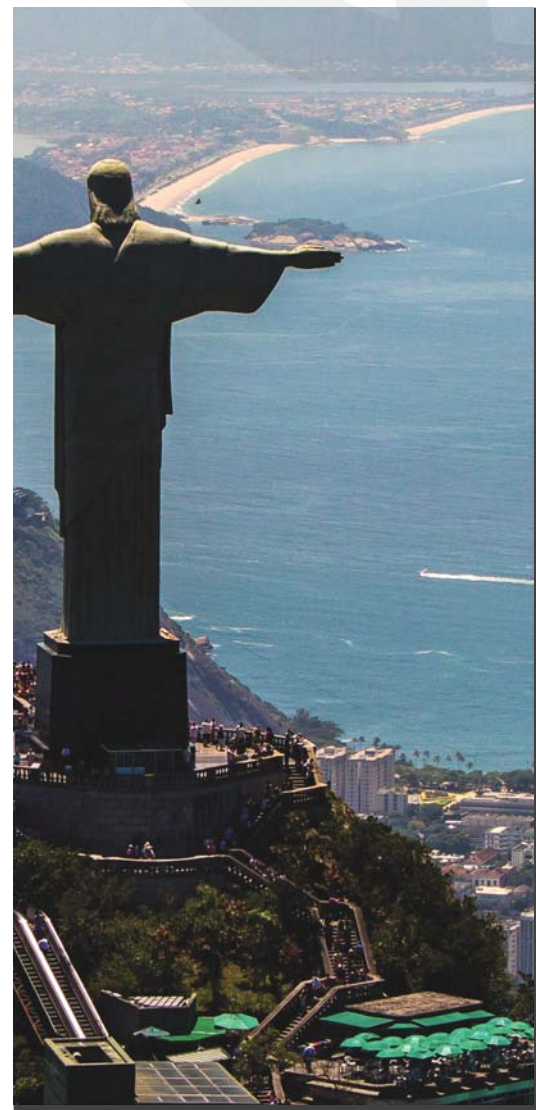
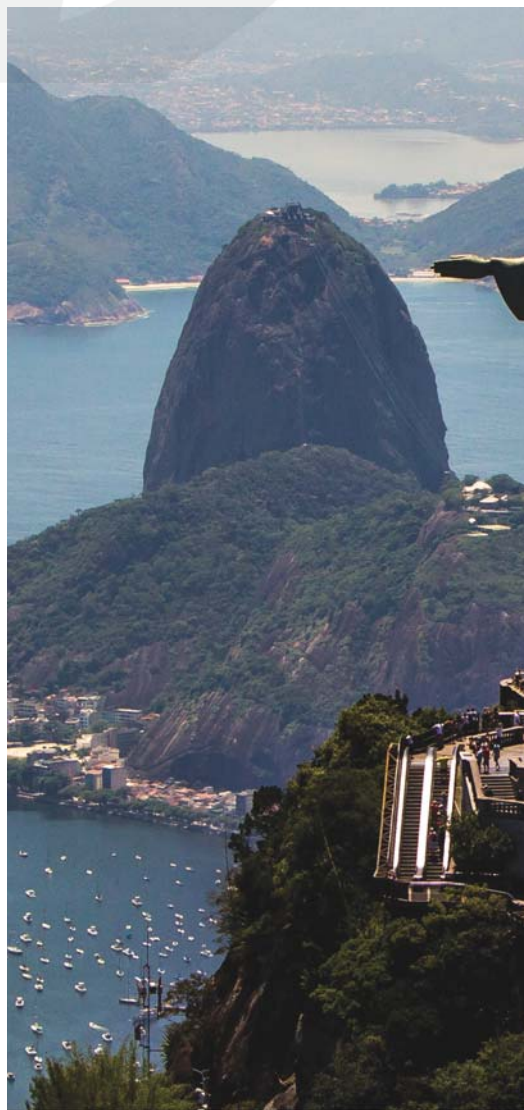


RIO 2016

TWO-YEAR-OUT PREVIEW

TEAM USA

STORYLINES



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ARCHERY



The Boys are Back: The London 2012 silver-medal trio comprised of **Brady Ellison** (Globe, Ariz.), **Jake Kaminski** (Elma, N.Y.) and **Jacob Wukie** (Oak Harbor, Ohio) are looking to make a return to the Olympic stage, each standing heavily in the Olympic hopefuls ranking going into trials. Ellison, who injured his right hand in 2013, seems poised for a strong comeback as Rio draws closer with consistent domestic performances this season and a world record-pace shot at the Pan American Olympic Festival in July. Wukie hopes to join Ellison and Kaminski in defending Team USA's gold-medal title at the 2015 Pan American Games. Competition will not come easy for this trio though with high-performing rookies including 2012 alternate **Joe Fanchin** (Oceanside, Calif.), **Jeremiah Cusick** (Forest Lake, Minn.), **Collin Klimitchek** (Victoria, Texas), **Matthew Zumbo** (Fountain Valley, Calif.), and twin brothers **Sean** and **Daniel McLaughlin** (West Chester, Ohio) who all have experience on the international stage, shaking up the domestic rankings.

Girl Power: On the women's side, three emerging talents will fight to represent Team USA in Rio: **Mackenzie Brown** (Tyler, Texas), **LaNola Pritchard** (North Branford, Conn.) and **Ariel Gibilaro** (Lehi, Utah).

Training together at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, California, all three are looking to make their mark in a very competitive field. Competition will not come easy for these ladies with other female contenders in the mix, including Texas A&M University's **Heather Koehl** (Sheboygan Falls, Wis.), **Michelle Gilbert** (Bethesda, Md.) and three-time Olympian **Jennifer Hardy** (Houston, Texas).

Five Olympic Games and Counting: **Khatuna Lorig** (Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia) will be seeking her sixth Olympic berth in 2016 and is hoping to come away with the hardware she missed during a crushing quarterfinal loss in 2012. Previously, Lorig competed for the Unified Team, the Republic of Georgia and the United States, representing Team USA since 2008. Following the London Games, Lorig trained actress Jennifer Lawrence for her role in *The Hunger Games*, which sparked a nationwide archery craze. She also coaches her son, 18-year-old Levan Onashvili, as he pursues his own Olympic dream.





BADMINTON

Hopefuls in the Hunt: After steady improvement that has seen the quality of U.S. competition increase, there are currently 10 U.S. athletes on track to qualify for the 2016 Games. Headlining the women's singles hopefuls is **Iris Wang** (Arcadia, Calif.), who has claimed titles at the 2013 Santo Domingo Open and 2014 Argentina International. In men's singles, **Howard Shu** (Anaheim, Calif.) has balanced pursuing a degree at the University of California, Los Angeles while competing at the international level, culminating in a runner-up finish at the 2013 Santo Domingo Open. Also, **Seguin Bjorn** (Suresnes, Ill.) made a name for himself with a victory at the 2014 Dutch International. **Phillip Chew** (Orange, Calif.) and **Pongairat Sattawat** (Orange, Calif.) highlight men's doubles, and are seeking their first Olympic appearance after taking home the 2013 Brazil International title and finishing third at the 2014 Peru International. These U.S. hopefuls are determined to make history in Rio by scoring the first Olympic badminton medal for Team USA.

Dynamic Duo: Setting the bar for U.S. women's doubles teams are **Paula Lynn Obanana** (West Covina, Calif.) and 2008 Olympian **Eva Lee** (Diamond Bar, Calif.). Obanana, who received her U.S. citizenship in May 2011 after competing as a member of the Philippine National Badminton Team from 1997-2005, is focused on achieving her Olympic dream after the missing the women's doubles cut for the 2008 Games by one ranking spot. Lee – who competed in mixed doubles at the 2008 Games – and Obanana rededicated their efforts to qualify for the 2016 Games and their hard work has begun to pay off. The two have become the most formidable team in the Pan American region after taking home the 2014 Peru International Open title and 2013 Pan American Championship title. Obanana's strong offense and Lee's well-rounded game have created a balanced partnership – one that is on its way to making a statement in Rio.



