

MEDALS TABLE

Country	G	S	B	Total
China	2	0	1	3
Japan	2	0	0	2
Russia	0	2	1	3
France	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Czech Republic	0	0	1	1
Germany	0	0	1	1
South Korea	0	0	1	1
Mongolia	0	0	1	1

(As of 9:30 pm BST)

LATEST

AFP, Athens

Japanese defending champion Tadahiro Nomura won the Olympic judo gold medal in the 60kg category here Saturday, defeating Georgia's Nestor Khergiai in the final.

Mongolia's Khashbaatar Tsagaanbaatar and South Korea's Choi Min-ho won bronze.

Nomura's compatriot Ryoko Tani successfully defended her Olympic 48kg bantamweight crown defeating Frenchwoman Frederique Jossinet.

Tani -- appearing in her fourth Olympic final after previous appearances in 1992, 1996 and 2000 -- sealed victory with waza-ari in a repeat of the two judokas' World Championship final in Osaka.

The bronze medals went to China's Gao Feng and Julia Matijass of Germany.

Mum's the word for Raema

AFP, Athens

Mummy's girl Raema Lisa Rumbewas of Indonesia, who ran away from training camp because she was homesick, will have maternal support when she goes for Olympic weightlifting gold on Sunday.

Rumbewas, a silver medallist at the Sydney 2000 Olympics and a gold prospect in the 53kg class here, had threatened to skip the Games if her mother could not come along.

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BTV

Athens Olympic Games
Highlights
Live at 8:30 pm

ESPN

England vs West Indies
Third Test, Day Four
Live at 3:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Everton vs Arsenal
Same Day Delay at 10:30 pm

STAR Sports

Football Extra
Live at 9:00 am
English Premier Football League
Chelsea vs Man United
Live at 9:00 pm

TEN Sports

Sri Lanka vs South Africa
Second Test, Day Five
Live at 10:15 am



Jacques Kallis

(South African all-rounder)

"As long as I continue playing winning innings and score hundreds I am happy with that. The records will take care of themselves."



PHOTO: AFP

ATHENS GETS GOING: China's Du Li displays her gold medal on the podium after she won the final of the women's 10m rifle yesterday. Du clinched the first gold medal of the Athens 2004 Olympics.

Du shoots first gold

REUTERS, Athens



China's Du Li won the first gold medal of the Athens Olympics on Saturday with a final-shot victory in the wo-men's 10-metre air rifle.

Du started the last round in second place behind Russia's Lioubov Galkina and moved ahead of the leader only with her final shot.

The 22-year-old student from Shandong province won with a score of 502.0 points, which included an Olympic-record final round of 104.0.

Galkina, who had set an Olympic record in the qualifying round earlier on Saturday with 399 points, took the silver medal. Katerina Kurkova of the Czech Republic won the bronze.

"I wasn't fully prepared mentally at the start," Du said at a tumultuous news conference that was translated into four languages and interrupted by Chinese reporters asking for auto-

graphs and souvenir photos.

"But I regained my confidence from the second shot. Before my last shot I was fully confident. I wasn't nervous at all."

Shooting, one of nine sports at the first modern Olympics in 1896, has traditionally held the honour of awarding the first medals of the Olympics. It was the first of 17 medals in the nine days of shooting competition.

Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), presented the medals at the Markopoulo Shooting Centre outside Athens, just hours after the Olympics opened with a lavish ceremony on Friday.

The 31-year-old Galkina, fourth in the 2000 Olympics, had been nearly flawless in the qualifying round with 399 out of a possible 400 that broke the Olympic qualifying-round record of 397 set by German Petra Horneber at Atlanta in 1996.

She shot superbly in all but the last of the 10-round final, faltering on her

ultimate shot with a sub-par 9.7 that drew gasps of disbelief from the big opening-day crowd. "On the last shot I don't think it's anything to do with me," Galkina said of the wayward shot that cost her gold.

"It's more than likely some kind of technical hitch. In the qualifying I had more control. I lost it somewhat in the final. But I'm quite pleased."

