

Gold-Winning Ukhov Blames Lack of Record on Photographers

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's Ivan Ukhov celebrating after winning the men's high jump final. **Mark Blinch**

LONDON — Shaggy-haired Russian Ivan Ukhov, who leaped to men's high jump gold on Tuesday, said he could have been celebrating an Olympic record as well if it had not been for overzealous photographers.

"I think I could have set an Olympic record if I had not been stopped," a downbeat Ukhov told reporters.

"When photographers started trespassing on the track, I decided it was not worth it to try."

Top 20 Medalists

The 26-year-old, not displaying the normal joy of an Olympic gold medal winner, jumped 2.38 meters on a wet and cold night in east London to finish ahead of America's Erik Kynard.

Ukhov even survived losing his competition vest on the way to victory, revealing a heavily strapped-up back before hastily pinning a number to his compatriot Andrei Silnov's top.

"My friends are also surprised because they told me that they haven't taken my shirt," the two-time European and former world indoor champion said.

Ukhov, who received a "strong warning" from the International Amateur Athletics Federation for being drunk during a competition in 2008 — footage that soon became a hit on the Internet — has the year's highest jump at 2.39 meters.

In the London rain, he had one failed attempt at 2.40 to try to better American Charles Austin's 1996 Olympic record of 2.39 before the presence of photographers eager to get snapping prompted him to take off his shoes and start celebrating.

"The T-shirt distracted me, and the medal ceremony, and the camera so I decided to stop. I could have jumped even higher at 2.40 meters," he said, referring to the women's pole vault ceremony.

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Russian handball coach Yevgeny Trefilov, who patrolled the sidelines like a pantomime villain during Russia's

quarterfinal loss to South Korea, told reporters afterward that the sport had no future in his country.

"There's no future for Russian handball. If my resignation will help, I will go now. But it won't help," he said.

Trefilov was roundly booed during the game by the crowd at London's Copper Box as he constantly berated his players, even when they scored.

"There's no talent at the youth level, no one to look out for. The Russian first division is basically full of children," he added.

The woes of the Russian team contrast with the three Olympic titles won by the Soviet Union in the 1970s and '80s.

"There's no one to replace the veterans," Trefilov said in reference to 33-year-old Lyudmila Bodniyeva and 32-year-old goalkeeper Maria Sidorova.

"My resignation would not help the crisis that is deepening in Russian handball," he added.

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Russia's Ilya Zakharov took a surprise gold at the men's three-meter springboard diving final Tuesday, ruining China's ambition of an eight-gold sweep in the sport.

In the closest contest seen yet in the Aquatics Centre diving pool, Zakharov took gold with 555.90 points, beating China's Qin Kai into silver on 541.75.

Qin's finals performance was not far off his usual high standard, but ultimately Zakharov benefited from the higher marks awarded for a more difficult suite.

"My trump card was the last two dives because they are the most difficult," Zakharov said. "So I focused on those."

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