

SPORT

What to WATCH

BTV
Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games
Live from 7:15 am, 8:15 am & 12:20 pm
TEN 2 & SONY SIX
Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

Live from 4:30 am (Wednesday)
T SPORTS, TEN 1, TEN 2 & SONY SIX
Sri Lanka vs India
Second T20I
Live from 8:30 pm

T SPORTS
The Hundred
Men's
Welsh Fire vs Southern Brave
Live from 12:30 am (Wednesday)



Japanese teen, Britain's Daley hit the headlines

AFP, Tokyo

A 13-year-old skateboarder struck gold for Japan and British diver Tom Daley was finally crowned an Olympic champion as the duel in the pool between the United States and Australia heated up at the Tokyo Games on Monday.

After a day of upsets on Sunday, day three of the Games saw a number of first-time champions plundering gold across the sporting spectrum.

Heading the charge was Japanese skateboarder Momiji Nishiya, who won the street discipline at the age of 13 years and 330 days.

Her performance mirrored that of Japan teammate Yuto Horigome, who won the men's title with a stunning sequence of tricks on Sunday.

"I'm so glad to become the youngest (Japanese gold medallist) at my first Olympics... tears came to my eyes," Nishiya said.

Skateboarding is one of four sports making their debut in Tokyo, along with

surfing, sport climbing and karate as part of an attempt to bring the Olympics to younger audiences.

Raw emotion was on display in the diving pool later Monday, as Britain's Daley claimed a surprise first Olympic gold in the synchronised 10m platform event with Matty Lee.

The 27-year-old Daley is a hugely popular figure in Britain, where he has spent half of his life in the public eye -- he competed at the 2008 Beijing Olympics as a 14-year-old.

He won bronzes at the 2012 London Games and 2016 Rio Olympics, but a gold medal had remained frustratingly elusive. However on Monday at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, Daley and Lee capitalised after a rare blunder by China's Chen Aisen and Cao Yuan to snatch gold.

Tears of joy streamed down Daley's cheeks following his victory as he paid tribute to late father Rob, who died of cancer in 2011 at the age of 40.

"He never saw me win an Olympic medal, get married, have a child, teach me to drive, have a pint down the pub,"

said Daley.

"He took me to every training session, every competition, he was always there," he added.

Elsewhere Monday, the battle for supremacy between swimming superpowers Australia and the United States warmed up with another compelling session of finals in the pool.

Ariarne Titmus landed the biggest blow for Australia with a pulsating victory over American great Katie Ledecky in the 400m freestyle.

Ledecky came to Japan on the back of winning four gold medals and a silver at Rio in 2016, but Titmus has been snapping at her heels, ousting her as world champion in 2019 and topping the timesheets this season.

"I tried to stay as composed as I could and use the speed that I have," said the Australian, who executed a perfect tactical race to reel in Ledecky over the final 50m.

"To pull it off in the backend against someone who has an amazing second half of her race, I'm really proud of that."

The United States bounced back to claim an emphatic victory in the 4x100m relay in the third-quickest time ever.

Zach Apple brought them home after Caeleb Dressel led off, with sizzling legs from Blake Pieroni and Bowen Becker ensuring they touched in 3:08.97, ahead of Italy and Australia.

Britain's unstoppable Adam Peaty extended his dominance of the 100m breaststroke, powering to gold in 57.37sec ahead of Dutchman Arno Kamminga to retain his 2016 Olympic crown.

Peaty and Daley's golds were two of three won by Britain on

Monday. The third of the day came when Tom Pidcock won the mountain bike cross-country title.

Day three got under way with comically chaotic scenes at the start of the men's triathlon eventually won by Norway's Kristian Blummenfelt.

The event saw a farcical false start, with around two-thirds of the 56 competitors diving into the water and setting off on the swimming leg only to be hauled back.

The bungled start was caused by a media boat filming the competitors before they dived in for the 1.5-kilometre swimming leg.

Elsewhere, Japan's tennis favourite Naomi Osaka stepped up her quest for Olympic tennis gold, easing into the third round with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Switzerland's Viktorija Golubic.

