Many of the athletes who took part in the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore 2010 have qualified to take part in London 2012. We look at 4 of the strong contenders who are strongly tipped to win medals, at this year's games.

The Youth Olympic Games are a sporting event for young people, balancing sport, culture and education. These Games work as a catalyst in these fields throughout the Olympic Movement.

Young athletes participate in high-level competitions and alongside the sports element of the event, participating in Culture and Education Programmes (CEP) focused on five themes: Olympism and Olympic values, skills development, well-being and healthy lifestyle, social responsibility and expression through digital media.

The first Youth Olympic Games was held in Singapore in 2010 and reflected all 26 sports on the programme of the 2012 Olympic Games, with a smaller number of disciplines and events. A winter edition was held this January 2012 in Innsbruck, Austria, reflecting all seven Olympic winter sports.

Qiu Bo (China) – won 2 Gold medals at Youth Olympic Games 2010 and a Gold at the Diving World Cup 2012

Qiu Bo results:

2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore
- 10m platform men - Final ranking - 1st -> gold medal
- 3m springboard men - Final ranking - 1st -> gold medal

2011 FINA Diving World Championship:
-Men’s 10m platform synchro event: The pair Qiu/Huo finished 1st and the pair Daley/Waterfield finished 6th
-Men’s 10m platform: Qiu Bo finished 1st and Tom Daley 5th

Shots of Qiu Bo competing at the Youth Olympic Games 2010 (5 shots)

Interview 21 March 2012 : Water Cube, Beijing, China

Q : (What was the best thing about your Youth Olympic Games experience?)

“It was the first time for me to take part in the Youth Olympic Games. I was very glad that I won two gold metals. The Youth Olympic Games provided me a chance to gain experiences such as how to respond to unexpected situations.”

Q : (Do you feel you gained valuable experience from the Youth Olympic Games and competing since then ?)

“Yes, I am much more experienced after the Singapore Youth Olympic Games and two World Championships, because I’m a grown-up now. I am 19 years old this year. I think I’m more mature now than two years ago not only psychologically but also professionally. I have also gained much more experiences since two years ago. I feel I’m much more mature than before.”

Q : (You will be diving against the British medal hopeful Tom Daley at London 2012, who will have the support of a home crowd – do you think it will have an effect on your performance)
“I don’t think it would affect me. The cheers from the audience would not pressurize me. Tom Daley is excellent and is a very competitive player to the Chinese team. But I believe I’m capable to compete with him. I hope both of us could get very good results.”

Shots of Qui Bo training (8 shots) 22 March 2012 : Water Cube, Beijing, China

Chad Le Clos – South Africa

Won 5 medals at Youth Olympics 2010 and finished ahead of Michael Phelps in World Cup in Moscow

Chad le Clos results:

2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore

- 100m butterfly men - Final - 2nd -> silver medal
- 200m butterfly men - Final - 2nd -> silver medal
- 200m individual medley men - Final - 1st -> gold medal
- 400m freestyle men - Final - 2nd -> silver medal
- 4x100m freestyle relay men - Final - 3rd -> bronze medal
2011 Swimming world Cup in Moscow:
-200m Butterfly final: Chad Le Clos finished 2nd and Michael Phelps 3rd
-100m Butterfly final: Chad Le Clos finished 4th and Michael Phelps 5th

Shots of Chad competing at Youth Olympics 2010 (8 shots)

Interview with Chad Le Clos:17 March 2012: Lahee Park Swimming Pool, Pinetown, South Africa

“I love racing and I love competing against the best – I don’t want anyone to be sick on the day – I don’t want to shy away from any challenges, I want to race the best so I hope everyone is as fit as they can be and as strong as they can be, because if I am going to lose and not even get a medal – I would like to know I did against the best. I am looking forward to racing Phelps and racing Mike… and taking away what should be a great games.”

“Olympics is about medals, so you want to go there and obviously win medals, and racing Michael Phelps is something I am looking forward too – he is going for his 3rd Olympic Gold, 3 times in a row in the same event so the first man who stops him will be legend.”

“An average week of training for me is about ten sessions a week, usually Monday, Wednesday and a Friday we are training in the morning from 6 till around 9 from there we head to the gym, from 10 to around 11:30, come home for a juicy snack with my dad, maybe a steak or pasta, and then maybe a light nap before training at 3pm, and we do that on Wednesday Monday and Friday, and then Tuesday and Thursday are one big session usually a distance session, and then obviously Saturdays are the biggest one of the week, so it is a lot of hours a lot of mileage”

Shots of Chad Le Clos training (6 shots) 20 March 2012: Kings Park Pool, Durban, South Africa

Interview with Jacques Rogge – President - International Olympic Committee

“Well I am very pleased because one of the purposes of the Youth Olympic Games was to prepare the athletes for the traditional games that would come later on. You have now the shining example of Qui Bo and Chad Le Clos, - these are two very promising young athletes, who won Gold in the Singapore games, and have qualified for London, and are also tipped for medals there, so that is very nice.”

“Well we thought there was room at the age category between 15 and 18 yrs to have a high level sports competition based on the Olympic tradition and Olympic protocol, but with a major addition and this is the cultural and education programme, which we do not have in the traditional games. We thought that this age category of 15 to 18 was the most sensitive to good advice, to counseling, and to transfer of information so we prepare these
young athletes not only for the future World Championships and traditional games but also for their life, life as an athlete and life after the sports career.”

“Well you know that is a nice story, Michael Phelps transmitted these experiences, to young swimmers, including Chad Le Clos, and of course Chad Le Clos looked at him as a role model, but in London in the pool, there will be no more role model at that time, it will be a competitor.”

Other Olympic hopefuls from the YOG stable:

Jessica Fox (Australia) - Gold winner of the Girls K1 Canoe slalom event - Youth Olympic Games Singapore 2010

Alexander Massialas (USA) - Silver winner of the Male Foil fencing event - Youth Olympic Games Singapore 2010

Jessica Fox (Australia)

Shot of Jessica competing at the Youth Olympic Games 2010 (7 shots)

Interview Jessica Fox:

“The Youth Olympics was just overall an amazing experience - I think being part of a big team of Australia was really cool as you would wake up and you are surrounded by all green and gold but then going down to the food court for breakfast you are with all different people from other countries and I really enjoyed making new friends from anywhere and any sport – it was great.”

“For canoe slalom the YOG was in a different format so it wasn’t what we usually race on – I guess it was just extra experience and it is great to get another competition – it was good to have the variety, for me racing on flat water was good as it was a test of my speed and I raced against new people, and in different boats so it was really good for my adapting skills I guess.”

Alexander Massialas (USA)

Interview Alex Massialas competing at the Youth Olympic Games 2010 (8 shots)

Interview Alexander Massialas:

“The Youth Olympic Games were extremely important for me going forwards towards London 2012, not just because it gave me a little taste of what I needed to do and what I was going to be doing at the Olympics but it also served as great inspiration for me going forward. Ever since the games I have been raving on and on about how it was a great experience how it really changed my life and though I wanted to make the Olympics ever since I was a little kid – this just gave me bonus inspiration to keep going.”

“It is a one in a lifetime experience you know, being at the Singapore games you know, I thought it was a great experience to be with athletes from around the World, to connect with anyone, not care about anyone’s background, but just to make friends from wherever no matter where they are from, and I think the Olympic Games are just a bigger show of that and I am extremely excited to be part of it.”

Michael Phelps Video – One Day – Duration 1’58”

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