BASKETBALL - MEN'S



Streking: The U.S. Olympic Men's Basketball Team will look to expand one of the most successful legacies in the history of the modern Olympic Games as it seeks its third consecutive gold medal in 2016. The U.S. men – gold medalists in 14 of the 17 Olympic Games in which they have played – own a remarkable 130-5 win-loss record (.963 winning percentage), and are currently enjoying a 17-game winning streak dating back to 2004. U.S. Olympic Teams featuring NBA players are 45-3, and the U.S. has won five of the last six Olympic titles when NBA players have participated (1992, 1996, 2000, 2008 and 2012).

Back for More: Members of the 2014-16 U.S. Men's National Basketball Team roster, from which the 12-man 2016 U.S. Olympic Team will be selected, include USA Basketball veterans and NBA All-Stars **Carmelo Anthony** (Baltimore, Md.) and **LeBron James** (Akron, Ohio). Anthony and James have an opportunity to become the first men's basketball players in U.S. Olympic history to appear at four Olympic Games after aiding Team USA to gold medals in 2008 and 2012, and the bronze medal in 2004. The duo joins David Robinson (1988, 1992, 1996) as the only three-time U.S. Olympians in men's basketball.

Pacing the Sidelines: Duke University's hall of fame head coach **Mike Krzyzewski** is slated to become only the second coach in USA Basketball history to lead U.S. men's teams to three Olympic medals, joining Oklahoma State University hall of fame coach Henry Iba. With a 26-1 record in Olympic play, Iba led U.S. teams to Olympic gold in 1964 and 1968, and a controversial silver medal at the 1972 Games. Since taking over at the helm of the national team in 2006, Krzyzewski is 62-1 and 16-0 in Olympic action, highlighted by back-to-back Olympic gold medals (2008, 2012) and the 2010 FIBA World Championship title. Previously, he served as an assistant coach for the historic, gold medal-winning 1992 U.S. Olympic Basketball Team.





BASKETBALL - WOMEN'S

Six-peat: Five-time defending Olympic champions, the U.S. Olympic Women's Basketball Team will look to capture its sixth straight – and eighth overall – gold medal at the 2016 Games. The U.S. women's team is currently riding a 41-game winning streak in Olympic play, dating back to the bronze-medal game in 1992. In 2012 the U.S. became the first women's traditional team sport program to capture five consecutive gold medals. The U.S. women's team has medaled in each of the nine Games in which it has competed, collecting a record seven gold medals, one silver and one bronze. Overall, U.S. women's basketball teams own a 58-3 Olympic record (.951 winning percentage).

Returning: Three athletes currently in the U.S. women's national team pool – **Sue Bird** (Syosset, N.Y.), **Tamika Catchings** (Duncanville, Texas) and **Diana Taurasi** (Chino, Calif.) – have won three straight Olympic gold medals and are likely to return for their fourth Olympics in 2016. The five-time defending Olympic champions have successfully defended the top spot by relying on a mix of veteran leadership and talented newcomers. Following in the footsteps of Lisa Leslie, Katie Smith and Dawn Staley, the trio will now pass the torch to ensure Team USA's future success on the world stage.

BOXING



Mr. Awesome: The most internationally experienced male athlete on the current U.S. men's boxing team, super heavyweight **Cam F. Awesome** (Lenexa, Kan.), is fully focused on earning a place on the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. The team captain, Awesome fell short of making the Olympic team in 2012. Formerly known as Lenroy Thompson, the eccentric 26-year-old legally changed his name to Cam F. Awesome in early 2013.

Girl Power: Following the Olympic debut of women's boxing at the 2012 Games, three U.S. women – Olympic champion **Claessa Shields** (Flint, Mich.), Olympic bronze medalist **Marlen Esparza** (Houston, Texas) and **Queen Underwood** (Seattle, Wash.) – have returned to training for a second run at representing Team USA. Like the 2012 Games, there will only be three women's Olympic weight classes in Rio, so the competition for those highly coveted spots will be intense. Joining the 2012 Olympic trio are several world medalists who are looking to clinch Olympic berths, including 2012 world champion **Tiara Brown** (Fort Myers, Fla.) and 2012 World Championship medalists **Franchon Crews** (Baltimore, Md.), **Christina Cruz** (New York, N.Y.), **Mikaela Mayer** (Los Angeles, Calif.) and **Raquel Miller** (San Francisco, Calif.).

The Youth Revolution: After the men's medal draught at the 2012 Games, several young boxers are aiming to turn the tide in 2016, including 17-year-old **Shakur Stevenson** (Newark, N.J.). The first U.S. male boxer ever to win both a junior world championship and youth world title, Stevenson plans to continue his medal run in 2016. Super heavyweight **Darmani Rock** (Philadelphia, Pa.) joined Stevenson atop the medal stand at the 2014 Youth World Championships in only his second international competition and will chase a second gold medal at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. Top medal hopes also reside with a third 17-year-old in flyweight **Antonio Vargas** (Kissimmee, Fla.), who will look to add his first elite national title in early 2015.

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CANOE/KAYAK



Smokin' Smolen: Eighteen-year-old Poland native **Michal Smolen** (Gastonia, N.C.) entered the 2012 season understanding he would be unable to race for his adopted nation – the United States – as he did not obtain citizenship before the U.S. Olympic Team Trials. Nonetheless, Smolen continued working at his craft and received his U.S. passport in 2013. This season, Smolen has risen through the ranks as he captured the gold medal at the 2014 ICF Canoe Slalom U23 World Championships and earned bronze at the ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup 3. Coached by his father, Rafal Smolen, the rising star is poised to contend for a medal should he qualify for the 2016 Games.

The Sequel: In 2012, the K1 men's competition came down to the final selection race for **Ryan Dolan** (Kailua, Hawaii) and **Tim Hornsby** (Atlanta, Ga.) with Hornsby narrowly edging Dolan to clinch the Olympic roster spot. While Hornsby, 27, is three years older than Dolan, age has not slowed down the quality of competition from both men. Currently, Dolan and Hornsby are once again the top boats representing Team USA in international competition. Friends off the water and foes during competition, it appears the two are headed for another battle to represent Team USA at the 2016 Games.

Rise of the K2 women: After years of competing individually, **Kaitlyn McElroy** (Bethel, Maine) and **Maggie Hogan** (San Diego, Calif.) joined forces to begin competing in the K2 women's category. McElroy and Hogan's strengths complement one another well with McElroy known for her starting speed in the first 100 meters and Hogan utilizing her power to close in the final 100. After three years of racing together, McElroy and Hogan have proven to be one of the top boats in the international field, consistently medaling in world cup competition and qualifying for multiple A finals. With these results, the duo has high hopes of securing its first Olympic berth and medaling at the 2016 Games.



CYCLING



2012 Returnees: Ten cyclists from the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team have continued training in hopes of competing at the 2016 Games. Road cyclists **Taylor Phinney** (Boulder, Colo.), **Tejay van Garderen** (Boulder, Colo.) and **Evelyn Stevens** (Acton, Mass.) all had remarkable 2014 seasons, during which Phinney became the 2014 time trial national champion in men's road racing, while Stevens remains the perennial favorite to win the women's national championship. Two-time Olympic silver medalist **Sarah Hammer** (Temecula, Calif.) and two-time Olympian **Bobby Lea** (Topton, Pa.) are both hoping to make their third Olympic appearance in track cycling. Mountain bike Olympians **Georgia Gould** (Fort Collins, Colo.), **Lea Davison** (Jericho, Vt.) and **Todd Wells** (Kingston, N.Y.) are proving to be strong contenders, each having earned pro national titles in 2014. Wrapping up the cycling disciplines is BMX with the return of London Olympians **Connor Fields** (Las Vegas, Nev.) and **Alise Post** (St. Cloud, Minn.).