In the men's event, Serbia's tennis world number one Novak Djokovic, who won the bronze medal in 2008, beat Jan-Lennard Struff of Germany 6-4, 6-3 to stay on course for a first Olympic title and Golden Slam.

Covid-19 continued to stalk the Games however, with Dutch tennis players Jean-Julien Rojer and Wesley Koolhof pulling out of the men's doubles after Rojer tested positive for coronavirus.

Japan's 13-year-old Momiji Nishiya clinched the Olympic title in the women's street skateboarding competition on Monday, becoming the country's youngest-ever gold medal winner.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Blind skateboarder going by feel

AFP, Tokyo



Ryusei Ouchi has all the usual trappings of a skateboarder -- the baggy T-shirt, the low-slung trousers, the flat-peak baseball hat. But he also skates with something else: a cane.

The 21-year-old, who goes by Jido, has lost 95 percent of his sight because of a condition called retinitis pigmentosa. But that hasn't stopped him skateboarding, or following the sport that debuted at the Tokyo Olympics this week.

Ouchi is a regular at a skate park in Tokorozawa, north of Tokyo, where he confidently performs tricks.

He lays down the board and pushes off with his cane out in front, swiping from side to side to feel out the obstacles. "Most people can see what it will be like just by looking at it," he told AFP.

"But in my case, I have to first try it out. I try touching, I try riding."

He started skateboarding as a teenager, when a friend offered to let him try his board.

"I tried skateboarding for the first time and then got hooked," he said.

It wasn't easy to get into the sport, which involves regular tumbles and injuries even for those without a visual impairment.

"People who can see get injured too, but the fact that I can't see has led to more injuries," said Ouchi, who is training as an acupuncturist.

"I don't know there's an object there because I don't see it, and I'll run into it, collide and be injured."

To try to keep himself safe, especially at new venues, Ouchi does a careful survey of the site before he starts.



"First I check the skatepark's environment by walking. If necessary, I touch it using my hands and feet. I then try to memorise the layout (of the park), and imagine it," he said. A lot of Ouchi's practice involves visualising his skating and his tricks.

"I just think about what I want to do," he said. "My skateboarding, whether it is a trick, the method or style, is just my imagination put into shape."

Despite his preparations, he's suffered injuries from bruises to fractures, but says it "doesn't matter how painful it is, how tough it is."

"When I achieve (the move) I was aiming for, it's an amazing feeling."

The skateboarder is following the sport's Olympic debut and said he was thrilled when Japan's Yuto Horigome had scooped the first-ever gold medal.

"I found it really heroic," he said. And Ouchi has his own sporting ambitions -- he wants blind-skateboarding to be registered as a Paralympic sport. It's "a bit like a personal project," he said.

"I think it is something like an order from God, to do my best to get it registered as a sport."



Adam Peaty labelled his achievement in becoming the first British swimmer to defend an Olympic title an "immortal moment" after claiming gold in the 100m breaststroke on Monday. The 26-year-old lived up to his billing as the overwhelming favourite by powering to the line in 57.37sec.

PHOTO: REUTERS



PHOTO: REUTERS

'We like to see him interviewed'

REUTERS, Izu

Plenty of concerned parents can empathise with newly-crowned Olympic champion Tom Pidcock's mum, Sonia, who says keeping tabs on her 21-year-old son in Japan is proving to be trickier than ever.

Leeds-born Pidcock stormed to victory on Monday to claim his country's first mountain bike gold medal.

With overseas fans banned for the Tokyo Games, Sonia joked she has been relying on television updates to catch a glimpse of her son in action, hoping for an interview in which he opens up a bit.

"Being a son he's not that communicative, we don't get that many words," she told BBC Radio. "We like to see him interviewed on telly so we can catch up with what he's doing, and how he's feeling!"

There's no shortage of cycling pedigree in the Pidcock family, with Tom's father Giles representing Britain in the 1980 Olympic road race in Moscow and younger brother Joe joining Groupama-FDJ's development team this year.

