

# London celebrates a glowing success

## US tops medal table but host nation emerges as real winner

By **MARK TREVELYAN** and **MATT FALLOON** in London  
Reuters

The United States topped the sporting world with 46 Olympic gold medals to China's 38 at the end of 16 days of thrilling action as the main stadium filled on Sunday ahead of the closing ceremony.

Crowds performed "Mexican Waves" around the 80,000-capacity arena as the sets for the final act of London 2012 were put in place - large reconstructions of some of the city's most famous landmarks including the Tower Bridge and St. Paul's Cathedral.

The stadium has seen some of the most spectacular moments

of the Games, including Jamaican sprint king Usain Bolt defending the 100, 200 and 4x100m titles he won in such spectacular fashion in Beijing, the latter in a world-beating time.

British supporters will also cherish memories of the venue, where Somali-born runner Mo Farah won the 5,000 and 10,000 double to deafening roars and was celebrated as a symbol of the capital's multi-culturalism.

The host nation won 29 golds to take third place in the rankings, its best result for 104 years which helped lift the nation out of the gloom of an economic recession temporarily buried in the inside pages of the newspapers.

"I will say history has been written by many athletes. The Games were absolutely fabulous. London has absolutely refreshed the Games," International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge told reporters.

British Prime Minister David Cameron agreed, writing in a succinct message on Twitter: "Britain delivered. We showed the world what we're made of."

On Sunday, Stephen Kiprotich of Uganda broke away from two Kenyan rivals to win the men's marathon near Buckingham Palace before vast crowds, reflecting local enthusiasm for the Games despite doubts about the cost and potential disruption.

After running side by side with world champion Abel Kirui and Wilson Kipsang, the 23-year-old put in a powerful kick to shake off the Kenyans 6 km from the end.

He crossed the finish line draped in the red, black and yellow Ugandan flag, which he knelt to kiss.

Also on Sunday, Britain, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine picked up golds for boxing and Japan and the United States for wrestling.

The women's modern pentathlon was the final medal to be decided, and Lithuanian Laura Asadauskaitė beat Briton Sam Murray to the gold to round off London's extravaganza of sport.

Many will remember London 2012 for the record-breaking exploits of American swimmer Michael Phelps, who took his lifetime medal haul to 22 including 18 golds, making him the most decorated Olympian in history.

There was, of course, Bolt, the biggest name in athletics and a charismatic ambassador for sprinting.

After winning the 4x100 he went on to a London nightclub to delight dancing fans with a turn as a DJ, shouting out "I am a legend" to the packed dancefloor.

Britons may recall Andy Murray demolishing world No 1 Roger Federer at Wimbledon to win the men's singles tennis gold, while Jessica Ennis, the "poster girl" of the Games, won the women's heptathlon on the first "super Saturday".

Despite concerns about the creaky transport system and a shortfall of private security guards, which forced the government to call in thousands of extra troops to help screen visitors, the Games were by fairly trouble-free.

A furore over empty seats at several Olympic venues blew over, especially once the track and field showcase kicked in and drew capacity crowds for virtually every session.

## TOP 10 MEDAL COUNT

Rank by Gold	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
1	United States of America	46	29	29
2	People's Republic of China	38	27	22
3	Great Britain	29	17	19
4	Russian Federation	24	25	33
5	Republic of Korea	13	8	7
6	Germany	11	19	14
7	France	11	11	12
8	Italy	8	9	11
9	Hungary	8	4	5
10	Australia	7	16	12

## Games: A great effort, but work still to be done

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"While we've continued to perform well in our traditional events, we have also improved in many in which we had lagged."

Liu urged the country to close gaps with sporting powerhouses.

"While we've improved, we still lag behind the world's elite in talent cultivation and grassroots promotion in some major events like cycling and track and field," Liu said.

Liu also expressed concerns about China's lackluster performances in team ball events and told their governing bodies to strive harder.

"Ball events are highly professional and globally popular," Liu said.

"We didn't improve, while the world is growing. The gap is enlarging, and this should be an alert for us to work harder."

None of the five qualified ball teams medaled. Women's volleyball did the best, coming in fourth, and men's basketball did the worst, having been eliminated at the pool stage.

These failures can be attributed to the lack of new blood and advanced coaching, Liu said.

While promising talent is emerging in the pool and on the track, injury-plagued veterans, including 35-year-old Wang Zhizhi and 31-year-old Miao Lijie, still play pivotal roles in both the men's and women's hoop squads and struggled to make difference.

Meanwhile, Liu also defended Ye against doping suspicions after the 16-year-old's 400m IM performance.

"Some people and foreign media stated groundless suspicions and slandered our athletes' elite performances without solid proof," Liu said. "They issued reckless and unfair allegations."

Ye broke the world record in the 400m IM with a last-leg freestyle sprint that was faster than US male swimmer Ryan Lochte's equivalent in the same race.

Pundits, led by US coach John Leonard, alleged her superb final 100m could be explained by drug use.

British Olympic Association Chairman Colin Moynihan later told a news conference that the World Anti-Doping Agency tested Ye and found she was clean.

