Tokyo 2020 Olympics: Laura Muir excited for 1500m semi-final after comfortable heat

Team GB's Laura Muir warned she is saving her best for last after successfully launching her bid for 1500m Olympic glory with qualification for the semi-finals.

The Scot clocked four minutes 3.89 seconds in Tokyo on Monday to safely progress into the next round on Wednesday.

Muir, the European champion, came second in her heat behind Canada's Gabriela DeBues-Stafford and after, insisted there was plenty left in the tank.

"You don't want to have any disrespect to any of the girls out here, but I want to save as much as I can for the final," she said ahead of Wednesday's semis.

"It's gone as smooth as it could be - I've been out in Japan for a couple of weeks now so feeling really prepared and it's really good.

"It didn't feel that fast so that's good. I just wanted to qualify for the next round as comfortably as possible. So that felt really good out there today and I am looking forward to the semi-final."

Rival and favourite, the Netherlands' Sifan Hassan, fell at the start of the final lap in her heat but still managed to win after overhauling the field in a stunning final 350m. Hassan is attempting to win the 1500m, 5,000m and 10,000m.

Hassan tried, but failed, to hurdle over Kenya's Edinah Jebitok, who tumbled just in front of her as runners jostled for position at the start of the final lap.

Staring at a shock elimination, the Dutch runner sped past a couple of runners down the back straight, had reached the leading pack by the last bend, and won from Australia's Jessica Hull and American Elinor Purrier St. Pierre after powering down the home straight.

Hassan had already qualified to run in the 5,000m final later Monday at the Olympic Stadium, although the energy she expended on that last-lap scramble in the 1,500 heats might catch up with her when she returns in the evening session to try for her first gold of the Games.

Hassan won a 1,500m and 10,000m double at the world championships in Doha, Qatar in 2019. She has said she will also run in the 10,000m at the Olympics. No athlete has won 1500m, 5,000m and 10,000m golds at the same Olympics.

Hassan's gruelling schedule means she will have to run six races in eight days in the Tokyo heat and humidity.

Team GB's Katie Snowden also progressed in four minutes 02.77 seconds, but Revee Walcott-Nolan missed out by 0.01s.

Greece's Miltiadis Tentoglou took the men's long jump title with a leap of 8.41m after world champion Tajay Gayle pulled out injured while Jasmine Camacho-Quinn of Puerto Rico claimed gold in the women's 100m hurdles.

In the women's 200m - without Team GB's world champion Dina Asher-Smith after she pulled out following her battle with a hamstring injury - the 100m champion Elaine Thompson-Herah progressed to the semi-finals.

Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, who claimed 100m silver, won her heat in 22.22s but Shericka Jackson missed out after the sprinter completed a Jamaican clean sweep in the 100m on Saturday.

Great Britain's Beth Dobbin ran a season's best of 22.78s to reach Monday evening's semis.

She said: "I can't ask for much more than that, I ran the bend how I wanted to and the straight felt really controlled. There's more in the legs later.

"I could see I was in contention so I tried to stay relaxed. There's a couple of tenths from that run. I need to see how I recover.

US shot putter Raven Saunders in first Olympic podium protest

US shot putter Raven Saunders has risked disciplinary action after making the first podium protest of the Olympic Games.

The 25-year-old athlete, who was nicknamed "Hulk" in high school after the Marvel superhero, crossed her arms in an "X" gesture during Sunday's medal ceremony at the Olympic Stadium after claiming silver in her event on Sunday.

US media outlets reported that Saunders, who is Black and an outspoken supporter of LGBTQ rights, said her gesture was made in solidarity with "oppressed people".

After clinching her silver medal, Saunders said she wanted to represent "people all around the world who are fighting and don't have the platform to speak up for themselves."

Saunders's protest is the first test of International Olympic Committee rules which ban protests of any kind on the medal podium at the Olympics.

The IOC tweaked its rules regarding athlete protests ahead of the games, saying that peaceful protests before competition would be allowed.

However the Olympics governing body has maintained a strict rule against protesting on the medal podium.