Runs in the Family: Two-time Olympic track cyclist **Lea** isn't the only one in the Lea family with a love for cycling. His brother, Syd Lea – who suffered brain damage due to a lack of oxygen at birth – shares Bobby's passion for competitive cycling and is a five-time Special Olympics champion.



DIVING



London Olympians: Prior to the 2012 Games, the U.S. women's diving team had not medaled since 2000, and the men's drought was even longer, dating back to 1996. That all changed in London as U.S. divers garnered three medals in the first three competitions. **David Boudia** (Noblesville, Ind.) became the first American man to win Olympic gold in the men's 10-meter since Greg Louganis in 1988 and is eyeing his third Olympics in 2016. Expecting his first child in September, Boudia is aiming to be on the 10-meter again in Rio, but he's also becoming a contender for spots in the springboard events. **Nick McCrory** (Chapel Hill, N.C.) teamed with Boudia to win bronze in the men's synchronized 10-meter platform and was also a finalist in the individual 10-meter in 2012. Now, preparing to make his second Olympic team, McCrory will turn his focus to the individual 3-meter heading into Rio. His brother, Lucas McCrory, will also be vying for a Team USA roster spot in 2016 as a Paralympic swimming hopeful. For the women, 2012 synchronized 3-meter springboard silver medalist **Abby Johnston** (Upper Arlington, Ohio) will try to balance training with medical school at Duke University as she aims to make her second Olympic team.

World Cup Success: At the 2014 FINA Diving World Cup – the top international meet of the season – **Boudia** competed in three of the four Olympic events, winning bronze in synchronized 10-meter with **Steele Johnson** (Carmel, Ind.), placing fourth in synchronized 3-meter with **Sam Dorman** (Tempe, Ariz.), and taking eighth in the individual 3-meter. Meanwhile, **McCrory** returned to the international scene for the first time since the 2012 Games, albeit in a new event. Previously a 10-meter specialist, he finished 12th in the individual 3-meter, which will be his primary focus heading into Rio.

Women's Roundup: The U.S. women's team will have a new look in 2016 as five of the six team members from the 2012 Games are no longer diving. Joining **Johnston** in the mix of Rio 2016 hopefuls are 12 women who have represented the U.S. at either the 2013 World Championships or the 2014 World Cup. Of those 12, three have made both teams, including **Maren Taylor** (Arlington, Va.), **Samantha "Murphy" Bromberg** (Bexley, Ohio) and **Amy Cozad** (Indianapolis, Ind.). Although she did not make the world championship team in 2013, **Laura Ryan** (Elk River, Minn.) was the only American female to make the 2014 World Cup team in two events, including the individual and synchronized 3-meter.



EQUESTRIAN



At the Helm: As a competitor, **Robert Dover** (Wellington, Fla.) represented Team USA at six consecutive Olympics, leading the U.S. to the team bronze medal at four straight Games (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004). An inductee to the U.S. Dressage Federation Hall of Fame, Dover is widely recognized as the greatest dressage rider in U.S. history – amassing more than 100 grand prix victories, seven FEI World Cup Finals appearances, five national titles and more dressage honors than any other U.S. rider. After his retirement in 2009, Dover was named the chef d’equipe and technical advisor of the U.S. National Dressage Team in June 2013, and the U.S. has seen an immediate impact – earning three top-10 finishes (including a third-place finish) at the CDIO3* Hickstead. At the helm of the dressage team, Dover is dedicated to returning the U.S. to the Olympic podium in 2016.

Davidson Legacy: **Buck Davidson** (Ocala, Fla.), son of two-time Olympic gold medalist and four-time Olympian Bruce Davidson – the only rider to win back-to-back world championships – has inherited his father’s ability, work ethic and competitive nature. Their training center in Ocala, Florida, and involvement as role models for young riders has had a profound impact on the equestrian community. Previously ranked as the No. 1 U.S. eventing rider, Davidson has represented Team USA at the world championships and Pan American Games, and will also compete at the upcoming 2014 World Equestrian Games. Serving as an alternate for

the 2008 and 2012 U.S. Olympic Teams, Davidson looks to follow in his father’s footsteps, while carving out his own legacy, and secure his first Olympic berth.

Rising Stars: Within the jumping discipline, there is a talented group of riders – all under age 30 – aiming to contend for a spot on the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. Highlighting the list of 2016 hopefuls is **Reed Kessler** (Armonk, N.Y.), who earned a share of the 2012 USEF show jumping national title in her first senior riding year; and **Lucy Davis** (Los Angeles, Calif.), who at age 20 became the youngest rider to win a global champions tour grand prix after capturing the 2014 Grand Prix of Lausanne title. Meanwhile, London 2012 Games alternate **Jessica Springsteen** (Colts Neck, N.J.) has garnered multiple top-five finishes against stiff international competition, and **Charlie Jayne** (Elgin, Ill.) – another 2012 Games alternate, secured a top-10 finish at the 2014 FEI World Cup Jumping Final. Rounding out the list of hopefuls is **Katie Dinan** (New York, N.Y.), who received the 2014 Lionel Guerrand-Hermès Trophy after a breakout year in 2013 that saw her compete at her first FEI World Cup Final and represent the U.S. at the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup Jumping Final. This collection of riders has already represented Team USA across international competitions and is looking to make the jump to the ultimate stage at the 2016 Games.



FENCING



Hungry for More: In 2004, **Marisel Zagunis** (Beaverton, Ore.) won the first gold medal in women's saber at an Olympic Games – a feat she repeated in 2008. Currently ranked No. 2 in the world, Zagunis is slated to make a run for her third individual Olympic gold medal, and become the first women's saber fencer to hold both an individual and team Olympic title. Already the most decorated U.S. fencer in history, Zagunis anchored the U.S. women's saber team to its first gold medal at a senior world championship since 2005 when Team USA won gold on July 21, 2014. Now, Zagunis and teammates **Dagmara Wozniak** (Avenel, N.J.), Eliza Stone (Chicago, Ill.) and **Ibtihaj Muhammad** (Maplewood, N.J.) are ranked No. 1 in the world and will finish the 2013-14 season as the overall world cup champions.

Head in the Game: Muhammad narrowly missed qualifying for the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team, but is hoping to make history in 2016 as the first U.S. athlete to compete at the Olympic Games in a hijab. The Duke University graduate recently launched her own fashion line and balances training with her role on the U.S. Department of State's Council to Empower Women and Girls through Sport.

Family Ties: The 2016 U.S. Olympic Fencing Team could include two sets of siblings. After winning bronze in the team event at the London 2012 Games, women's epee fencers **Kelley** and **Courtney Hurley** (San Antonio, Texas) both won individual medals during the world cup season and are aiming to compete together at a second Olympic Games in Rio. Meanwhile, men's foil fencer **Alexander Massialas** (San Francisco, Calif.) is a frontrunner to qualify for a second Olympics, where he could be joined by his younger sister, **Sabrina Massialas** (San Francisco, Calif.) Sabrina fenced on her first senior world team this year and, like Alexander in 2010, will represent Team USA at the Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, this August. Both the Hurley and Massialas siblings are coached by their fathers. Kelley and Courtney train with their father, Bob Hurley, who is a former modern pentathlete. Alexander and Sabrina are coached by Greg Massialas – a three-time Olympian and head coach of the U.S. men's foil team.





