



Sam Kendricks in action during the USA Olympic Team Trials (file photo)

## Dressel gold chase



Caeleb Dressel of the United States looks on after setting a new record

In Olympics action, US swim star Caeleb Dressel notched his second triumph of the Games to stay on track for a potential six golds.

Dressel arrived at the Olympics tipped to push for a Michael Phelps-style medal haul and already has two wins under his belt, with a potential four to come.

The 24-year-old powered to the wall in the men's 100m freestyle in a new Olympic record time of 47.02sec to dethrone Australia's Kyle Chalmers.

Dressel, who spearheaded the United States to the 4x100m relay title earlier this week, will also race the 50m freestyle and 100m butterfly and could feature in two other relays.

The swimmer, who won two relay golds in Rio, said he was proud to claim his first individual title.

"I didn't want to admit it but now I did it I can admit it, it's a lot different," he said.

Dressel's 13 world titles have prompted inevitable comparisons with Phelps -- winner of eight Olympic golds at the 2008 Beijing Games and 23 in total. Only Phelps, Mark Spitz and Kristin Otto have won six or more golds at a single Olympic Games in swimming.

Robert Finke won another gold for the United States in the men's 800m freestyle while Australia's Zac Stubblety-Cook claimed the men's 200m breaststroke gold in a new Olympic record time of 2:06.38.

## Djokovic romps into last four as Bencic reaches Olympic final



Novak Djokovic hits a return to Kei Nishikori

At a sweltering Ariake Tennis Park, world number one Novak Djokovic swept aside home hope Kei Nishikori 6-2, 6-0 to reach the semi-finals as he targets his first Olympic title.

The Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon champion, on course for the first men's Golden Slam of winning all four majors and

the Olympics, will face Germany's Alexander Zverev in the last four.

Switzerland's Belinda Bencic beat Elena Rybakina 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-3 to reach the final, and was overcome with emotion to secure a medal.

"I don't feel pressure right now. I just feel joy to have a medal," Bencic said.

## USA's Sunisa Lee wins Olympic all-around gold as Biles cheers her on

American teenager Sunisa Lee won the women's gymnastics all-around Olympic gold yesterday, succeeding defending champion Simone Biles who withdrew over concerns for her mental health.

Lee, 18, won ahead of Brazil's Rebeca Andrade, with Russian women's team gold medallist Angelina Melnikova in the bronze medal position.

It was the fourth final in four days to go down to the final rotation, with Lee's polished floor exercise earning 13.7 to go into provisional gold, with Andrade unable to dislodge her.

Lee, from Minneapolis, added gold to the silver she won as part of the US women's team on Tuesday with a points tally of



Sunisa Lee of the United States in action on the balance beam

57.433, 0.144 clear of Andrade, with Melnikova 0.099 away in third.

Biles, who stood down from the Olympics during the women's team final, was in the stands to cheer on her compatriot.



Yang Junxuan of China, Tang Muhan of China and Zhang Yufei of China react

## Chinese women smash world record

In a major shock, neither the United States nor Australia won the women's 4x200m relay for the first time since the event was added to the Olympic program in 1996.

Instead, China's Yang Junxuan, Zhang Yufei, Li Bingjie and Tang Muhan dominated, leading all the way to clock an incredible 7:40.33 ahead of the United States (7:40.73) and Australia (7:41.29).

All three teams were under the previous world time of 7:41.50 set by Australia in 2019.

Li held off a charging Katie Ledecky over the final leg to clinch the title.

"These girls swam their lights out and I got in a position where I thought I could take on those ladies next to us," said Ledecky. "I wish I had another half second in me but I gave it my all."

## Japan's Hamada and Wolf win golds to match record haul

Japan's Aaron Wolf and Shori Hamada grabbed gold medals in judo finals, bringing the host nation's haul to 15, and boosting them past China, at 14, and the United States with 13.

Wolf, whose father is American and mother Japanese, threw South Korean Cho Gu-Ham to secure a dramatic ippon victory that ended more than five minutes of gruelling sudden-death overtime in the men's 100kg final.



Aaron Wolf (R) of Japan in action



Shori Hamada (R) of Japan in action

# Pandemic casts pall on Games

New coronavirus scare causes jitters on eve of Tokyo Olympics athletics

### Two pole vaulters out with Covid in fresh scare for Tokyo Olympics

AFP | Tokyo

Two pole vaulters were ruled out of the Tokyo Olympics and Australia's track and field team were briefly forced into isolation on Thursday in a jolting reminder of the risks facing athletes at the coronavirus-hit Games.

On the eve of the athletics competition, 2016 bronze medallist Sam Kendricks and Argentina's German Chiaraviglio suffered heartbreaking disappointment when they both tested positive.

Kendricks' case triggered a panic in the Australian team, which went into precautionary isolation for more than two hours before all but three close contacts were released.

America's Kendricks, a two-time world champion, and Chiaraviglio are both in isolation and will miss the pole vault competition when it starts on Saturday.

"We knew this Olympic Games was different and with different rules, and here I am, it's my turn," Chiaraviglio wrote on Instagram.

"Living through this is very difficult, but it will also pass," he added.

Preparing for the Olympics has been tough in the pandemic and athletes are under extra pressure at the pandemic-delayed Games with strict biosecure measures and the constant threat of Covid.

OLYMPIC MEDAL TABLE				
				TOTAL
China	15	7	9	31
Japan	15	4	6	25
USA	14	14	10	38
ROC	8	11	9	28
Australia	8	2	10	20
Great Britain	5	7	6	18
South Korea	4	3	5	12
France	3	5	3	12
Germany	3	3	7	13
Italy	2	7	10	19
Netherlands	2	7	4	13
Canada	2	3	5	10
Hungary	2	1	2	5
Slovenia	2	1	1	4

### Men against women in the pool as mixed relay makes Olympic debut



Britain's Adam Peaty reacts after his leg in a heat for the mixed 4x100m medley relay swimming event

Olympic swimming took a dive into the unknown yesterday as men and women competed against each other for the first time in the new 4x100m mixed medley relay in Tokyo.

Britain, led by Adam Peaty, and world record holders China won the two heats of the inaugural competition, which has its final on Saturday and makes its debut in Japan as part of a drive to boost gender equality.

Britain will be the favourites after their time of 3min 38.75sec was more than two seconds ahead of the rest of the field and only a shade outside China's world record 3:38.41 set last year.

"I haven't been part of many mixed relays so it is fun to get out with guys and girls," said Australia's Brianna Throssell.

"The lead changes so often and no-one knows each other's tactics. It was really fun to get out here and do the heat for Australia."