

# Andre De Grasse takes silver in 200 metres as Usain Bolt restores order

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By Israel Fehr

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RIO DE JANEIRO – The smiles from the night before had vanished. Usain Bolt reminded the world that his cute side-by-side with Andre De Grasse was just that – a cute moment – not at all a sign of what was to come when they raced again.

Bolt didn't have anyone to turn to smile at when he crossed the finish line in the men's 200-metre final Thursday night to win the gold medal with a time of 19.78 seconds. Order restored. Greatness unquestioned. De Grasse was the next man across, coming in at 20.02 seconds for a silver medal, but in track terms well off the pace from the 19.80 he ran in the semifinal just over 24 hours earlier. France's Christophe Lemaitre took the bronze with a time of 20.12.

Whether it was fatigue or a cooler temperature than the night before, De Grasse couldn't summon what he needed to do what's been considered impossible at recent Summer Games. His start was great, especially by his standards, but he had trouble around the bend and his form eluded him down the stretch. Enough for a silver, yes, but not even close to enough to take down Bolt.

"I felt like I had a great shot. I'm not sure if I used up too much energy yesterday and didn't have anything left today," said De Grasse. "Coming home I just didn't have the same push.

"I'm a little bit disappointed. I think I could have run a little bit faster."

Translation: The fun and games are over. The bronze medal in the 100 metres was De Grasse's first at the Olympics and understandably special. The second medal – even a silver – doesn't quite feel the same. It feels like a missed opportunity, even, according to De Grasse's coach Stuart McMillan.

"We had a strategy to try and tire out Usain last night and I think we did that. It's clear that Usain was very tired tonight. It's why we're a little bit frustrated, because he was there for the taking," said McMillan. "Usain Bolt in his prime is untouchable. But Usain Bolt in 2016 is touchable."

Well, at least in theory. Through six races in Rio that theory still hasn't proven to be true. Bolt's won them all, and the two with a medal on the line haven't been particularly close.

But no one has come closer to busting Bolt's bubble than De Grasse did in Wednesday night's 200-metre semifinal. And that, along with continued growth and experience – which the performance in the final shows is still necessary – has left the man who justifiably calls himself the greatest impressed.

"To win a bronze in a field like that in the 100 and win a silver in a field like this in the 200 is something," Bolt told the CBC. "He's shown the world and he's shown his country that he's going to be something special."

De Grasse's medal was Canada's fourth on a banner day in Rio and fifth overall in track and field. It was Canada's first medal in the 200 since 1928 and the first time a Canadian track athlete has won two medals at the same Games since 1932.

History's been made and De Grasse isn't done. Canada is seen as contender in Friday night's 4x100 relay final with De Grasse running the anchor leg. A third medal at 21 years old is not out of the question, and the significance of that is not up for debate. But already, De Grasse knows all medals aren't created equal.

"I never thought I'd be in this position: Olympic debut and coming away with two Olympic medals," said De Grasse. "But now I'm in this moment – and I'm still happy, I'm grateful that I did it – but at the same time I still wanted to come away with a gold."

De Grasse let out a slight laugh. In an Olympic race featuring Usain Bolt – touchable or not – the thought of anyone else coming away with the gold has elicited laughter. So silver would have to be OK, for now. There's only one man out there better than the kid from Markham, Ont., and he's the best anyone's ever seen.

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