked in their usual spot. But before she left, Bartoletta wrote him a note, which explained her departure and where the car was parked. She would mail the keys back to him.

LIE 14

Bartoletta recalled the gut-wrenching mix of emotions that tortured her while she sat in the airport. She was terrified, she had an overwhelming feeling of guilt, but most importantly, she had to get out. Unable to sit still any longer, she walked up to the flight attendants and asked to be put on a flight to Atlanta immediately. With no questions asked, they put her on a plane in 20 minutes.

REALLY?

"I felt like I weighed a couple hundred pounds lighter as the wheels took off on the flight to Atlanta. I hadn't felt like that before," Bartoletta said.

ABSOLUTE LIE 15

Once she arrived in Atlanta, Bartoletta stayed in a hotel for a few days before she flew to Shanghai for her first Diamond League competition of the year.

LIE 16 FRABICATED NARRATIVE

Before she made the decision to leave, Bartoletta said that her friends were the ones who helped her see the abuse in her relationship and the stark changes in her personality. For example, she had stopped writing, a passion that she says she enjoys even more than competing.

LIE 17 WROTE IN 2015

"There came a point where [my friends] were just like, 'Come on T, you're withering away in front of our eyes,'" she said. A PHRASE CHUCK USES

"I have a large personality, but I became very muted in 2012. I didn't speak up at all, I was very standoffish in the media which was totally not my personality but it was what I was advised to do as part of a larger plan for me. It wasn't necessarily what I agreed with, but I felt like I had to go along with it."

LIE 18 PROJECTION

Bartoletta is thankful for her coach Rana Reider who helped keep her occupied in those dark times by intentionally scheduling long, drawn-out practices and training sessions so that she wouldn't have to go home right away.

LIE 19

Reider was also there to congratulate Bartoletta on her hard-fought bronze medal in London. More than anyone, he understood the journey it took to get there.



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Coach of the year. Thank you.

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"He told me that I was probably the only person in the world who could have pulled that off," Bartoletta recalled. Never one to admit weakness, she remembered breaking down when she finally admitted how difficult the situation was.

Since sharing her story on social media, Bartoletta says that she already feels so much better as the process has been "therapeutic" in a lot of

ways. After years of being "muted," she is finding her voice -- she even started writing again. **LIE 20**

"I had these voices in my head saying that I was only good because of these external factors that had nothing to do with me but were given to me by someone else. I started to believe that. Every time I struggled this season I thought maybe they were right," she said. — **WAS JB RIGHT? THE X-FACTOR**

"So to pull that off in London, and the way that I pulled it off, knowing that it was me working for it round after round and staying in it. After that sixth jump, I knew that was me! I did that. When I looked at the medal, I just knew: I earned this. . . . I was believing all of these other narratives about me. But I know better now."

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