



PHOTO BY CUI MENG / CHINA DAILY

Wu Minxia (below) and He Zi on their way to winning gold in the synchronized 3m springboard on Sunday. Wu and He led throughout the five-dive final and amassed 346.20 points.

New diving queen on the way?

Wu wins fifth Olympic medal, putting her one shy of tying Guo's record

By ASSOCIATED PRESS
in London

Wu Minxia is close to crowning herself China's new diving queen.

Wu and her partner, He Zi, won the first diving gold medal of the Olympics on Sunday, putting the country on a path toward a possible sweep of the eight medals.

They led throughout the five-dive round and totaled 346.20 points in the 3-meter synchronized event.

"It's kind of if they mess up, then you have an opportunity," US silver

medalist Abby Johnston said. "Anything can happen in this sport, so you still have that possibility."

It was Wu's fifth Olympic medal, leaving her one away from tying countrywoman Guo Jingjing's record of six medals. Guo was China's superstar diver until her retirement 1 1/2 years ago.

Wu has three golds, one silver and one bronze. She could earn another in the individual springboard event, where she has medaled twice before and will compete against He. "It feels normal," Wu said. "I



I am impressed by them. I watch their video. That's one of my training methods, just watching them and how they do it."

ABBY JOHNSTON
US DIVER

really don't have that many emotions."

China won seven of eight golds at the host country four years ago in Beijing and swept the gold medals

at last year's world championships in Shanghai.

"I am impressed by them," Johnston said. "I watch their video. That's one of my training methods, just watching them and how they do it"

Johnston and Kelci Bryant finished second with 321.90 points, ending the country's diving medal drought that extended to the 2000 Sydney Games. It was the first-ever Olympic synchro medal for the Americans.

Laura Wilkinson's gold on 10-meter platform in Sydney was the last US medal. The Americans were shut out for the first time four years later in Athens and again in Beijing.

"This is a new beginning," US high performance director Steve

Foley said. "We've got to forget the great USA diving history because really that was 20-plus years ago. It wasn't just 12 years ago when Laura won because they only got one medal, so the glory days were gone a long time ago."

After receiving their medals — Bryant cried and Johnston smiled broadly on the podium — Bryant reminded Johnston to hold up her prize as they posed for a gaggle of photographers on the deck.

The US duo was third after the first round, then moved up to second and stayed there despite a mere 1.5-point lead over Canada after the fourth round. Bryant deliberately didn't watch the scoreboard during the competition.

France surprises US in men's relay to take gold

By AGENCIES
in London

France avenged its defeat to the United States in Beijing four years ago when it snatched the gold medal in the men's 4x100 meters freestyle final at the London Olympics on Sunday.

Yannick Agnel, swimming the anchor leg for the French, reeled in Ryan Lochte on the last lap to win gold for France in 3 min, 9.93 seconds.

The Americans, who gambled and lost when they called up Lochte ahead of their sprint specialists, held on to take the silver medal after an exhilarating finish.

Russia got the bronze medal while Australia, who dubbed itself a "weapon of mass destruction" after winning last year's world championship title, could only manage fourth.

Michael Phelps swam the second leg for the Americans and picked up the first silver medal of his Olympic career to lift his overall medal tally to 17, just one shy of the all-time record.

Four years ago, Phelps won an

unprecedented eight golds in Beijing, including the men's relay when the US famously came from behind to beat France on the last lap.

Camille Muffat of France also won gold in a riveting 400 freestyle duel with American Allison Schmitt, the two virtually stroke for stroke the entire way. Muffat held on to win by about half a stroke in an Olympic-record time, while Schmitt settled for silver. Britain's Rebecca Adlington brought out the biggest cheer when she touched third — the home country's first swimming medal of the games.

But the US world champion Dana Vollmer took the limelight in the pool at London Olympics on Sunday as she wiped out the world record in women's 100m butterfly final to claim a gold medal.

