



2017-08-23

Solid outing for gymnasts as athletics kicks off on Day 5

Chris Remkes (Canberra Institute of Technology) has finished a solid fifth place in the final of the men's vault to close out the men's artistic gymnastics competition at the 2017 Summer Universiade.

Michael Merceica (The University of Queensland) and Mitchell Morgans (University of Canberra) also performed valiantly on their apparatus final to finish in 5th and 7th place respectively on the horizontal bars.

Remkes scored 14.116 points in total with a mistimed first attempt costing him a much higher placing.

"My preparation was pretty good... to be honest it was a bit up and down, I was really happy with my second attempt - it felt good, the first one, not so much, it felt a bit short," Remkes said.

"The experience is good here and I'll take that going forward," Remkes said.

"Everyone has their ups and downs and I felt like I've learnt a lot from it."

"Gold Coast 2018 is definitely on my mind though. There'll be a lot of hard training between now and then but I can't wait for it to come around. Competing at a home Games will mean absolutely everything to me."

Remkes, who will celebrate his 21st birthday in just over a week's time, will be heading to the world championships in Montreal, Canada next month alongside Uniroos teammates Merceica, Morgans and Clay Stephens (University of Canberra).

Dominican Republic's Audrys Nin Reyes won gold in the vault with 14.933 points as Ukrainian Parallel Bars Olympic gold medallist Oleg Vernyayev took silver with 14.733.

Earlier in the Games the Australian men's team placed 11th in the team event.

Athletics – Fresh off her debut appearance at the IAAF World Championships in London, rising middle distance star Georgia Griffith (Monash University) has secured herself a spot in the women's 800m semi-finals in wet and humid on the opening day of competition at the athletics.

Finishing her heat in third place as the final automatic qualifier, Griffith's time of 2:04.17 was enough to see the 20-year-old Victorian through to the semi-finals on Thursday evening.

Griffith, who is enrolled in a Bachelor of Communication Design and Business, was happy to see herself progress through the rounds.

"I felt pretty good coming into the last 200m," Griffith said.

"I got pretty lucky with positioning and it sort of opened up so I wasn't boxed in and I was able to hang onto the leaders."

In 2017 Griffith had a breakthrough season that saw her qualify for both the 800m and 1500m at the world championships.

"London was a very good experience. It definitely gave me confidence going into this," Griffith said.

Middle-distance teammate Isaac Hockey (The University of Melbourne) equally found himself a final qualifying spot in his heat of the 1500m.

In dramatic fashion, Hockey lunged to the line in third place in 3:46.88, an exact time he shared with second placegetter Fernando Martinez Estrada of Mexico as well as fourth placegetter Joao Bussotti Neves Jr of Italy.

Incredibly, just 0.19 seconds separated first and sixth place.

Fellow Australian Adam Pyke faded in his heat of the 1500m, finishing in 8th place in 3:52.77 and will not progress to the final.

In other events at Taipei Stadium, Taryn Gollshewsky (Central Queensland University) found herself straight through to the final of the women's discus after securing an auto-qualifying throw of 56.39m on her first attempt.

2015 women's discus finalist, who also made her IAAF World Championships debut in London, set her personal best of 60.27m in Perth in September last year.

US-based distance runner Isobel Batt-Doyle (University of Washington) came in a solid seventh place in 34:32.13 in the women's 10,000m, the only final of the first night of competition.

Joseph Baldwin (The University of Melbourne) couldn't improve on his first jump clearance of 2.10m in the men's high jump, and missed out on the final of 12, placing 14th overall.

In the women's javelin, Australian pair Kathryn Brooks (The University of Melbourne) and Mackenzie Little (Stanford University) finished in 15th and 16th place respectively with throws of 52.65m and 52.09m. They will not advance to the final.

In the men's 100m first round, The University of Sydney pair of Jin Su Jung and Rohan Browning found the going swift. Jung, a 2015 Universiade finalist, clocked 10.67 for 4th in his heat, with Browning finishing 5th in his heat in 10.60. Neither qualified for the 2nd round.

Basketball – The Emerging Opals will advance to the quarter finals in the women's basketball despite suffering a heartbreaking loss to Russia 63-58 at the Heping Basketball Gymnasium.

A fourth quarter clutch three pointer from Kristy Wallace (Baylor University) with 11 seconds on the clock put the scores level, however it wasn't enough with the Russians laying the final blow at the free throw line.

A blow-for-blow battle all day, it was Australia's first loss of the 2017 Universiade after notching strong wins against Lithuania and Argentina in the past two days.