FIELD HOCKEY



Third Time's the Charm: Team USA enters the two-year countdown to the Rio 2016 Games on the heels of a historic fourth-place finish at the 2014 Rabobank Hockey World Cup, which saw the U.S. women advance to the semifinal round for the first time in 20 years. Seeking their third Olympic berth, U.S. standouts **Lauren Crandall** (Doylestown, Pa.), **Rachel Dawson** (Berlin, N.J.) and **Katelyn Falgowski** (Landenberg, Pa.) will look to lead the U.S. to its first Olympic podium in field hockey since 1984. With more than 600 combined career caps, the veteran trifecta will lead a talented crop of rising talent at the U.S. Olympic qualification tournament and 2015 Pan American Games. Also looking to return from the London 2012 roster are **Michelle Kasold** (Chapel Hill, N.C.) and **Melissa Gonzales** (Mohegan, N.Y.).

The Keystone State: More than half of the current 30-member U.S. women's national team roster hails from Pennsylvania, highlighted by **Kelsey Kolojejchick** (Larksville, Pa.) and **Katie O'Donnell** (Blue Bell, Pa.). Kolojejchick netted five goals at the 2014 Rabobank Hockey World Cup, including Team USA's only two goals in the semifinal match and one to force a draw against world No. 2 ranked Argentina in pool play. Not to be outdone by her former collegiate foe,

O'Donnell also had a stellar season in 2014, scoring eight goals in 13 champions challenge and world cup matches. The U.S. will look to another pair of Pennsylvania natives in **Kat Sharkey** (Moosic, Pa.) and **Paige Selenski** (Shavertown, Pa.) to bring speed and stick-handling skill to the U.S. offensive attack.

Redemption: Determined to avenge a disappointing result at the London 2012 Games, the U.S. team is headed in a new direction under head coach **Craig Parnham**. The two-time Olympian took over at the helm of the U.S. women's team after assisting his native Great Britain to the bronze medal at the London 2012 Games. Joining Parnham on staff is **David Hamilton**, director of performance science, and assistant coach **Janneke Schopman**, a two-time Olympic medalist, who aided the Netherlands to the 2006 Women's Hockey World Cup title and 2007 Champions Trophy. Under the new regime, the U.S. defeated three top-10 teams to advance to the semifinals at the 2014 Rabobank Hockey World Cup. The fourth-place finish catapulted the U.S. into the top-10 of the International Hockey Federation World Rankings at No. 8. With redemption on the mind, the U.S. team looks to continue its climb in the lead up to Rio.



GOLF



Olympic Inclusion: Previously contested at just two Olympic Games in 1900 and 1904, golf will be played for the first time in 112 years at the 2016 Olympic Games. Featuring men's and women's individual events as announced by the International Olympic Committee in 2009, both events will have 60 players competing in a 72-hole stroke play tournament. The field will be determined by the International Golf Federation's Olympic Golf Ranking list, which is based on a player's official world ranking. All players ranked within the top 15 as of July 11, 2016, will be eligible to represent their respective Olympic teams, with one limitation – only four players can qualify from each country. In an effort to be as inclusive as possible, the remaining field will be determined by the world golf rankings, with a maximum of two players per country for nations with less than two players ranked in the top 15.

Roster Depth: The United States has historic depth in golf rankings for individual players, both male and female. As of July 31, 2014, there are seven male and seven female U.S. players in the top 15, which – based on the IGF's Olympic qualification procedures – must be trimmed to the top four in each gender to make the final U.S. Olympic Team roster. Based on this week's rankings – which are updated weekly throughout the season – U.S. male golfers in the top 15 include: No. 6 **Matt Kuchar** (Winter Park, Fla.), No. 7 **Bubba Watson** (Bagdad, Fla.), No. 8 **Jim Furyk** (West Chester, Pa.), No. 10 **Tiger Woods** (Cypress, Calif.), No. 11 **Jordan Spieth** (Dallas, Texas), No. 13 **Phil Mickelson** (San Diego, Calif.), and No. 14 **Zach Johnson** (Cedar Rapids, Iowa); while U.S. female golfers in the top 15 include: No. 1 **Stacy Lewis** (Toledo, Ohio), No. 5 **Lexi Thompson** (Coral Springs, Fla.), No. 6 **Michelle Wie** (Honolulu, Hawaii), No. 10 **Christie Kerr** (Miami, Fla.), No. 12 **Paula Creamer** (Pleasanton, Calif.), No. 13 **Angela Stanford** (Fort Worth, Texas), and No. 14 **Lizette Salas** (Azusa, Calif.).





GYMNASTICS



London Olympians: With the exception of **Jordyn Wieber** (DeWitt, Mich.), currently a student at University of California, Los Angeles, all U.S. artistic gymnasts who competed at the 2012 Games – male or female – have indicated interest in representing Team USA in 2016. Post-London, **Kyla Ross** (Aliso Viejo, Calif.) is the only member of the Fierce Five who did not take time off from competition, winning three world silver medals and national titles on uneven bars and balance beam in 2013. She is expected to compete at the 2014 P&G Championships, to be held Aug. 21-24 in Pittsburgh. **McKayla Maroney** (Long Beach, Calif.), who is currently recovering from knee surgery, returned to competition in 2013 to win the world vault gold medal and national titles on vault and floor exercise. **Gabby Douglas** (Virginia Beach, Va.) and **Aly Raisman** (Needham, Mass.) have both returned to training. Every member of the men's 2012 U.S. Olympic Team – **Jake Dalton** (Reno, Nev.), **Jonathan Horton** (Houston, Texas), **Danell Leyva** (Miami, Fla.), **Sam Mikulak** (Newport Coast, Calif.) and **John Orozco** (Bronx, N.Y.) – has been training since London and will compete at the 2014 P&G Championships.

2013 World Championship Success: Featuring a combination of 2012 Olympians and a fresh crop of newcomers, both the men's and women's U.S. artistic gymnastics teams found success at the 2013 World Championships. The women, led by 2013 U.S. all-

around champion **Simone Biles** (Spring, Texas), took home eight of the possible 15 medals. Biles, who won the women's all-around and floor exercise titles, as well as silver and bronze on vault and balance beam, also became the first U.S. woman to qualify for all four event finals since 1991. Other female medalists included Maroney and Ross. The men's team won four medals, marking the most the U.S. men have ever captured at an individual world championships. **Dalton** and **Steven Legendre** (Port Jefferson, N.Y.) won silver medals on floor exercise and vault, with Legendre becoming the first U.S. men's world vault medalist since 1979. Additionally, **Brandon Wynn** (Voorhees, N.J.) and **Orozco** claimed bronze on still rings and parallel bars.

2014 Youth Olympic Gymnasts: Team USA has four gymnasts competing at the Youth Olympic Games, all of whom will be age-eligible for the Rio Olympics in 2016. These athletes are **Nicole Ahsinger** (San Diego, Calif.), junior women's trampoline champion at the 2014 U.S. Elite Challenge and Junior Pan American Championship; **Cody Gesuelli** (Middletown, N.J.), three-time consecutive U.S. junior men's trampoline champion; **Alec Yoder** (Indianapolis, Ind.), 2014 U.S. junior elite all-around, pommel horse and horizontal bar champion; and **Laura Zeng** (Libertyville, Ill.), 2014 U.S. junior all-around, hoop and ball champion.



JUDO



Going for Gold, Again: Kayla Harrison (Middletown, Ohio) became the first American – male or female – to win an Olympic gold medal in judo at the London 2012 Games. Post-London, Harrison became an enduring symbol of hope and inspiration, embodying the purity and spirit of both Olympic and personal triumph after sharing her story of sexual abuse. Harrison is looking ahead to the Rio Games in 2016 when she'll attempt to defend her gold medal and further solidify the world-class standard of American judo that she helped to build.

