



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Half of them like it, half of them don't

Tussle of titans

BARCELONA, Aug 3: An Olympic showdown between Britain's 100 metres gold medalist Linford Christie and world champion Carl Lewis is on the cards because of a severe injury to a member of the US relay team, reports Reuter.

Lewis, six times an Olympic gold medal winner, had an infection during the US Olympic trials and failed to qualify for either the 100 or 200 metres in Barcelona. But he was named as a reserve for the relay.

Van Langen wins women's 800m

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Ellen van Langen of the Netherlands won the Olympic medal Monday night in the women's 800 metres in a time of 1:55.54, reports AP.

Weller lifts heavyweight gold

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Germany's Ronny Weller won the heavyweight gold medal with a final lift Monday that raised his total to 432.5 kilograms, reports AP.

Joyner-Kersee remains the greatest woman athlete

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Jackie Joyner-Kersee defended her heptathlon title Sunday, becoming the first woman in Olympic history to earn two golds in a multi-event competition, reports AP.

She became the first athlete — male or female — to win three Olympics medals in the multi-events, adding her second gold to the heptathlon silver she won in 1984.

Joyner-Kersee also is only the second US woman to win consecutive gold medals in the same event, joining Wyomia Tyus the 1964 and 1968 100-meter champion.

"This was the challenge," Joyner-Kersee said after circling the track draped in an American flag. "Because it was so historic, I really wanted to get the gold. It was a challenge

mentally and physically. It was a feeling of joy and relief when I came across the finish line."

For Joyner-Kersee, who also will be seeking a second straight gold medal in the long jump later in the week, and her coach and husband, Bob Kersee, their No. 1 aim coming into the Games was securing the heptathlon gold.

"What we are looking to do is try and recapture the Olympic title and bring home back-to-back gold medals," Kersee said. "No male or female athlete has three Olympic multi-event medals, so I think that would be historic."

"And I think at that point, you would have to consider her to be one of the best multi-event athletes ever."

The resourceful Joyner-Kersee finished the seven-event, two-day competition with 7,044 points, an extraordinary total considering the sultry conditions under which she was competing. She beat runner-up Irina Belova of the Unified Team by 199 points.

The total was the sixth-highest in history, and Joyner-Kersee owns all six of the top scores, including the world record 7,291 at the 1988 Seoul Games.

The victory was Joyner-Kersee's 14th in a row in a heptathlon in which she has finished since 1984, and it exorcised the "ghost of Tokyo," where she suffered a hamstring injury during the 1991 World Championship heptathlon 200 meters — the first serious injury of her career.

"Because of what happened to me in Tokyo, the heptathlon is the most important event to me," Joyner-Kersee said before the Barcelona Games.



JACKIE JOYNER-KERSEE ... retains her heptathlon title

BARCELONA, Aug 3: The 5,000 athletes still competing in the Barcelona Olympics have told the 5,000 who have finished their events to shut up and stop partying, reports Reuter.

With the stress of competition over, many relieved young people are enjoying the beach-side Olympic Village disco, eating dinner at three in the morning and evidently making use of the 60,000 condoms which have been distributed free.

Village officials have organized a mass chess competition to put their minds on more cerebral matters.

World chess champion Garry Kasparov is due in Barcelona soon and will be challenging 50 athletes at a time.

"More than half of the athletes are now out of competition. This has led to slight problems of discipline and order," organising official Pedro Palacios said on Monday.

"It is difficult. These young people have gone through a lot of stress. It is normal they should want to go partying."

The athletes who are still in competition need an atmosphere that is peaceful. That is understandable.

Officials at the Village, where accommodation is free of charge for the first time, have issued a note urging all athletes to show respect for others. The noise level has been turned down at the disco after midnight.

Asked if the rules might be changed on how long an athlete is allowed to stay on the Village after competing, International Olympic Committee spokeswoman Michele Verdier said the issue would be reviewed.

The Barcelona organisers have broken with tradition by scrapping the athletes' parade at next Sunday's closing ceremony. In Seoul, the marching athletes broke ranks in spontaneous high spirals.

The decision to cut the emotional closing highlight of the Games has angered athletes. "They've kicked us in the teeth a bit on this one," complained British swimmer Roland Lee.

Verdier said: "All the athletes will be seated in the stands. At the end, as part of the ceremony, they will be invited down (on the track) to join in the party, the fiesta."

Scherbo makes gymnastics history

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Former Soviet Vitaly Scherbo made gymnastics history and paid tribute to the system that produced him, reports AP.

American Trent Dimas emerged a saviour for a forgotten US men's programme and paid back his father's labour of love.

The incomparable Scherbo and the American whose father helped build the gymnasium on which he started the road to Barcelona, produced an unforgettable finale Sunday night.

