USA Basketball team win gold

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The U.S.A Men’s Olympic Basketball team took home a gold medal Sunday after beating Spain 118-107. After the U.S.A went 7-0 throughout the games and previously defeated Spain by 37 points in preliminaries, Spain gave them their hardest test that came down to the final minutes.

The gold medal final played more like an NBA All-star game than a defensive orientated final match. The Americans had too much offense down the stretch. Bryant converted a clutch four-point play with 3:10 remaining, silencing the rowdy Spanish crowd. With the score at 108-104 Dwayne Wade nailed a 3-pointer with just over 2 minutes left, giving them a little breathing room. After a couple technical fouls against Spain with 26 seconds left the Americans knew they were going to get gold. When it was all said and done the U.S.A partied at mid-court to Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A”. Wade finished as top scorer for his country with 27 points while Lakers superstar, Kobe Bryant ended with 20 points. Lebron James chipped in for 14 points while Carmelo Anthony and Chris Paul added 13 points apiece.

Spain’s top scorer was Rudy Fernandez with 22 points while Pau Gasol ended with 21 points. Gasol had special love for his fellow Lakers teammate Bryant as he patted his friend on the back, "They did what they were supposed to do," Gasol said. "We fought hard all the way." Spain lost to the U.S.A. by 30 points in the preliminaries, but this game wasn’t like their previous meeting. The Americans never had control of this game, giving up open looks from the perimeter and plenty of points in the paint against the defending world champions, who were playing without injured point guard Jose Calderon. Spain hit 7 of 9 shots right off the start, leading for much of the first quarter. A quick burst of 10 points by James and Wade had the U.S. advantage up to 14 points with 4 minutes left in the half, but Spain chipped away and trailed only 69-61 at the break. Fernandez's 3-pointer cut it to 91-89 with 8:13 remaining in the game, but Bryant answered with a bucket and then a 3, and things seemed safe when James scored to make it 103-92. Spain made one last push to close within 108-104 on Carlos Jimenez's 3-pointer, but Wade hit one on the other end, and the final score became lopsided when the Americans hit a bunch of free throws after Spain became frustrated and were called for the technical’s.

Argentina took the bronze medal after beating Lithuania 87-85. Carlos Delfino had 20 points and 10 rebounds, while Luis Scola added 16 points and Andres Nocioni added 14 points. Argentina played without their top performer Manu Ginóbili, who injured his left ankle in the semifinals against the U.S. The San Antonio Spurs standout watched from the bench. "What they've done today is one of the best performances I've seen," said Ginobili. "Winning bronze is not the same as going home empty-handed. So I'm extremely proud. I'm very happy."

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