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## **DWS-2019 in Kazan, Day 3: Golden diversity**

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Three nations checked in on top at the end of the 4th Leg of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series in Kazan, Russia.

The final competition day played out 3 medals sets left on offer – 10m platform men, 3m springboard women and 3m springboard mixed synchro, and was highlighted by a number of surprises in store for us. Host Russia was not dominating. Incomparable Chinese shone on the brightest and habitually grabbed a good share of the merits, however, this time their quality was not homogeneous.

Read on to learn how the events unfolded, and who dared to sneak ahead of the ever favorites.

**3m springboard women: Abel proved class**



Photo (LOC): Jennifer Abel, winner of the women's 3m springboard

Canadian Jennifer Abel finally landed atop of the podium. Keeping to the shade of her rising opponents, one of the most decorated divers in the competition turned out to save her best for the last and won confidently in the 3m springboard event.

4th heading into the final round, she turned out to be the most consistent participant of the event. Scoring 67.50 for all pike dives – Inward, Reverse and Back 2.5 Somersaults, she totaled 330.60, 27 points ahead of the nearest challengers. They were, of course, born in China, initially viewed as major favorites of the day 3.

“I am satisfied with my today’s performance. Winning 3m springboard is always a fun, - said **Jennifer Abel**. - I know, I can dive much better, especially than I did in the semi-final stage in the morning. This week has been pretty tough for me, so I guess I was a little bit tired. I always strive to perfection, so I will not stop working hard until I receive excellent 10s”.

Winning silver and bronze on over 300 points, was a bit disappointing for the 18-year old Chinese girls.

“My performance today was frustrating, - characterized her dives silver medalist **Lin Shan**. – I usually do much better in practice. Canadian Abel deserved her win. She is experienced and well-trained, and her consistency in the dives was rewarded accordingly”.

According to **Chang Yani**, matching her energetic synchro partner, she wished to add up another gold to her jewelry box. It turned out that her problems started early in the morning. She was only 5th after the semies and came across the same easy mistakes in the final as well.

“I wrapped the first 2 dives, and I could not regain concentration. So I was not 100% competitive in terms of gold. I was at a loss, because I made easy errors. I did not expect them, - confessed bronze winning diver of China. - There is a small period of time before the next stop of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series in London, so I and my coach will try to fix everything without delay”.

Maddison Keeney, standing in possession of the best semifinal's overall, finished empty handed, on position 4, 295.10. 2018 European champion Reid Grace of Great Britain landed on 5th, rough 5 points adrift, and Inge Jansen, representing the Netherlands, completed the final's order, 273.20.

### **10m platform men: 90+ points club member podium**



Photo (LOC): Yang Hao of China, winner of the men's 10m platform

90+ points club members played out the crown at the men's 10m platform. Initially, there were 4 divers in the list, able to keep up to the sky high rhythm. Top three seen on top of the chart at least once included the 2018 European Champion Aleksandr Bondar of Russia, Junior World's winner Lian Junjie and world champion in the men's synchro platform Yang Hao.

Perfect 10 on round#4 spoke highly in favor of the host Bondar, scoring 97.20 on Back 3.5 Somersaults pike with 3.6 DD. Yang Hao responded soon, nailing Back 2.5 Somersaults pike and Forward 4.5 Somersaults tuck. Totalling over 90 points for each of the 2 final attempts, Chinese finished on 537.05 grabbing a well deserved gold.

“Finishing first in the chart is a good motivation to work harder, - commented on his win **Yang Hao**. - I am not happy about the entries this evening, so I will have some time to work on it before the major competitions of the year. This is my 8th medal in the circuit, which keeps me motivating. I love diving in Kazan, because of the warm support of the crowd, who had been

cheering for us all the way and gave us strength”.

The best dive of the day came from Thomas Daley of the Great Britain. After a series of averagely performed attempts, he produced a fantastic 207B, breaking a hundred points with 2 perfect 10s on the execution. The trick fall on the last diving round and he managed to sneak ahead of his major competitor Lian.

“I am satisfied with getting a medal, but I only got one good dive, all the rest – nothing special, nothing great, - emphasized **Thomas Daley**. – We had been trading bronze with Lian of China, so I knew this is a good chance for me to finish on the podium”.

“We can compete China, - noted **Aleksandr Bondar** in his turn, expressing his take on the passed contest. – There is a good room to improve on myself. Like my Russian teammates, I have been diving in Kazan taking much physical loads. It was a good challenge. I believe it will help us better prepared towards the World Championships scheduled on July this year”.

