

# Enough with the Twitter Olympics

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Yes, we all know about Ryan Lochte and Michael Phelps. Even the Queen's granddaughter (a silver medalist) is popping up in the Olympic news, but let's focus on what's important during this competition: Twitter.

It's official, people: Twitter has taken over the Olympics.

It seems for every story you read about the craziness of antiquated gymnastic rules and disappointing defeats, there is a story about Twitter. There are controversies and rules and inane tweets that should never have seen the light of the internet. Plus athletes who are clearly in need of some major media training. Some of the stories are funny, others are appalling, and a few are just absurd. In fact, it seems like athletes, NBC, fans, and Twitter themselves are fighting for the gold medal in stupidity.

Here's a highlight reel of the best (and worst) in the Twitter Olympics.

### **Athletes being dumb**

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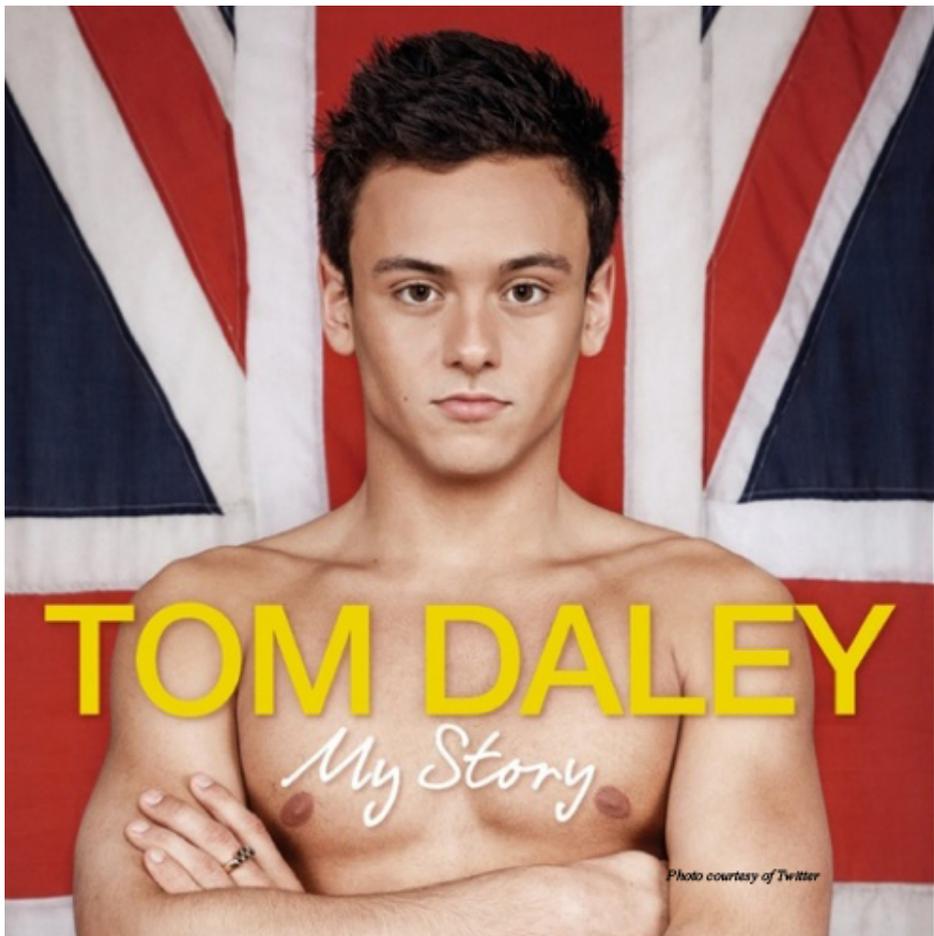
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Athletes who qualify for the Olympics are incredibly talented individuals (and teams), but some recent tweets have me resisting the urge to yell "What were you *thinking?*" at my computer.

