

Inspiring Words of Olympic Athletes

Some dreams can be hard to achieve but the Olympics provide us all hope. To be a world-class athlete takes a lot of talent and even more motivation. Previewing five USA Olympic athletes gives insight into the coming Olympics and what it takes to get there.

Swimmer: Kate Ziegler

Kate explains that some days are harder than others. Being a world-class swimmer requires a diligent work ethic. Besides talent it helps that Kate loves what she does, but even still she has quotes on her mirror that she can read in the morning because as she puts it, those “sometimes inspire me to get out of bed.” While we might not take on an Olympic schedule some other athlete quotes may inspire the best out of us.

Gymnast: Samantha Peszek

Sam is the only American girl at the elite program level who still continues going to school instead of being home taught. She knows what it is like to balance life with your dreams but somehow she fits it all in. When speaking of a double-double on the floor routine—a skill that few in the world do in their routine, let alone can even do at all, she says, “I think that’s the fun part of gymnastics, to do stuff that not everyone else can do.” Again, while we might not be able to pull off that stunt, it gives us encouragement to know that with enough work we might be able to find things to do that not everyone else can do.

Boxer: Gary Russell, Jr.

Gary knows that a person has got to believe. He is brimming with confidence but doesn’t take anything for granted. No surprises here, he also has a grueling daily practice regimen. He is determined and has set his sights on Olympic glory and adjusted to international style accordingly. With his quickness he should be able to score points on that stage, but what will give him the edge is attitude. He knows he is better than the competition as long as he is focused and gives as he calls it, “that extra push that got me to where I am.” Working several years for your day on the Olympic stage may not be your goal but if we could gain from learning how to be just as poised to perform when being the champion of our opportunities.

Triathlete: Laura Bennett

Laura realizes that there is success in just getting there. When we set out to achieve a goal we will experience progression in the journey. Laura says, “win or lose, it’s not as important to me as it is being in the game and being a part of it.” Life is a lot that way. We are all in it, but are we a part of the game? How well do we lead our lives?

Sprinter: Wallace Spearmon

Wallace tries to be a good role model in life. In general, he puts God first, family second, and track third. He believes in making the most of the God-given talent he has been given and is emphatic about not using substances. But he wants to succeed at it all. He is outspoken and not shy to admit, “I’m never gonna say I can’t win or anything...I want to win at everything.”

These motivations given by these athletes, respectively, could likely be attributed to them all collectively. In the heart of champions is the ability to be determined to reach your dreams. They may not all receive the ultimate prize for their Olympic sports, with Olympic gold, but it is no small feat or sacrifice for them to even be competing at the Olympics. As the nations converge, many inspirational stories with common goals and common drives will emerge. If you are interested in more glimpses into the lives of American athletes competing in the Beijing 2008 Olympics, all my quotes came from segments of *A Shot at Glory*, which can be found on www.hulu.com.