

'World's fastest anime fan'

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese media hailed Olympic 100m gold medallist Noah Lyles as the world's fastest anime fan after the American celebrated his win by miming an attack from "Dragon Ball".

Wrapped in a US flag after the race, an over-the-moon Lyles thrust his hands forward, fingers splayed, imitating the "kamehameha" attack used to unleash a powerful burst of energy in the Japanese manga and anime franchise.

The 27-year-old Lyles has made no secret of his love for Japanese pop culture, including comics and cartoons such as the global 1990s megahit "Dragon Ball".

At the Olympic trials in June, he delighted fellow anime enthusiasts by whipping out his "Yu-Gi-Oh" cards and showing them off to the cameras.

"Yu-Gi-Oh!" ran in the Japanese weekly comic magazine Shonen Jump between 1996 and 2004 and gave rise to a media franchise including a trading card game.

"Mankind's fastest otaku", blared a headline in Japan's Daily Sports using the term for hardcore superfans in a new nickname.



World champion Noah Lyles celebrates after clinching the victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday. Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five-thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson. Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish and it made the 27-year-old the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games. PHOTO: REUTERS

USA women bag swim medley gold with world record

REUTERS, Paris

The United States smashed their own world record in the women's 4x100 medley on Sunday to close the Paris Olympics swimming meet with one last gold that lifted them clear of Australia at the top of the medals table.

Australia, who finished with seven swimming golds to the United States' eight, took the silver at the La Defense Arena and China the bronze.

The U.S. quartet of Regan Smith, Lilly King, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske touched out with a final time of three minutes 49.63 seconds at the La Defense Arena to avenge their defeat to Australia by 0.13 in Tokyo three years ago.

"We've brought it (the record) down a lot, so it's really cool to continue to be a part of that relay and watching it faster and faster and faster, but pretty much the same people," said King.

The U.S. team led all the way, with Smith leading off and King increasing the advantage with her breaststroke leg before Walsh finished her stint 1.33 seconds inside the record and handed over to Huske.

The gold was a third of the Games for Huske, second each for Smith and Walsh and first since 2016 for King who was a double champion in Rio de Janeiro.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

EQUSTRIAN
Jumping Individual
2:00 pm

SAILING
Women's Dinghy Medal Race
6:43 pm
Men's Dinghy Medal Race
7:43 pm

DIVING
Women's 10m Platform
7:00 pm

SKATEBOARDING
Women's Park
9:30 pm

WRESTLING
Men's Greco-Roman 60 kg
11:55 pm

Men's Greco-Roman 130 kg
12:30 am (Wednesday)

Women's Freestyle 68 kg
1:15 am (Wednesday)

CYCLING (TRACK)
Men's Team Sprint
12:10 am (Wednesday)

ATHLETICS
Women's Hammer Throw
11:57 pm

Men's Long Jump
12:15 am (Wednesday)

Men's 1500m
12:50 am (Wednesday)

Women's Steeplechase 3000m
1:14 am (Wednesday)

Women's 200m
1:40 am (Wednesday)

BOXING
Women's 60 kg
3:06 am (Wednesday)

'Wolf' Lyles claims 100m glory in thriller

AFP, Paris

World champion Noah Lyles roared to victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday.

Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson.

Both were given the rounded up time of 9.79sec but the American's name carried the all-important (.784) to Thompson's (.789).

It made Lyles the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games.

"It's the one I wanted... to prove that I'm the man amongst all of them. I'm the wolf amongst wolves," said Lyles, whose winning time was a personal best.

Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish.

The American said of the wait for the final results: "And I was fully prepared to see his [Thompson] name pop up and to see my name pop up, I'm like goodness gracious. I'm incredible."

Lyles added: "It's been a rollercoaster, ups and downs. "I'm usually a guy who likes to come out blazing in all my rounds, especially in the 200m. But the 100m, it's my first time here on the Olympic stage."

The relatively unknown Thompson, the fastest man this year with a best of 9.77sec, said he hadn't been "fresh enough" over the final 30 metres.

"I couldn't really see Lyles, I wasn't sure," 23-year-old Thompson said of the photo-



finish. "It was that close.

Lyles' US teammate Fred Kerley took bronze in 9.81sec, just one-hundredth ahead of South African Akani Simbine, who timed 9.82sec.

"Whoever came off the best is the best. It's my second time around and I'm going off with a medal," Kerley said.

In an astonishing race, defending champion Marcell Jacobs of Italy was fifth in 9.85sec, Botswana's Letsile Tebogo sixth in 9.86sec, American Kenny Bednarek seventh in 9.88sec and Jamaican Oblique Seville eighth in 9.91sec.

Starting in lane seven, outside Seville and inside Tebogo, Lyles got off to an average start but was soon into his stride pattern.