YOG Medal Potential: Two judo athletes will represent Team USA at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games, to be held Aug. 16-28 in Nanjing, China. Fifteen-year-old **Alex Hyatt** (San Francisco, Calif.) is a strong medal contender earning his place on the team after placing second at the 2013 International Judo Federation's World Cadet Championships. Meanwhile, 18-year-old **Adonis Diaz** (Hialeah, Fla.), who finished fifth at the world cadet championships, will also vie for a podium spot in Nanjing.



A composite image featuring a rider on a horse. The top portion shows a close-up of a rider in a dark helmet and jacket. The bottom portion shows a brown horse in mid-air, jumping over a red obstacle with a white bar. The obstacle has a red pillar with a gold finial and a small flag on top. The word "OFFICE" is visible on the pillar. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

PENTATHLON

Sister Act: Standout sisters **Margaux** and **Isabella Isaksen** (Fayetteville, Ark.) are leading the U.S. women on the path to the Rio 2016 Games. Margaux, who finished two seconds shy of earning a podium spot at the London 2012 Games, is aiming to return for her third Olympic appearance in hopes of capturing the elusive Olympic medal. Well on her way to her ultimate goal, Margaux captured the gold medal at the 2013 UIPM World Cup in Rio. Isabella is on track to potentially join Margaux at the 2016 Games. The Isaksen sisters live and train together at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and both are currently ranked in the top 15 of the international rankings – Margaux in second and Isabella in 13th. The sister duo will look to capture Team USA's first Olympic medal in pentathlon since 2000.

Army Strong: The top contenders for the U.S. men's team are all soldiers in the United States Army. USA Pentathlon has a rich military history, dating back to the first U.S. Olympian in the sport – General George Patton, who competed at the 1912 Games. The 2016 Games are no exception, with **Sgt. Dennis Bowsher** (Dallas, Texas), **Pvt. Nathan Schrimsher** (Roswell, N.M.) and **Pvt. Logan Storie** (Portland, Ore.) in prime contention to qualify for the team. Bowsher, a 2012 Olympian and regular on the international circuit, is seeking his second Olympic berth. Schrimsher burst onto the international scene after competing at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in 2010, and has since shattered the American pentathlon shooting record, while Storie holds the American pentathlon swimming record in the 200-meter freestyle.



ROWING

New Direction: Looking to build on the success of the 2012 Games, in which the U.S. garnered one gold and two bronze medals, USRowing welcomed **Curtis Jordan** to direct the program in the lead up to the Rio Games. With more than 30 years of coaching experience at the elite international and intercollegiate level, the 2016 Games will mark his sixth Olympic stint. Joining Jordan on the staff is three-time Olympian **Bryan Volpenhein**, and former national team member **Luke McGee**. Under the new direction, USRowing has narrowed its focus on eight of the 14 boat classes contested at the Olympic level, opening the selection process to rowing clubs throughout the country. The impact of this decision is already taking shape with Team USA collecting eight medals at the 2013 World Championships. As the 2016 cycle evolves, USRowing will continue to focus resources on the priority Olympic boat classes, while developing non-priority crews that perform well at the 2014 and 2015 world rowing cups and world championships.

Great Eight: It's one thing to build a championship dynasty, and yet another to be undefeated on the world stage for eight straight years. Under the direction of head coach **Tom Terhaar**, the U.S. women's eight has

not lost an Olympic or world championship title since 2006, and it shows no signs of slowing down. The American dynasty will be seeking its third consecutive Olympic gold medal in 2016 after setting a world record at the 2013 World Rowing Cup. Looking to make their third straight Olympic appearance in 2016 are two-time Olympic champions **Susan Francia** (Abington, Pa.), **Caroline Lind** (Greensboro, N.C.) and **Eleanor Logan** (Boothbay Harbor, Maine).

Revitalized Men: Under the direction of Volpenhein, McGee and **Cameron Kiosoglous**, the U.S. men's rowing team is developing into a world contender. The men's eight improved its medal position from bronze to gold at the 2014 World Rowing Cup II, while the men's four claimed bronze. With the lightweight men's four training in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and the men's heavyweight squad training in Princeton, New Jersey, the future for the next two years is looking bright.

RUGBY



Olympic Inclusion: Rugby sevens will be contested for the first time at the Olympic Games in 2016. The sevens format is a smaller, faster-paced game than the more common 15-a-side rugby tournament, which was last featured at the 1924 Games, in which the U.S. defended its gold medal from 1920. The competition will feature both men's and women's tournaments and will also be featured on the program for the Nanjing 2014 Youth Olympic Games.

Friday: **Mike Friday** was selected in July 2014 to coach the U.S. men's rugby sevens team in the lead up to the 2016 Games. He will work alongside assistant coach **Chris Brown** while continuing his duties at London Scottish for the 2014-15 Greene King IPA Championship season. With a history of success on the IRB HSBC Sevens World Series circuit as both a player and coach, Friday elevated Kenya from 12th to fifth place in a single season at the helm. He plans to implement a similar training program to the one he used in Kenya at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, California.

Fastest Man: **Carlin Isles'** (Massillon, Ohio) electric speed quickly earned him international acclaim as the "fastest man in rugby." After failing to earn a spot on the 2012 U.S. Olympic Track & Field Team, the former sprinter and football standout transitioned to rugby, revealing viable pipelines for the sport. The Ohio native resisted overtures from the NFL in the spring of 2014 to focus solely on rugby and the chance to win the first rugby sevens Olympic medal for Team USA.



SAILING



Unfinished Business: London 2012 Olympian **Paige Railey** (Clearwater, Fla.) has achieved everything possible in the laser radial class except for her ultimate goal – winning an Olympic medal. The youth and open world champion, and Rolex ISAF World Sailor of the Year is in the prime of her career at age 27. A third-place finish at the 2013 World Championships after a post-Games break proved her staying power in the lead up to the 2016 Games. Additionally, two-time Olympian **Stuart McNay** (Providence, R.I.) teamed with **David Hughes** (San Diego, Calif.) in the men's 470 class after the 2012 Games and immediately began the hottest run of his sailing career, highlighted by a sixth-place finish at the 2013 World Championships and multiple top-10 finishes at major events in 2013 and 2014.

Early Success: After winning medals at the ISAF Youth World Championships and then becoming two of the most decorated collegiate sailors in history, **Annie Haeger** (East Troy, Wis.) and **Briana Provancha** (San Diego, Calif.) have wasted no time in establishing themselves among the world's best in the women's 470 class. With podium finishes at elite-level ISAF Sailing World Cup events in Miami, Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and Hyères, France, since January 2013, Haeger and Provancha are already considered medal contenders for Rio 2016.

SHOOTING



Mix for Six: Five-time U.S. Olympic shot gun athlete **Kim Rhode** (El Monte, Calif.), who won a U.S. Olympic record five medals in five consecutive Games, and is also the first Olympic shooter, male or female, to compete in all three shotgun events – trap, double trap and skeet – now has her sights set on Rio. Rhode, who gave birth to her son, Carter, in May 2013, has since won three world cup medals in 2014.

On the Mark: One of the best marksmen in history, rifle shooter **Matt Emmons** (Browns Mills, N.J.) has won three Olympic medals and two individual world championship medals. Becoming just the fourth shooter ever to win individual rifle medals at three or more Games, he's currently living in the Czech Republic with his wife, Katy, and their two children. The move hasn't stopped Emmons from being among the top rifle shooters in the world, however, as proven by his three world cup finals appearances in 2014.

Triple Double: The elite Army Marksmanship combination of 2008 Olympic champion **Glenn Eller** (Houston, Texas), 2008 Olympian **Jeff Holguin** (Yorba Linda, Calif.) and 2012 Olympian **Josh Richmond** (Hills Grove, Pa.) rarely visits any range in the world without garnering some hardware in double trap. Combined, the trio has earned five of the 12 world cup medals up for grabs this season and are poised to contend for podium spots at the Rio Games.