The IOC is in contact with World Athletics, the international governing body for the sport, and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), IOC spokesman Mark Adams told a news conference on Monday. It is unclear what sanction, if any, Saunders may face.

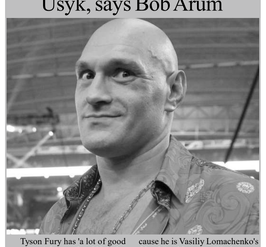
Updated IOC guidelines released last month say that disciplinary consequences for protests will be "proportionate to the level of disruption and the degree to which the infraction is not compatible with Olympic values".

The USOPC said before the games it would not sanction its athletes for protesting.

It softened its position on podium protests after a review of rules following nationwide protests in the United States last year in the wake of the killing of George Floyd.

Experts say the IOC is unlikely to take a heavy-handed approach against athletes for protesting in Tokyo, mindful of the possible public relations backlash.

Tyson Fury has lot of options for US fight if Anthony Joshua loses to Oleksandr Usyk, says Bob Arum



Tyson Fury has 'a lot of good opponents' for another US fight, if a defeat for Anthony Joshua delays an undisputed world title clash, says promoter Bob Arum.

Joshua risks his WBA, IBF and WBO titles against Usyk on September 25, live on Sky Sports Box Office, and then Fury's WBC belt is at stake in a rescheduled third fight against Deontay Wilder on October 9.

Fury's elusive fight with Joshua could be further delayed if his Brit rival suffers defeat to Usyk, setting up an immediate rematch, but Arum says his fighter's growing popularity in America means he is not short of alternative options.

"There are a lot of good heavyweights that we could fight," Top Rank boss Arum told Sky Sports.

"Tyson, because of his personality, has really appealed to the American audience and is such a big favourite in the US.

"He is larger than life, he is a straight talker, and people in the States love him.

Usyk has returned to his amateur trainer, Anatoly Lomachenko, the father of pound-for-pound star Vasiliy Lomachenko, ahead of the Joshua fight.

The Ukrainian is a fellow Olympic gold medallist like Joshua and has previously unified the cruiserweight division during 18 professional fights without a defeat.

"Usyk is a friend of mine because he is Vasiliy Lomachenko's friend," said Arum. "He is a terrific guy, funny, articulate and smart.

"It is against my economic interest, but I will be rooting for him in the fight! I just can't help myself."

Joshua has vowed to topple his WBO mandatory challenger, telling Sky Sports: "I'm looking to do a good job, to handle business, because I have my eyes set on other things."

Arum admits the naturally smaller Usyk's supreme skills might not be enough against a huge puncher like Joshua.

"This is a new era. We have never seen heavyweights of the size that we see now," he said.

"We've never seen a guy of 6'9" like Tyson fight the way he does. Or Joshua. They are all huge.

Joshua says he's willing to settle rivalry with Fury without any world titles on the line, in an exclusive interview on Gary Neville's The Overlap YouTube channel.

"Evander Holyfield was a light-heavyweight, then a cruiserweight, then a great heavyweight. Other than Riddick Bowe there weren't many big guys that he fought. "Mike Tyson was relatively little. "In ordinary times a guy like Usyk, against a 6'2" heavyweight, has a really good shot. "But against a massive guy like Joshua? It may be a bridge too far."

Hungarian GP: Sebastian Vettel disqualified after insufficient fuel sample after race, loses P2

Sebastian Vettel has been disqualified from the Hungarian GP for a fuel rules breach after the race, losing his second place for Aston Martin.

Aston Martin have notified the FIA of their intent to appeal the decision. The team have until Thursday to formalise a challenge.

In the publication of the FIA's 'official' final race classification late on Sunday night, Vettel remained listed as being in second place but it was noted that the "classification is provisional" pending the outcome of any challenge from Aston Martin.

Should the stewards' verdict ultimately stand, the result will lift new championship leader Lewis Hamilton up to second in the race, and Carlos Sainz into third.

Four-time F1 champion Vettel had driven superbly on Sunday, narrowly missing out on the win on a chaotic afternoon, before taking his second runner-up berth of the season.

