



FÉDÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE
DE NATATION

Published on *fina.org* - Official FINA website (<https://www.fina.org>)

HDWCup, Zhaoqing, Day 1: Hunt and Jimenez, the best so far

Zhou Xin, FINA Media Committee Member

Three-time World Cup champion Gary Hunt of Great Britain and 2017 winner Adriana Jimenez of Mexico lived up to their reputation, leading after two rounds on the opening day of the FINA High Diving World Cup 2019 taking place in Zhaoqing (CHN) this weekend.

Despite the rain, favourite Hunt overcame a minor mistake in his first dive to come from behind with his trademark dive 5167D (forward 3 somersaults 3 1/2 twists) for a day-high score of 132.30 points in the second dive. He collected a total of 193.90 after two rounds.

Alessandro de Rose of Italy sits second with 187.05 points, and Michal Navratil of Czech Republic is third with 183.75 points. Constantin Popovici of Romania, runner-up of last year in Abu Dhabi, showed the most difficult dive (armstand back 3 1/2 somersault 2 twists) and is provisionally in fourth with 176.40 points.

Hunt said he enjoyed competing in the fixed high dive venue since the World Cup is held at the Yingxiong High Diving Center, the first-ever permanent facility for high diving in the world.

"This is the best conditions we've ever had in high diving. You got all the platforms to work up to 27 metres high. The rain is light and it doesn't make a big difference. There is no wind up there, so it feels good. Apart from the rain, it's perfect conditions. I feel great," Hunt said.

"I made a small mistake in the first dive and I was sure that I could make up in the second round. I did it. I've been doing this stuff for eight or nine years now and I will try to do my best tomorrow," the defending champion added.



The women's 20m competition saw a three-women battle as Adriana Jimenez, winner of 2017 World Cup and runner-up at Budapest World Championships, edged the reigning world champion Rhiannan Iffland of Australia and Jacqueline Valente of Brazil by 0.55 point after two dives.

Jimenez enjoyed a high flying start in her first dive, performing a 5154B (forward 2 1/2 somersaults 2 twists) for 66.30 and a 206B (back 3 somersaults) with 96.00 for a lead of 162.30. Iffland grabbed 65 points for her 312C (reverse flying 1 somersault), 96.75 for a 5264B (back 3 somersaults 2 twists) and a total of 161.75. Valente also had consistent performance and collected exactly the same scores as Iffland in each dive.

"We really appreciate the permanent facility here and are so grateful, because we don't have these facilities at home. We can have more practice before the competitions. There is a lot of risk in high diving, but I really enjoy the moment of flying. I am happy that I place first right now, but you never know what is going to happen tomorrow. I have to do it step by step, day by day and in full focus concentration. The most important is to enjoy the competition. Everybody is so excited to be here and everything is safe here. It's a big party sport. Remember that the result is not the real world that you have inside," said the 34-year-old Mexican talent.

Ginger Huber (USA), 44, the eldest female diver at the Zhaoqing World Cup, was glad to witness the young generation pushing the sport stronger and higher. Huber finished 11th with 123.60.

"I feel like I'm sort of winding down in my career because I'm watching these young girls come up and they're starting to push the sport to a new level. They can move the sport even more towards the right direction. I really believe that people will get to know more and better about the sport with this permanent facility," said the US veteran.

A total of 43 high divers from 18 federations are competing in this World Cup.
