

Team USA Dominates 2012 London Summer Olympic Games



PHOTO courtesy of NBC OLYMPICS

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"I declare open the games of London, celebrating the thirtieth Olympiad of the modern era," Queen Elizabeth II said.

With those simple words, a seventeen-day journey consisting of about 10,500 athletes from 204 countries, 26 athletic sports and 302 medal events commenced. This year, the Olympics took place from July 27 to Aug. 12. Team USA entered London with aspirations of gold and won the top medal count of 104 with 46 gold medals, 29 silver medals and 29 bronze medals.

One particular sport the Team USA has defended its title in was men's basketball. This year's team consisted of veterans from the NBA, such as Kobe Bryant and LeBron James. In the finals of men's basketball, the American team was pitted against Spain, a long-time contender. Team USA won by a small margin of 107-100. The Spaniards had the

Americans struggling to stay in the lead by putting up similar statistics in terms of rebounding, steals, blocks and shooting. However, Team USA stayed in the lead with last-minute free throws.

When thinking about dynamic duos, the names Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh Jennings come to mind. These two veterans have won back-to-back medals.

May-Treanor came out of retirement to play in London with Jennings in hopes of doing what no other duo in beach volleyball has ever done before: win three consecutive gold medals in women's beach volleyball. May-Treanor and Jennings faced American duo Jen Kessy and April Ross in an All-American gold medal match. Kessy and Ross kept up with May-Treanor and Jennings when it came to offensive and defensive plays. However, May-Treanor and Jennings used their size to their ad-

vantage and came through for the game victory of 2-0, with each set having a score of 21-16. May-Treanor and Jennings won the match, won the medal and won the three-peat for an unprecedented record in Olympic history.

This year's team of five gymnasts, nicknamed the "Fierce Five", took home the gold medal in the team event. The Fierce Five

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-Sebastian Coe

members gold medal winners included Gabby Douglas, Aly Raisman, Kyla Ross, McKayla Maroney and Jordyn Wieber. For the floor exercise, perhaps one of the most defining moments occurred during Raisman's performance. What could've been a fall off of a twirl turned into a majestic split and beautiful finish.

The Fierce Five were the victors. Douglas became the first African American gymnast in history to win gold in the individual all-around event and the first American to win gold in the team event and the individual all-around in the same Olympic competition.

To the USA women's soccer team, this year's gold medal match against Japan wasn't just another shot at a medal, it was a rematch of last year's world championships when Japan defeated the USA. This year's match was intense as the USA won 2-1 with two goals from Carli Lloyd. Although Japan controlled the ball for most of the duration of the game, America came back using strong offensive strategies, six shots on goal and seventeen shots total to put Japan on the offensive. In the end, the USA defense proved to be too strong for Japan. The Americans prevailed and received their long-awaited victory.

The London Olympics featured many highlights, but in swim-

ming, Michael Phelps took the spotlight. Phelps attained the Olympic record for most medals by winning 22 medals in four Olympics. Missy Franklin won four gold medals and one bronze medal in her first Olympics. Ryan Lochte won five medals in his third Olympics. Nathan Adrian won gold in the 100M freestyle race, making him the first American swimmer to do so since 1988. The USA Swimming team won a total of thirty-one medals, making up almost thirty percent of USA's medal count.

From the Queen skydiving with James Bond to the torch being extinguished, the London Olympics brought people from all over the world closer together in the spirit of friendly competition.

"This may be the end of these two glorious weeks in London, but what we have begun will not stop now. The spirit of these Olympics will inspire a generation," London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Chairman Sebastian Coe said.

Cross-Country Team Pursues Almont League Title and CIF Qualifications

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AHS' cross-country team is currently in the middle of their season with three invitationals and one league meet down. Last year, the varsity team took third place in league and moved on to the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) preliminaries. This year, they once again are striving to place in the top three in league and advance to CIF.

At their first Almont League meet, the varsity boys took fourth place and the varsity girls took third place. Junior co-captain Justin Torres came in first for Alhambra and 6th place overall for the varsity boys with a time of 17:11. In the varsity girls' race, junior co-captain Luz Badillo came in first for Alhambra and also 6th place overall with a time of 21:33. So far, these are times and places worthy of CIF qualification. However, the leaders of

the team believe that improvements need to be made before the team is ready for league finals.

"Physically we are ready, but mentally we are just not out there yet. I think we need to listen and follow directions more without the constant talking and distractions," senior captain Henry Tea said.

According to some members of the team, attendance is the key to success. It is essential for members to show up to practice daily to prevent falling behind their teammates. "I think we would have a stronger team if everyone on the cross country team was fully committed to [the sport] and came to all the practices," freshman Viviana Prado said.

This season is also head coach Sandra Rodriguez's second year coaching the cross country team. She emphasized that the team has practiced enough to be a threat to other rival schools.

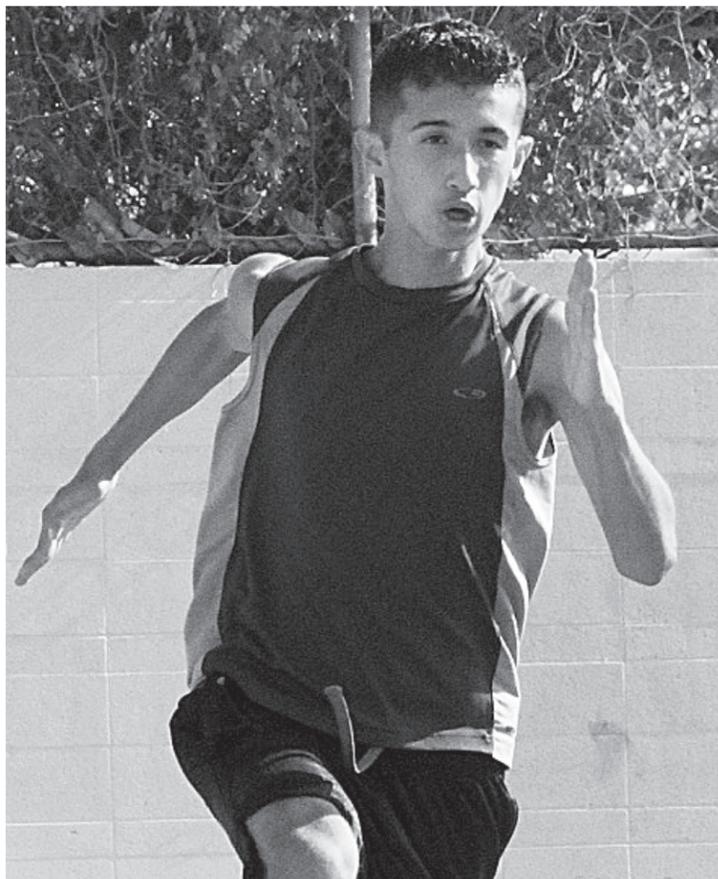
"We have been working hard

all summer. They are more trained and should be ready for this season," Rodriguez said.

Younger athletes tend to look up to the more experienced varsity athletes for advice and mental tips. Since the whole cross-country team warms up, stretches and works out together, there is a connection between the runners even though they are of different grades and divisions. "The more experienced members are very good at mentoring the younger members, such as [myself]," freshman Joseph Ney-Jun said.

With only a few days left until their upcoming Almont League meet, the team is focusing on their mental strategies and finalizing their physical training to have the best possible chance to score in the top three ranks and regain the third place spot they had last season.

MOOR graphic by SIMON ZHAO



MOOR photo by YIBEI LIU

WINNING TAKES PRACTICE Senior Josh Lopez practices to prepare for the Sept. 24 cross-country Almont League meet.