F1 regulations state that "competitors must ensure that a 1.0 litre sample of fuel may be taken at any time during the event" - and only an insufficient 300ml could be removed from Vettel's Aston Martin in Budapest.

Vettel did not finish his cool-down lap after the chequered flag, returning to the pits for the post-race celebrations on foot.

What did the stewards say?

The stewards met with Aston Martin team boss Otmar Szafnauer after Vettel's insufficient fuel sample was referred to them by FIA technical delegate Jo Bauer.

The stewards' report read: "After the race it was not possible to take a 1.0 litre sample of fuel from car 5.

"The team was given several opportunities to attempt to remove the required amount of fuel from the tank, however it was only possible to pump 0.3 litres out.

"During the hearing in [the] presence of the FIA technical delegate and the FIA technical director the team principal of Aston Martin stated that there must be 1.44 litres left in the tank, but they are not able to get it out.

"This figure is calculated using the FFM or injector model. Given this situation, car No. 5 is not in compliance with the requirements of Art. 6.6 FIA technical regulations.

"According to Art. 6.6.2 competitors must ensure that a 1.0-litre sample of fuel may be taken from the car at any time.

"The procedure was followed however the 1.0-litre sample of fuel was unable to be taken.

"The stewards determine to apply the standard penalty for technical infringements. Therefore they took into account, that it shall be no defence to claim that no performance advantage was obtained."

Distance no issue for badminton-mad Indonesian fans

Jakarta, Indonesia – On Saturday morning, when Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu became the first Indonesian women doubles team to make a badminton final at the Olympics the two women's delight echoed around an almost empty arena.

With spectators banned from most Olympic venues because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were none of the usual "IN-DO-NE-SIA!" chants, or loud thunder-stick bangs that usually accompany the players' victories.

But thousands of miles from the stadium, in their homeland, Indonesia's legion of badminton fans were thrilled.

Among them was Cindy Susanti, 33, a photographer, who had been waking up early to watch every single badminton game at the Olympics. From her apartment in North Jakarta, Susanti shouted with joy as Polii and Rahayu won an emphatic straight-set victory: 21-19 and 21-17.

"There were people below my apartment unit who also watched the match. I could hear their screaming from here," Susanti laughed: "They shouted IN-DO-NE-SIA!" Badminton has a huge following in the Asia Pacific and Indonesia has long been known as one of the giants of the game, renowned not only for its talented players but also the passion of its fans; a dedication undimmed even amid a devastating pandemic.

Susanti has loved the game since she was a child. She recalls many students would bring rackets and shuttlecocks to school and play during physical education classes and break times.

"I would go to my neighbour's house to watch the matches because they had a colour television. Mine was still black and white," she recalled, adding that she would try not to miss a single tournament. Since living in Jakarta, she has made a point of going to the Istora indoor stadium, the country's top sports venue, each year to watch the Indonesia Open.

On the same Saturday that Indonesia's women's duo made history, Cindy also watched the seasoned men's doubles pair, Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan, lost to Malaysia's Aaron Chia and Wooi Yik Soh.

"There are times when our national teams do not win as we expected but I will always be there for them," she said. "I will always be a proud supporter."

The nation won its first two gold medals from badminton – the women's and men's singles – at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, when badminton first became an Olympic event. Most of Indonesia's Olympic glory has come from the sport, which is dominated by countries in the Asia Pacific. Only 13 of 116 medals awarded in the tournament have gone to non-Asian athletes.

"Because of badminton, Indonesia can be known globally," Broto Happy, the Indonesian Badminton Association (PBSI) spokesman told Al Jazeera.

Happy, who was a senior sports journalist before he joined PBSI, says the Indonesian badminton team is a source of national pride. He recalls the first pivotal win when the badminton team won the Thomas Cup, badminton's most prestigious tournament, in Singapore in 1958, just 13 years after independence. Until today, Indonesia has chalked up the most Thomas Cup victories, with 13 wins. China is behind it with nine wins.