

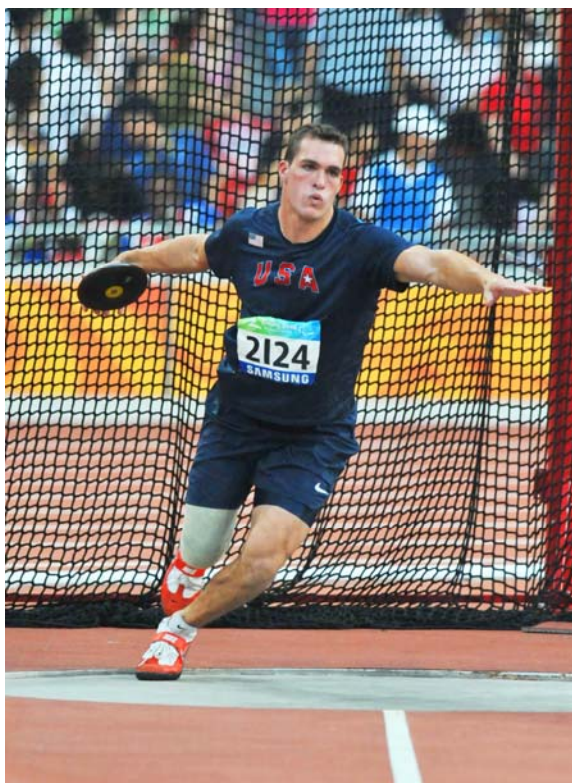
Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Beijing, China

For more information on the U.S. Paralympic Team, please check www.usparalympics.org and www.usocpressbox.org.

Sport Reports

Athletics



Jeremy Campbell (Perryton, Texas) won gold on Monday in discus. Photo: courtesy of Randy Richardson



Peter Gottwald, Jr. (Westchester, Pa.) won gold Monday in the 800 meters. Photo: courtesy of Randy Richardson

The U.S. Paralympic Track & Field Team added seven more medals to its tally Monday.

The sole gold medal of the day was won in the men's discus (F44) by now two-time gold medalist **Jeremy Campbell** (Chula Vista, Calif./Perryton, Texas). Campbell solidified his first place standing after a Herculean effort; he moved from fourth position to first on his sixth and final throw of the night with a 55.08m pitch and 1019 points, securing the gold medal.

Jessica Galli (Savoy, Ill./Hillsborough, N.J.) won not one, but two silver medals on the day, bringing her personal medal count to four for the Games. She earned silver and a season's best time of 29.68 in the women's 200m final (T53). She then added a second silver in the women's 800m (T53) in a hard fought race against China's Hongzhuan Zhou. Both athletes finished in 1:57.25, but after a photo finish review by officials, Zhou was deemed the gold medal winner, and Galli claimed the silver. **Amanda McGrory** (Champaign, Ill./Kennett Square, Pa.) helped pack the two-three punch for USA by winning bronze, finishing the 800m in 1:57.31.

In the men's 800m final (T53) **Joshua George** (Champaign, Ill.) won silver with a time of 1:37.09 behind Huzhao Li of China, who set a new world record time of 1:36.30.

Peter Gottwald Jr. (West Chester, Pa.) won silver in the men's 800m final (T13). Gottwald led the pack through the first 600m of the race, when Abdelillah Mame from Morocco challenged him heading into the last turn - taking the lead. Gottwald held on down the straightaway for the silver medal finish in 1:55.49.

Elexis Gillette (Raleigh, N.C.) won silver in the men's long jump final (T11) with a best jump measuring 6.46m – a season's best.

Swimming

On the final day of swimming competition at the Water Cube, the U.S. Paralympic Swimming Team won four additional medals, bringing the total count to 44, including 17 gold medals, and finishing – for the first time – at the top of the medal standings.

After two bronze medals earlier in the week, **Kelley Becherer** (Sheboygan, Wis.) moved her way up to the top of the podium, winning gold in the women's 50m freestyle (S13) with a time of 27.85.

"It's the last night and I just wanted to medal, so I went for it," said Becherer. "Everyone's been swimming really fast and I knew that all of them would be competitive. The gold feels amazing –all my hard work has gone into it."

Taking home silver medals for Team USA were **Cheryl Angelelli-Kornoelje** (Clinton Township, Mich.) and **Ashley Owens** (Stockbridge, Ga.)

After winning silver in the women's 100m freestyle (S4) earlier in the week, Angelelli-Kornoelje came back to match it in the 50m free, her toughest race, with a time of 52.81. "I've been swimming so fast all week," said Angelelli-Kornoelje. "I knew that if I could stay relaxed and just go for it, I could do it."