"China stringently follows the world anti-doping code and implemented a series of strict testing processes and tough penalties," Liu said.

"Our anti-doping work has earned praise from the IOC and WADA. Skeptics should stick to the facts and learn to respect clean athletes and their results."

Liu also praised Chinese athletes' ethics, citing players' behaviors in the face of controversial officiating.

Disputed refereeing, which cost China gymnastics and cycling titles, partially spoiled the country's jubilant winning streak and destroyed some athletes' Olympic dreams.

But the affected players, including men's gymnast Chen Yibing, female cyclists Guo Shuang and Gong Jinjie, and hammer thrower Zhang Wenxiu, all accepted the final determinations after their appeals were turned down.

"They showed great sportsmanship while delivering elite performances despite controversial refereeing decisions," Liu said.

Liu also declared strong disapproval of the women's badminton match-fixing scandal, in which two leading Chinese athletes were among four pairs disqualified for trying to lose to manipulate the knockout draw.



DAVID GRAY / REUTERS

China's Ye Shiwen poses with her gold medal on the podium during the women's 400m individual medley victory ceremony on July 28.



ANTHONIN THULLIER / AFP

China's Lin Dan returns to Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei during the men's singles gold medal match on Aug 5.



MARTIN BUREAU / AFP

China's Sun Yang stretches before compete in the men's 1,500m freestyle final in London on Aug 4. He won the gold.



LEE JIN-MAN / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jamaica's Usain Bolt holds up his shoe after his team's win in the men's 4 x 100m relay at the Olympic Stadium on Saturday.



MATT SLOCUM / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Great Britain's Mohamed Farah reacts after winning gold in the men's 5,000m final at the Olympic Stadium in London on Saturday.

## It never rains but it pours at London Games

I know the clouds above London tend to weep a lot, but I didn't think there would be such a trickledown effect on the athletes at the just-concluded XXX Olympiad in the British capital. Tears of pain, tears of joy and tears of agony rained down the Games by the bucket load; the only thing missing was a performance by Tears for Fears.

Anyway, amid all those misty eyes, some stellar performer emerged or re-emerged.

I'll keep my final ode to the event down to five as the sleep-deprivation experiment known as the Olympics has clearly shown me that man needs more than two hours of sleep per day over the course of two and a bit weeks.

5) The US basketball team. Awesome! Lived up to its hype and blew all and sundry

away on the way to its gold medal win over Spain, which was a little close, in Sunday's final. Yeah, with guys that go by singles monikers like LeBron, Kobe and Carmelo, they should crush the field, but they also did it with class, which is not something always associated with superstar athletes. My heart says the Magic-Bird-Jordan led Dream Team of 1992 would have beaten this incarnation, but my head says, "Heart you are an idiot."

4) Mohamed Farah. You've simply got to love the Brit who broke the African hegemony in the men's 5,000 and 10,000 meter races. OK, yeah, he was born in Somalia, but he grew up in somewhat the less than a hotbed of distance running known as England. When asked after his double delight if he was England's greatest track athlete, he bowed to middle-distance



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great and London Olympic Games Organizing Committee (thank God I will never have to write that again) boss Sebastian Coe. Now that's how to make friends and influence people.

3) Lin Dan. It's official the Chinese badminton mega-star is the greatest shuttler to ever live. Sure, it's only a sport that maybe five or six countries seriously care about, but that should not take away from his golden efforts in the men's singles and team event. Now we can look forward to him appearing in every Chinese TV ad for the

next four years. Yaaay.

2) Ye Shiwen and Sun Yang. I'm cheating a bit here, but how can you separate the simply brilliant performances of Ye and Sun in the pool for China. Sun is now the undisputed king of distance freestyle swimming after clinching gold in the 400 and 1,500 events ... and almost completed a remarkable treble by claiming silver in the 200, oh, and let's not forget a bronze in the 4x200 relay. Not to be outdone or outshone by her compatriot, Ye women's 200 and 400 individual medleys in record-breaking style. At the ripe old age of 16, she has at least two more Olympics left in her, which can't be a cheery thought for her rivals.

1) Usain Bolt

Well, it had to be 'Lighting' didn't? The brightest star in the track and field cosmos. The Jamaican pulled off the never-

before-seen feat of winning the 100 and 200 sprints and the 4x100 relay at consecutive Olympics ... and four of those races were in world record times! Bolt lost to his compatriot Yohan "the Beast" Blake at Jamaican trials and Bolt skeptics were saying the baton had been passed to his younger training partner. But, not so fast, my friends.

Party-hearty Usain silenced all his critics with a double treble of gold medals that is not likely to be matched for a long, long time. At 25, the lanky sprint legend is thinking of retirement in the not-too-distant future. Now, that brings a tear to my eye.

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PASCAL LAUENER / REUTERS

Chinese sailor Xu Lijia celebrates as she crosses the finish line to win gold in the Laser Radial class during the medal race at the London 2012 Olympic Games in Weymouth and Portland, southern England, on Monday. Xu's success in sailing, traditionally a Western-dominated sport, testified to China's growing overall sports power.