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YOG Nanjing 2014: China's Wu Shengping scoops 10m platform gold

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The evening's biggest reception was for top qualifier Wu Shengping of China, who claimed victory in the girls' 10m platform on Day 1 of the Youth Olympics diving competition at Nanjing's Olympic Sports Complex Natatorium. The local hope (she's from the Jiangsu province of Nanjing) delighted the home crowd in what was her first international appearance, amassing a total 526.20. Wu, who turned 18 two days ago, recorded her best score on her second dive, an Inward 3.5 Somersault, Tucked, earning six 9.0's and one 9.5 from the judges.

Malaysia's Zhiayi Loh picked up her first piece of international silverware, chalking 450.65 points. Loh received her best score, a 9.0, for her first dive, a Forward 3.5 Somersault, Piked.

On her performance, Loh said: "It's a great feeling to win the silver. I received my highest scores tonight."

Asked whether she prefers 3m springboard or 10m platform, the Malaysian said: "The platform because I can make my entry splash really small."



Wu Shengping of China on way to gold - *credit: Xinhua/Yan Yan*

Placing third was Mexico's Alejandra Orozco, 2012 Olympic silver medallist in the women's 10m synchro. The 17-year-old took bronze, scoring 430.25, with a steady series of dives.

Guadalajara-born Orozco said: "I was satisfied with my dives and my scores tonight but I was expecting to perform a little better."

"I knew the Malaysian [Loh] was a very good diver, she has a lot of talent and this showed in the competition tonight, as well as for the Chinese [Wu] but I also know that everything can happen in a final."

On her future plans, Orozco added: "Now I'm training both in 10m platform individual and synchro. My dream is to win an individual Olympic medal."

Just out of medal range was France's Alais Kalonji with 405.85. Ingrid de Oliveira of Brazil narrowly followed, earning 399.60 points.

"I did not perform really well tonight," said de Oliveira. "I performed better in training but I struggled with the time difference coming here."

"The competition field was strong," the 18-year-old added. A former gymnast, the Rio-native first got acquainted with the sport thanks to her older sister, who was a diver. She took up diving in 2008 and fell in love with the sport since. The Brazilian prospect has now her eyes firmly set on the home Olympics in 2016.



Silver medallist Zhiayi Loh of Malaysia - *credit: Xinhua/Yan Yan*

Egypt's Maha Gouda took sixth with a score of 386.35 while Ukrainian Ganna Krasnoshlyk was seventh in 375.80.

Alexandria-based Gouda said on her performance: "I failed two dives, a Forward 3.5 Somersault, Tucked and a Forward 1.5 Somersault, Piked but I'm still happy with my sixth position."

Gouda earned her berth for the Youth Olympics in Nanjing by taking the last qualifying spot placing eighth at the YOG diving qualifier in Guadalajara, Mexico last March. The 16-year-old Egyptian was introduced to the sport thanks to some friends, who liked taking off the 10m platform.



Bronze medallist Alejandra Orozco of Mexico - *credit: Xinhua/Yan Yan*

American Gracia Leydon Mahoney scored 375.25 points to place eighth. Colombian Sara Perez Beltran totalled 330.65 for ninth place ahead of Belarus Katsiaryna Fitsner, who scored 299.00. Canada's Molly Carlson closed the ranking with a score of 296.00 points.

In the preliminaries this morning, the girls performed a total eight dives, four with an imposed degree of difficulty (DD) and the remaining four without one. In the final, competitors exhibited four unlimited dives. Judges take into account the dives with DD limit from the prelims and add it to the dives performed in the final for the total score.
