

Artistic Gymnastics: Simone Biles' triple gold comeback

Simone Biles' success at Paris 2024 marked the completion of one of the greatest bounce-backs in Olympic history. The 27-year-old American, who withdrew from Tokyo 2020, returned to win three more golds and one silver in Paris. She led the American women to the team title at the outset of the artistic gymnastics competition, and followed with golds in the all-around and the vault, with her silver coming in the floor exercise.

It capped off a career of seven Olympic golds, two silvers and two bronzes over three Olympics Games, going back to Rio 2016. Her celebrated return was the top ticket for celebrity spectators, with Biles delivering an inspiring performance with a message of redemption that went beyond sport.

Swimming: Four medals each for Katie Ledecky and Summer McIntosh

These Games further solidified the legend of Team USA's Katie Ledecky, swimming in her fourth Olympics. The 27-year-old swimming icon added four more medals at Paris 2024 — two golds, one silver and one bronze, a performance highlighted by her fourth consecutive gold medal in the 800m freestyle, a feat only matched by Michael Phelps.

The 17-year-old Canadian swimmer Summer McIntosh also had weighty expectations on her coming into Paris 2024, and she not only met them but exceeded them, winning four Olympic medals — three gold and one silver. McIntosh earned gold in the 400m individual medley, 200m butterfly and 200m IM, with silver in the 400m freestyle. McIntosh became the first Canadian to win three gold medals at a single Olympic Games.

Athletics: Noah Lyles' 100m sprint

The showmanship, the confidence, the claims — Team USA's Noah Lyles backed it all up on 4 August as the men's 100m sprint took centre stage for the night's final event at the Stade de France. The orchestrated buildup, complete with lasers, led to a show that delivered on every promise.

The fastest men in the world lined up... and in a flash, it was over, with a dramatic photo finish as Lyles caught Jamaica's Kishane Thompson at the finish line. Lyles took the gold with a personal best time of 9.784 seconds, ahead of Thompson's 9.789. "Goodness gracious, I'm incredible," said Lyles — the newly minted Olympic gold medallist and the fastest man in the world.

Athletics: Keely Hodgkinson charges to victory in 800m for Great Britain

Team GB's Keely Hodgkinson would not settle for silver this time. The 22-year-old Hodgkinson, the Tokyo 2020 silver medallist, snapped to setting the pace early. The pre-race favourite shrugged off any nerves to hold off an outside attack from Kenya's Mary Moraa, then found that top gear in the final straight to pull away and charge to victory at a time of 1:56.72.

Swimming: Leon Marchand, four-time gold medallist and host-nation star of Paris 2024

The pressure was on for the 22-year-old swimming sensation Leon Marchand heading into Paris 2024. Would he rise to the occasion for his home country or sink under the pressure? And wow, did he rise, kick, pull and glide his way to four Olympic individual gold medals,

breaking Michael Phelps's 400m IM and 200m IM records and finishing with a bronze in the men's 4 x 100m medley relay.

As the medals piled up, so did the Marchand frenzy. The entire country went along for the ride, with deafening cheering, and not just at the Paris La Defense Arena venue. Across France, in cafés and city centres, the chants of “Leon, Leon, Leon” rang out. Viva Marchand!

Athletics: 'Mondo' Duplantis's pole vault world record

The stage was set for greatness in the Stade de France, with the chant of “Mondo, Mondo, Mondo!” ringing across the stadium. The Swede, Armand “Mondo” Duplantis, did what he does best, breaking the Olympic record with a jump of 6.10m to defend his gold medal and then raising the bar higher to 6.25m.

The stadium watched in silence as Mondo began his run up. He flew over the bar, setting a new world record height. His feat was met with roars of approval from fans who had witnessed the greatest jump — and jumper — in history.

Mountain biking: Pauline Ferrand-Prévot and Tom Pidcock must-see cycling

It was the dominant Frenchwoman Pauline Ferrand-Prévot and the confident Brit Tom Pidcock — both of them reigning XC mountain bike world champions and, in Pidcock's case, the reigning Olympic champion — who had hearts soaring and racing in the mountain bike finals.

