

Olympic trials

Phelps wins latest showdown with Lochte at U.S. swim trials

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP National Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — Michael Phelps won his latest showdown with Ryan Lochte, capturing the 200-meter individual medley at the U.S. Olympic swimming trials Friday night.

Phelps led a scintillating race from start to finish, but Lochte was with him stroke for stroke. Their arms were in almost perfect sync as they came to the wall, before Phelps pulled slightly ahead to touch in 1 minute, 55.91 seconds.

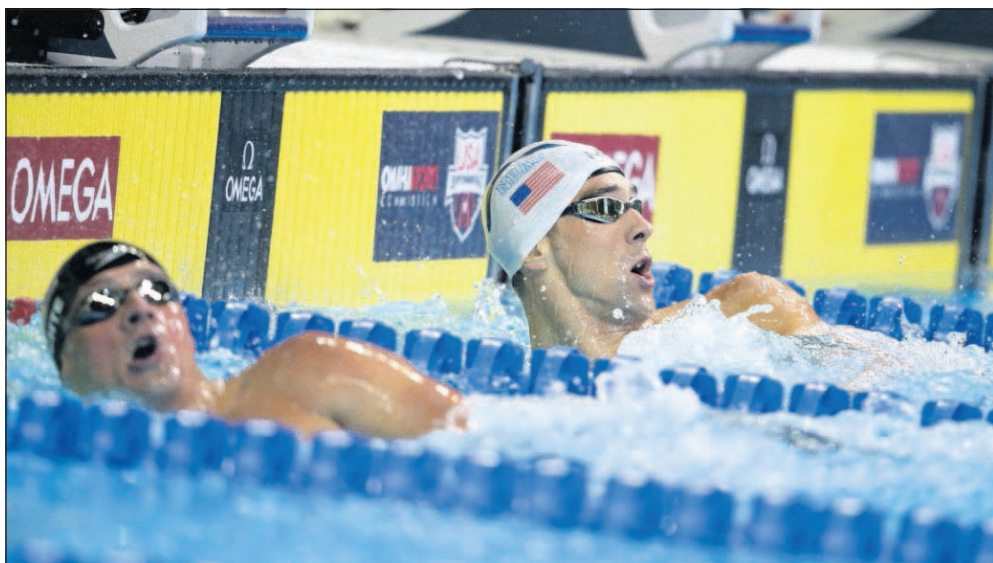
Lochte was next at 1:56.22 and had no complaints about his consolation prize: an individual race at the Rio Olympics.

The 11-time medalist injured his groin on the very first day of the meet, struggled in his next few races and was down to his final chance to get a swim of his own at the Summer Games.

Now, that's out of the way, which means Phelps and Lochte will carry their longtime rivalry to one more event in South America.

Phelps is a three-time defending gold medalist in the 200 IM and the most decorated athlete in Olympic history with 18 golds and 22 medals overall.

He's now locked up two individual events for Rio, having already qualified in the 200 butterfly. After shaking hands with Lochte as they hung together on the rope separating their side-by-side lanes, Phelps hustled



Michael Phelps, right, checks his time in front of Ryan Lochte, left, after winning the men's 200-meter individual medley final at the U.S. Olympic swimming trials, in Omaha, Neb., Friday. Lochte finished in second place.

off to the warmup pool to get ready for his second race of the night: the semifinals of the 100 fly.

Meanwhile, another defending Olympic champion went down at the trials.

Tyler Clary finished third in the 200 backstroke behind California Aquatics teammates Ryan Murphy and Jacob Pebley, who will represent the U.S. team in Rio.

Murphy grabbed the lead on the second lap and pulled away to win easily in 1:53.95 seconds. He completed a sweep of the backstroke events, having also won the 100.

Pebley held on for the second spot, touching in 1:54.77 to earn his first trip to the Olympics.

Clary was next at 1:55.33, ending his hopes of defending

the gold medal he won in London.

Murphy seemed happier for his teammate, turning toward Pebley and screaming when he saw a "2" beside his name. Pebley held a hand over his face, and then defiantly splashed the water in triumph.

Clary hung alone on a rope in the third lane, unable to take his eyes off the scoreboard. Finally, he climbed over to congratulate the two swimmers who ended his Olympics hopes.

"That's it," Clary said. "I couldn't be happier to be sending Team USA off with two backstrokers that I have a lot of respect for, and I know they are going to represent Team USA well in Rio."

Murphy wasn't the only one pulling off a sweep.

Lilly King followed up her victory in the 100 breaststroke by winning the 200 in 2:24.08 seconds. The 19-year-old from Indiana was followed by Molly Hannis, a 24-year-old who swims for Tennessee Aquatics. She took the second spot for Rio at 2:24.39, yet another swimmer who will be an Olympic rookie.

It wasn't totally a night for the upstarts.

Anthony Ervin and Nathan Adrian were the top two qualifiers in the semifinals of the 50 freestyle.

The 35-year-old Ervin led the way in 21.55, while Adrian was second quickest in 21.60. Both men are already on the team, with Ervin still seeking an individual event to go with his relay duty and Adrian set to defend his 100 free title from the London Games.

