

DV, Past winners: China takes it (almost) all

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Out of the 14 awards distributed so far in Diving (seven for men and seven for women), between 2010 and 2016, only two eluded to China so far. While in the women's category, the supremacy was complete, in the men's list we find two "intruders" to the Asian dominance: Patrick Hausding (GER, 2010), and Ilya Zakharov (RUS, 2012).

The German star has a prolific career in the discipline, having earned two Olympic medals and four World Championships' podium presences. In 2010, he was particularly successful at the FINA Diving World Series, with the bronze in the synchro 3m springboard and the silver in the synchro 10m platform. His successes at the European Championships that year (five medals) also contributed to the 2010 accolade (presently the criteria for the "Best Athlete" award only take into account FINA competitions).



Ilya Zakharov (RUS) - Photo by deepbluemedias

Zakharov was the diver in evidence in 2012, after interrupting a series of four consecutive gold medals for China in the men's 3m springboard at the Olympics. In London, the Russian ace took gold, beating Qin Kai (CHN, silver) and He Chong (CHN, bronze).

Besides these two exceptions, the list of Chinese winners, in the men's category, comprises Qiu Bo in 2011 (gold in both the individual and synchro platform event in Shanghai), He Chong in 2013 (win in the 3m and 3m synchro springboard in Barcelona), Cao Yuan in 2014 (triumph in the 3m synchro and 10m synchro at the World Cup, and silver in 3m springboard), He Chao (He Chong's younger brother, who impressed the

guests in the Budapest Gala, when he superbly played piano before receiving his award) in 2015 (gold in the 3m springboard event in Kazan), and Chen Aisen in 2016 (double gold at the Rio Olympics, in the 10m individual and synchro event).

Wu and Shi twice

Among women, China swept all the awards, and two stars had the honour to make it twice: Wu Minxia in 2011 and 2012, and Shi Tingmao in 2015 and 2016. In the first case, Wu's recognition came after gold in the 3m and 3m synchro events at both the Shanghai 2011 Worlds and London 2012 Olympics. As for Shi, it was exactly the same roll of honour in the springboard events, this time at the Kazan Worlds (2015) and Rio Olympics (2016).



Shi Tingmao (CHN) - Photo by deepbluemia

Chen Ruolin was the best in 2010, after being second in the 10m platform and gold medallist in the synchro event at the World Cup. He Zi shone in Barcelona (gold in 1m and 3m) and got the award in 2013, while Liu Huixia was also double medallist at the 2014 World Cup (silver in 10m, and gold in 10m synchro).

List of past winners*

Men

- 2010 – Patrick Hausding (GER)
- 2011 – Qiu Bo (CHN)
- 2012 – Ilya Zakharov (RUS)
- 2013 – He Chong (CHN)
- 2014 – Cao Yuan (CHN)
- 2015 – He Chao (CHN)
- 2016 – Chen Aisen (CHN)

Women

- 2010 – Chen Ruolin (CHN)
- 2011 – Wu Minxia (CHN)
- 2012 – Wu Minxia (CHN)
- 2013 – He Zi (CHN)
- 2014 – Liu Huixia (CHN)
- 2015 – Shi Tingmao (CHN)
- 2016 – Shi Tingmao (CHN)

**The FINA World Aquatics Gala “Soirée des Etoiles” has been successively organised in Doha (QAT, 2014), Budapest (HUN, 2015), and Windsor (CAN, 2016).*
