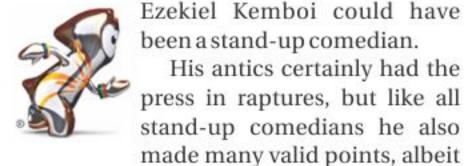


PHOTO: AFP

Kenya's Ezekiel Kemboi does his own version of the Bolt celebration after winning men's 3000m steeplechase crown at the London Olympic Stadium in London on Sunday night.

## Comedian Kemboi

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM from London



Ezekiel Kemboi could have been a stand-up comedian.

His antics certainly had the press in raptures, but like all stand-up comedians he also

in a humorous way.

"South Asians have cricket, Europeans have football, and Kenyans have steeplechase," said Kemboi. "We say it's ours and we cannot allow some else to win it. If you want to win, you have to do a lot of training and calculations," he said.

He was right. Kemboi won the men's Olympic 3000m steeplechase for the second time on Sunday and ensured Kenya's dominance of the event; they have now won it eight consecutive times, a fact that Kemboi pointedly showcased by running through his own honour roll since 2004. By the end, even the journalist who asked the question was laughing.

But it was Kemboi's elaborate dance routine after his victory that sparked the greatest debate. The Kenyan had a simple explanation for it.

"The dance was a spontaneous thing," he said and he also made sure to include the silver medallist and Frenchman Mekhissi-Benabear. To his credit, the runner-up also went along with it, providing one of the highlights of London 2012 so far.

But this wasn't the first time Kemboi unfurled such excessive celebrations.

"If you can remember in Daegu some people were saying, I was 'mini-Bolt'. And that's good because it is good to have your own slogan. My celebration though is not so much like Bolt," he continued, "It's mini."

The Kenyan also revealed that he shares a strong bond with the Jamaican athlete and

that they had met in the Village. "Usain is my friend. We just met in the Village. He said, 'I'm wishing you the best of luck.' After the Olympics we are going to party."

The room was laughing at every word out of the Kenyan's mouth but Kemboi was not yet done as he dished on his elaborate hairstyle.

"It's shaved round so it's the shape of the gold medal," said Kemboi.

"I had a different hairstyle in 2009 (at the world championships) -- and I won. In 2011 (at the world championships) I had another hairstyle -- and I won. And now in 2012 in London, I have another hairstyle -and I won.

"When I shave my hair it's a sign that something is coming and everyone must be prepared for that," he said. Kemboi's relaxed demeanour showcases

the mental strength that the Kenyan athlete possesses and one that is required of any champion. The 30-year-old faces a trial back home for allegedly stabbing a woman. But he managed to block out those pressures to bring home the gold and keep Kenya smiling.

AFP, London

A Dutch judoka has claimed she tackled a man who threw a bottle in the direction of Usain Bolt and his competitors at the start of the Olympic men's 100 metres final.

Edith Bosch said a man in front of her became agitated and then threw the plastic bottle towards the sprinters as the starter called "set" in a packed Olympic Stadium in London on Sunday.

The bottle landed behind the blocks in lane five, a few metres behind Bolt's fellow Jamaican Yohan Blake, and came to a halt just as the sprinters set off.

The green plastic bottle could clearly be seen on TV pictures bouncing onto the track behind the sprinters.

Bosch, who had competed in the judo competition earlier in the Olympics, said she was furious after seeing the man throw the bottle.

"The whole time this guy was shouting 'No Usain Bolt, no' and he was very disrespectful," the 32-year-old told Dutch public broadcaster NOS.

"He stood right in front of me and threw the bottle and I could not stop him. thought 'what is this?'

"I got furious and gave him a hard slap on the back," said Bosch.

Security guards then took the man away and he was arrested by police.

Bosch, who came up just short of a bronze medal in the women's -70kg competition, said she was especially annoyed because as a result of the incident she missed seeing the race in which Bolt retained his 100m title.

"I hope he gets severe punishment," she added. British police said a man -

a vending machine technician from Leeds in northern England -- remained in custody on Monday.

Local organisers LOCOG said they were investigating what happened.