Bolt injures hamstring, rival Blake qualifies for Rio

Bolt's status for Rio Games in doubt

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Usain Bolt's Olympic quest is in doubt, after the sprint superstar left his country's national championships with a hamstring injury shortly before he was going to run the 100-meter final.

And that was just one part of a bizarre night at National Stadium.

Bolt's longtime rival Yohan Blake won the 100 title and formally qualified for the Rio de Janeiro Olympics — but only after a false-start disqualification call against him was overturned after review.

But even after Blake regrouped and prevailed, all the buzz was about Bolt and his status going forward especially since the national meet serves as the Jamaican Olympic trials.

He's not out of the Rio Games, but his status hinges now on how he does at a meet in London in three weeks. Bolt said he was diagnosed with a Grade 1 hamstring tear — the most mild sort — and that the discomfort began presenting itself in his quarterfinal race on Thursday night.

"I have submitted a medical exemption to be excused from the 100m final and the remainder of the National Championships," Bolt said in a statement released through Jamaican officials.



FILE- In this Aug. 29, 2015, file photo, Jamaica's Usain Bolt, right, anchors the Jamaican team to the finish line as Jamaica wins the men's 4x100 meter relay final at the World Athletics Championships in Beijing.

"I will seek treatment immediately and hope to show fitness at the London Anniversary Games on July 22 to earn selection for the Olympic Games in Rio."

Blake, who finished second to Bolt at the London Games in the 100, said he was confident that the world-record-holder will be in Rio.

"No doubt, no doubt, no doubt," Blake said. "It's just a caution measure. He's good. Just being cautious."

Blake won the 100 final in 9.95 seconds, 0.01 ahead of Nickel Ashmeade. Jevaughn Minzie got third in 10.02 seconds, which figures to send him to Rio — though his role could depend on how Bolt's hamstring recovers.

"I'm just smiling," Minzie said.

Bolt's absence was announced on social media but never to the crowd, which left many of the green-and-gold-clad fans wondering

what was going on with the national hero who would likely be considered the favorite to win the Olympic 100 gold for a third consecutive time — something no man or woman has ever accomplished.

Then came the false-start, followed by a review and a showing of the red card to Blake — who reacted with anger, so much that security officials stepped onto the track just in case. Then came another review of the tape, Blake was cleared and he went back to his lane.

"I waited four years for this," Blake said. "I've been injured, I've been battered and I just made it back."

Even with the injury, Bolt won both of his heats at this meet, first the quarterfinal on Thursday and then the semifinal on Friday.

Bolt seemed to be looking at the clock at the end of his semifinal, which he won in

10.04 seconds and capped by giving runner-up Senoj-Jay Givans — his closest pursuer — a knowing smirk as they crossed the line.

He put on a fresh shirt and walked off the track after a couple minutes, giving no indication that he was hurting. The news came about an hour later.

"We need him out there," said Asafa Powell, the veteran who was fourth in Friday's final. "I'm sure he'll be fine. I'm sure he'll be fine for Rio. I'm sure he's just being very cautious."

Elaine Thompson was being anything but cautious, on her way to knocking off two-time defending Olympic 100 gold medalist Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and winning the national title. Thompson equaled Jamaica's record in the 100, winning with an emphatic time of 10.70 seconds. She beat Fraser-Pryce by 0.23 seconds.

Thompson isn't new on the world track scene — she's the 2015 world silver medalist in the 200 — but what awaits in Rio will represent her first taste of Olympic-bright lights.

She's only 24, was a bit of a wild child in the past and has long been thought of in her country as the heiress apparent to Fraser-Pryce and Veronica Campbell-Brown (who was fourth Friday in the women's 100 final) atop the Jamaican women's sprint throne.

The meet continues Saturday and Sunday, without its biggest star.



Sanya Richards-Ross waves to the crowd after pulling up 250 meters into her lap around the track during qualifying for women's 400-meter run at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials Friday in Eugene.

Felix cruises, and Richards-Ross says goodbye

By EDDIE PELLIS
AP National Writer

EUGENE (AP) — Allyson Felix blocked out the knifing agony in her right ankle and made her first run at Olympic Trials look like a jog Friday night.

Sanya Richards-Ross felt a different kind of pain.

On a night Felix cruised on auto-pilot in the 400-meter qualifying round to keep her chance at a 200-400 double alive, Richards-Ross bid a tearful adieu to the fans, after pulling up 250 meters into her lap around the track — her hamstring too tight to carry on.

"I've had an amazing career," the 31-year-old Richards-Ross said. "To have my last race be here, at Hayward Field, in front of these fans, it's incredible."

In addition to her four Olympic gold medals, including the individual title at the London Games, Richards-Ross holds the stadium record in Eugene — better known as Track Town USA. It was here, five weeks ago at the Prefontaine Classic, that fans got their first true glimpse of what might be coming.

Richards-Ross finished seventh that day. In this one, her first 15 steps out of the blocks were smooth, but she quickly slowed from a sprint to a trot. By the time she hit the first curve on the backstretch, she was jogging. And then she pulled up completely.

