



News Release

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FROM SPORTS TO ENTERTAINMENT, LIVERPOOL 2022 STARTS THE NEW WORLD GYMNASTICS SCENE

Nine action packed days of competition, which saw 14 world titles claimed and 79 medals presented, has come to a close at the 51st FIG World Gymnastics Championships in Liverpool, with FIG President, Morinari Watanabe hailing the championships a success.

Giving his final address he said: “The organising committee has created a wonderful stage and a wonderful Worlds.

“As you know, the Beatles created a new music scene. Liverpool World Championships turned gymnastics from sports to entertainment this time. It is the start of the new gymnastics scene.”

The Championships saw the welcome return of spectators for the first time since 2019 due to the pandemic, with over 35,000 tickets sold to the M&S Bank Arena and sell-out crowds for the final weekend.

The level of competition hit new highs. Eight 2020 Olympic and World champions reinforced their dominance to claim 18 medals, including Olympic Champion Hashimoto Daiki collecting an astounding all-around Gold, and triple silver across team, floor, and high bar. Established stars, alongside a new cohort of emerging talent, assured an exciting future of the sport ahead of the Championships moving on to Antwerp next year.

A raucous home crowd had plenty to cheer about, as Great Britain surpassed their best-ever World’s medal haul set in Glasgow in 2015. An incredible six medals for Great Britain came courtesy of the men’s and women’s teams (bronze and silver), Giarnni Regini-Moran claiming a superb gold on the Floor, Jessica Gadirova taking bronze in the individual all-around, Courtney Tulloch snatching bronze on rings before Jessica Gadirova made history with an incredible final day gold on Floor. Both the men’s and women’s teams also achieved automatic qualification to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, the only nation to do so.

Broadcast by the BBC in the UK, more than 900,000 watched Britain’s Men claw their way to a team bronze, and even higher viewing figures were reported over the closing weekend as 10 individual apparatus champions were crowned.

Off the competition floor, these Championships made the action more accessible and connected with more people than ever before. In a world first for the sport, Liverpool 2022 introduced the first ever use of British Sign Language on screen for the duration of the competition, receiving great acclaim from the deaf



community. And fans were at the heart of the action in the Arena bowl, with the use of innovative technology including the WGC2022 App, which enabled audiences to be fully immersed in the show.

Qualification live streaming saw over 87,000 tuning in on the WGC2022 Facebook page in the UK. The event's social media moments went big as finals began, with Brazilian All-Around star Rebecca Andrade's performance viewed over 700,000 times, and the channels growing to unprecedented levels as the WGC2022 Instagram achieved more than three times the average followers from any of the previous five FIG World Gymnastics Championships, to sit in excess of 11,000.

Visiting fans and local families had the most engaging and immersive experience thanks to the Championships Fan Zone, which offered a variety of free have-a-go activities, opportunities to meet Fan Ambassador gymnasts Becky Downie, Claudia Fragapane, Dan Purvis, Kelly Simm and Kristian Thomas, and to see the Championship medals up close. The Fan Zone gave an opportunity of a lifetime to over 1500 young people from 37 schools and community groups, and was also home to the World Gymnastics Championships Liverpool 2022 sponsors - leading fruit brand Jaffa, and equipment supplier, Gymnova. Another first for a World Gymnastics Championships, the Fan Zone received more than 18,500 visits from both spectators and non-ticket holders across the nine days of competitive action.

Tying the entire Championships together was the 406-strong volunteer army, who between them clocked a total of 15,000 hours working across 30 different roles, from spectator services, digital & media, sport, hospitality and event operations. The volunteers spanned from 18 to 85 years old and between them spoke 34 languages.

To conclude a fantastic event, Claire Lewis, Chair of the World Gymnastics Championships Liverpool 2022 said: *"The last two weeks have been an incredible festival of gymnastics in the city and I would like to thank the FIG for allowing Liverpool to host their flagship event. I would also like to thank all the event partners, Liverpool City Council, British Gymnastics and UK Sport who have worked so well together to deliver the 51st World Championships despite the constraints of the global pandemic, and to attain the high bar we set for ourselves.*

"We have witnessed such incredible skill and determination on the competition floor, and alongside amazing performances, we believe we have taken the spectator experience to the next level, delivering an immersive and inclusive experience for those both familiar and new to the sport of gymnastics. Through our digital strategy, we have also successfully engaged with those fans following the Championships from across the globe.

"Closer to home we are confident that this event will leave a legacy that inspires the city to continue the story of the championships, through local communities, schools, athletes, coaches, and the volunteer workforce."

Liverpool's Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy, Councillor Harry Doyle, said: *"The World Gymnastics Championships 2022 has exceeded all our expectations.*



“Audiences from across the world descended on the city and were treated to the most incredible, warm Liverpool welcome, and as always, the city really basked in that limelight as the competition was beamed out to a global audience.”

“I’m so proud of our Culture and Marketing Liverpool teams and what they have delivered in partnership with British Gymnastics and UK Sport – the passion, excitement and energy was clear from the outset and initial feedback from gymnasts and visitors has been overwhelmingly positive. Well done to everyone involved on this huge success.”

Beth Tweddle MBE, Ambassador for the World Gymnastics Championships, said: *“I knew it was going to be special, but the results we’ve seen, the crowds, the noise, the party atmosphere, we really have had a show here in Liverpool and the city has really embraced the event. We knew the British team would get really great home support, but as soon as any athlete stepped onto the podium, the noise was so loud.*”

“The Fan Zone in particular was incredible to be a part of, there was so much for kids to get involved in. For children who have never done gymnastics, it was an opportunity for them to have a go and wherever they live around the country, they can go home and find their local club.”

Ben Williams, Commercial Director of The ACC Liverpool Group - operator of the M&S Bank Arena – and a member of the Local Organising Committee, said: *“We are honoured to host this global championship and welcome tens of thousands of gymnastics fans to our campus to see the world’s leading athletes in action.*”

“This phenomenal event was a culmination of the city working in collaboration with UK Sport, British Gymnastics and the International Gymnastics Federation from first submitting the bid in 2017 to holding a world-class Championships. It was a prime example of our prowess in delivering major international events as we mark six months until we host Eurovision 2023.”

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