

Men's Basketball

Many players to watch outside US team

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — From Kyrie to KD, DeMar to DeMarcus, many players on the U.S. Olympic men's basketball team are so well known to NBA fans they can simply go by first names or nicknames.

The Americans have 12 NBA players on their roster, headlined by former MVP Kevin Durant and featuring multiple All-Stars. Kyrie Irving, DeMar DeRozan and DeMarcus Cousins played on the team that won the gold medal two years ago in the Basketball World Cup.

There are plenty more players in the tournament who either are familiar faces or could soon be. There are a record 46 current NBA players set to play in the Olympics, the league said, along with 18 more former players.

"We know that there are great basketball players all over the world," U.S. coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "Over 20 percent of the NBA is international now and so there's a deep respect for the game, for the international game, and we hope that we'll be able to show that respect in the matter in which we play here in Rio de Janeiro."

A look at some players to watch when competition begins Saturday:

DARIOSARIC, CROATIA. The "will he or won't he join the 76ers" questions were as frequent as the losses last year in Philadelphia, but the team got good news in July when the former lottery pick signed with the 76ers. The 6-foot-10 forward played the last two seasons with Turkish team Anadolu Efes and looked NBA-ready when he averaged 14 points and 10 rebounds while winning MVP honors of the Olympic Qualifying Tournament that Croatia won to earn its spot



In this Sept. 6, 2014, file photo, Croatia's Dario Saric, right, drives the ball against France's Boris Diaw, center, and Jeffrey Lauvergne during the World Cup Round of 16 match between Croatia and France in Madrid, Spain.

in Brazil.
YI JIANLIAN, CHINA. Once so highly regarded that he was the No. 6 pick in the 2007 draft, Yi's NBA career didn't amount to much. But he remains a solid international player who was the MVP of the FIBA Asia championship last summer when his team clinched its Olympic berth, and the 7-footer scored 18 points in an exhibition game last month against the U.S., China's opening opponent on Saturday.

GUILLERMO "WILLY" HERNANDEZ, SPAIN. The New York Knicks noticed him while scouting Kristaps Porzingis, who was playing for the same professional team in Spain. So they acquired the rights to the 2015 second-round pick of Philadelphia and signed him last

month so he could join the team next season. In the meantime, the 6-10 center gets valuable experience playing for his country while Marc Gasol is sidelined while recovering from a broken foot.

BOGDAN BOGDANOVIC, SERBIA. Not to be confused with and not related to the similar-sounding Bojan Bogdanovic, a Brooklyn Nets guard who plays for Croatia. Bogdan Bogdanovic could someday join him in the NBA, as the Phoenix Suns own his rights. He has chosen to remain in Europe at least for next season and showed the Suns what they will be missing when he had 26 points and eight assists in the championship game of the Olympic qualifying tournament the Serbians won last month.

DOMANTAS SABONIS, LITHUANIA. The son of Hall of Famer Arvydas Sabonis played for Gonzaga and after being drafted by Orlando in the first round was traded to Oklahoma City in a deal for Serge Ibaka. At 6-10, he could give the Lithuanians an imposing front line alongside the 6-11 Jonas Valanciunas of the Toronto Raptors.

PATRICIO GARINO, ARGENTINA. The San Antonio Spurs have done pretty well with an Argentine on their roster, and they added another alongside Manu Ginobili when they signed Garino last month. The 6-7 swingman scored 14.1 points per game last season in helping George Washington win the NIT championship, and playing for the Orlando Magic's summer league team averaged 12 points in three games.

OTHER VIEWS

Rio could prove that Olympics are too big to fail

On a corner outside the athlete's village, a soldier carrying an automatic weapon tried his best to keep from smiling as he posed for a cameraman trying to put a face on security at the Olympics.

All is not quite fun and games just yet in Rio, though beleaguered organizers are hoping that changes soon. Most competitions begin Saturday and, barring a potential disaster, the discussion may actually turn from the problems of Rio to sports from badminton to basketball in an extravaganza that only the world's biggest sporting event can bring.



TIM DAHLBERG
AP Sports

It will happen in a city of astonishing beauty and incredible poverty. It will happen despite worries about everything from virus-carrying mosquitoes to gun-toting criminals.