Owens added a silver medal to her list of Beijing successes, taking silver in the women's 400m freestyle with a time of 4:38.11. Katarzyna Pawlik (POL) broke Owens' previous world record (4:39.44), winning gold in 4:33.15. "I knew it was going to be a close race," said Owens. "Getting the silver medal was fantastic and I couldn't be happier"

Susan Beth Scott (Colorado Springs, Colo./Cape Girardeau, Mo.) joined her teammate on the medal stand to accept the bronze, her first Paralympic medal. "I've been training so hard for this and it feels great to be on the podium," said Scott. "I tried to go out as fast as I could and then hold it. It was my first medal ever and I'm really happy with it."

Wheelchair Basketball

Women

The U.S. Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team is golden once again. The U.S. downed Germany, 50-38, to capture the gold medal for the second Paralympic Games in a row.

"This experience has been so incredible. It was a little more difficult this time because we had such a big target on our backs and we rose to the challenge," said team co-captain **Patty Cisneros** (Champaign, Ill./Lake Station, Ind.). "There's no better feeling than knowing you're the best in the world. This is so amazing."

The U.S. team got off to a bit of a shaky start,



but a switch to the full-court press in the second quarter got the team into a rhythm. The second unit was led by **Christina Ripp** (Littleton, Colo./Dane, Wis.) whose leadership and experience shined in Monday's championship effort. This is the third Paralympic Games for Ripp and she came off the bench to direct a defensive effort that forced Germany into 19 turnovers and held the Germans to seven second quarter points. Ripp also led the team on offense with 16 points, joined by **Carlee Hoffman** (Champaign, Ill./Cutlerville, Mich.) with 10 points.

"I don't think I've ever been part of a team that plays defense the way we did during this tournament. It was a total team effort and everything came together for us tonight," said Ripp. "I'm proud to be a part of this team and it's an unbelievable feeling to share this achievement with my teammates."

Wheelchair Fencing

In men's epee category B competition Monday, **Scott Rodgers** (San Diego, Calif.) lost in his quarterfinal bout against Belarus to conclude his performance in Beijing. A three-time Paralympian ranked fifth in the world, Rodgers won bronze in the epee category B event at the 2004 Athens Paralympics and placed sixth at the 2007 World Cup in Paris. Rodgers and **Benjy Williams** (Bethlehem, Ga.) both advanced from the morning pools, Rodgers with wins against Japan (5-1), Spain (5-3), France (5-3), and China (5-4), and Williams with two wins against Kuwait's Alsaedi Abdulwahab (5-4) and Greece's Emmanouil Bogdos (5-4). Then in the un-luck of the draw, the two U.S. fencers were paired together. Rodgers advanced to the quarterfinals with a 15-2 win over Williams.

"Scott's the better guy. You never really want to fence against a teammate, unless it's for two medals," said Williams. "The highlight of the morning was beating Kuwait. He beat me at all the world cups, and I got him today. In the bout against Greece, timing was key because he was so quick, but my long arms came in handy. It's been a real experience being here for the first time. I fenced better today than I ever have before."

In the quarterfinals, Belarus' Mikalai Bezyazychny jumped ahead of Rodgers early in the bout, taking a 5-0 lead. Rodgers was able to score 4 touches over the next two minutes, but Bezyazychny continued to push the score to 12-4, before taking the next 3 points to win 15-4.

"I dug myself a hole and got in trouble," said Rodgers, who upset Poland's Piotr Czop in the foil category B on Sunday before losing in the quarterfinals to China's Daoliang Hu, who went on to win gold. "He's a tough competitor and I knew that coming in. He's been around a few years and has a lot of experience. I wasn't patient enough to make him come to me. He was pretty good at giving me the invitation and caught me flat-footed, so to speak. I forced too much of the action too early and made mistakes."

"He just never really got into it," said coach Michael D'Asaro. "Logically, he knew what to do. But in epee, when you get down like that and your opponent is ahead by a significant number of touches, it can be difficult to come back. The opponent sits back and lets you make the mistakes."

Wheelchair Rugby

Four years ago at the Athens Paralympics, the United States didn't even have the opportunity to play for the gold medal. The team was upset by Canada in the semifinals and had to settle for bronze. Since that day, the U.S. has been on a mission to get back to the gold medal game and sit atop the medal podium once again. On Monday, Team USA got one step closer to its goal, defeating Great Britain, 35-32, to earn a berth in the championship game.

"We'll definitely enjoy this win for a little bit, but it's not over," said U.S. head coach **James Gumbert** (Austin, Texas). "Our ultimate goal is to win five games. It feels great to get the fourth win under our belt, but now it's time to refocus and get ready for the last one."