Scherbo, the superstar on a Unified Team making its first and only appearance in the Summer Games, set an Olympic record with six gold medals in gymnastics.

There on the chest of Scherbo's green Unified Team uniform was a stark reminder of the dismantled system that produced him and so many other gymnastics stars: The hammer and sickle of the Soviet Union, his very own good-luck charm.



VITALY SCHERBO ... six gold medals

In all likelihood the last of that long, gilded line, the 20-year-old from Minsk became an Olympic legend Sunday. He won four gold medals in men's individual gymnastics finals — rings, vault, parallel bars and pommel horse — adding to his individual all-around and team titles in Barcelona.

"I had a meet, his dad would pay me just before the competition or I would take care of it myself."

Burch also predicted Dimas' gold medal will help turnaround the US men's programme, which has been in recession since 1984, when the US team captured six medals against an Olympic field that was minus the Soviets and most Eastern bloc countries.

"A lot of things are going to change because of that medal," Burch said. "This is what our

country needed. It needed a hero like Trent. We've been put down a lot. All the big countries were here, and we've got a medal now."

Scherbo exceeded the previous record number of gold medals — four — in Olympic gymnastics by four former Soviet stars: Vladimir Artemov (1988), Nikolai Andrianov (1976), Viktor Chukarin (1952) and Boris Shakhlin (1960).

Scherbo was better than any other gymnast — ever. Scherbo spent the night smiling, hugging and kissing coach Leonid Arkaev and piling up

out of bounds. He finished last, then headed to the pommel horse and a place in history.

The last athlete up on that piece, Scherbo tied North Korea's Paek Gil Su's score of 9.925. Later, as he shared the top rung on the awards podium with his former Communist ally, Scherbo flashed a smile and an OK sign to a Hungarian friend in the stands.

Scherbo's streak picked up further momentum on the rings, where he scored a 9.937, again as the last performer up. Considered one of the toughest events in which to achieve balance, Scherbo's upper body strength often turned the guy wires into unmovable pillars from which he hung.

His night and his act only got better.

He captured the gold medal in the vault with a 9.856, sticking both of his twisting, somersaulting landings. He beat teammate Grigori Misutin, who by now had grown accustomed to letting Scherbo lead the Unified Team's way.

Misutin, who finished the night with three silvers — the others coming in the floor and high bar — was second to Scherbo in the all-around finals on Friday.

THE MULTIPLE MEDALISTS

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Following is a list of male participants who have won more than one medal in the XXV Summer Olympic Games, as of Sunday, Aug 2:

MEN

- Six:** Vitaly Scherbo, Unified Team; gymnastics; 6 gold.
- Five:** Grigori Misutin, Unified Team; gymnastics; 2 gold, 3 silvers.
- Four:** Alexander Popov, Unified Team; swimming; 2 gold, 2 silver.
- Three:** Evgenii Sadyvi, Unified Team; swimming; 3 gold.
- Jon Olsen, US; swimming; 2 gold, 1 bronze.
- Li Xiaoshuang, China; gymnastics; 1 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze.
- Li Jing, China; gymnastics; 3 silver.
- Anders Holmertz; Sweden; swimming; 2 silver, 1 bronze.
- Andreas Wecker, Germany; gymnastics; 1 silver, 2 bronze.
- Two:** Viorel Talapan, Romania; rowing; 2 gold.
- Matthew Ryan, Australia; equestrian; 2 gold.
- Arkadiusz Skrzypczak; Poland; modern pentathlon; 2 gold.
- Nelson Diebel, US; swimming; 2 gold.
- Pablo Morales, US; swimming; 2 gold.
- Tamas Darnyi, Hungary; swimming; 2 gold.
- Wang Yifu, China; shooting; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Kieren Perkins, Australia; swimming; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Matt Blondi, US; swimming; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Jeff Rouse, US; swimming; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Jens Lehmann, Germany; cycling; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Iulica Rucan, Romania; rowing; 1 gold, 1 silver.
- Igor Korobitchinski, Unified Team; gymnastics; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Joseph Hudepohl, US; swimming; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Valeri Belenki, Unified Team; gymnastics; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- McI Stewart, US; swimming; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Mark Tewksbury, Canada; swimming; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Tom Jager, US; swimming; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Dimitrie Popescu, Romania; rowing; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Nicolaie Taga, Romania; rowing; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Dumitru Raducanu, Romania; rowing; 1 gold, 1 bronze.
- Norbert Uzsa, Hungary; swimming; 2 silver.
- Pavel Khuykine, Unified Team; swimming; 2 silver.
- Vladimir Selkov, Unified Team; swimming; 2 silver.
- Herbert Blocker, Germany; equestrian; 1 silver, 1 bronze.
- Guo Linyao, China; gymnastics; 1 silver, 1 bronze.
- Robert Taft, New Zealand; equestrian; 1 silver, 1 bronze.
- Edouard Zenovka, Unified Team; modern pentathlon; 1 silver, 1 bronze.

