Some of the leading athletes preparing for London 2012 gained vital experience at last year’s Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. Sam Oldham (Great Britain), Jade Jones (Great Britain), Yuka Sato (Japan), Tony Yoka (France), Alexander Massialas (USA), Nathan Schrimsher (USA), Aleix Heredia (Spain), Ibrahim Sabry (Egypt) and Mariana Avitia (Mexico) all have something in common – they all competed in the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Singapore in 2010. The experience they gained in Singapore means they are well-equipped to face the challenges of London 2012.

In this VNR package we have interviews from President of the International Olympic Committee Jacques Rogge, Youth Olympic Games Ambassadors Usain Bolt and Michael Phelps, and the competitors themselves as they prepare for the ultimate test on the greatest stage in sport.

Around 5,000 young athletes and officials took part in the Youth Olympic Games in 2010 in front of an estimated audience of 370,000 spectators. The VNR package features some of the winners from Singapore 2010 speaking on how they believe their participation in YOG raised their hopes and boosted their chances for London 2012.

Athletes interviewed:

• **Artistic Gymnastics – Sam OLDHAM (Great Britain)**
  
  Sam is the British Junior Individual All Around Champion 2010 and current holder of the Junior Individual titles in the High Bar, Parallel Bars and the Floor disciplines. He is also the holder of the Youth Olympic High Bar title and the European All Around Junior Gymnastics Champion after winning Gold in the All Round and the high bar disciplines at the European Junior Championships.
  
  Date of birth: 07.02.1993
  
  2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
  
  - Men's floor exercise: 5th
  - Men's horizontal bar: 1st
  - Men's individual all-around: 5th
  - Men's parallel bars: 4th
  - Men's pommel horse: 2nd

• **Taekwondo – Jade JONES (Great Britain)**
  
  Jade was the UK’s only taekwondo representative at the Youth Olympic Games Singapore, but she lived up to high expectations with an impressive 9-6 victory over Thanh Thao Nguyen of Vietnam in the under 55kg final.
  
  Date of birth: 21.03.1993
  
  2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
  
  - Taekwondo - Women -55kg: 1st
  - Other results: Silver medal at the 2011 World Championships and Bronze at the 2010 European Championships.

• **Triathlon - Yuka SATO (Japan)**
  
  Winner of 2009 Incheon ITU Triathlon Asian YOG Qualifier, Sato is one of Japan’s most promising athletes. She has already competed in five rounds of the Dextro Energy Triathlon ITU World Championship Series in Elite category this year. She first took up triathlon when she was 9 years old, with her mother’s encouragement. Sato finished first at the 2010 Sendai Bay ITU Triathlon Asian Cup and 2010 Amakusa ITU Triathlon Asian Cup in the elite categories. An accomplished swimmer, Sato’s personal best in the 400m is 4’23”. Her dream is to become an Olympic medallist. She was the first person ever to win a gold medal at a Youth Olympic Games.
  
  Date of birth: 18.01.1992
  
  2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
  
  - Triathlon Women: 1st
  - Triathlon 4x Mixed team relay: 8th
Translation of interview:
“Through YOG, I feel that I took one step further, like crossing a hurdle. It gave me confidence to stand at starting grids with some pride, even in elite races.

My family and friends were very happy for me. I was even recognised by the Governor of Tokyo and my hometown’s city, which I really appreciated.

I haven’t been able to get inside the top 50 in the ITU Points List, so it will still be a challenge for me to be selected for London 2012. Scoring some points this weekend and getting inside the top 50 in the rankings, I want to move closer to the position where I can qualify for the Games.”

• Boxing – Tony YOKA – (France)
Tony took gold at the first Youth Olympic Games in Singapore and is now looking to step into the ring at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Tony credits the Youth Olympic Games with giving him the confidence to go on to bigger and better things. Since Singapore, he has participated in the World Series of Boxing with Paris United, who were named overall world team champions.

Date of birth: 28.04.1992
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
- Boxing - Super Heavy +91: 1st

Translation of Interview:
“(The Youth Olympic Games) prepared me by giving me some experience. I took part in a major junior competition, the Youth Olympic Games, which enabled me to win a gold medal and above all gain in self-confidence.

The athletes in the senior events have more experience. It’s true that the mental angle is more important in senior competition than in the junior ones.

I hope to qualify for the Olympic Games in London. It’ll be difficult, but I’m going to try my luck at the World Championships.

I’ll prepare with my federation, which is going to send us to a camp to box with the best in the world.

I have had to bridge the gap between me and the older boxers. So I’ve had to work twice as hard to get there.”

• Fencing – Alexander Massialas (USA)
The son of three-time Olympian Greg Massialas, Alexander became the youngest athlete ever to win a men’s foil Division I National Championship, at age 16 in 2010 - a year after competing in his first Senior World Team at 15.
Massialas grew up watching fencing and says that when his father started the Massialas Foundation he decided to take up the sport. He hopes to qualify for the 2012 Olympic Games as well as the Games in 2016 and 2020.
Alexander credits his coaches with being the greatest influences on his fencing career: “My father has been there throughout my whole career. He and my other coach, Dean Hinton, have been there for every step.”

Date of birth: 20.04.1994
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
Fencing - Cadet Male Individual Foil: 2nd
Fencing - Mixed team: 3rd

• Modern Pentathlon – Nathan SCHRIMSHER (USA)
Nathan is from Roswell, New Mexico, and started training in the pentathlon at age 13. In addition to performing in the Modern Pentathlon at the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore, Nathan also participated in the mixed relay event with Cuban athlete Leydi Laura Moya Lopez. The pairing is widely believed to be the first time in decades that athletes from Cuba and the USA have teamed up.

Date of birth: 22.05.1992
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
- Modern Pentathlon - Boys individual: 13th
- Modern Pentathlon - Mixed Relay: 16th

• Modern Pentathlon – Aleix HEREDIA (Spain)
Aleix is from Barcelona and is hopeful of doing well in London 2012.
Date of birth: 05.01.1992
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
- Modern Pentathlon - Boys individual: 5th
- Modern Pentathlon - Mixed Relay: 21th

• Archery – Ibrahim SABRY (Egypt)
Ibrahim Sabry won Egypt’s first gold medal at the Youth Olympic Games and the first Olympic medal ever in archery for Africa, clinching victory over top-ranked Rick van den OEVER (NED) with a brilliant crunch shot.
Date of birth: 25.09.1993
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
Archery - Junior Men’s individual: 1st
Archery - Mixed team: 17th

• FITA - Mariana AVITIA (Mexico)
Mariana has a hard training regime, shooting approximately 200 arrows in the morning and the same amount in the afternoon, followed by a visit to the gym and a run. She hopes to capitalize on her success at the Youth Olympic Games.
Date of birth: 18.09.1993
2010 Youth Olympic Games results:
Archery - Junior Women’s Individual: 4th
Archery - Mixed team: 17th
Other results: 8th in the individual event at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games
Translation of Interview:
What was the best thing about your Youth Olympic Games experience?

“The best thing in the Youth Olympic Games was to reach the finals and compete with athletes of my age … and realising that just being there was a great experience for me. It was also great representing my country and finishing as high as I did in the competition.”

What would it mean to you to qualify for London 2012?

“I believe it will be something big to me. It would allow me to live the dream I have always had and waited for. Eh... I don’t know, it would be great to experience the feeling of being at the Olympic Games and to play an important role at the Games.”