

Diving, Men's 10m semi-finals- Daley eliminated in the Olympic platform semi-final

Derek Parr, FINA Media Committee Member from Great Britain

European champion Tom Daley was knocked out of the Olympic 10m semi-final in a major shock on Saturday after he had dominated proceedings in the preliminary round the day before.

Nothing went right for Great Britain's Daley, Olympic bronze medallist in 2012 and world bronze medallist in 2015, after he had produced a performance of such dazzling class in the previous session with a score which would have won the Olympic title at the London Games.

Chen Aisen, already a Rio gold medallist from the 10m synchro, led the 12 qualifiers for the final with 559.90 points from his six dives, an excellent effort though outside the brilliant 571.85 22-year-old Daley had amassed the day before.



Chen Aisen (CHN) ©Giorgio Scala / Deepbluemia

Daley, contesting his third Olympics having first appeared at the 2008 Beijing Games at 14, had earned a Rio bronze medal with Daniel Goodfellow in the 10m synchro earlier in the diving programme at the Maria Lenk outdoor pool. But gold had seemed to be within the 2009 world champion's reach in the individual 10m, the event in which he had burst on to the international scene at 13 when he became Europe's youngest-ever diving champion.

Reigning Olympic champion David Boudia also had a nerve-racking morning and nearly failed to make the cut, the American rallying with his final dive to squeeze through in 10th place. But for Daley it was a different story and the Briton could not get back into contention after dropping to 18th and last with disappointing efforts in the second and third rounds.

He was still last in the fourth round, failing to reproduce the stunning execution of his forward 4-1/2 somersaults which had earned him 103.60 points of the preliminary round.

Daley hauled himself up 15th in the fifth round but still needed to score more than 100 points with his final dive, though he said afterward he thought he still might do it. With the pressure enormous, he came to grief on his back 3-1/2 somersaults and plummeted back down to the bottom of the standings, 50.60 points short of the 453.85 of South Korea's Woo Haram, which made the cut, and a colossal 156.65 behind Chen.

World champion Qiu Bo, Olympic silver medallist between Boudia and Daley in London, also encountered problems but recovered to finish second on aggregate, 55.20 points behind Chinese team-mate Chen on 504.70.

Qiu earned 102.60 points in the fourth round for his back 3-1/2 somersaults piked – just as he had in the preliminary round – and collected two perfect 10 marks in the process. Ivan Garcia of Mexico was third overall on 497.55. The scores revert to zero for the final.