For example, Greek athlete [Voula Papachristou](#) [1] sent out the cringe-worthy tweet: "With so many Africans in Greece, the West Nile mosquitoes will be getting home food!!!" Papachristou was booted from the team just days before the opening ceremony. More recently, Swiss soccer player Michel Morganella took a twitter-shot at Korea with a racist remark after his team lost a match. Morganella was also kicked out of the Olympics. In a competition that is supposed to promote—theoretically—international cooperation, there have been an uncomfortable amount of very public, very embarrassing racial incidents via Twitter. Clearly, these people should *not* be representing their respective countries.

Meanwhile, Hope Solo, a goalie for the American team, lashed out at an announcer—who also happens to be a former soccer superstar—for one of the women's soccer matches. Apparently upset with the commentary, Solo tweeted, "It's too bad we can't have commentators who better represent the team and know more about the game." Obviously, this is not as bad as Papachristou or Morganella, but it's still fairly inappropriate. Solo [met with the team captain](#) [2] and other higher-ups, but refused to apologize. As of this blog post, she was still on the American team.



### Fans being dumb

Sometimes, it's the athletes who become the victim. When British diver Tom Daley didn't perform as well as expected, one perturbed (and disturbed) fan took to Twitter to attack the 18-year-old superstar, tweeting, "You let your dad down i hope you know that." Daley's dad died from brain cancer in 2011. When Daley outted the attacker, who then found himself on the receiving end of some pro-Daley tweets, things got ugly. Though initially apologetic, when Daley failed to respond, the attacker became even more incensed and the story was eventually picked up by SkyNews. Because of a British law which prohibits threatening tweets, the 17-year-old attacker was [arrested](#) [3] by British Police after being tipped off by a member of the public.

### Twitter being dumb

Not even the journalists are safe in this epic battle of stupidity. [Guy Adams](#) [4], a reporter for British paper *The Independent* and vocal critic of NBC's coverage, found himself without a twitter account when he posted the email of an NBC executive. Though the blame for who actually ordered the account disabled has been tossed from NBC to Twitter like a terrible game of hot potato, the official reasoning was that posting a private email is against Twitter's privacy policies. Unfortunately, it's a publically available email address.

### People being awesome

Just when you think it's all twitter atrocities, the social media site found a way to redeem itself with some excellent parodies devoted to the Olympic games. One account [@Olympicseat](#) [5] has taken on the personality of an empty seat at the Olympics. Organizers have been widely criticized for the amount of open space seen

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at most of the competitions. The account spouts out fantastic tweets like, “Day 3: Still empty” and “Some important looking people in suits are pointing at me and looking all serious. Musn't get hopes up though... .”

NBC is taking a lot of flack for their (debatable) Olympics coverage, and Twitter is not helping. The handle [@NBCdelayed](#) [6] is calling the network out via a parody feed about the time delay, spouting gems like, “Sources: “The British are coming, the British are coming” re: Colonists declaring independence” and “BREAKING: Governor George W. Bush wins Florida, declared President-Elect. VP Gore to challenge.”

Unfortunately, there will be more twitter idiocy to come. Stay tuned.

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<http://www.ecnmag.com/articles/2012/07/enough-twitter-olympics>

### Links:

[1] <http://content.usatoday.com/communities/gameon/post/2012/07/voula-papachristou-olympic-ban/1#.UBghJaCC5kQ>

[2] [http://espn.go.com/olympics/summer/2012/soccer/story/\\_/id/8211746/2012-olympics-hope-solo-disciplined-brandi-chastain-rant](http://espn.go.com/olympics/summer/2012/soccer/story/_/id/8211746/2012-olympics-hope-solo-disciplined-brandi-chastain-rant)

[3] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-19059127>

[4] <http://www.examiner.com/article/journalist-critical-of-nbc-s-olympic-coverage-gets-suspended-from-twitter>

[5] <https://twitter.com/OlympicSeat>

[6] <https://twitter.com/NBCDelayed>