

Cuba's Yarisley Silva Finishes First in Women's Pole Vault



IAAF Diamond League: Athletics

Cuba's Olympic silver medalist Yarisley Silva finished in first place in the women's pole vault of the 28 meetings at the **IAAF Diamond League** meeting in Stockholm with another excellent performance. Her efforts turned into an intriguing tactical battle with her two main rivals, Greece's Diamond Race leader Niki Kyriakopoulou and Brazil's 2011 world champion Fabiana Murer.

Silva was the only woman to clear 4.81 meters, although the result was not decided until the next height, when Murer – who had skipped after two failures at that height – was unable to turn her last vault to advantage.

Both Murer and Silva had delayed their entry until 4.46 m, which they both cleared the first time. Kyriakopoulou delayed further still but also achieved a first time clearance at 4.56 m, a height Silva also cleared on the first attempt.

Murer skipped to 4.61 m, clearing at the first try, but her two main rivals moved straight to first time clearances at 4.66 m.

Only the Brazilian vaulted when the bar was raised to 4.71 m, clearing it on her second attempt, but she gambled again on passing at 4.76 m, which both her rivals managed, and this time it didn't pay off as she could go no further.

Kyriakopoulou looked to be the favorite as vaulting began at 4.81 m, having had no failures as against Silva's two, but she was unable to progress further and the Cuban's clearance in a second attempt proved decisive, before the latter failed with her three attempts at a world-leading height and meeting record of 4.86m.

Beijing selected to host 2022 Winter Olympics

Beijing was selected Friday to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, becoming the first city awarded both the winter and summer games.

Beijing narrowly defeated Almaty, Kazakhstan, in a vote of the International Olympic Committee. The vote was surprisingly close: 44-40.

The Chinese capital, which hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, came in to the vote as the strong favorite, despite its lack of natural snow.

The secret vote was conducted by paper ballot, after the first electronic vote experienced technical faults with the tablets.

Beijing was seen by the IOC as a safe, reliable choice that also offered vast commercial opportunities in a new winter sports market of more than 300 million people in northern China.

Almaty had hoped to bring the games to Central Asia for the first time, but was a lesser-known quantity and viewed as a riskier choice by IOC members. Kazakh Prime Minister Karim Massimov made a last-minute impassioned plea for the IOC to be "brave" and give the games to his country, but it wasn't enough.

Beijing and Almaty had both been considered long-shots when the 2022 bid race opened two years ago. But they were the only two candidates left after four European cities – including Oslo and Stockholm – pulled out for political or financial reasons.

Beijing plans to use several venues from the 2008 Olympics, including the "Bird's Nest" stadium and "Water Cube" arena. But the snow and sliding events would be at venues in Yangqing and Zhangjiakou, (40 and 90 miles) outside Beijing. A planned high-speed rail line to Zhangjiakou is supposed to cut travel time to 50 minutes.

China's mountain venues also rely heavily on man-made snow, which was considered one of the bid's main weaknesses and one that was the target of Almaty's "Keeping it Real" slogan. Almaty is surrounded by towering mountains and plenty of natural snow, but Beijing bid leaders insisted they have sufficient water supplies and snow-making equipment for ideal skiing conditions.

FIBA bans Russian basketball teams - Federation

Russia said its national basketball teams have been banned from all competitions by the sports ruling body FIBA.

"The Russian basketball federation received a letter from FIBA, which said that all Russian national teams have been banned," Sergei Chernov, honorary president of the Russian basketball federation, told the TASS news agency.

"For the moment, Russia's FIBA membership was also temporarily suspended. The FIBA final verdict on the case will be announced at its conference on August 8-9."

Chernov added that the Russian men national men's squad is under threat of missing the European championships in September and next year's Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

The FIBA letter said: "The FIBA Executive Committee decided to suspend with immediate effect the Russian Basketball Federation (RBF) in view of the fact that the RBF has been unable to resolve longstanding institutional and legal issues preventing the Federation to work under proper conditions and maintain full control and governance in the country, as proven by the recently published Court decision against the RBF."

A dispute between the previous national basketball federation head and the new president Yulia Anikeyeva, who was elected in 2013, was reportedly the reason for the ban.

On June 18th, one of Moscow's regional courts ordered the national basketball federation to hold fresh elections for the post of president and its executive board within 60 days.

The country's ruling body issued an appeal against a judgment but it was rejected.

According to a Russian version of the letter from FIBA's president Horacio Muratore, the sports governing body criticized the Russian authorities for failing to resolve the situation.

However, Muratore did invite federation head Anikeyeva to attend the FIBA conference in August to give an account of the situation and held out hope that the ban would be lifted.

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