

## The Top 20 Moments Of The London Olympics | Allan Besselink

Written by Allan Besselink  
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The London Olympics are now in the history books. For two weeks, we were exposed to some honest-to-goodness reality TV. The beauty and spectacle of the Olympics is built on the stories and athletic performances of each and every athlete, regardless of their home nation.

Out of all of the Olympics highlights, I present to you my top 20 moments in the London Olympics – with personal bias and in no particular order!

1. The US men's basketball team, but not because of their gold medal performance. Since the 1992 Dream Team, everything else pales in comparison. What the win did bring us was video of **Coach K** jumping up and down on the sidelines during a game, something that I don't think has ever been witnessed. It is good to know that even Coach K gets excited with a gold medal.
2. Speaking of the US men's basketball team, how about former Texas Longhorn **Kevin Durant** ? He was the high scorer in the gold medal game and he broke the record for most points scored in an Olympic tournament. After the gold medal victory, he gleefully enjoyed the moment much like any kid would – eyes big as saucers and a smile from ear to ear.
3. Durant wasn't the only Longhorn that won a medal this year. The **University of Texas** garnered a total of 12 medals – 5 gold, 5 silver, and 2 bronze. If the University of Texas was it's own nation (and Texas Exes often believe this), then the Longhorn Nation would rank tied for #20 overall. Some of those Longhorn performances were pretty stunning – Sanya Richards-Ross in the 400 meters, Leo Manzano in the 1500 meters, and Bianca Knight in the 4 x 100 meters. Missy Franklin, you belong at Texas! Hook'em!

4. Speaking of which, how about that **women's 4 x 100 meters** in track and field. 40.82 seconds. Wow. Can you say "fast"? Can you say "world record"?

5. And on the men's side of the 4 x 100 meters, we have Jamaica. We have what has to be the best **men's 4 x 100 meter** final in history – an incomprehensible 36.84 seconds. More bewildering was that it took a world-record-tying run by the United States to get the silver medal. That's one fast race.

6. **Usain Bolt**. Legend. Enough said. I think Bolt already said the rest himself!

7. Watching the crowd cheer when **Andy Murray** defeated Roger Federer for the gold medal in men's tennis. Now if that wasn't nationalistic pride, I don't know what is. "God Save The Queen" never sounded better. The weight of the nation may now be off his shoulders – until his next Open final.

8. In the "surely you jest" column: commentators **Shaun White and John McEnroe** hamming it up at fencing. Goofiest. Segment. Ever. But funny nonetheless.

9. **Jordan Burroughs** in wrestling. The highlight was one of the best post-event interviews of the Olympics, even if his alma mater is the University of Nebraska. Sorry, college football season is coming.

10. **Michael Phelps**. I think the record-setting 22 career medals say it all.

11. **Kirani James** for winning Grenada's first Olympic medal – and a gold one at that. His exchange of bibs with Oscar Pistorius after the semi-final spoke volumes about the human element that defines the Olympic spirit. While we're at it, Grenada wins the Olympics in medals per capita. Just sayin'.

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12. The other half of that exchange was **Oscar Pistorius**. He put “differently-abled” on the map. Rightfully so. All the talk about the Cheetah carbon composite prostheses is crap. Try living your life as a double amputee, then tell me how you have an advantage running for 45 seconds with a couple of prostheses. It was great to see him have the opportunity to run for South Africa in the 4 x 400 meter final.

13. The **Canadian women’s soccer team** for their incredible semi-final performance against arch rival the United States. Canada wasn’t expected to be there, but they played their hearts out. If it wasn’t for some questionable end-of-game calls, they would have had a different color medal. Christine Sinclair scoring a hat trick in a semifinal is epic stuff. She was a great choice to be flag-bearer at the Closing Ceremonies.

14. The world record performance by **David Rudisha** in the 800 meters. He knew what level of fitness he had, had confidence in it, and went out and ran a race consistent with that level of fitness. Simple. His mental approach was refreshing in a sport in which “traditional logic” and “tactical races” rule.

15. **Mo Farah** in the 5,000 and 10,000 meters in track and field. Olympic Stadium was deafening. The smile at the end of the race, in front of an adoring home crowd, said everything. A beautiful moment. A special honorable mention on this one goes to Galen Rupp, Farah’s training partner, with the silver medal in the 10,000 meters.

16. **Water polo**. Any match. It’s like hockey in a pool, and a lot more physical. What you see above water is minor compared to the physical nature of the game under water.

17. **Rosie MacLennan** winning the gold medal in the women’s trampoline. Why? Because she was the only Canadian gold medalist at the London Olympics. I just had to pay homage to my home country. Fortunately, the Winter Olympics are only two years away.

18. “The Flying Dutchman”, gymnast **Epke Zonderland**, on the high bar. How many release moves did he do? Did Heathrow or Gatwick air traffic control give him clearance to take off and land? Incredible.

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19. **Queen Elizabeth II and James Bond** also required a little air traffic control for their arrival at the Opening Ceremonies. Are you serious? They really got the Queen involved? Now that is some serious buy-in! Well done!

20. Last but certainly not least, the **United Kingdom**. They put on a great show. But I have to ask – where were the Rolling Stones when you were doing Opening and Closing Ceremonies?

Now, we head to Sochi for the 2014 Winter Olympics and Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 Summer Olympics. Onwards, Olympians!

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