



WATCH: AUGUST 6 (WOMEN'S FINAL)

POLE VAULT

WOMEN'S POLE VAULT is set for high-stakes drama: Two-time Olympic champion **Yelena Isinbayeva** looks to defend her title after a recent one-year break from the sport. The 30-year-old Russian superstar crushed the competition between 2003 and 2009, but took a hiatus after a string of losses. She resurfaced in 2011, placing a disap-

pointing sixth at the world outdoors in Daegu, South Korea.

But in March, Isinbayeva returned to form with a win at the world indoors in Istanbul. In London, she'll face tough competition from American Jenn Suhr and current world outdoor champion Fabiana Murer of Brazil. But if she's in good shape, Isinbayeva will be hard to beat. She's still the only woman to reach the five-metre mark (her current world record is 5.06 m). **-NAOKO ASANO**



WATCH: AUGUST 12 (GOLD MEDAL GAME)

MEN'S BASKETBALL

HERE'S ALL YOU need to know about how stacked Team USA is: In the last few months, they've lost superstars Dwyane Wade, Chris Bosh, Dwight Howard, LaMarcus Aldridge, Derrick Rose and Blake Griffin to injury (combined: 27 NBA all-star appearances, three MVPs, three NBA championships and three Olympic gold medals). And

they won't suffer one bit, the 12 players going to London will still be the 12 best players in the tournament. The roster, co-captained by Kobe Bryant and LeBron James, is versatile enough to match up against any style of play. It's not a matter of whether the Americans will claim gold, it's whether any country can challenge them like Spain did in Beijing in 2008, taking USA down to the wire in the gold medal game. **-DAVE ZARUM**



WATCH: JULY 31 (TEAM EVENT)

GYMNASTICS

EVERYONE'S TALKING about "Wieber Fever" for a reason. **Jordyn Wieber**, 17, is the smiling face of the current U.S. gymnastics crew, lauded as the nation's best shot at team gold since the Magnificent Seven first captured the hardware at the 1996 Atlanta Games.

The tiny-yet-powerful superstar is the reigning individual all-around world

champ, and she helped propel the U.S. team to a world title in Tokyo last year. To win gold, Wieber and her team will need to defeat talented Russian and Romanian squads. Russia's Viktoria Komova and Aliya Mustafina, as well as China's Yao Jinnan and Wieber's teammate Gabby "The Flying Squirrel" Douglas, will have a shot at taking the individual all-around medals, but they'll have to be exceptional to beat Wieber, who rarely falters. **-NAOKO ASANO**



WATCH: JULY 25 (CANADA VS JAPAN, FIRST ROUND)

WOMEN'S SOCCER

LAST YEAR'S World Cup shocker, in which Japan beat out No. 1-ranked USA in a dramatic overtime final, proved that women's soccer is must-watch TV. And with several teams capable of taking gold in London, the stage is set for another round of exciting matchups.

Defending champs USA will be looking to avenge their World Cup disap-

pointment; they'll face strong opposition from Japan, Sweden and Brazil. Canada is eyeing the podium, too. Captain **Christine Sinclair**, 29, will try to overtake American Abby Wambach, 32, for the second-most goals in international competition (Sinclair, 135; Wambach, 138; Mia Hamm, retired, 158). Canada's first game, against world champs Japan, will be tough. But with a player like Sinclair leading the charge, anything is possible. **-NAOKO ASANO**



WATCH: AUGUST 11 (MEN'S 10-M PLATFORM)

DIVING

AT THE 2008 Beijing Olympics, China hoped to sweep the diving gold medals on home soil. But one event fell through their grasp—the men's 10-metre platform, which they lost to Australia's Matthew Mitcham. This time around, China has new hope in the form of 19-year-old **Qiu Bo**, whose impressive control—he pierces bullet-like through

the water after a gripping display of acrobatics—earned him 25 perfect-10 scores for the top spot at last year's FINA Diving World Series in Beijing.

Watch for a showdown between Bo and hometown hero Tom Daley, 18, a former world champ. And despite recent injuries, Mitcham will try to recapture Olympic glory. Bo's the clear favourite, though—even Daley's coach has called the Chinese phenom "a machine." **-NAOKO ASANO**