

Simone Biles becomes the most decorated female gymnast in history

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| Required Annotations | | Student-Created Annotations | | Summary / Questions / Reflection | |
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Student-created

Required (bold)

From the moment they arrived in Stuttgart, Germany, the U.S. women's gymnasts were ready to make history.

They made it clear that they are not letting anything stand in the way. They did not let the **bankruptcy** proceedings or general instability of USA Gymnastics, their sport's national governing body, stop them. Not even a scoring **snub** from the sport's international governing body itself slowed them down.

The gymnasts defied controversy as effortlessly as they defied gravity at the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships on Tuesday, October 8.

Following a world-best performance in qualifying, reigning Olympic and world all-around champion Simone Biles led the group. The gymnasts **routed** the field to claim a fifth consecutive team gold medal and seventh overall.

In the process, Biles became the most decorated female gymnast in history. She collected her 21st world championship medal to move past Russia's long-since retired Svetlana Khorkina.

Women's Team Works Together

Biles' haul of gold medals at world championships was already a record at 15. She was expected to add to her tally over the next five days, when she competed for her seventh world all-around title and contest medals in all four event finals.

Russia took silver, lagging 5.801 points behind the United States. Italy was the surprise bronze medalist.

While Biles shouldered the scoring load, it was a four-gymnast effort to claim the team gold. Under the format, each of the eight countries that advanced to the Tuesday team final chose three gymnasts to compete on each of the four events. All three scores counted, so any athlete's misstep was costly to the entire group.

Like Biles, 16-year-old Sunisa Lee competed in all four events for the United States. Just one year removed from junior competition, Lee is the youngest on the squad. She finished second to Biles in qualifying to advance to the all-around competition on Thursday, October 10. With a team gold at stake, she led the Americans on uneven bars but fell and wobbled twice on beam.

Rounding out the U.S. team were 19-year-old Jade Carey of Phoenix, Arizona, who scored well on vault and floor; 16-year-old Kara Eaker of Grain Valley, Missouri; and 16-year-old Grace McCallum of Isanti, Michigan.

Biles Breaks Medal Record

Despite battling her customary nerves at the outset, Biles was deservedly proud of her performance, posting the top marks on three of the four events: vault, beam and floor. Yet she still gave herself "probably an 8 out of 10," when asked to rank her showing.

As for her female-record of 21 world championship medals, Biles called it "kind of crazy."

"I think that's really impressive for someone to be able to do that; I guess that's me," Biles said with a smile. "I haven't got a chance to process it yet, but I think we'll do some celebrating tonight for all of it — for the team, for the medal count, for the fifth year in a row."

In her case, Biles is pursuing a standard that she alone can reach.

Biles made history in Stuttgart on Day 2 of qualifications.

She had two new skills named for her by becoming the first to successfully land them on the world or Olympic stage: the Biles II on floor, a triple-twisting double somersault. The other was the Biles dismount on beam, a double-twisting double somersault.

Penalized For A Difficult Dismount

However, instead of celebrating Biles' innovation and risk-taking, the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG) in effect penalized her by deliberately **devaluing** her **unprecedented** beam dismount.

Biles made her displeasure clear on social media. USA Gymnastics "respectfully disagreed" in a formal letter.

The federation responded that it did not want to give lesser gymnasts an incentive to attempt such a difficult, dangerous skill.

"Am I in a league of my own?" Biles said afterward when asked about the FIG snub. "Yes, but that doesn't mean you can't credit me for what I'm doing."

On Tuesday, October 8, Biles chose a slightly safer dismount, with one twist in her double somersault.

Women's Team Wins By A Big Lead

Despite teammate McCallum's hiccup on uneven bars and Lee's fall on beam, the Americans extended their lead after each rotation on a day littered with tumbles. They closed the competition with another strength, floor exercise.

By the time Biles closed the competition, the United States had a major lead. Biles could have taken a nap after her first two tumbling passes and still clinched the team gold. Still, she dazzled, hitting impossible heights with her triple-double and sticking the landing. Wearing an enormous smile, she tumbled on to her sassy music, as the crowd clapped along.

Biles and Lee returned to the competition floor on Thursday, October 10. They will contest the **prestigious** all-around, which consists of the 24 top-scoring gymnasts from qualifications with a maximum of two per country.

On Wednesday, October 9, the U.S. men contested the team event after a qualifying effort full of errors. They barely made the eight-country cut. They are not expected to medal, lagging well behind top qualifiers Russia, China and Japan.

Questions

1. Read the following summary of the article.

The U.S. women's team claimed team gold at the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships. Simone Biles led the team at the championships and became the most decorated female gymnast in history. However, Biles was unfairly penalized by the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG) on Day 2 of qualifications.

Is this an objective summary? Why or why not?

- a) Yes; the summary highlights Biles' accomplishments without judgment.
 - b) Yes; the summary lists the events neutrally and in the order they occurred.
 - c) No; the first sentence of the summary shows bias toward the U.S. women's team
 - d) No; the last sentence of the summary is an opinion about the FIG's decision.
2. Read the following paragraphs from the section "Biles Breaks Medal Record."

Despite battling her customary nerves at the outset, Biles was deservedly proud of her performance, posting the top marks on three of the four events: vault, beam and floor. Yet she still gave herself "probably an 8 out of 10," when asked to rank her showing.

She had two new skills named for her by becoming the first to successfully land them on the world or Olympic stage: the Biles II on floor, a triple-twisting double somersault. The other was the Biles dismount on beam, a double-twisting double somersault.

How is the central idea developed in these two paragraphs?

- a) They both indicate that Biles had a disagreement at the championship.
 - b) They both explain how Biles has won on the world and Olympic stage.
 - c) They both highlight how Biles feels about her performance and skills.
 - d) They both emphasize Biles' achievements at the championships.
3. Which of the following MOST influenced the FIG to penalize Biles?
 - a) the displeasure they felt with how Biles reacted to their suggestion about her new dismount
 - b) the fact that Biles' new dismount had never been seen before and they prefer traditional moves
 - c) the concern they felt that other gymnasts with less skill would try to do her new dismount
 - d) the desire to make the playing field level since other gymnasts could not catch up to Biles
 4. How did McCallum's performance on the uneven bars and Lee's performance on the beam affect the U.S. team?
 - a) Even though they made some mistakes, the U.S. team had a strong lead and easily got gold.
 - b) Because of their mistakes, the U.S. team almost did not qualify for the next round or get gold.
 - c) Even though they had near-perfect performances, only Biles' performance mattered.
 - d) Because of their near-perfect performances, it was not necessary for Biles to do hers.