



High jumper comes up short but keeps elevated hopes

Wang Yu performs in the men's high jump final on Wednesday. He finished fourth at 2.24m.

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By LEI LEI
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SHENZHEN — Despite narrowly missing the podium in the men's high jump, Wang Yu, the flag-bearer of the Chinese delegation at the opening ceremony, is satisfied with his first Universiade experience.

The university freshman, who turned 20 on Wednesday, believes he still has time to improve.

"I expected a medal here, so I'm a little regretful," Wang said.

"But I tried my best, so I'm satisfied. I'll keep training hard to

improve my speed and strength. I'm only a freshman."

Ukrainian Bogdan Bondarenko claimed gold in the men's high jump final on Wednesday night with 2.28 meters.

He was followed by Pole Wojciech Theiner, who jumped 2.26m, and Russian Sergey Mudrov, who jumped 2.24m. Wang finished fourth — with the same height as Mudrov but with more failures in the previous round.

"I'm not as strong as the other jumpers, and I was not that focused in the competition," Wang said.

The Tsinghua University stu-

dent said holding the Chinese delegation's flag — considered the top honor for an athlete — was encouraging.

"I was very surprised when I found out. I asked myself why," Wang said.

"I think maybe it's because I had achieved good results in high school and university, and I'm tall enough to do it. I'm also a freshman, so I think it represents the hopes the delegation has for the new generation."

The Zhuhai city, Guangdong province native comes from a family tradition of sports. His parents

work at a sports school.

Wang never received official training before he was selected — essentially because of his 1.9-meter height — by the high school attached to Tsinghua University in Beijing as a "young sports talent".

He said it was difficult to study so far from home at age 16.

"I complained at the beginning, but since I've finished, I've always believed that if I hadn't controlled myself well then, I wouldn't be as good of a person now," he said.

"I used to be introverted but became outgoing at school because my classmates were from all over the

country. I learned a lot from them, and they broadened my mind."

Wang beat many professional athletes to win the gold at a national track and field event this year with his personal best of 2.28m. He also claimed the titles at the next two National Grand Prix meet.

On his 20th birthday, Wang made two wishes — to grow even taller to be able to jump better and to pass the university's Level 4 English exam.

"I can't perform my best at every competition," he said.

"But standing on the field and learning something is another form of progress."

Brotherly love at finish line

By LEI LEI
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SHENZHEN — Imad Touil could have run faster to claim his gold medal, but he slowed down before crossing the finish line, reaching out for the hand of his twin brother, Abdelmadjed.

The siblings kept a promise made before the race to win gold and silver in the 1,500m at Shenzhen Universiade on Wednesday.

"Before the race, we promised to each other that if we could finish in the top two we would cross the finishing line hand in hand," said Imad.

"Special moments between us happen nearly every day, but I

think the moment we crossed the line hand in hand was the most touching one.

"We should say thank you to all the spectators for their support."

Imad won the race in 3 min, 48.13 sec, followed by Abdelmadjed in 3:48.24. Russia's Valentin Smirnov took the bronze in 3:48.45.

After the race, the two held the national flag of Algeria and posed for photos together.

"I worked very hard to win the gold medal today," said Imad. "I spent a lot of time in training, so I sacrificed a lot of leisure time."

His brother agreed.

"I came to this Universiade to realize my dream. I expected at

least a medal here. I'm very happy that I took the silver," Abdelmadjed said. "We made great efforts to achieve this and I'm very glad that I can stand in the stadium with the national flag on my shoulder."

The identical twins admitted that even their coach found it hard to tell them apart.

"Since we look the same and are the same height, even our coach cannot tell who we are sometimes. So he can't tell who runs faster," said Abdelmadjed.

For the brothers, the London Olympics is their next goal.

"We will definitely compete at the London Olympics next year. We are preparing for it," Imad said.



LIAO YUJIE / XINHUA

Imad Touil (left) and his twin brother, Abdelmadjed, pose after their race.