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MUNICH 2022 DAY 4 REVIEW - GYMNASTICS

DOUBLE DELIGHT FOR HOSTS GERMANY AS SEITZ AND MALEWSKI CLAIM EUROPEAN TITLES

Published on 14 August 2022

Elisabeth Seitz (28) and Emma Malewski (18) treated host country Germany to a big surprise as they clinched European Championships gold medals on uneven bars and balance beam, respectively.

Seitz triumphed on the uneven bars where she claimed her first-ever European title when she beat Italy's Alice D'Amato and Lorette Charpy of France. "I can't tell you how it feels. It's a dream coming true after so many years," Seitz, who previously won world bronze (2018) and a European silver (2017) on the apparatus, said.

"I've been in the national team since 2009. To now be a European champion for the first time is kind of crazy. I think I still need to realise that this really happened, that I am a European champion now."



"As soon as I finished my routine I was completely overwhelmed. My whole body was shaking because the whole arena was shaking," she laughed.

The gold came one day after clinching a historic team bronze and Seitz admitted the team final had been the best way to prepare for Sunday's uneven bars final. "In the last weeks of training I felt like my bars routine worked well, but was also kind of exhausting. Then yesterday in the team final I realised that it wasn't that exhausting anymore so I knew I was ready."

"After this week the thought of lying in bed and sleeping is super tempting but the bronze medal from yesterday and this gold medal needs to be celebrated," she laughed.

The German gymnast also revealed that the gold medal gave her a confidence boost towards Paris 2024. "I will take it step by step, but to be honest, with this medal around my neck I don't have any thoughts about quitting right now."

MALEWSKI SUPRISSES WITH BEAM GOLD, GADIROVA DEFENDS FLOOR TITLE

Seitz' teammate Emma Malewski (18), who only made her European senior debut a year ago, added to the German party with a surprising gold on balance beam. "I feel amazing," Malewski said. "With the team we got a medal (bronze) yesterday and now Elisabeth and I got a medal as well. This week couldn't have gone any better."

Malewski finished ahead of Ondine Achampong (GBR) and Carolann Héduit (FRA) who took silver and bronze. Malewski's teammate Pauline Schäfer-Betz, the 2021 world silver medallist and 2017 world champion, missed out on a medal after a mistake at the beginning of her routine and finished fifth.

Great Britain's Jessica Gadirova was unbeatable on floor exercise and successfully defended her European title, finishing ahead of Martina Maggio and Angela Andreoli of Italy. "I was disappointed about vault where I did not get the result that I wanted (5th)," Gadirova said. "Therefore, there was a big challenge in front of me to pick myself up. I wiped it away and thought: 'I have another final, another chance to redeem myself.' That's what I did," she said.

VAULT DRAMA

The apparatus finals at the European Championships Munich 2022 started with a scare in the vault final, where Asia D'Amato (ITA) twisted her ankle on her second vault. While D'Amato was carried away for treatment disaster struck again as Bulgarian Valentina Georgieva hurt her knee during her first vault. Georgieva received treatment behind protective boards and was then taken away on a stretcher.

Despite the injury, D'Amato's score was still enough to take the silver. After the two incidents, Zsófia Kovács (HUN) managed to stay calm and jumped to gold to retain her title from 2020. Aline Friess (FRA) took the bronze.

The vault drama had its impact on Alice D'Amato, Asia's twin sister, who competed in the uneven bars final just half an hour after seeing her sister getting injured. "When I knew Asia was injured, I didn't even care about the competition anymore. I was so focused on her," she admitted.



D'Amato, who had qualified for the final in first position, still managed to come away with a silver. "When I started (my routine), I thought about doing my best and to do it for my family and for Asia, because they deserve this. I can't wait to see her (Asia). For me it is very important to know how she is feeling right now," Alice D'Amato said after her uneven bars final.

JUNIOR CHAMPIONS

In the junior competition, Sabrina Maneca-Voinea (ROU), Martina Pieratti (ITA), Anna Lashchevska (UKR) and Amalia Puflea (ROU) were crowned European champions on vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise, respectively.

Artistic gymnastics competition at the European Championships Munich 2022 will resume on Thursday, with the men taking the stage.