SOCCER



Setting the Stage: Coming off a highly successful 2014 FIFA World Cup, Brazil has set the stage for what promises to be an exciting and colorful Olympic Games for both the men's and women's soccer tournaments. The soccer finals will be held at Maracana Stadium, which will also serve as the site for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. In addition to the venues within Rio, four other cities will host soccer matches, including Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Brasilia and Salvador.

Four in Four: The U.S. women's team is seeking its fourth consecutive gold medal – and fifth overall – at the Rio 2016 Games. The U.S. has medaled at every Olympics since women's soccer debuted in 1996. The Olympic tournament promises to be the most competitive ever, with 12 teams (compared to 16 in the FIFA Women's World Cup) vying for medals over a condensed 16-day competition; meaning roster depth will be vital to any team's success. With a relatively short time between the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games, the two rosters will be similar. The Rio Games will likely be the last appearance on the international stage for many Team USA players who have contributed greatly to the growth and success of women's soccer in the United States.

Rising Stars: Riding on the momentum of a dramatic 2014 FIFA World Cup, the U.S. men's national team will look to return to the Olympic stage for the first time since 2008. As in previous Olympics, the men's tournament will feature teams comprised primarily of U-23 players, with three older players allowed on each team. Of the 23 players who represented Team USA at the 2014 World Cup, three will be 23 or younger by 2016, including **John Brooks** (Berlin, Germany), **Julian Green** (Tampa, Fla.) and **DeAndre Yedlin** (Seattle, Wash.), who all showed promise in adding the U.S. to the FIFA World Cup round of 16.



SWIMMING



Change of Scenery: Three of Team USA's brightest stars from the 2012 Games – **Missy Franklin** (Centennial, Colo.), **Katie Ledecky** (Bethesda, Md.) and **Ryan Lochte** (Daytona Beach, Fla.) – will have changed training locations before the 2016 Games. Franklin, who won six gold medals at the 2013 FINA World Championships, recently completed her freshman season at the University of California, Berkeley, where she won the NCAA title in the 200-yard freestyle. Ledecky, who set world records in the 800- and 1,500-meter freestyle events at the 2013 FINA World Championships and then broke them in a small Texas meet in June 2014, recently committed to Stanford University where she will enroll in the fall of 2015. And, Lochte, who led the men's team with three gold medals at the 2013 FINA World Championships, relocated from Florida to Charlotte, North Carolina, in early 2014 to train with two-time Olympic assistant coach David Marsh. He was slowed due to a knee injury suffered late in 2013, but appears to be rounding into form this summer.

Young Ones: At the London Games, **Franklin** won four gold medals at 17 years old and the then 15-year-old **Ledecky** posted the second-fastest time ever in winning the 800-meter freestyle. The dynamic duo went a step further at the 2013 FINA World Championships,

winning six and four gold medals. Joining the teen sensations on the path to Rio is 17-year-old **Simone Manuel** (Sugar Land, Texas), who qualified for her first senior-level international meet at the 2013 FINA World Championships, in which she reached the final in the 50-meter freestyle and was a gold medalist in the 400 freestyle relay. Manuel has continued to blossom in 2014, setting an American record in the 100-yard freestyle earlier this year.

Need for Speed: Currently training for the Rio Games in the auto racing hotbed of Charlotte, North Carolina, 2012 Olympic champion **Tyler Clary** (Riverside, Calif.) has befriended six-time NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson, and the two have traded tips on their respective sports. Clary helped Johnson, an aspiring triathlete, with his swimming technique, while Johnson opened doors for Clary in the world of stock car racing; leading to Clary's debut in competitive stock car racing at Charlotte Motor Speedway this summer. Clary ranks as one of Team USA's top medal threats in several events leading up to the Rio Games and aspires to make a run at NASCAR following his Olympic swimming career.



SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING



For the Cup: Every four years, the world's top senior synchronized swimmers compete head-to-head at the FINA Synchronized Swimming World Cup. A four-day elite competition featuring solo, duet, team (technical and free) and free combination events, 2014 marks the 12th edition of the event which will be held Oct. 2-5 in Quebec City. The 2014 World Cup is likely to feature top U.S. competitors, including 2012 Olympians **Mary Killman** (McKinney, Texas) and **Mariya Koroleva** (Walnut Creek, Calif.). Since the London 2012 Games, Killman has competed for Lindenwood University, claiming collegiate national titles in 2013 and 2014, while Koroleva competed for Stanford University through 2013.

History Lesson: Heading into the Rio 2016 Games, the U.S. owns nine Olympic medals in synchronized swimming, ranking second among all nations behind Japan (12), and ahead of Canada and Russia with eight apiece. The U.S. is seeking its first Olympic medal since 2004 – when it claimed bronze in both the duet and team events – and its first gold medal since 1996, when Becky Dyroen-Lancer led the U.S. to the team title.



TABLE TENNIS



Teen Sensations: At age 12, **Crystal Wang** (Boyd, Md.) became the youngest player on the U.S. women's national team to qualify for the 2014 World Championships. She placed 21st in the team event along with **Prachi Jha** (Milpitas, Calif.), **Erica Wu** (Arcadia, Calif.), **Angela Guan** (San Jose, Calif.) and **Lily Zhang** (Palo Alto, Calif.). Fourteen-year-old **Kanak Jha** (Milpitas, Calif.) competes for the U.S. men's national and world teams, recently winning the 2014 North American Cup, besting three U.S. teammates, including two-time Olympian **Jim Butler** (Houston, Texas). Wang and Jha will continue to compete on the national teams in hopes of earning a roster spot for the 2016 Games.

Comeback Kids: All three women from the 2012 U.S. Olympic Women's Table Tennis Team have set their sights on representing Team USA in 2016. **Ariel Hsing** (Fremont, Calif.) continued training following the London Games and is currently competing in the Chinese Super League. **Zhang** became a finalist in the youth singles event at the 2014 Korean Open following a winning performance at the 2014 U.S. Open. In August, Zhang is expected to compete at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, and will compete alongside **Wu** at the North American Championships. She becomes the first American to debut at the Olympic Games prior to competing at the Youth Olympic Games and only the 10th athlete to represent Team USA at both events.



TAEKWONDO



Rio Bound: London Olympians **Paige McPherson** (Sturgis, S.D.) and **Terrence Jennings** (Alexandria, Va.) each brought home a bronze medal in their individual weight divisions at the 2012 Games. Not ready to retire, McPherson and Jennings continued training after London. McPherson earned a title at the 2013 Spanish Open, and also placed second and third at the 2014 U.S. Open and 2014 Canadian Open, while Jennings took home gold at the 2013 Pan American Open. Currently ranked No. 13 and 14 in the world, McPherson and Jennings are strong contenders to represent Team USA at the 2016 Olympics.

Team Lopez: The Lopez family made history in 2008 when **Steven, Diana** and **Mark Lopez** (Sugarland, Texas) became the first sibling trio to medal at the same Games, and the first to qualify for a U.S. Olympic Team in more than 100 years. In 2012, the siblings were split up after the youngest brother, Mark, came up short at trials, but all three have continued training under the direction of their eldest brother, Jean Lopez, in hopes of returning to the Olympic stage in Rio. The 2016 Games could be the last chance for Team Lopez to compete at an Olympic Games together.

Elite status: Heading into the Rio 2016 Games, the U.S. is tied for second in the all-time Olympic medal count for taekwondo, having collected eight medals since the sport debuted in 2000. Accountable for nearly half of these medals is three-time Olympic medalist and five-time world champion **Steven Lopez**.



