



Australian diver Matthew Mitcham reacts on the podium before receiving a gold medal at the Beijing Olympic Games. August 23, 2008

REUTERS/WOLFGANG RATTAY

2008 JOURNALISTS OF THE YEAR

STORY OF THE YEAR

Exceptional coverage of one of the year's biggest news stories

BEIJING OLYMPICS

"The Olympic Games, demonstrating the finest aspects of international camaraderie and competition, are, perhaps, the ultimate global story. And in a year when the Games and their host captivated the world for weeks on end, Reuters dominated, displaying impressive teamwork and innovative, multimedia storytelling."

– David Schlesinger, Editor-in-Chief, Reuters

WINNER OVERVIEW

The 2008 Beijing Olympics were one of the most important Games since the Olympics began, as China cemented its place of importance on the world stage with a dazzling display of showmanship and organization. While the story took a definite turn toward a pure sports story once the Games began, Reuters owned the run-up with a series of important features. Many of them were general news pieces, though quite a few were cross-asset stories. We also initiated the Olympics Blog (which included a multimedia effort from base camp of Mount Everest, where our team braved freezing temperatures and altitude sickness to cover the controversial ascent of the Olympic torch to the top of the world).

During the Games, Reuters dominated the competition by winning all but five snaps on the hundreds of gold medals doled out. We notched up roughly 20 beats and exclusives, including the first major interview with American swimmer Michael Phelps after his unprecedented haul of eight gold medals. We were also the fastest on the wire with pictures of Usain Bolt's record-breaking victory in the 100-metre sprint.

The China crew contributed on every aspect of the file and sports editor Paul Radford wrote that he's never seen a local bureau so involved in Olympics coverage.

Sure, the markets may not have moved much, but our multimedia coverage, complete with a full-time blog editor, new podcasts and regular updates that made "The View from the Bird's Nest" one of the most popular Reuters blogs, helped Reuters sites, which usually languish during slow Augusts, show robust traffic growth. Reuters.com.cn alone saw 18 million page views, second only to the record of 20 million set during the Sichuan quake.

Our successful team effort on a story that the whole world watched, in a year where improved multimedia storytelling was a companywide objective, was no small feat, and makes Reuters coverage of the Beijing Olympics the story of the year.



Fireworks explode during the opening ceremony of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games at the National Stadium, August 8, 2008.
REUTERS/TIM WIMBORNE

2008 JOURNALISTS OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Recognize the best in Reuters journalism over the last year. Winners of 10 awards were honoured for their exceptional work on March 5, 2009, in New York City