Brazilians sustain medal hopes

BARCELONA, Aug 3: The future of Brazilian basketball kept the nation's current Olympic medal hopes alive on Sunday, reports AP.

Faced with a final preliminary round game that meant third place and the quarterfinals or fifth and also-ran status, Brazil responded with an 85-76 victory over Germany.

In other games Sunday Lithuania beat Australia 98-87, Croatia defeated Angola 73-64, Venezuela defeated China 96-88, Puerto Rico beat the Unified Team 82-70 and the United States beat Spain 122-81.

Tuesday's quarterfinal pairings are set with Pool A champion United States meeting Puerto Rico; Pool B winner Unified Team going against Germany; Pool A runner-up Croatia meeting Australia and Pool B runner-up Lithuania facing Brazil.

Injured point guards Magic Johnson and John Stockton returned for the United States (5-0), the only team not to lose in the preliminary round.

The US team led 65-35 at halftime. Charles Barkley's 20 points led seven double-figure, for the United States. Johnson, who did not score but had one assist, had missed the last two games with an injured right knee, while Stockton had four points as he made his first Olympic appearance after cracking a bone in his right leg in last month's Americas qualifying tournament.

Jose Ortiz had 16 points and 13 rebounds as Puerto Rico kept the Unified Team from completing preliminary play undefeated.

The Unified Team led 63-62 with 3:36 to play on a 3-pointer by Alexander Volkov, who played for the Atlanta Hawks, and Puerto Rico then went on a 9-0 run over the

next 2:32. The Unified Team didn't have another field goal until Gundars Vetra's 3-pointer made it 72-67 with 3:56 left, but Puerto Rico responded with a 10-0 run for its biggest lead of the game.

Brazil's victory ended Angola's hopes of becoming the first African team to ever make the quarterfinal round. With the game meaningless on both sides, Croatia (3-2) opted to rest its starters, but three did play in the second half after Angola had opened a 38-27 halftime lead. Angola (1-4) led 59-41 with 4:14 to play, but Croatia closed the game with a 32-5 run, including the game's last 10 points.

Carl Herrera and Gabe Estaba each scored 23 points to help Venezuela beat China in a matchup of winless teams.

Filipino feat

BARCELONA, Aug 3: Olympic medals came few and far between for the Philippines so boxer Rol Velasco was entitled to his whoop of joy when he outpointed Britain's Rowan Williams, reports AFP.

His semi-final place assures him of only the third Olympic medal for the Philippines since the Second World War. Leopoldo Serantes won a lightweight bronze at Seoul four years ago.

Even Williams admitted he was beaten by the better man on the day.

"He was a clear winner, but not by that much," said the 24-year-old.

The best man won on the day and good luck to the guy. I hope he goes all the way."

That looks unlikely as Velasco's next opponent is Cuban Rogelio Garcia, new favourite for the gold medal after the controversial second-round defeat of double world champion Eric Griffin by Spaniard Rafael Lozano.

Graf, Fernandez in medal round

BARCELONA, Aug 3: German Steffi Graf and American Mary Joe Fernandez clinched medals at the Olympic tennis tournament Monday by advancing to face each other in the semifinals, reports AP.

Graf beat Sabine Appelmans of Belgium 6-1, 6-0 in the quarterfinals while Fernandez bettered Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere 5-7, 6-1, 6-0.

Making the final four guarantees Graf and Fernandez a medal in Barcelona, since both losing semifinalists are given bronze.

Remarkable Goran Ivanisevic, the only top 20 player still alive in men's singles, rallied to win his fourth consecutive five-set match. The fourth-seeded Croatian survived two match points to beat Frenchman Fabrice Santoro, 6-7 (5-7), 6-7 (1-7), 6-4, 6-4, 8-6 in a match that took four hours, 25 minutes.

American teenager Jennifer Capriati also reached the women's singles semifinals beating Anke Huber of Germany 6-3, 7-6 last night.

Fernandez, seeded fourth, was too consistent and persistent for Maleeva-Fragniere, who wilted on Barcelona's sun-baked clay.

While upsets have eliminated most of the top players in men's singles, the top-seeded Graf has lost a total of just 11 games in winning four matches.

"I've really been playing well," Graf said. "And today I hit the lines I don't know how many times. I was lucky."

Graf won a gold medal at the Los Angeles in 1984, when tennis was a demonstration sport, and another at Seoul in 1988.

"The experience does help when you get to the semifinals or finals," she said. "That's when you have a good feeling because you've played in the Olympics before."

Top players say the slow surface, hot weather and best-of-five matches have turned the Olympics into an endurance test that skews results.

Motivation may also be a problem. With a couple of exceptions, the top professionals say they would rather win Wimbledon or the US Open than a gold medal.