But the chief organiser of the London Games, Sebastian Coe, said it had been "poetic justice" that the bottle thrower happened to be sitting next to a judo



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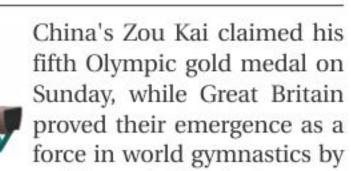
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## Judoka saves sprinters' day Zou reigns supreme

AFP, London



supplying two of the medallists in the pommel horse final.

Zou's successful defence of his men's floor title gave the 24-year-old his second gold medal of the London Games and his fifth overall, which is more than any other Chinese gymnast.

"This medal means a lot to me," said Zou, whose floor routine was awarded a winning score of 15.933 points.

"It's my fifth Olympic gold medal and I've won the most Olympic gold medals in the Chinese team now.'

Zou claimed three gold medals at the Beijing Olympics four years ago and he can repeat the feat if he prevails in Tuesday's horizontal bar final.

Runner-up Kohei Uchimura finished with the same score as Russia's Denis Ablyazin -- 15.800 -- but the Japanese star took the silver medal on account of his higher execution score.

"Although I wasn't able to get gold today, I think I did really well, so I am satisfied," said Uchimura, who was crowned individual all-around champion on Wednesday.

In the pommel horse final, Hungary's Krisztian Berki took the title by the slimmest of margins to prevent Louis Smith from claiming Britain's first ever artistic gymnastics gold medal.

Berki and Smith finished on the same score -- 16.066 points -- but reigning world champion Berki was awarded the gold medal as his execution score of 9.166 was 0.100 points higher than Smith's.

Having won bronze in Beijing four years ago, Smith moved up a step on the podium at the North Greenwich Arena, and the position he vacated was filled by 19-yearold team-mate MaxWhitlock.

It gave the hosts their second and third medals of the men's gymnastics tournament, following Britain's shock bronze medal triumph in the team final on Mon-

"A bronze medal for Max, two GB gymnasts on the podium -- we're probably one of the best countries in the world at the pommel horse right now," said Smith. In front of Prince William's wife

routine to close the final but it was not enough to outstrip the elegant display produced by the long-limbed Berki. "When I saw Louis Smith's performance, I thought that he could win, because it was

Catherine, Smith produced a flawless

reigning world champion. "Beating two British athletes in London is a great achievement."

quite a strong exercise," said Berki, the

There was an upset in the women's vault final, where an error by American world champion McKayla Maroney allowed Romania's Sandra Izbasa to claim the gold.

Maroney, 16, produced an outstanding opening vault but then sat down on her landing on her second attempt, allowing Izbasa to snatch the title with a score of 15.191 points.

Maroney was left with the silver medal, while Russia's Maria Paseka came third.

It is Izbasa's second Olympic gold, after her floor title in Beijing four years ago, and follows on from the bronze medal she won with Romania in the team final on Tuesday. "The vault final is a war of nerves and it showed," said Izbasa, who will also compete in the floor final.

## Blade Runner's graceful exit

AFP, London



South African double amputee Oscar Pistorius failed to qualify for the Olympic Games men's 400m final on Sunday.

The 25-year-old had on Saturday become the first double amputee to compete in an athletics event at the Olympics, but he was never in contention

46.54sec. Pistorius, though, was far from disappointed at bowing out.

in his semi-final and finished last in a time of

"The whole experience is mind-blowing," said Pistorius, who had been supported in London by his 89-year-old grandmother.

"My aim was to make the semi-final. It's a dream come true. Thanks to everyone for their support. I've got the (4x400m) relay in a few days.'

There was a touching moment after the race as Grenada's world champion Kirani James asked to swap bibs with the South African. "As soon as we crossed the line, we're

friends," said Pistorius.

"It was very kind of him. We share a similar life. It's what the Olympics is all about. It's great to make good friends."

James, who last year became the youngest ever world or Olympic champion in the event at 18 when he won in Daegu, said that Pistorius deserved all the accolades.

"He's an inspiration to all of us. He is very special to our sport," he said.

"He's a down-to-earth guy and a great individual."

Nicknamed 'The Blade Runner' because he runs on carbon fibre blades fought a long battle to be allowed to run in the Olympics.

A panel of experts finally declared he could compete as long as he used the same pair of blades he used in the Paralympic Games.

