

# France, Britain win triathlon golds after Seine suspense

Cassandre Beaugrand and Alex Yee shine in Olympic triathlon after Seine pollution delays

● **Cassandre Beaugrand wins women's gold for France**

● **Alex Yee claims dramatic victory in men's race**

AFP | Paris

France and Britain dominated the podiums in the Olympics triathlon yesterday, which finally began in the Seine after days of suspense over whether the river would be clean enough for racing.

Cassandre Beaugrand took the women's gold ahead of Switzerland's Julie Derron and Britain's third-placed Beth Potter.

In the men's competition, which had to be delayed by 24 hours after the Seine failed water tests, Alex Yee stormed to a dramatic victory by passing rival and friend Hayden Wilde from New Zealand in the final stretch.

Frenchman Leo Bergere finished third.

"I started to find my legs with about 3k to go and I said to myself 'I'll give myself one last chance to make this happen,'" Yee told reporters of his late surge, adding that British legend Alistair Brownlee had shouted him on during the last lap.

All the attention during the build-up had been on the Seine, which was the centrepiece of a spectacular course that included a biking and running route through the historic heart of the French capital.

The Seine has been too dirty for swimming all week after Paris was deluged by rain during the opening ceremony of the Games on Friday, with the equivalent of a month's rain falling over 36 hours.

The storms overwhelmed the city's sewerage system despite a recent 1.4 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) upgrade, leading to discharges of untreated waste water that sent E.Coli bacteria



Triathlon - women: Gold medal winner Cassandre Beaugrand celebrates as she crosses the finish line



**Cassandre Beaugrand, who grew up near Paris but moved to Britain in 2023, vomited before the race start and was comforted by fellow competitor Georgia Taylor-Brown from Britain**

levels spiking.

Beaugrand said she "never doubted" that the swimming would go ahead despite warn-

ings that it might be cancelled, which would have turned the triathlon into a duathlon of only cycling and running.

"It would have been shameful for our sport... it would have been a disgrace," she told reporters afterwards.

#### Strong currents

After the competition was given the go-ahead at around 4am (0200 GMT), thousands of fans turned out to line the streets which were slippery and hazardous during the women's race after overnight showers.

Beaugrand was in contention from the start, remaining in touch with front-runner and defending Olympic champion Flora Duffy during the swim when many competitors reported being surprised by the strength of



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ALEX YEE

the river currents.

The UK-based 27-year-old had vomited before the start, finding comfort in words from fellow competitor Georgia Taylor-Brown from Britain, the silver medallist at Tokyo 2020, who helped settle her nerves.

"She told me 'It's just a race, you can do it,'" Beaugrand, who grew up near Paris but moved to Britain in 2023, told French television.

After so much public debate about the water quality, Hayden said the currents were the biggest concern.

"I watched the women's race beforehand and was like 'wow,'" he told a press conference.

#### Table tennis stunner

In other early action on day five, China's table tennis world number one Wang Chuqin suffered a shock defeat, a day after having his bat broken.

Wang won mixed doubles gold on Tuesday but his elation turned to anger after a photographer accidentally snapped his bat while jostling to take a picture.

Less than 24 hours later, Wang went out in the singles after a 4-2 defeat to Truls Moregard of Sweden.

"I've almost never taken a set against Wang so it's crazy to win here at the Olympics," said Moregard, the world number 26.

China ramped up their bid for a clean sweep in diving, prevailing in the women's synchronised 10m platform ahead of North Korea and Britain.

China have won all three golds in the sport in Paris so far.



Triathlon - men: Gold medal winner Alex Yee in action



Cycling - Women's BMX Freestyle Park: Gold medal winner China's Deng Yawen in action



Diving - Women's Synchronised 10m Platform: Gold medal winners Chen Yuxi and Quan Hongchan of Team China compete



Cycling - Women's BMX Freestyle Park: US' Hannah Roberts (L) and Czech Republic's Iveta Miculycova fall a ramp after colliding during a warm-up



Sailing - women's 49erFX skiff: Spain's duo Tamara Echegoyen Dominguez and Paula Barcelo Martin compete in race 10



Table tennis - men's singles: China's Wang Chuqin plays a return to Sweden's Truls Moregard