TEAM HANDBALL



Hangtime Hines: Though many USA Team Handball athletes are currently participating in the new residency program based in Auburn, Alabama, American **Gary Hines** (Atlanta, Ga.), who is currently playing professionally in Germany, hopes to bring his scoring expertise and athletic prowess to Team USA in the lead up to the Rio 2016 Games. For the fourth consecutive year, “Hangtime” Hines placed in the top 25 in scoring for his European league in 2014. He was also one of three players on the U.S. Men’s National Handball Team to place in the top 10 in goals scored at the 2014 Pan American Championships. He is expected to lead the U.S. men’s team as it prepares to qualify for the 2015 Pan American Games and 2016 Olympics.

Qualifying: The U.S. Handball Team is looking to return to the Olympic Games for the first time since 1992. Under new leadership and with renewed focus, USA Team Handball hopes to surprise the rest of the handball world with a strong campaign leading up to Rio.



TENNIS



Who Will It Be?: The 2016 Olympic tennis competition will include 64-player draws for both men's and women's singles, 32-team draws for men's and women's doubles and a 16-team draw for mixed doubles, which will return for its second straight Olympics – the 2012 Games marked the first time mixed doubles was played at an Olympics since 1924. The U.S. selection field is expected to be particularly competitive, especially for the women as a maximum of six athletes per gender can be selected for the U.S. Olympic Tennis Team. As of July 28, there are eight Americans in the WTA Tour top 50, including No. 1 **Serena Williams** (Palm Beach Gardens Fla.); No. 22 **Sloane Stephens** (Coral Springs, Fla.); No. 25 **Venus Williams** (Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.); No. 27 **Madison Keys** (Rock Island, Ill.); No. 43 **Lauren Davis** (Gates Mills, Ohio); No. 46 **Alison Riske** (Pittsburgh, Pa.); No. 48 **Coco Vandeweghe** (Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.); and No. 50 **Christina McHale** (Teaneck, N.J.). Of those eight players, six are under age 25 and three – Serena and Venus Williams and McHale – were on the 2012 U.S. Olympic Tennis Team. Tennis at the 2016 Games will be played Aug. 6-14 on hard courts at the Olympic Tennis Center in the Rio Olympic Park.

Siblings Strike Back: After a successful campaign at the London 2012 Games that saw the U.S. Olympic Tennis Team win gold in three of five events, the U.S. looks ahead to the 2016 Games with hopes of continued success. Each of the U.S. Olympic champions from 2012 have expressed desire to play in Rio, including **Serena Williams**, the women's singles champion who also won her third Olympic doubles gold with sister **Venus Williams**. Also looking to return for another run at Olympic gold is the sibling doubles pairing of **Bob Bryan** (Camarillo, Calif.) and **Mike Bryan** (Wesley Chapel, Fla.).



TRACK AND FIELD



Back for More: Olympic champions **Allyson Felix** (Santa Clarita, Calif.) and **Sanya Richards-Ross** (Austin, Texas) look to make their fourth Olympic appearance after earning their first individual gold medals in the 200-meter and 400-meter at the London 2012 Games. Having battled back on the road to recovery in 2013, the veteran sprinters now turn their focus to the Road to Rio, with their eyes set on the podium in 2016.

Young Guns: **Mary Cain** (Bronxville, N.Y.), 18, and **Ajee' Wilson** (Neptune, N.J.), 20, will look to continue the U.S. trend of young Olympic medalists, following in the footsteps of **Felix**, **Erik Kynard** (Toledo, Ohio) and **Brigetta Barrett** (Duncanville, Texas). The rising stars made their world championship debut in 2013, with Wilson finishing sixth in the 800-meter and Cain placing 10th in the 1,500.

Move into the Fast Lane: Former long jumper **Tori Bowie** (Clermont, Fla.) shocked the world in 2014 when she emerged as a force to be reckoned with in the sprint events. Bowie recorded the fastest time in the world and currently leads the IAAF Diamond League in the 100-meter with three times as many points as her competitors. She is also tied for third in the 200.

Going the Distance: **Molly Huddle** (Elmira, N.Y.) has only become more impressive since making her Olympic debut in the 10,000-meter in 2012. The American 5,000-meter record holder also owns the fastest U.S. times in six different distances in 2014 (5-kilometer, 8K, 10K, half marathon, 5,000, 10,000).



TRIATHLON



Second Chance: Currently ranked No. 1 in the world as a result of a historic season on the 2014 ITU World Triathlon Series circuit, **Gwen Jorgensen** (St. Paul, Minn.) is the only woman from any nation to have won seven career ITU series titles, and the only athlete to have captured four consecutive titles in one season. Jorgensen made her first Olympic appearance in 2012, finishing 38th due to a flat tire on the bike segment. A spot on the 2016 U.S. Olympic Triathlon Team would give her a chance at redemption. Also of note, the former collegiate swimmer, track and field, and cross-country athlete from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, was working fulltime as a CPA when 2004 Olympian Barb Lindquist invited her to join USA Triathlon’s Collegiate Recruitment Program, leading to her triathlon debut in 2010.

Staying Power: Four-time Olympian **Hunter Kemper** (Colorado Springs, Colo.) is the only male triathlete in the history of the sport to have completed all four Olympic triathlons. Twice he has finished in the top 10 at the Games, posting his best result in 2008 with a seventh-place finish. In 2014, Kemper was the second American to cross the line at the ITU World Triathlon Chicago and the top American at the PATCO Triathlon Championships in Dallas. Kemper, who was ranked No. 1 in the world in 2005, will turn 40 prior to the 2016 Games.

Transition: Known as one of the fastest runners in U.S. history – most notably for breaking the American mile record in 2007 with a time of 3:46:91 – **Alan Webb** (Beaverton, Ore.) represented Team USA at the 2004 Olympics in the 1,500-meter. In February 2014, Webb retired from running to focus on triathlon fulltime, earning his elite license and competing on the U.S. team at the ITU Mixed Relay World Championships and besting a top-15 world-ranked athlete for fifth place. In his individual ITU debut at the Magog Sprint Triathlon Pan American Cup, Webb recorded the day’s fastest run split for second place overall.



VOLLEYBALL - BEACH



Three-peat: All eyes will be on **Kerri Walsh Jennings** (Saratoga, Calif.) as she aims to make her fifth Olympic appearance – her fourth on the sand and first without long-time partner Misty May-Treanor by her side. With May-Treanor’s exit from the sport after the duo’s remarkable three consecutive Olympic gold medals (2004, 2008, 2012), Walsh Jennings has switched partners to 2012 silver medalist **April Ross** (Costa Mesa, Calif.). A strong partnership that has yielded multiple medals on the international circuit in 2014, the duo is still navigating the waters to find a consistent rhythm. Now a mother of three, Walsh Jennings has moved to the right side of the sand, which has been a challenge as she heads into uncharted territory in search of her fourth Olympic title.

Who’s No. 2?: On the women’s side, **Walsh Jennings** and **Ross** are the favorites, while **Phil Dalhausser** (Ormond Beach, Fla.) and **Sean Rosenthal** (Hermosa Beach, Calif.) are poised to lead the U.S. men’s team. However, the second-place U.S. men’s and women’s beach volleyball teams are still unclear with a talented crop of upstart teams seeking Olympic berths. Looking to make their case on the men’s side are 2014 FIVB Long Beach Grand Slam bronze medalists **Todd Rodgers** (Santa Barbara, Calif.) and **Theo Brunner** (Ridgefield, Conn.), and 2013 USA Volleyball Beach Team of the Year **Jake Gibb** (Bountiful, Utah) and **Casey Patterson** (Van Nuys, Calif.). Meanwhile, **Emily Day** (Torrance, Calif.) and **Summer Ross** (San Diego, Calif.) have made a strong case on the women’s side after medaling at FIVB Grand Slams in 2013. With this host of talent, USA Volleyball expects a fierce battle for the second-team slots heading into the 2016 Games.





