

# Biles out of next event, mental health in Games spotlight

Simone Biles in second pull-out as mental struggles laid bare at Tokyo Olympics

● Biles withdraws from all-around gymnastics after dropping out of the women's team final

AFP | Tokyo

Superstar gymnast Simone Biles pulled out of a second event to protect her mental health yesterday, putting the spotlight on athletes' wellbeing at a Tokyo Olympics held under strict rules to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Biles, who caused shockwaves with her withdrawal during the team event on Tuesday, also ditched the all-around, raising doubts about her further participation in Tokyo.

The 24-year-old American's struggles follow those of Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka, another face of the Games who lost in the third round on her return from a mental health break.

Biles, unbeaten in all-around competition since 2013 and widely touted as the 'G.O.A.T.' (Greatest Of All Time), arrived seeking five Olympic titles to equal Soviet gymnast Larisa Latynina's career record of nine.

But this week she complained she had "the weight of the world on my shoulders" and withdrew after a single, shaky vault in the team competition. Attention will now focus on whether she will compete in her four remaining individual events.



Simone Biles

## Second time lucky as Dutch rider Van Vleuten strikes time trial gold

Veteran Dutch cyclist Annemiek van Vleuten powered to gold in the Olympic women's time trial, days after her red-faced finish to the road race when she mistakenly thought she had won.

The 38-year-old from Utrecht produced an Olympic gaffe for the ages on Sunday, punching the air in delight after crossing the finish line believing

she had won gold.

In fact, the race had been won by Anna Kiesenhöfer, with a blushing Van Vleuten later admitting she was unaware that the Austrian amateur had broken away earlier in the race.

There was no doubt about victory in yesterday's time trial at the Fuji International Speedway, however, as Van Vleuten delivered a dominant performance to finish the undulating 22.1km course in 30min 13sec.



Annemiek van Vleuten of the Netherlands in action

				TOTAL
Japan	13	4	5	22
China	12	6	9	27
USA	11	11	9	31
ROC	7	9	6	22
Australia	6	1	9	16
Great Britain	5	6	5	16
South Korea	4	2	5	11
Germany	3	2	5	10
France	3	2	3	8
Netherlands	2	6	3	11
Canada	2	3	4	9
Hungary	2	1	2	5
Slovenia	2	1	1	4
Kosovo	2	0	0	2



Biles will be evaluated daily before deciding if she will participate in next week's individual events. Biles qualified for the finals on all four apparatuses, something she didn't even do during her five-medal haul in Rio de Janeiro in 2016

## Quarantined Dutch athletes demand fresh air

Dutch athletes in quarantine in Tokyo after testing positive revealed they staged a sit-in strike over the harsh conditions, eventually earning the concession of being able to stand at an open window for 15 minutes a day.

"Not having any outside air is so inhuman, and it is mentally super-draining," said street skateboarder Candy Jacobs, while taekwondo fighter Reshmie Oogink called it "Olympic jail".

International Olympic Committee

spokesman Mark Adams said support measures included psychologists in the Athletes' Village and phone helplines.

"That became more urgent obviously with the Covid pandemic, so we've been working on that quite a lot," he said.



## More golds for Ohashi, British men win relay

Japan's Yui Ohashi completed a medley double, winning the 200m event to go with the 400m gold she secured on Sunday, while world record-holder Kristof Milak powered to the men's 200m butterfly gold.

Britain's freestyle swimmers brought the morning session to a thrilling climax, narrowly missing out on a world record in the 4x200m freestyle as they beat the Russian team by more than three seconds.

Yui Ohashi

## Heat woes prompt schedule change



Paula Badosa of Team Spain is helped away from the court in a wheelchair

In baking conditions, Spanish tennis player Paula Badosa retired and left the court in a wheelchair after suffering heatstroke.

In response to the incident, organisers said from today matches would not start until 3:00pm to avoid the worst of the Tokyo heat.

## Fiji retain title with emphatic win over New Zealand

Fiji maintained their dominance of the Olympic Rugby Sevens yesterday with a comprehensive 27-12 gold medal win over New Zealand at the Tokyo Stadium, retaining the title they won in Rio five years ago.

Argentina claimed the bronze with a 17-12 victory over Britain, sparking wild scenes of celebration, and plenty of tears, at the final whistle.

But it was Fiji's day as they ran in

four tries to cap an excellent tournament. They put pressure on their near neighbours from the start with a deep kick and were rewarded when the tall Meli Derenalagi dived over in the corner.

Fiji were in again when Andrew Knewstubb failed to gather a kick into New Zealand's in-goal area and the impressive Sireli Maqala dotted down the loose ball.



## USA thrash Iran to get Olympic basketball challenge back on track



United States' Damian Lillard shoots over Iran's Mohammadsina Vahedi

In men's basketball, the United States bounced back to hammer Iran 120-66 after they fell to a strong French team for their first Olympic defeat in 17 years.

Players and coaches from the geopolitical rivals chatted after the game. USA coach Gregg Popovich said: "People generally get along and appreciate each other, no matter what country you are talking about. I really believe that."



Ariarne Titmus

## 'Terminator' Titmus

US swimming great Katie Ledecky bounced back from her second defeat by Australia's Ariarne Titmus to win her first gold in Tokyo

Ledecky, who won four gold medals at the Rio 2016 Games, lost her 200m freestyle crown to Titmus, two days after

also ceding her 400m title to the Australian.

But Ledecky regrouped to annihilate the field in the first women's 1500m held at an Olympics, finishing more than four seconds clear of US teammate Erica Sullivan.

Ledecky, 24, is just the

fourth female swimmer to claim six Olympic gold medals, with her first coming in the 800m freestyle at the London 2012 Games.

But Titmus, nicknamed "Terminator", is emerging as one of the stars at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre.



Kathleen Ledecky of the United States gets ready