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August 6, 1992
SUMMER

ATTN: DRAFT WILL BE REVISED PENDING WEEKEND OLYMPIC RESULTS

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: SUMMER OLYMPICS
SOUTH LAWN
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 1992
5:00 P.M.

___, President of the U.S. Olympic Committee. Ladies and gentlemen, fellow athletes and Americans. / Welcome to the White House. / It's an honor to have the U.S. Olympic team here, though I almost didn't recognize you without Bob Costas as a voiceover.

First, let me say it's nice to see our great Olympic athletes without hearing the words, "We'll be right back after this message." / Today, my message comes from a grateful people: Whether you took home a gold, silver, bronze, or simply gave your best, you're all winners in the eyes of every American. // We're proud of you.

Over the last couple of weeks America was completely caught up in the Olympic spirit. For instance, the other night Barbara asked me to help her re-arrange a couple of chairs in the residence. I said, "What's the degree of difficulty?" //

For sixteen days / over hundreds of hours / you made excellence crucial to the American spirit -- and that spirit central to the American character. / You gave of your heart -- and of yourselves. You helped the Olympics race enrich the human race. Two weeks ago, a flaming arrow lit the Olympic torch. You lit again the definition of excellence: No. 1 -- U. / S. / A. //

→ training for years

Yesterday I got to thinking about you -- and I remmebered that quote about "the game [being] well worth the candle . . . burned long into the night." // For years the candle you've lit will keep memory's flame alive. But who lit it? For many of today's champions -- the answer, simply, is family. //

Ask diver Mark Lenzi. He'll talk about dad's endless carpools or mom's care packages -- his favorite brownies, her special lasagna. / Talk to Summer Sanders, one of swimming's "New Kids on the Block." She'll tell you that "success comes down to the people around you." / ((Incidentally, I'm especially amazed at the feats of the synchronized swimmers. Maybe it's because I live in a city where it's tough to get any two people to agree on anything.)) //

I think of the Odens sisters -- Kim and Elaina -- volleyball's "Sisters of Smash." // ((These West Coast women made the competition "wish they all could be California girls.)) // Then, there's the ^{men's} mae volleyball team. We've had a lot of athletes proudly represent the symbol of the bald eagle -- byt they're the first to look like one. //

Next, look at Gwen Torrence: With her two-year-old son, this sprinter shifts the mommy track into the passing lane. // She calls her husband, __, "my backbone." / Sounds like the American character. / He calls her "priority number one." / Sounds like the American family. / He concludes: "I want to see her on top of the world because I've seen the bottom with her." //

All of us have been at the bottom -- only to clear hurdles that once seemed impossible. / Think of the inspirational stories at this year's Olympics. Gail Devers overcoming her Graves Disease. Gail -- we don't love you because you're the fastest woman in the world. We love you because you're one of the most courageous women in the world. / For more inspiration, try Shannon Miller overcoming a bone chip in her left elbow -- and, of course, Charles Barkley overcoming his shyness. // Each showed how Americans compete to win -- not for themselves alone -- but for the Family of America. //

For them -- for you -- family is more than their No. 1 fan club. It's a shoulder to cry on. It's the friend that's always there. Whether you're an Olympic athlete -- an armchair fan -- or even a President with twelve grandkids -- no trophies or medals can take its place as an heirloom of the heart. / Think of the vignettes -- the keepers -- of the Barcelona Games. Think of __ weight-lifting. ((__, watching you on TV, I you're even stronger than I thought you were. Whenever you feel your heavy weightlifting equipment isn't enough of a challenge, you're welcome to drop by and bench-press the Federal budget.)) //

Think of __ -- another strong man. ((I've come to value his advice. For instance, he tells me I don't have to pump iron. So I'm going to keep my arms in shape just by carrying Millie's investment portfolio.)) //

Perhaps the best metaphor for family was the Dream Team. //

You know, the last basketball team to be here was in May -- the great Harlem Globetrotters. / I told them we had a lot in common. I got a lot of laughs when I played basketball. The difference is they're funny on purpose. // Some called the Dream Team poetry in motion. / I also call them history in action. / And to those who think our basketball team might be less competitive ~~four years from now~~ in Atlanta, I have just two words to say: Shaquille O'Neal. // X

((~~Several days ago~~, I was talking about all this to a fellow athlete, Arnold Schwarzenegger. I told him you were a role model for make people start exercising. He said he said the same thing: "I just use those two magic words -- 'or else.'"))

Well, like Arnold, you've said, "Hasta la vista, baby" to couch potatoes." // You've inspired the dad who plays softball with his girls / ~~the mom shooting skeet with her kids~~ / the family who swims as a team. / Someone once asked me, "What are you trying to prove by competing in so many sports?" // I told him I'm not trying to prove anything. I'm just trying to be the first President to get his picture on a Wheaties box. // ✓

~~The 1992 Summer Olympics Team doesn't just deserve the~~ Breakfast of Champions. You became the champions of America -- and an example to the world. // I remember coaching Little League for my kids down in Texas -- Barbara driving those carpools all over creation. / I learned there that when you take time out to play catch or shoot hoops with your kids -- you teach them more than how to throw a knuckleball or drive the lane. You

teach them competition / self-discipline / self-reliance /
teamwork. The qualities that make a good citizen -- and, yes, a
great Olympian. //

Earlier, I mentioned California's Odens sisters. Once, Kim
told where they learned the spunk behind their spike. "It's
simple. We weren't raised to be quitters." //

How true for all the heroes of Barcelona. / You showed the
way to America's —. You scored a knockout punch against those
who doubt America. // — said: " ." [[Re. American spirit/
Olympic spirit.]] By showing that, you proved that the Olympics
-- like America -- are truly Number One. //

For that, I thank you -- and for coming to the White House.
God bless you, and the wondrous land that you have made so proud
-- the United States of America.

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Recently, millions of music fans shared a magical moment.
Subbing for Gloria Estafan, Jon Secada stepped forward /
unleashed his voice / and sang the song which launched his
career.

Its title was "Always something." / Tonight, Jon brought
something extra to a wonderful performance. / Born in Cuba --
his grace now lifts the world. / Barbara and I want to thank you
for an unforgettable evening. //