And it will happen with some athletes eyeing each other carefully, not knowing if the playing field is truly level.

The Rio Olympics open with a lot more at stake than gold medals and national pride. Not since Los Angeles rescued the troubled movement with a stripped-down version of the games in 1984 has there been more trepidation about the future of the massive sporting event.

Some issues, like the Zika mosquitoes, were out of the control of the International Olympic Committee. Others were things they simply failed to control, like the rampant dopers who have made a mockery of the Olympic movement itself.

Bowing down to Vladimir Putin and allowing Russian athletes to remain in the games may have prevented a full-blown Cold War from breaking out among Olympic nations. But it also highlighted a schism between Olympic officials and those running the World Anti-Doping Agency, bringing into question their commitment to clean sport.

It also exposed the IOC as a spineless organization more bent on self-preservation than on ensuring cheaters are not allowed in any Olympic sport.

Disappointing, but hardly surprising. These are the same people, you might remember, who awarded the first Olympics in South America to Rio in 2009, buying without question the promise that in seven years Rio would somehow clean up waters long polluted by raw sewage and build mass transportation systems to whisk people around town.

Instead, the city's highways are a logjam and on Saturday athletes will row their way through the slimy and dangerous waters of Rodrigo de Freitas lagoon, where hastily erected barricades and garbage collection boats will be on duty so that television viewers from around the world won't have to see just how filthy the water really is.

It's enough to make some of the stuffed shirts at the IOC a bit unsettled.

"How worried should we be?" Prince Albert of Monaco asked his fellow IOC members this week.

Plenty worried, though about seven years too late. Every Olympics has its issues — few thought Athens would ever be able to pull off the 2004 Games — but there are so many facing Rio that there will be a collective sigh of relief if everything has gone off mostly as planned when the Olympics end in just over two weeks.

Indeed, IOC President Thomas Bach envisions clear sailing for the Olympic movement if that happens.

"If this model stands such a stress test like it had to here in Brazil, then you can see that this model is more than robust," Bach said.

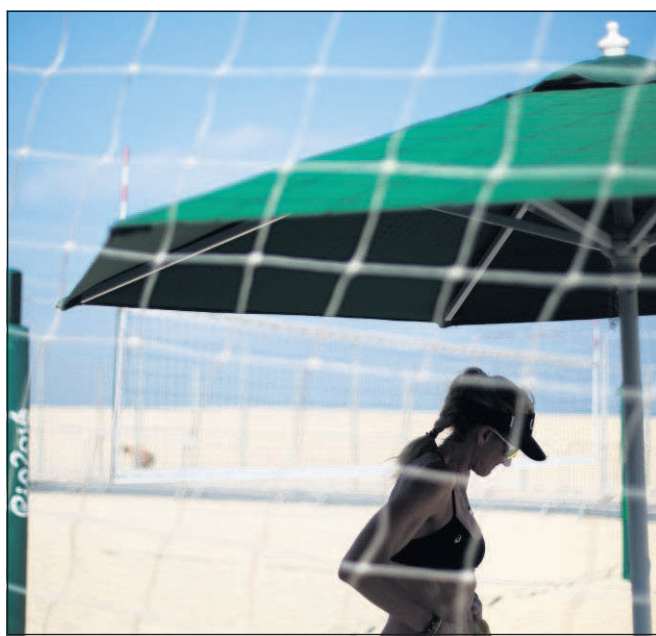
NBC for one isn't worried. The Olympics have long been little more than a long-running prime-time summer TV show and the network that paid \$1.2 billion for the games says it will make money on this edition.

Rather than cutting into ad sales, the stories about crime, Zika and Brazil's economic and political woes have actually increased them. And the backdrop for these games will be a director's dream, with stunning views from venues around the city, including beach volleyball on the famed Copacabana Beach.

The billions in TV revenue have padded the IOC coffers and increased its appetite for adding sports to an already bloated program that for some incomprehensible reason now includes golf. The newest for Tokyo will be sport climbing, surfing and skateboarding, efforts to lure younger viewers into the games while traditional track and field and other sports are in decline.

It may turn out that Bach is right. Barring a terrorist attack or mass illness of rowers and sailors, Rio — for all its myriad of problems — may be remembered as a success.