### Mixed 3m synchro springboard: Australians stroke it lucky



Photo (LOC): Awarding ceremony in the mixed 3m synchro platform

Australian mixed duo of Domonic Bedggood and Maddison Keeney hit the last gold left in the Kazan's competition, which became the first for their nation in 2019. Their win was not at all easy as divers had to resist a severe opposition coming from always strong Chinese.

Scoring 49.8 on both compulsory rounds, Aussie sharks kicked off their leading story. Round#3 procured them the best dive as they performed Reverse 3.5 Somersaults tuck, 79.80. Their closest challengers, always on guard, got heated. Tai Xiaohu/Chen Yiwen posted a Forward 3.5 Somersaults pike to appear on top. Still nerves of Australians were not shaken. Responding by 5154B, Bedggood and Keeney finished first, upgrading their season's best, 318.12 points.

“We are together but for a few sessions only, as in the previous stops of the Diving World Series I teamed Anabelle Smith, - related **Domonic Bedggood**. – We haven't done much preparations with my new partner. Our collaboration has not been great, and we shall work more

together if we are going to dive mixed synchro together for our nation”.

“We have been a team for 2 years now, and this silver medal is a very important achievement for us, - said **Tai Xiaohu**. – We hope we will be able to improve our overall in London in a week. I think, we will have the same opponents, who are very strong, standing as a very good challenge”.

The podium was completed by another clear favorite of the competition. Thomas Daley teaming Reid Grace for Great Britain, were good and consistent, performing dives with a high degree of difficulty. However their good marks have always been lower than of their Chinese opponents. They definitely missed accuracy both in the flight phase and at the entry. Posting Inward 4.5 Somersaults tuck on their last round, they totaled 409,99 to earn bronze.

“I was not tired, I love diving, - commented **Thomas Daley** on his second straight final during 2 hours. – It’s a standard program for the Diving World Series, so I had enough energy for competing and challenging podium in both”.

Happy medal holders were followed in chart by Canada, Malaysia and Russia, which could not realize all their plans and ambitions, finishing on tallies, ranged from 300.27 to 261.60.



Photo (LOC): Thomas Daley of Great Britain with his coach

**Summary of the Meet:** Chinese could not dominate on stage of Kazan in all events where they appeared. They left the door open for Ukraine, Australia, North Korea and Great Britain to claim their golden shares. However, the Asian powerhouse still confidently keeps sitting atop of the chart on a marvelous 33 + 12 + 7 record.

The most successful diver at the 4th Leg of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series was Yang Hao of China, conquering 2 champions titles on platform, enhancing his already vast tally to 7 gold and 1 bronze. North Korean Kim Mi Rae and Maddison Keeney of Australia did very well indeed, finishing on 1+1+0.

Russia appeared on the podium 5 times, which was neither their best nor the worst happened, and the other medals awarding nations during the Leg #4 were Mexico, Australia and Canada, registering one podium presence each.

The ultimate stop of the 2019 FINA/CNSG Diving World Series will take place in London, the capital of the Great Britain, on 17 – 19 May, 2019 to officially register the overall chart of the circuit.

#### **Competition results. FINA/CNSG Diving World Series 2019. Leg#4.**



Photo (LOC): Diving fans at the Aquatics Palace of Kazan

#### **Day 3 May, 12**

##### **3m springboard women**

1. ABEL Jennifer (CAN) 330.60
2. LIN Shan (CHN) 303.60
3. CHANG Yani (CHN) 302.20
4. KEENEY Maddison (AUS) 295.10
5. REID Grace (GBR) 290.05
6. JANSEN Inge (NED) 273.20

##### **10m platform men**

1. YANG Hao (CHN) 537.05

2. BONDAR Aleksandr (RUS) 522.60
3. DALEY Thomas (GBR) 520.40
4. LIAN Junjie (CHN) 516.00
5. AUFFRET Benjamin (FRA) 447.60
6. SHLEIKHER Nikita (RUS) 418.30

#### **Mixed 3m synchro springboard**

1. BEDGGOOD Domonic/KEENEY Maddison (AUS) 318.12
  2. TAI Xiaohu/CHEN Yiwen (CHN) 313.26
  3. DALEY Thomas/REID Grace (GBR) 304.14
  4. IMBEAU-DULAC Francois/ABEL Jennifer (CAN) 300.27
  5. PUTEH Muhammad Syafiq/SABRI Nur Dhabitah Binti (MAS) 283.02
  6. MOLCHANOV Ilia/KOROLEVA Vitaliia (RUS) 261.60
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