VOLLEYBALL - INDOOR

Quest for Gold: Coming up short in the final hurdle at the last two Olympic Games, the U.S. women's team lost to Brazil in two straight Olympic finals to return home with the silver medal. The U.S. women's team has never won a major championship – Olympic Games, FIVB World Championship or FIVB World Cup – but has won the premier women's international tournament in three of the last four years. The U.S. women are ranked No. 2 in the world by the FIVB, sitting within striking distance of leader Brazil. Hungry for redemption on the world stage, Team USA is beginning to rewrite the script. At the 2014 USA Volleyball Cup in July, Brazil traveled to the United States for a four-match series. A younger U.S. team – with only four Olympians – defeated a seasoned Brazil squad – featuring eight Olympians – in all four matches. Should the two sides qualify for the 2016 Games, the friendly, yet heated, rivalry will provide plenty of action as the U.S. seeks to capture the elusive gold medal on its rival's home court.

The King Leading the Way: **Karch Kiraly**, considered the best volleyball player of all-time by the FIVB, is the only athlete to win Olympic gold medals in both indoor (1984, 1988) and beach volleyball (1996). After serving as an assistant coach with the U.S. women from 2009-12, Kiraly accepted the head coaching job for the U.S. women's national team in September 2012. In his first year at the helm, the U.S. finished 25-6 overall (13-6

against top-10 opponents). Under Kiraly's leadership, Team USA is 17-2 in 2014 and well on its way to continuing its tradition of Olympic success.

Unconventional Wisdom: California native **John Speraw** was selected to lead the U.S. men's national team in 2013, and quickly eschewed the traditional formula of only recruiting athletes with international experience. Starting setter **Micah Christenson** (Honolulu, Hawaii) joined the team before his junior year at the University of Southern California and top outside hitter **Taylor Sander** (Huntington Beach, Calif.) was named to the team just weeks after competing in his final NCAA Men's Division I Championship. With this approach, Speraw has put a premium on developing untapped potential and young talent – a long-term, sustainable approach invested in the team's success for years to come.

Anderson Attack: **Matthew Anderson** (West Seneca, N.Y.), the youngest member of the 2012 U.S. Olympic Men's Volleyball Team at 25, has flourished into one of the top outside hitters in the world. Speraw has utilized Anderson at the opposite position – a challenge he has embraced – to capitalize on his unique skill set. Anderson will play a key role in Team USA's success at the 2016 Games, serving as a leader for Olympic newcomers.

WATER POLO



MEN:

New Coach: After leading the Serbian men's national team to a world championship title in 2009 and the bronze medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games, **Dejan Udovicic** took over as head coach for Team USA in 2013. He has set out to assemble a balanced team with key veterans and a host of rising young talent in the lead up to the Rio Games.

Homecoming: Four-time Olympian **Tony Azevedo** (Long Beach, Calif.) will look to compete at a USA Water Polo record fifth Olympic Games in 2016. Making it extra special, the 2016 Games would serve as a homecoming for Azevedo, who was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In the last year, Azevedo has played professionally in Brazil while helping to grow the sport.

College Star Power: The current Team USA roster is stacked with talent from the collegiate level. Highlighting the lineup are Stanford standouts **Bret Bonanni** (Huntington Beach, Calif.) and **Alex Bowen** (Santee, Calif.), **Alex Obert** (Stockton, Calif.) from the University of the Pacific, and recent University of Southern California graduate **Michael Rosenthal** (Miami, Fla.).

WOMEN:

Defending Champs: Having medaled at every Olympic Games since women's water polo made its debut in 2000, the U.S. women's team finally broke through to win the gold medal at the London 2012 Games. Head coach **Adam Krikorian** will return for a run at the 2016 Games with London 2012 MVP **Maggie Steffens** (Danville, Calif.), outside sharpshooter **Courtney Mathewson** (Anaheim Hills, Calif.), and the dynamic center duo of **Kami Craig** (Santa Barbara, Calif.) and **Annika Dries** (Laguna Beach, Calif.) leading the charge.

Goal Change: Betsey Armstrong, who manned the goal for Team USA at the 2008 and 2012 Games, announced her retirement in July 2014. Looking to fill the void is University of California, Los Angeles starter **Sami Hill** (Santa Barbara, Calif.), Stanford University starter **Gabby Stone** (La Jolla, Calif.), and Princeton University starter **Asleigh Johnson** (Miami, Fla.). In what is considered a predominantly Caucasian sport based in California, Johnson, an African-American and Florida native – comes from off the radar, bringing amazing athleticism and diversity to the game.



WEIGHTLIFTING



Breaking Fast: At the Rio 2016 Games, U.S. weightlifters will be working to break a 32- and 16-year Olympic podium drought in the men's and women's divisions. The U.S. men will look to return home with a medal for the first time since Mario Martinez and Guy Carlton claimed silver and bronze in the superheavyweight and heavyweight divisions at the 1984 Games. Meanwhile, the U.S. will look to land an American woman on the Olympic podium for the first time since 2000, when Tara Nott-Cunningham and Cheryl Haworth won gold and bronze in flyweight and superheavyweight. At the 2012 Games, Team USA posted three top-10 finishes, with **Sarah Robles** (San Jacinto, Calif.) and **Holley Mangold** (Dayton, Ohio) placing seventh and 10th in women's superheavyweight, and **Kendrick Farris** (Shreveport, La.) finishing 10th in men's light-heavyweight.

Home Again: In 2015, the United States will host the International Weightlifting Federation World Championships for the first time since 1978. The event – one of only three opportunities for athletes to earn 2016 Olympic quota spots for their country – will be held Nov. 20-29 in Houston.



WRESTLING



Chasing History: With three consecutive world titles, **Jordan Burroughs** (Sicklerville, N.J.) is widely considered one of the best wrestlers in the world, regardless of discipline. The reigning men's freestyle Olympic champion and two-time defending world champion (2011, 2013) at 74 kg. joins John Smith as the only U.S. wrestlers to win at least three consecutive world titles, with Smith having won six straight from 1987-92. Burroughs currently owns a remarkable 88-1 record at the senior level, recording the longest win streak in American history in his first 69 bouts. But there is one goal he has yet to accomplish. He will look to tie Smith as the winningest American wrestler in history as he seeks his fourth, fifth and sixth consecutive world titles at the 2014 and 2015 world championships, and 2016 Olympic Games.

Golden Opportunity: Women's freestyle wrestling will return for its fourth installment at the 2016 Games and feature two additional weight classes (six total). The U.S. women's team has collected four Olympic medals (one silver, three bronzes) and will be seeking its first Olympic gold medal after placing third as a team at each of the last two world championships. Highlighting the list of 2016 Olympic hopefuls are world champions **Elena**

Pirozhkova (Greenfield, Mass./63 kg.) and **Adeline Gray** (Lakewood, Colo./75 kg.), world championship silver medalist **Helen Maroulis** (Rockville, Md./55 kg.) and two-time world championship bronze medalist **Alyssa Lampe** (Tomahawk, Wis./48 kg.). On the men's side, 2012 gold medalist **Jake Varner** (Bakersfield, Calif./96 kg.), and bronze medalist **Coleman Scott** (Waynesburg, Pa./60 kg.) could make another run for the podium.

Coaching Carousel: **Matt Lindland**, a 2000 Olympic silver medalist, was selected to lead Team USA's Greco-Roman wrestling program after long-time national team mentor Steve Fraser retired from coaching in 2014 to pursue a fundraising opportunity for USA Wrestling. Meanwhile, **Bruce Burnett** returns for a second stint at the helm of the U.S. freestyle national team after leading the program from 1993-2000. He replaces Zeke Jones (2009-14), who assumed the head coaching position at Arizona State University, his alma mater, earlier this year. Burnett recently retired from his head coaching duties at the U.S. Naval Academy and has agreed to lead the U.S. team through the 2016 Games.