Debutants make their mark

BARCELONA, Aug 3: They came to the Olympics to put their countries on the map.

Namibia and Slovenia weren't at the last Summer Games. Nor were Armenia or Estonia. Or Latvia or Lithuania.

Now they're the new Olympic countries on the block.

Some are even winning gold medals.

At least 10 of the world's newest countries, the dye barely dry on their flags, managed a medal on their first try, reports AP.

The Baltic republics of Latvia and Estonia have medals. So does the former South African territory of Namibia. And the ex-Yugoslav republic of Slovenia, along with former Soviet republics Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Georgia.

And there might be more before the Games end next Sunday.

The medals they won at the 1992 Olympics have given these fledgling nations a sense of national pride that even the United Nations couldn't when it accepted them as members over the past two years.

"The whole country is celebrating," Stasa Bailey of Slovenia's Olympic delegation said Sunday after her country's rowers secured a second — and unexpected — bronze for the nation.

As soon as the medal was presented, the phone in the delegation's office began ringing. And ringing. First, the president called for Ljubljana. Then the prime minister, and then in quick succession the entire Cabinet, the athletes' families, their employers and teachers, journalists and just plain well-wishers.

Croatia, Slovenia's neighbour which also proclaimed independence from Yugoslavia last year, has not been as successful.

Lithuania, for 52 years an unwilling part of the Soviet Union, is also making its mark in basketball and could get a medal.

Latvia, its neighbour to the north, won a silver medal in men's rapid fire pistol.

And the northernmost of the three Baltic republics,

Estonia, won itself a gold when Erika Salumae clinched the women's cycling sprint.

Olympic officials were so unfamiliar with Estonia's flag, that they flew it upside down during the medal ceremony, Salumae was unfazed.

"It is the first time in these Olympic Games we see the Estonian flag raised," Salumae said. "It was not only for me, it was for my people."

She's no stranger to Olympic glory, having won a gold in the 1988 Games. But then, she was cycling for the Soviets.

"It is a great honor to see the Armenian flag raised and I feel very proud," Israel Miltosian said after winning a gold in weightlifting.

Fedor Kassapu became the first Moldovan to see his country's flag raised at the Olympics. "I felt the whole of Moldova was following me and that their eyes were on me," he said after nailing the gold in middleweight weightlifting competition.

Officially, Olympic officials say they're not keeping tabs on which republics are winning medals for the Unified Team. That, they say, is irrelevant for now.

And then there's Namibia and its star sprinter Frankie Fredericks. The 24-year-old Brigham Young University student finished second in the men's 100-metre dash. Born in Windhoek, Fredericks didn't have a country until two years ago.

Now he has a silver medal for his new nation.

NEW WORLD RECORDS

- BARCELONA, Aug 3: Following is a list of world records set on equalled by competitors at the xxv Summer Olympic Games here, as of Sunday, Aug 2:
- CYCLING:**
- 4,000-metre pursuit — Chris Boardman, Britain, 4:24.496; old record, Boardman, 4:27.357.1992.
 - 4,000-metre team pursuit — Germany, 4:08.791; old record, 4:10.438, Australia, 1992.
- SET**
- SWIMMING:**
- Men:
 - 100 backstroke — Jeff Rouse, US, 53.86; old record, 53.93, Rouse, 1991.
 - 200 freestyle — Mike Barrowman, US, 2:10.16; old record, 2:10.60, Barrowman, 1991.
 - 200 breaststroke — Mike Barrowman, US, 2:10.16; old record, 2:10.60, Barrowman, 1991.
 - 400 freestyle — Evgenii Sadovyi, Unified Team, 3:45.00; old record, 3:46.47, Kiern Perkins Australia, 1992.
 - 800 freestyle relay — Unified Team (Dmitri Lepikov, Vladimir Pychenko, Veniamin Tatanovitch, Evgenii Sadovyi), 7:11.95; old record, 7:12.51, United States, 1988.
 - 1,500 freestyle — Kieren Perkins, Australia, 14:43.48; old record 14:48.40, Perkins, 1992.
 - Women:
 - 50 freestyle — Yang Wenyi, China, 24.79; old record, 24.98, Wenyi, China, 1988.
 - 200 individual medley — Lin Li, China, 2:11.65; old record, 2:11.73 Ute Geweniger, East Germany, 1981.
 - 400 freestyle relay — United States, 3:39.46; old record, 3:40.57, East Germany, 1986.
 - 400 medley relay — United States, 4:02.54; old record, 4:03.69, East Germany, 1984.
- TIED**
- WEIGHTLIFTING:**
- 198-pound Clean and Jerk — Kakhi Kakhiachvili, Unified Team, 518 (235.0), record set by Anatoly Khrapaty, Soviet Union, 1988.