Alex Wilson (NSW TAFE) led the score sheet with 15 points to her name, while James Cook University's Darcee Garbin earned another double-double, ending the match with 14 points as well as 11 rebounds.

The Aussies will regroup before they face a big match against the United States in the first of the knockout rounds after finishing in 2nd place in pool D.

In men's basketball, after a rest day, the Emerging Boomers took on Israel. Following a close loss in the opening game against Ukraine plus a win over Lithuania, the Israel team had the better of the contest throughout, and despite drawing within six points at the final change, the opposition pulled clear in the final quarter to win 89-72.

With a win and two losses, Russia is next up as the fight is on for a spot in the quarter finals in a tough pool.

Diving - Synchro silver medallists Brittany O'Brien (Western Sydney University) and Emily Meaney (Purdue University) returned to the University of Taipei Diving Pool for a pulsating 10m platform final.

In a dramatic final O'Brien had a slow start, but stormed home to finish fourth (307.20 points), whilst Meaney got off to a strong start, but missed a few dives to finish 11th (269.50).

North Korea's 2015 world champion Kim Kuk Hyang was the red-hot favourite, but a poor third dive had her tumble to second behind teammate and fellow synchro gold medal winner Kim Un Hyang. She recovered in her

final two dives to win with 350.55. Kim Uh Hyang hung on for silver with 335.25 despite a strong challenge from Celina Toth of Canada who finished third with 329.20.

O'Brien returns to the tower on Thursday to join Nicholas Jeffree in the 10m mixed synchro event.

Table Tennis - The men's team of Rio Olympian Hemming Hu (Monash University), Kane Townsend (The University of Sydney) and Jake Duffy (The University of Queensland) won one and lost one on Tuesday, against Canada and Korea respectively.

The trio returned to face Poland on Wednesday in a bid to make the top 16 and put up a tremendous effort despite going down 3-2 to their more highly fancied opponents.

Townsend won all his encounters with Hu also playing some brilliant table tennis in a match which lasted just over three hours.

In the women's team event – Universiade table tennis is a world class affair and the Australian women's team of Antonia Zhang (Macquarie University), Rossalean To (Monash University) and Sarah Tan (The University of Sydney) battled hard before going down 3-0 against Poland in the women's team competition.

The team had previously played Singapore and Canada but were unable notch up a win.

Weightlifting – Both Aussie men in Beau Garrett (Griffith University) and Liam Saxby (Queensland University of Technology) who lined up in the <85kg division of the weightlifting earned scintillating personal bests to finish fourth and eighth respectively on Wednesday. Garrett, an Exercise and Sports Science student only missed out on a medal via countback after a successful snatch of 130kg and a clean & jerk of 165kg.

In the women's <69kg category, Caity Haniver (RMIT University) placed ninth after a successful snatch of 77kg and a clean & jerk of 97kg.

Taekwondo – 18-year-old William Afonczenko (Australian Catholic University) recorded a win in his first Universiade bout over Estonian Aleksandr Galaktionov 19-12 in the round of 32. However, the Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science student found it more difficult in the round of 16, losing out to Thailand's Tawin Hanprab 18-10.

In the women's -67kg, Lorna Munro (University of Canberra) withdrew from her fight against Iris Jovic of Serbia, while Keshena Waterford (Canberra Institute of Technology) received a disqualification in her scheduled round of 16 bout with Seema Kannaujiya.

Water Polo – After a win and two losses in the pool matches, the men's water polo team took on the 2nd place team from pool B, Japan, in a battle to reach the quarter finals. In a tight affair, the Japanese always had the edge and despite a hard-fought encounter they went down 15-9. The Unirooms now head to the 9-16th place playoff series which starts on Friday.

The women's team had the day off competition, but return to the pool Thursday to play their penultimate pool match against France ahead of their final pool game against Argentina on Friday.

Tennis - Danielle Wagland (University of Texas) came up against world no.112 and local gold medal favourite KC Chang in the 3rd round of the women's singles. Chang chose to miss the US Open to focus on the Universiade and provided too strong, winning 6-0, 6-0.

Annabelle Andrinopoulos (University of Colorado) met Chinese Taipei's Lee Ya-Hsuan for a spot in the 4th round, and once again it was a local victory, 6-0, 6-1.

The duo returned to the court to take on Arbutthnott and Nichols of GBR in second round of the doubles but fell 6-2, 6-2.

Badminton - It was a mixed opening day for our badminton players, with mixed team event getting the win over South Africa emphatically 5-0, before succumbing to 3/4 seeds Malaysia, losing 0-5.

Match of the day was Eric Vuong (La Trobe University) and Jennifer Tam who played well in a close mixed doubles match against their Malaysian opponents (17-21, 18-21).