Proof that no matter how incompetently they're managed, the Olympics are simply too big to fail.



Beach volleyball player Kerri Walsh Jennings, of the United States, stands in the shade after a practice session ahead of the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympics at the beach volleyball venue on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2016.

Beach Volleyball

Brazil looms large on beach

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — Kerri Walsh Jennings beat the Chinese in Beijing, winning one of her three Olympic beach volleyball gold medals in 2008 in front of a crowd rooting hard for the hometown opponents.

That doesn't come close to what she can expect when the 2016 tournament begins on Saturday at Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana Beach.

"The fact that we're in one of the Meccas of beach volleyball — beach volleyball's second to football there — that's nuts. It's going to be awesome," Walsh Jennings said recently as she prepared to attend her fifth Olympic Games. "The whole tournament's going to be intense."

A five-time Olympian with three gold medals, Walsh Jennings is rarely

an underdog when she steps on the sand. But with a new partner, the remnants of a shoulder injury and an advancing age — she's 37 — Walsh Jennings could be facing her toughest challenge yet.

Two Brazilian pairs enter the tournament as the top two seeds, including Agatha and Barbara, who are the defending world champions. The women on Brazil's other team, Larissa and Talita, have won Olympic medals, though not together.

"I want to beat the best. I want to be in the gold medal match playing against the best," said Walsh Jennings, who is now teamed with April Ross after Misty May-Treanor retired. "I don't care what country they're from. But yeah, the dream is to play the best. The past couple of years Brazil has certainly been the best, but I'm prepared mentally to play anybody."

Friday's Results

- ARCHERY**
- Men's Individual Ranking Round**
1. Woojin Kim, South Korea, 700 (world record).
 2. Brady Ellison, United States, 690.
 3. David Pasqualucci, Italy, 685.
 4. Sjeif Van Den Berg, Netherlands, 684.
 5. Atanu Das, India, 683.
 6. Bonchan Ku, South Korea, 681.
 7. Takaharu Furukawa, Japan, 680.
 8. Jean-Charles Valladont, France, 680.
 9. Chun-Heng Wei, Taiwan, 679.
 10. Juan Ignacio Rodriguez Liebana, Spain, 678.
- Also:
15. Zach Garrett, United States, 674.
 31. Jake Kaminski, United States, 660.
- Men's Team Ranking Round**
1. South Korea (Woojin Kim; Bonchan Ku; Seungyun Lee), 2057.
 2. United States (Brady Ellison; Zach Garrett; Jake Kaminski), 2024.
 3. Italy (Mauro Nespoli; David Pasqualucci; Marco Galiazzo), 2007.
 4. Australia (Alec Potts; Ryan Tyack; Taylor Worth), 2005.
 5. France (Jean-Charles Valladont; Pierre Pilihon; Lucas Daniel), 2003.
 6. China (Xuesong Gu; Dapeng Wang; Yu Xing), 1997.
 7. Taiwan (Hao-Wen Kao; Chun-Heng Wei; Guan-Lin Yu), 1995.
 8. Spain (Miguel Alvarino Garcia; Antonio Fernandez; Juan Ignacio Rodriguez Liebana), 1986.
 9. Netherlands (Sjeif Van Den Berg; Rick Van Der Ven; Mitch Dielemans), 1981.
 10. Indonesia (Riau Ega Agatha; Hendra Purnama; Muhammad Wijaya), 1962.
 11. Brazil (Marcus D'almeida; Bernardo Oliveira; Daniel Rezende Xavier), 1948.
 12. Malaysia (Khairul Anuar Mohamad; Haziq Kamaruddin; Muhammad Akmal Nor Hamin), 1945.