Head tucked down through to the

40-metre mark, the American opened up, but the whole field pushed him all the way.

As Lyles dipped for the line with Thompson charging alongside him, the crowd erupted and a photo-finish was called before Lyles was confirmed as gold medallist.

There was an electric pre-race atmosphere in a 69,000-capacity Stade de France, a light show and booming music keeping the crowd entertained as the sprinters adjusted their starting blocks.

The lights then went off and the sprinters leaving the track to remake their entrance like prize fighters in a colosseum, with each sprinter individually introduced behind an image of their name above their flag.

Thompson roared, hands clenched in fists as his head rolled back. Kerley patted his heart.

Lyles bounded out like a kangaroo, bouncing 20 metres down the track. Jacobs was the definition of cool, raising both arms and calmly walking to his blocks.

Then came the moment where the sprinters set, at the starter's beck and call. The shot was fired and the field moved as if one up the purple track to the dramatic denouement.

The photo-finish officials examined the evidence and Lyles walked away with gold to bury the demons of the Tokyo Olympics three years ago where he harvested a mere 200m bronze.

Asked whether he was confident of doubling up in the 200m, an event in which he is a three-time world champion, Lyles said "That's my better event and now that I've got a new PR in the 100, I'm ready to take it to the 200."



Refugee team's Ngamba makes history

REUTERS, Paris

Cindy Ngamba became the first representative of the refugee team to win a medal at the Olympics after making it to the boxing semi-finals of the Paris Games on Sunday, guaranteeing her at least a bronze although she is gunning for more.

Ngamba beat France's Davina Michel by a unanimous decision in front of a crowd who were heavily behind their countrywoman at the North Paris Arena to progress to the last four of the women's middleweight category.

The 25-year-old who was born in Cameroon has lived in England for 15 years but is still awaiting citizenship, and is competing for the refugee Olympic team, which was established at the Rio Games in 2016.

"It means the world to me, to be the first ever refugee to win a medal. I'm just a human, just like any other refugee, athlete and refugee all around the world. But I hope I can change the medal on my next fight," Ngamba said.

Graham Thorpe: A shining light for England

AFP, London

It is a measure of Graham Thorpe's class that despite emerging during one of English cricket's most difficult periods, he still managed to win exactly 100 Test caps.

Left-handed batsmen are often described as either "stylish" or "gritty" yet Thorpe, whose death aged 55 was announced on Monday, somehow managed to be both in an often struggling England team.

He enjoyed a spectacular start to his Test career with an Ashes hundred on debut in 1993 and retired 12 years later having won 99 more caps - no mean feat in an era of inconsistent England selection.

England went through the whole of the 1990s without winning a single Ashes series yet Thorpe averaged more against Australia than he did in his career overall (45.74 against 44.66).

But the collapse of his first marriage, which took place in the full glare of media publicity, led to a bout of depression and separation from his children, with Thorpe taking an indefinite break from cricket in 2002.

As he movingly wrote in his autobiography, Rising from the



Ashes: "There came a time when I would have given back all my Test runs and Test caps just to be happy again."

Thorpe, who enjoyed a happy second marriage, did manage a successful return to the Test arena.

Born on August 1, 1969 in the market town of Farnham, Surrey, Thorpe was both a promising schoolboy cricketer and footballer.

But it was cricket that claimed him and his first-class debut against Leicestershire saw the best England left-handed batsman of his time dismiss the one of the previous generation when Thorpe took the

wicket of David Gower with his rarely-used medium-pace bowling.

His Test debut in the 1993 Ashes against Australia at Trent Bridge, saw Thorpe score a second-innings 114 as he became England's first debutant century-maker since Frank Hayes 20 years earlier.

One criticism levelled at Thorpe was that a man who got past fifty on 55 occasions in Test cricket, should have ended up with more than 16 hundreds.

But many of those centuries were memorable, be it his first overseas hundred for England on the notoriously quick WACA pitch in Perth against a formidable Australia attack in 1995 or an unbeaten 119 when facing West Indies greats Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh in Barbados in 2004.

Thorpe returned to England duty for the final Test of the following home season against South Africa, where his 124 at the Oval helped England to an unlikely series draw with the Proteas.

Thorpe's last Test was against Bangladesh two years later, with Kevin Pietersen effectively taking his place for England's celebrated 2005 Ashes triumph.



Overwhelmed with joy, An Seyoung of South Korea collapses in celebration after beating Bing Jiao He of China 21-13 in the women's badminton singles gold medal match at the Paris Olympics yesterday. "I dreamed, I spoke about the dream, I carried on the dream, and it was the moment that I achieved the dream. Now I have nothing to be scared of," An told media after win. PHOTO: REUTERS