It was Galkina's only shot under 10 in the finals and came at the worst moment as Du hit close to the centre of the bullseye on her final shot for a 10.6.

Du turned to her enthusiastic China supporters and flashed a broad grin.

"It feels unbelievable," she said. "It's a very big honour."

Du is the world record holder with a score of 504.9 set at a World Cup event in Zagreb last year.

China's shooting coach Xu Haifeng has said his team aim to win eight to 10 medals in Athens after taking three golds, two silvers and two bronze medals in Sydney.

Winning not everything

AFP, Athens



Baron Pierre de Coubertin's dictum that 'it is not the winning but the taking part' may seem idealistic for the modern Olympics but for several athletics medal contenders here at the Athens Games life has dealt them blows that would make them the standard bearers for it.

Glory Alozie already knows what it is like to be confronted by tragedy leading into an Olympic Games as the 100-metre hurdler's Nigerian boyfriend was run over by a car and killed instantly just before the Sydney Games.

She showed extraordinary resolve to compete anyway and win the silver medal and it is likely she would have won the title had she not lost nearly a stone in weight because she could not eat following the tragedy.

Alozie's joy at winning a medal was tempered by the fact that the Nigerian Olympic Committee showed a distinct lack of sensitivity by refusing to pay for her boyfriend's body to be flown home. The 26-year-old didn't let Nigeria forget that aberration by switching to Spanish nationality in 2002.

Now though, she is prepared to live

and let die.

"It was a terrible episode in my life and I shall always remember Hyginus (Anugo, her boyfriend) but my life has moved on and I am here to deliver Spain a gold in the hurdles," said Alozie, who is now married.

Yamile Aldama doesn't just share with Alozie the fact that she changed nationality -- in her case from Cuban to Sudanese -- but she also lost the man closest to her, though in rather darker circumstances.

The 32-year-old 1999 triple jump world silver medallist was married to Scotsman Andrew Dodds, who she believed was a wealthy, settled man and by whom she would acquire British citizenship - that was until he was sentenced to 15 years in jail after 100 kilogrammes of heroin were discovered in a garage he rented.

"It was a really tough time for me as I knew nothing about Andrew's dark side," said Aldama, who has a child by him.

"Now, however, my focus is evidently on the Olympics and I will not let anything else cloud my determination in moving from fourth last time to gold," added Aldama.

She had wanted British citizenship but the process would have taken too long for her to be able to compete in

these Olympics, so she went to Sudan and received a passport within a week.

Athletics fans have the wayward husband of Kenyan runner Edith Masai to thank for being able to watch her matchless talents as the police sergeant in the prison service would not have taken up the sport if she had not needed the money to bring up their child when he walked out.

Four successive short race world cross country titles and a genuine chance for gold in the 5,000m here represents a fine reward for the 37-year-old's selfless decision. Her success on the international circuit has allowed her to buy a 10-acre farm and send her son to boarding school in Kenya.

British sprinter Darren Campbell too has confronted his demons and reined himself in just in time. The sensitive 30-year-old admitted after winning 200m bronze in the 2002 Commonwealth Games that he had contemplated suicide because of a succession of injuries and a troubled relationship.

"I've been down a very dark road, believe me," said Campbell.

Having shown their resilience to overcome such blows, a handful of athletes stand on the verge of landing the greatest prize in their sport and nobody would begrudge them that.

Fine better than facing Israel!

REUTERS, Tehran

Iran's Olympic team chief said world judo champion Arash Miresmaeili should receive a 115,000 dollar (61,000 pounds) reward for refusing to compete against Israel in his first-round match at the Athens Olympics.

"I hope Iran's sporting officials agree to give the reward which he deserves, because he could easily have won a medal of some colour," Nassrollah Sajadi told the Sharq newspaper.

Miresmaeili, twice world champion, finished fifth in Sydney and carried the Iranian flag during the Athens opening ceremony on Friday night.