Ferrand-Prévot, in her final Olympic mountain bike cross-country competition, pedaled her way to a storybook ending, winning an Olympic gold medal in a perfect finale to her dominant mountain biking career. Moreover, she got to do it at home in France — chef's kiss.

Pidcock's bid to defend his Olympic gold medal culminated with an audacious final lap against France's Victor Koretzky, looking for his own storybook ending at home. Koretzky was denied by Pidcock, who overcame a tire puncture to make up a 34-second deficit, catching up to the Frenchman and then making a harrowing pass to take the lead and win in a finish that many fans and viewers have yet to recover from.

Skateboarding: Men's street skateboarding finals decided in three-way battle

It came down to the final three in what is being called the greatest men's skateboard final of all time. The defining moment belonged to three titans of the street contest scene: the defending gold medallist from Japan in Yuto Horigome, the USA's Nyjah Huston — the 15-time X Games champion looking to cap his career with the elusive Olympic gold medal — and the unwavering fellow American competitor Jagger Eaton.

The contest came down to the trio battling in the final trick section, each one-upping the other, landing the heaviest of tricks under the most intense pressure. Minds were blown, Tony Hawk was speechless and NBC commentator Ryan Sheckler called it “the gnarliest final of competitive skateboarding I've ever seen” as Horigome defended his gold ahead of Eaton and Huston.

Athletics: Women's 4x100 ... and here come the United States!

The Americans were heavy pre-race favourites as the reigning world champions in the women's 4x100, but the win was not a given. At the race's midpoint, the US, with Melissa Jefferson and Twanisha Terry on the first and second legs, were in third.

But Paris 2024 200m champion Gabby Thomas began gaining ground in the third leg, passing the baton to the anchor leg and 100m silver medallist Sha'Carri Richardson, who hit top form, finding another gear to speed past rivals Great Britain and Germany, a sideways look before she burst across the finish line to defend the gold medal for Team USA in 41.78 seconds, a season's best.

Surfing: Teahupo'o goes huge for men's Round 3

A highlight that was not a final medal round took place thousands of kilometres away in Tahiti, where the Olympic surfers woke to a massive swell: Teahupo'o had turned on. The men's Round 3, on Monday June 29, saw massive, powerful barrels roll in, with the world's best surfers pulling in deep and emerging with hands in the air. It was a day that transcended sport and delivered something genuinely soul-stirring.

The competition saw the highest scores of the Olympic Games, with Brazil's Gabriel Medina, the eventual bronze medallist, earning a 9.90, exiting the wave with the fly-away kickout seen around the world. The day of competition exemplified the best surfing and the very best of the incredible Teahupo'o wave.

Basketball: USA vs France twice over

And you couldn't have scripted it better: USA vs. Olympic host nation France in both men's and women's basketball finals, with both contests decided in the gripping final minutes. The all-star USA men's team brought it home 98-87 in the gold medal final, led by Steph Curry in his Olympic debut shooting four of his eight three-pointers in the final minutes and scoring 24 points, while Kevin Durant and Devin Booker finishing with 15 points each and LeBron James had 14. This marked a fifth straight US gold medal in men's basketball going back to Beijing 2008.

The women's final between these two nations was even tighter and more dramatic. The USA's A'ja Wilson was everywhere on the court, scoring 21 points, 13 rebounds and five blocks. The game was decided in the final second as a jump shot by France's Gabby Williams went in as time expired, sending the audience into raptures as the French thought the game had been tied — but Williams had just left the three-point area when she delivered that shot, and a two-point bucket wasn't enough for the hosts and the USA won by the narrowest of margins: 67-66 in a game for the ages. With that great escape, the US women had won their eighth Olympic gold medal in a row.

Athletics: Julien Alfred makes history for Saint Lucia in women's 100m

It all happened in the blink of an eye; Saint Lucia's Julien Alfred burst out of the blocks ahead of the field. The three-time NCAA champion kept her lead, holding off pre-race favourite Sha'Carri Richardson to win gold in 10.72 seconds.

The win marks a momentous occasion for Saint Lucia, as it is its first Olympic medal in the Games' history.