As it's done all tournament long, the U.S. rotated an endless array of line-ups into the game to wear down the opponent and keep up its own energy and momentum. Despite the fresh bodies, the U.S. was having a difficult time putting a run on the Brits and led by just one entering the fourth quarter. With five and a half minutes to go in the game, the U.S. turned the ball over on a bad pass and an ensuing Great Britain goal tied the game at 27. **Seth McBride** (Portland, Ore./Juneau, Alaska) quickly scored to put the U.S. back up by one and then tough defense by **Bryan Kirkland** (Leeds, Ala.) on the inbounds pass forced Great Britain to fumble and give the ball right back to the USA. A goal by **Andy Cohn** (Tempe, Ariz.) gave the U.S. the two point lead and put the British away for good.

“The USA’s biggest strength is that we’re 11 guys strong. There are 11 different starters on this team and we can confidently play any one of them at any point in the game. That helps all of us go out on the court and give it our all knowing there are seven guys on the bench that can back us up and come in fresh and ready to go,” said **Nick Springer** (St. Petersburg, Fla./New York, N.Y.), who had eight assisted blocks in the game.

Will Groulx (Portland, Ore.) once again led Team USA, tallying 13 goals against Great Britain. The other top scorers for the U.S. were Kirkland and Cohn who each chipped in five goals. Cohn also had seven assists.

Paralympic Medalist. Paralympic Mentor.

In January of this year, nine-year-old Nick Nelson of Minneapolis, Minn. visited the U.S. Olympic Training Center for a VIP tour and the chance to meet his hero and mentor, Paralympic swimmer **Rudy Garcia-Tolson** (Colorado Springs, Colo./Bloomington, Calif.) Nelson was born with Popliteal Pterygium Syndrome; the most common trait is a web on the back of each leg.

In late 2007, Nelson made the decision to have surgery to amputate his right leg. After getting fit with a prosthetic, he was able to enjoy running and playing with his friends, and also started participating in sled hockey.

Monday, Sept. 15, Nelson had surgery to amputate the left leg. To wish Nelson well before going into surgery, Garcia-Tolson spoke with him via phone from the Athlete Village in Beijing, sharing the support of Team USA and the spirit of the 2008 Paralympic Games.

“As we’ve talked many times of Nick’s concerns for the surgery and his future, our visit to Colorado Springs comes up in every discussion. I can’t say thank you enough for that life changing experience,” said Nick’s mom, Greta Nelson. “To be able to look Nick in the eye and tell him that things will be fine is such a gift. We’ll be cheering for Team USA every day!”

During the Beijing competition, Garcia-Tolson defended his title in the men’s 200m IM (SM7), winning gold with a world record time of 2:35.92, and also took bronze in the men’s 100m breaststroke (SB7.) As athletes like Garcia-Tolson continue to inspire the next generation of talent, we can only expect more great things from Team USA.

Schedule of Upcoming Events for Team USA *(subject to change)*

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Athletics, National Stadium

- 9:05 Men’s shot put (F53/54)/final – Scot Severn (Caro, Mich.), Carlos Leon (Birmingham, Ala./N. Lauderdale, Fla.)
- 9:10 Men’s Long Jump (F42/44)/final – Jeremy Campbell (Chula Vista, Calif./Perryton, Texas), Casey Tibbs (San Diego, Calif.), Jeff Skiba (Chula Vista, Calif./Sammamish, Wash.)
- 9:30 Men’s Discus (F42)/final – Matt Brown (Idalou, Texas)
- 10:05 Men’s 200m (T12)/final – Josiah Jamison (Chula Vista, Calif./Vance, S.C.)
- 11:51 Men’s 100m (T53)/prelim – Josh George (Champaign, Ill.)
- 17:48 Men’s 100m (T53)/final
- 19:19 Women’s 1500m (T54)/final
- 19:45 Men’s 4x100m Relay (T42-46)/final
- 20:18 Women’s 4x100m Relay (T53/54)/final
- 20:57 Men’s 400m (T44)/final

Wheelchair Basketball, National Indoor Stadium

17:00 Bronze Medal Match, USA vs. Great Britain

Wheelchair Fencing, Fencing Hall of the National Convention Center

9:30 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Preliminary Pools, USA, Andrea DeMello (New York, N.Y.)

12:40 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Round of 16, TBD

13:20 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Quarterfinals, TBD

14:10 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Semifinals, TBD

15:00 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Bronze Medal Match, TBD

15:40 Women's Individual Epee, Category B, Gold Medal Match, TBD

Wheelchair Rugby, University of Science & Technology Gymnasium

20:00 Gold Medal Match, USA vs. Australia

Top 10 Medal Standings *(as of 11 p.m. 9/15/08)*

<i>Country</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Total</i>
China	80	60	47	187
Great Britain	41	27	28	96
United States	33	33	26	92
Australia	20	26	25	71
Ukraine	23	17	29	69
Russia	17	20	20	57
Germany	13	23	20	56
Spain	14	20	21	55
Canada	18	9	20	47
French	10	21	15	46