Sonia, a physiotherapist, has paused her career to focus on supporting her two children as they chase lofty goals on their bikes.

Gone in 67 seconds

REUTERS, Tokyo



Eldric Sella went through an arduous journey to get to Tokyo, spending years visualising himself throwing punches in the Olympic boxing ring but when his Games experience finally became a reality on Monday it lasted only 67 seconds.

Representing the Refugee Olympic Team in middleweight, the Venezuelan-born Sella was facing Dominican Republic's Euri Cedenó in his opening bout but found himself lying on the floor after a few seconds.

He got up in time to survive the referee's count but a minute had just passed when another powerful jab from Cedenó caught his face, leaving him frozen for a second.

The referee would allow no more as he felt the 24-year-old was clearly

out of his depth and awarded the fight to Cedenó. Sella did not want to leave the ring so early after all his efforts to get there.

At the age of 18 he made the Venezuelan national boxing team but a lack of resources in the aftermath of the economic crisis in the country forced him to quit.

Aspiring for better opportunities and more stability, Sella fled Venezuela in 2018 and sought asylum in Trinidad and Tobago, where he had been invited to compete in a boxing tournament.

The next year he was joined by his father, who is also his coach, in the Caribbean nation. Sella worked odd jobs to earn his living but the love for boxing and the Olympic dream were always at the back of the mind.

"There was not a day when I didn't think of going to the Olympics, when I didn't think about boxing," he told Olympics.com after being granted

the chance to compete in Tokyo as part of the refugee team.

"When I was mixing concrete, I was thinking how that would help me in my boxing career. When I was cutting grass, I was thinking how that will help me in my boxing career. When I was painting a house, or whatever I was doing, I always had in my mind what I wanted to do."

There was, however, a nervous wait before he could make the trip to Japan as he needed an exemption from the government in Trinidad and Tobago to travel because of his refugee status. His appearance at the Olympic stage, though brief, left him wanting more.

"How do I feel to be an Olympian? I don't know yet," he said, trying to fight back tears of emotion.

"But you will see me in the next Olympics and I will answer that question better. Right now I can't answer it."



'Australia will arrive as scheduled'

SPORTS REPORTER



As Bangladesh team completed their successful tour of Zimbabwe, winning in all three formats, the focus now shifts towards the upcoming home series against Australia starting from August 3, while the visitors are set to land in Dhaka on July 29.

The Tigers will return home on July 28 as per the previous flight schedule as the third and final T20I was set to take place on July 27. However, the three-match T20I series was later scheduled ahead, keeping the home series against Australia in mind.

In an attempt to properly maintain bio-secure bubble protocol ahead of the upcoming five-match T20I series against Australia, the Tigers team management decided to travel together on July 28 in one flight, rather than returning back in small groups.

Previously, the series against Australia suddenly became uncertain when the second ODI between Australia and West Indies was postponed after a West Indies staff member tested positive for coronavirus.

However, all 152 people involved in the ongoing West Indies and Australia ODI series returned negative Covid-19 tests on Friday, which meant that the Tigers were back on course to host the Aussies for the first time in a bilateral T20I series. All five matches of the series are set to take place at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, in between August 3 to 9.

"There was a concern at one point

but Australia will arrive as scheduled. The matches are expected to start from 6 pm in the evening," Akram Khan, chairman of the cricket operations committee, told the media yesterday.

Akram also revealed that the board



has decided to continue with Ashwell Prince as the Tigers batting consultant until the upcoming ICC World T20, slated in October this year.

"We were in talks over this issue for the past few days with the board president. And the players returned with positive feedback for him (Prince) after the tour ended. He's confirmed to stay till the T20 world cup but we will be able to know his exact tenure within the next 6-7 days," he said.

Meanwhile, confusion arose over the participation of Liton Das in the upcoming Australia series.

Although, according to Akram, the cricketer wanted to return home from Zimbabwe ahead of the scheduled time, so that he could stay beside a family member of his who is battling the sickness. In that case, Liton is likely to miss the entire series against Australia, considering the ten-day quarantine protocol set by the two boards.