- Women's Individual Ranking Round**
1. Misun Choi, South Korea, 689.
 2. Hyejin Chang, South Korea, 666.
 3. Bobae Ki, South Korea, 663.
 4. Ya-Ting Tan, Taiwan, 656.
 5. Tuiana Dashidorzhiyeva, Russia, 654.
 6. Jiaxin Wu, China, 653.
 7. Lucilla Boari, Italy, 651.
 8. Alejandra Valencia, Mexico, 651.
 9. Shih-Chia Lin, Taiwan, 651.
 10. Kaori Kawanaka, Japan, 650.
- Also:
13. Mackenzie Brown, United States, 641.
- Women's Team Ranking Round**
1. South Korea (Misun Choi; Bobae Ki; Hyejin Chang), 1998.
 2. Russia (Tuiana Dashidorzhiyeva; Ksenia Perova; Inna Stepanova), 1938.
 3. China (Hui Cao; Yuhong Qi; Jiaxin Wu), 1933.
 4. Taiwan (Chien-Ying Le; Shih-Chia Lin; Ya-Ting Tan), 1932.
 5. Mexico (Aida Roman; Alejandra Valencia; Gabriela Bayardo), 1922.
 6. Italy (Guendalina Sartori; Claudia Mandia; Lucilla Boari), 1911.
 7. India (Deepika Kumari; Bombalya Devi Laishram; Lakshmirani Majhi), 1892.
 8. Ukraine (Veronika Marchenko; Anastasia Pavlova; Lidiia Sichenikova), 1890.
 9. Japan (Kaori Kawanaka; Yuki Hayashi; Saori Nagamine), 1862.
 10. Colombia (Carolina Aguirre; Ana Maria Rendon; Natalia Sanchez), 1855.
 11. Brazil (Sarah Nikitin; Ane Marcelle Dos Santos; Marina Canetta), 1845.
 12. Georgia (Khatuna Narimandze; Kristine Esubua; Yuliya Lobzenidze), 1831.

OPENING: Greece, Refugees lead entry march

Continued from 1B

The show wasn't all frivolous and fun. Images showed swirling clouds of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, in the Earth's atmosphere and images of world cities and regions — Amsterdam, Florida, Shanghai, Dubai — being swamped by rising seas. The peace symbol, tweaked into the shape of a tree, was projected on the floor of the stadium where Germany won the World Cup in 2014.

"The heat is melting the icecap," a voice intoned. "It's disappearing very quickly."

Before the show, in a video broadcast, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the games "celebrate the best of humanity" and appealed for an Olympic truce, calling on "all warring parties to lay down their weapons" during the two weeks of sporting achievement.

As well as a showcase for Brazil's history, culture, diversity and hopes, the gala also represented a triumph, because there were times after the International Olympic Committee selected Rio ahead of Chicago, Tokyo and Madrid in 2009 when it seemed that the city of 6.5 million people might not get its act together for the world's greatest sporting mega-event.

But with more than a dash of "gambiarra," the Brazilian art of quick-fixes and making do, Rio is ready.

Just. The honor of declaring the games open will fall to Michel Temer, Brazil's unpopular interim president, standing in for suspended President Dilma Rousseff. Her ouster less than



Former Brazilian tennis player Gustavo Kuerten arrives with the Olympic flame during the opening ceremony for the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Friday, Aug. 5, 2016.

four months out from the games for alleged budget violations was one of the many complications that roiled Brazil's Olympic preparations and impacted the opening ceremony itself. Fewer than 25 foreign heads of state were expected, with others seemingly staying away to avoid giving the impression of taking sides amid Brazil's leadership uncertainty.

As Brazilian officials took their seats in the stadium, there were shouts of "out with Temer" from sections of the crowd.

Greece, the historical and spiritual home of the games, led the march by athletes from 205 nations and territories into the stadium. They were being joined by a first-ever Refugee Olympic Team of 10 athletes, displaced from Syria, South Sudan, Congo and Ethiopia. Their flag-bearer, Rose Nathike Lokonyen, fled war in South Sudan and ran her

first race in a refugee camp in northern Kenya.

The athletes were being given tree seeds, plus cartridge of soil. When they sprout, they will be planted in a Rio park.

Michael Phelps will lead the U.S. team, the largest with 549 competitors. History's greatest Olympian will be looking to add to his record haul of 22 medals, in three individual swims plus relays, before the Aug. 21 closing ceremony.

After the grandeur of Beijing's opening ceremony in 2008 and the high-tech, cheeky inventiveness of London's in 2012, Rio's was earthier, less swish and still inventive. Creative director Fernando Meirelles said their budget was slashed by half as Brazil's economic recession bit ever harder.

He said he hoped that the ceremony would still be "a drug for depression in Brazil."