"Let's be honest, I hurt my hamstring real bad," she said. "I worked with a great doctor just to get out on the track today."

After she pulled up, Richards-Ross walked to the finish line. Fans rose from their seats and Richards-Ross blew kisses.

She earned as many of those fans through her failures as her successes — her long battle with illness and injuries, her third-place finish in Beijing that left her weeping underneath the stands, then, finally, the gold medal in London.

"Most fans have seen my heart through my running," Richards-Ross said. "I don't win every time I step

"I've had an amazing career. To have my last race be here, at Hayward Field, in front of these fans, it's incredible."

— Sanya Richards-Ross, Olympic gold medalist

on the track. I don't deserve the ovation because I'm always a champion. But I think they see my heart, my determination, my desire to be a good person."

Now, though, they'll be watching Felix and others finish up the 400.

Felix finished second in her heat, posting a time of 51.96 seconds, then headed straight to the trainer's room for treatment.

She hurt the ankle in the spring and has had a rough time coming back — forced to do most of her running the wrong way around the track so as not to put the injured ankle at more risk.

She has less than 18 hours to recover. Her semifinal heat is set for Saturday afternoon.

Other headlines from Day 1 at track trials:

RUPP ROMP: Galen Rupp won the 10,000 meters in a time of 27 minutes, 55.04 seconds and is now qualified for both the 10K and the marathon. Rupp, the silver medalist at 10K in London, beat Shadrack Kipchirchir by more than 6 seconds. Leonard Korir also qualified.

SHOT PUT: Adam Nelson was honored for his Olympic gold medal — the one he won in 2004 — during a ceremony before the shot put finals. Wearing a "Best Dad Ever" T-shirt with unicorns and a rainbow, the 40-year-old got the ceremony that didn't take place when he was upgraded from silver to gold because of a doping positive. But Nelson, who came out of retirement for trials, did not make the 2016 Olympic team. He finished ninth. The top three were Ryan Crouser, world champion Joe Kovacs and Jordan Clark.

NBA players cash in as big free agency period opens

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP Basketball Writer

Mike Conley and All-Stars Andre Drummond and DeMar DeRozan are staying put. So are Hassan Whiteside and Nicolas Batum.

Many more players are on the move — and some are getting paid like they never could have imagined.

Chandler Parsons, Evan Turner and Timofey Mozgov were among the players cashing in Friday during the first day of free agency — and really, of a new era — in the NBA.

With revenues rising and the salary cap soaring right along with it, good players were being paid like All-Stars, while All-Stars were getting contracts that used to go only to superstars.

Conley is in a class of his own

after agreeing to a \$153 million, five-year deal to remain in Memphis, the biggest deal handed out yet.

And the players at the top of the class haven't even started agreeing to deals yet. Kevin Durant and Al Horford probably can't wait to see what they get after watching what lesser players on the market have already received.

For example: Parsons — four years, \$94 million from Memphis.

Turner — four years, \$70 million from Portland.

Mozgov — four years, \$64 million from the Lakers.

Their timing was even better than their play, as they became free agents at the ideal moment. With the NBA's national TV contracts worth more than \$2.6 billion beginning with next season, the salary cap that's tied to revenues will soar

well beyond its previous record to between \$90 million-95 million.

Some players didn't have to wait long to claim their share of it.

Drummond's five-year maximum contract to stay in Detroit will be worth \$130 million, just a share more than the \$128 million Bradley Beal got to remain in Washington. DeRozan will do a little better in Toronto and Charlotte kept Batum for about \$120 million.

But the Hornets lost a couple of key players from their 48-win team, as Jeremy Lin got a three-year, \$36 million contract from Brooklyn, and the Pacers lured Al Jefferson to Indiana with a three-year, \$30 million contract.

None of the contracts can be signed until July 7, after next season's salary cap is set and the moratorium is lifted.

Missing out on the money was

O.J. Mayo, the former No. 3 overall pick who finished last season in Milwaukee and was a free agent. But he was dismissed and disqualified from the NBA on Friday for violating the terms of the league's anti-drug program, the first player to receive that punishment in a decade. He will be eligible to apply for reinstatement in two years.

His old team was busy, as the Bucks agreed to terms with free agent shooter Mirza Teletovic on a three-year deal worth \$30 million, and also agreed to terms on a four-year, \$38.4 million offer sheet with restricted free agent Matthew Dellavedova. The Cleveland Cavaliers have the option to match that deal.

Durant had his first discussions with another team, meeting with the Golden State Warriors. He met with his Oklahoma City Thunder

on Thursday, before free agency opened, as the former NBA MVP decides whether to remain with the franchise that selected him with the No. 2 pick in 2007.

The other MVP available is LeBron James, who opted to become a free agent. But he said last week he intends to return to Cleveland to defend the city's first championship in 52 years.

The Cavaliers' biggest decision could be what to do with free agent forward J.R. Smith, whose 3-point shooting — and defense — helped Cleveland rally to beat Golden State in the finals. Smith fits in well with Cleveland because he follows James' lead and he's embraced a stopper's role given to him by coach Tyronn Lue.

AP Sports Writer Tom Withers in Cleveland contributed to this