Vollmer touched home in 55.98, toppling the previous world mark of 56.06 seconds set by Swedish world champion Sarah Sjöström at the 2009 World Championships.

China's Lu Ying took silver in 56.87 and Australian Alicia Coutts had bronze in 56.94.

REUTERS—XINHUA



MAJOR UPSET

PHOTO BY HASSAN AMMAR / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Om Yun-chol of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea won the gold medal in the men's 56-kilogram category in the first upset of the weightlifting competition at the London Olympics. Om, who was competing in the "B" group of lower-ranked lifters, set an Olympic record in the clean and jerk to finish with a total of 293 kilograms. He joined an exclusive group of weightlifters who have lifted three times their body weight in the clean and jerk. Double world champion Wu Jinfiao of China got the silver medal while European champion Valentin Hristov of Azerbaijan won the bronze.

Saudi judo athlete to withdraw if hijab banned, paper says

By REUTERS

in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

A female Saudi Arabian judo competitor, one of the first two female athletes sent to the Olympics by the conservative kingdom, will withdraw if she is not allowed to wear her hijab or headscarf, during bouts, her father was quoted as saying.

Wojdan Ali Seraj Abdulrahman Shaheerani is due to compete in the +78kg judo category on Friday. A Saudi official said this month its female athletes would have to obey Islamic dress codes.

But International Judo Federation president Marius Vizer said Shaheerani would have to fight without a headscarf to comply with "the principle and spirit of judo."

Sunday's edition of Saudi Arabia's al-Watan newspaper quoted the father, Ali Shaheerani, as saying over the telephone from Britain that his daughter "will not compete at the judo Games on Aug 3 if the committee insists that she removes her hijab".

He was quoted as telling al-Watan he had not heard back from the International Olympic Committee on the matter.

The IJF, whose regulations for the Olympic event state no headgear can be worn, was in regular discussions with Olympic and Saudi officials to find a solution, IJF spokesman Nicolas Messner said.

He said the hijab was banned for safety reasons, as judo fighters can try to strangle each other using their *judogi* or kit. While using a hijab to do this would be illegal it could happen by mistake during a move.

"It can be dangerous," Messner said. "It could happen during a move, something wrong could happen."

Female participation in sports has long been a controversial issue in Saudi Arabia, where conservative Muslim clerics have said it is immodest and goes against women's nature.

Until this year, Saudi Arabia was one of three countries, alongside Brunei and Qatar, never to have sent female athletes to the Olympics. Human rights groups urged the IOC to ban the countries from the Games unless they agreed to send women.

Saudi Arabia reached an agreement on the participation of Shaheerani and Sarah Attar, an 800 meter runner, just two weeks ago after talks with the IOC.

Medals: Organizers promise changes

FROM PAGE 1

"It's infuriating to see so many empty seats on TV. Surely it can't be beyond the organizers to allow real sports fans to fill them up on a first-come first-served basis?" said Ed Shorthose, a London-based father of two who had been trying for months to get tickets to see the Games.

London organizing committee chairman Sebastian Coe said he thought the problem would resolve itself over time.

"I don't think this is going to be an issue, certainly it's not going to be an issue right through the Games," he said.

However, Lizzie Armitstead provided some belated joy for home fans when she won Britain's first medal of the Games - a silver - in the women's cycling road race although the host had hoped for more. Dutch favorite Marianne Vos, runner-up at the past five road race world championships following her 2006 win, took the gold.

Day two saw the latest incarnation of the US basketball "Dream Team", this time featuring LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and Kevin Durant, begin its title defense with a comfortable 98-71 win over France after a joyous display of high-flying skill.

At Wimbledon, where rain forced the closure of the roof over Centre Court, women's second seed Agnieszka Radwanska crashed out in a surprise first-round defeat by world No 24 Julia Goerges of Germany while Britain's Andy Murray reached the second round by beating Switzerland's Stanislas Wawrinka.

On Saturday, Serena Williams breezed past Serbia's Jelena Jankovic in straight sets, with US First Lady Michelle Obama cheering her on.