But following the draw, Miresmaeili was paired with Ehud Vaks of Israel in the first round of the men's under 66kg category and an Asian Judo Union official said he would be withdrawn rather than face the Israelis.

Since its 1979 Islamic revolution, Iran has refused to recognise the state of Israel's right to exist and has allied itself to the Palestinian cause.

Israeli team spokesman Yaron Michaeli said they had received no word Miresmaeili would not appear.

"We have come to Athens to participate in sport and not in politics," he said.

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Razzak off to England

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak, who has been ignored for the ICC Champions Trophy because of a suspect bowling action, left for England yesterday to work with an English biomechanic expert.

The 22-year-old bowler is currently under ICC scrutiny after his action was reported by Sri Lankan match referee Roshan Mahanama during an Asia Cup game against Pakistan last month.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in a press release yesterday said that ICC nominated English bio-mechanic Dr. Paul Hurron would analyse his action and forward his recommendations to the BCB.

Enamul injured

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19 cricket captain Enamul Haq injured himself during the last day's play of the second Test against England Under-19s at Taunton, Somerset on Friday.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in a press release yesterday said that an MRI was done which showed

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ATHENS STREET TALK

AFP, Athens

Lone British boxer, lightweight Amir Khan, could be the surprise medal contender at the Games, says coach Terry Edwards.

But first he has to get past Marios Kaperonis who will have huge Greek support behind him in the opening bout.

"It will be difficult as I'm sure he will have a lot of support. But Amir has boxed in foreign countries before where the crowds have supported their boxers so he is used to that and I'm sure he will raise his game," said Edwards.

"If Amir wins that first bout, he could box European champion Dimitar Stilianov. Amir is not in awe of anyone and could win a medal if he boxes to his capabilities."

JUST THE TICKET

Over 2.8 million Olympic Games tickets had been sold up until Friday, the day of the opening ceremony, organisers claimed.

The objective is to sell between 3.1 and 3.4 million tickets, said press spokesman Michalis Zacharatos.

The sales have yielded 176 million euros out of a 183 million predicted in the Games budget.

SECOND TIME FOR DIMAS

Triple gold medal winner Pyrrhos Dimas carried the flag for Greece at the Olympics opening ceremony for the second time in his career on Friday.

Weightlifter Dimas, 33, won the hearts of his countrymen in 1992 when he won gold at Barcelona with a last lift which he preceeded with a scream of 'For Greece'.

JUST FANTASTIC

Nikolaos Kaklamanakis, Greece's 1996 windsurfing gold medallist, was overjoyed being handed the honour of lighting the Olympic flame in the opening ceremony.

"It was an unbelievable feeling that comes once in a lifetime," said the 36-year-old who will retire after the Games.

ATHENS HOTELS FULLY BOOKED

Relieved Athens hoteliers reported peak capacity after a surge in last-minute bookings from tourists abroad, encouraged by slashed prices.

"We have reached 95 per cent capacity," the president of Athens hotel owners' union EXA, Yiorgos Tsiakiris said.

"This may be normal for Olympics, but compared with where we stood last month, it is much, much better," Tsiakiris said.

An unfavorable mix of stagnating European economies, fear of terrorist attacks and Olympics-related construction delays that threatened to spoil the country's image had smashed Greeks' dream of busy, pre-Olympic tourist rush.

According to EXA figures for June, the average occupancy rates in the Greek capital's greater area hotels of three stars and above was only around 50 per cent -- the same level with the same month last year and 10 per cent down from 2002.

"Many people decided to come in the last four weeks," Tsiakiris said.

"The timely completion of Olympic projects and the shift of the negative attitude towards Athens in the foreign press helped," Tsiakiris said.

GREEK SPRINTERS TO BE WITHDRAWN

Greek sprinters Costas Kenteris and Katerina Thanou will be withdrawn from the Olympic Games, a source close to the Greek team has said.

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PHOTO: AFP

MAKING THEIR PRESENCE FELT: Shooter Asif Hossain Khan (2nd from R) bears the national flag as the Bangladesh contingent parades during the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Athens on Friday.