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## Jr.Diving Worlds 2018, Kyiv, Day 3: China produces wins and flurry

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The 22nd edition of the FINA World Junior Diving Championships continues to flourish in the ancient city of Kyiv, Ukraine.

Representatives of 7 nations climbed up the podium on a busy Competition Day 3, expanding geography of the awardees to 9. Heavy favorites China were again the major newsmakers. At first, they reigned supreme in the Girls A 1m springboard and Girls B platform, and then unpredictably made noise, finishing out of the Boys A&B 3m springboard podium.

### **GIRLS A 1M SPRINGBOARD**

Great Britain did not defend their Girls A 1m springboard title, and American Maria Coburn had almost done. Two years ago, in Kazan she finished atop of the Girls B 1m event, and celebrated bronze of the elder age-group. However, her medal presence was not given for granted. Taking a slow start, she stunned everyone booking the last train with the ultimate round. Reverse 1.5 Somersaults 1.5 Twists gave to Maria the day high of 58.50 points for the overall 393.05 points score.

“I am very lucky I have won today, and I am very happy, - she confessed afterwards. - My diving season was pretty tough I got injured in January, I did my best to recover, and so far I can’t do my best. Even today my dives were not at all perfect, but I cherish myself I would be able to improve as soon as I get recovered to the full”.



Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

Another Chinese gold by Ma Tong was of another character.

She booked her lead early in the prelims, first headed into the final round on 395.85 points, where she also let no one doubt her eventual win. Even though she almost broke her Reverse 2.5 Somersaults with tuck on the 3rd out of 4 final rounds, she did survive on top to finish confidently on 410.85 points.

“This is my third international junior competition, and I feel very proud I have managed to repeat my success story of the Asian Junior Games, where I won 1m springboard event. Of course, it was important for me to win here, and I did my best to stay focused and never tracked my opponents scores during the competitions”.

On the contrary, Russian Uliana Kliueva did that tracking of hers and her opponents. She acknowledged this little trick was a good aide to her when concentrating on each coming dive. Russian in the end won silver, showing consistency and no major drawbacks, 398.35, however she was not that happy.

“I am not pleased with the overall I received, and there is much room for improvement”, - she commented, hoping to show her best on the 3m springboard in Kyiv later.

Chart of the Top 12 demonstrated a close competition for the placements. Michelle Heimberg of Switzerland finished fourth at a less than 2 points to the podium residents. Alysha Koloi of Australia came fifth on 390.65 points overall as Anna Shyrykhay of Germany and Yashmin Harper of Great Britain were 6th and 7th, earning 383.60 – 383.05 points respectively.



Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

## GIRLS B PLATFORM

Another successful story of Chinese diving at the FINA World Junior Diving Championships relates to the Girls B platform event. As a matter of fact, their gold never looked in doubt. He Yanwei reigned supreme in the Prelims, posting a 76.80 points morning high on the Inward 3.5 Somersaults tuck. In the final there was Liu Jialing to reshuffle, who went on straight to chase gold. Posting an impressive list with 3.0 – 3.2 degree of difficulty, she scored accordingly, from 72.00 to 75.20 points as her winning record registered 378.40. It was some 3 points less than her compatriot Xia Bingqing got in Kazan 2 years ago.

“I can say, I am satisfied with the scoring, but, of course I can dive much better, - commented the winner, smiling. – In fact, there was no "too difficult" dives for me, but there was an injury in place, which left me a few chances to shine bright like a diamond”.



Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

Italian Maia Biginelli was chasing eventual winner all the way through to the final round. Junior's complex nature gave rise for emotions as she wrapped up her last 107B dive. The door was left open for another Chinese and, surprisingly, Japanese to trade silver and bronze, whereas the unhappy Maia ended up disappointingly fourth, just 0.60 points to the podium residents.

Final chart of the Girls B platform saw bronze going to Rin Kaneto, 335.95, and master of the best dive He Yanwei, receiving 80.00 on 6243D in the final, landing silver, 371.20.

“This was not my best day, as I actually meant to win gold, - confessed He Yanwei of China. – Maybe I would need even more training to show better techniques and skills in the future. My take-off was absolutely perfect, but the entry was no way rip”.

3 more divers in the 320+ club were Romanian Nicoleta-Angelica Muscalu and two Russians Elizaveta Kuzina and Elizaveta Kanso, ending up within the interval of 331.50 – 327.60 points.

### **BOYS A/B 3M SYNCHRO SPRINGBOARD**





Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

It seemed as if there were 3 major contenders for the Boys A/B 3m synchro merits.

Columbia had a strong diving list and an experienced duo. Daniel Restrepo Garcia celebrated gold in Boys A 3m contest, inspiring Luis Felipe Uribe Bermudez to join him vying for another title.

Always strong China had their take on the medals offer. They stood in possession of the most “expensive” list (DD 14.6) and at the same time were in great need on the rebound. Very disappointing from their viewpoint was to see no male-champion on the Asian side for the 2 initial days of the competition. Wu Luxian had been close to the crown on the individual springboard, but failed to concentrate on the last dive and gave way to Colombia. It was all easier said than done though as there was also Germany, defending their Junior Worlds’ crown. Lou Massenber had been a part of the gold pair of Kazan, teaming Patrick Kreisel. However here in Kyiv, his synchro partner was another participant of 2016 FINA World Junior Diving Championships Karl Schone, whom they already got victorious at the European Junior Diving Championships in 2017 (I place) and 2018 (II place).



Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

In practice, it turned out to be a different story. All about emotions: getting patience and handling still nerves.

There was hardly a duo in the Top 12 final showing a steady list with steadily rip entries. Chinese have been an exception up to the ultimate round. None knows exactly what has happened. Some say, Zongyuan Zhang could not cope with the intricate

109C dive, others are speculating on the slippery board, but the duo got 0 and was pushed immediately out of the chase on gold. It was a surprise for Canada, whose divers had not been at all tracking their opponents scores in the athletes lounge. Commenting on their emotions about the win after the Awarding ceremony, they said they felt very sorry for the Asian team, but could not help celebrating their first win in Kyiv.

“Diving is such an amazing sport. It brings surprises. Chinese did excitingly well, but for the last dive, this was a play of nerves and emotions. They are a great diving nation, - said Victor Povzner of Canada. - We did not make any major mistakes, we dived with consistency, and we could expect have booked at least a podium presence”.

‘We have been a duo but 10 months, - added Henry McKay. – We love this event very much, and this win gives us additional motivation as it is our third international junior competition, and the third gold”.

Germany – moved up on second, 298.56, and Columbia pocketed third, 290.88.

“We just wanted to do a good competition, and the result is amazing, - noted Lou Massenberg of Germany. – We tried to take care of the each individual dive, but it is pretty difficult to say if we were got on points overall. National and international events are very different. Of course, we would love to break 300 points, but we are quite pleased on landing silver. Chinese were a surprise, of course. They are very strong, and evidently something happened to one of the divers that they did not cope with the dive they have been steadily doing in practice”.

After Competition Day 3, the team overall chart sees 9 medal winning nations and China on top with an impressive 3-3-1 record. Great Britain, Canada and Columbia got one gold apiece with one bronze adding to South American’s pocket. Russia collected silver and bronze, USA and Germany landed silvers.



Photo: credit to Pavlo Kubanov

The 22nd FINA World Junior Diving Championships, staged in Kyiv until July, 29, will reach its height tomorrow with 2 more medals sets on offer – in the Boys B 1m and Girls A 3m springboard. The last mentioned event will also be a qualifying story for the 3rd Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, scheduled on October this year. The scores will all but matter as top 9 shall earn qualification births for their respective NOCs.

## Competition results. 22nd FINA World Junior Diving Championships. Day 3

### Girls A 1m springboard

1. Ma Tong (CHN) 410.85, 2. Kliueva Uliana (RUS) 398.35, 3. Coburn Maria (USA) 393.05, 4. Heimberg Michelle (SUI) 391.25, 5. Koloi Alysha (AUS) 390.65, 6. Shyrykhay Anna (GER) 383.85, 7. Harper Yasmin (GBR) 383.05, 8. Zhang Rui (CHN) 375.45, 9. Hentschel Lena (GER) 373.55, 10. Vincent Victoria (GBR) 371.55, 11. Gullstrand Emma (SWE) 359.45, 12. Vazquez Montano Aranza (MEX) 342.85.

### Girls B platform

1. Liu Jialing (CHN) 378.40, 2. He Yanwei (CHN) 371.20, 3. Kaneto Rin (JPN) 335.95, 4. Biginelli Maia (ITA) 335.35, 5. Muscalu Nicoleta-Angelica (ROM) 331.50, 6. Kuzina Elizaveta (RUS) 328.15, 7. Kanso Elizaveta (RUS) 327.60, 8. Conn Tatiana Elizabeth Grace (CAN) 319.25, 9. Pavel Antonia-Mihaela (ROM) 304.05, 10. Shurda Nika (UKR) 299.75, 11. Zillig Josie (GBR) 279.65, 12. Cervantes Millan Victoria (MEX) 261.35.

### Boys A&B 3m synchronised springboard

1. CAN McKay Henry/Povzner Victor 300.33, 2. GER Massenber Lou/ Schone Karl 298.56, 3. COL Restrepo Garcia Daniel/Uribe Bermudez Lius Felipe 290.88, 4. JPN Idobata Kazuma/Nishida Reo 265.95, 5. CHN Wang Zongyuan/Wu Luxian 264.78, 6. MAS Gilbert Daim Gabriel/Jaya Surya Hanis Nazirul 260.97, 7. MEX Jimenez Mestas Gael/Cervera Madera Juan Diego 260.61, 8. BRA Bonfim Dos Santos Moura Luis Felipe/Figueroa Pereira Kawan 258.12, 9. USA Borowski Manuel/Matthews Jack 257.76, 10. ITA Semeria Edoardo/Torres Garcia Gesu Kay 257.37, 11. GRE Molvalis Nikolaos/Tsirikos Athanasios 251.88, 12. UKR Hroza Dmytro/Kryvopyshyn Nikita 251.46, 13. AUS Cronin Lachlan/Carter Mathews 250.89, 14. BLR Molchan Alexandr/Semianiuk Ivan 247.14, 15. NZL Brown Nathan John Ray/Tavener Frazer 230.91, 16. EGY Faroul Mohamed/El-Sayed Adham 230.76, 17. GBR Harding Anthony/Crompton Oliver 228.90, 18. KAZ Chilyayev Vladislav/Tkachuk Aleksandr 213.81, 19. CHI Aros Elias/Heredia Jerson 194.46.

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