

Spectacular spills mar women's race

HUGE CRASH AT THE VELODROME LEAVES SEVERAL RIDERS INJURED

GUANGZHOU — Two spectacular wipe outs left a black cloud over the final of the women's cycling points race at the Asian Games Tuesday, leaving one rider with a dislocated shoulder and a medal winner in tears.

China's Liu Xin won the race to claim gold, but that wasn't the major topic of conversation at Guangzhou Velodrome.

The first crash, which saw all the riders back on their bikes was followed by a huge smash that left several of them dazed and strewn across the track, unable to continue, as coaches and medics rushed to their aid.

Having taken a heavy tumble, Hong Kong's Wong Wan Yiu gingerly got back on her bike and completed the race to take silver in what her coach called "a miracle".

Wong had to be helped up to the podium to collect her medal and sobbed uncontrollably as she shakily stood for the Chinese national anthem, clutching her arm while her knees clearly showed bad bruises.

Wong was taken from the velodrome in a wheelchair.

"She might have a fracture," said Hong Kong coach Shen Jinkang of Wong's arm injury.

"To get her on the podium we had to use a board to support her and her pulse was 207 per minute when she finished the race.

"She suffered a lot, but she is really strong — it's a miracle she finished the race. Although she had a crash, she got back on her bike bravely and carried on."

Another Hong Kong rider, Diao Xiao Juan, also had to be stretchered off the track.

"She dislocated her shoulder in the crash," said Shen. "Right then she couldn't move. She had 28 points and was leading, she had a good chance for gold."

Japan's Mayuko Hagiwara and China's Tang Kerong were also sent flying in the second crash and had to be stretchered off. Chanpeng Non-tasin, of Thailand, took bronze.

The Republic of Korea's (ROK) cycling star Jang Sun-jae, meanwhile, claimed his second title of the Asian Games — and fifth in all — as his powerful men's team eased to gold in the pursuit final.

Jang, who took gold in the men's individual pursuit on Sunday



TORSTEN BLACKWOOD / AFP

Right: Injured silver medalist Wong Wan Yiu of Hong Kong leaves the podium area in a wheelchair after the women's points race cycling on Tuesday. Above: Tang Kerong of China is strapped to a stretcher after crashing heavily.

and forged a new Games record in the event, said afterwards he expected nothing less than team victory after a year of meticulous preparations.

"We actually expected victory from the start of the competition," said Jang, after the Koreans set an Asian Games record time of four mins 06.598 secs on Monday and then won the final with nearly three seconds to spare.

Hong Kong claimed silver and China took bronze after they defeated Iran in a race-off.

"Frankly speaking, I expected this win one month ago," said Jang, 25.

"We prepared for one year for this competition. We did not compete in any other competitions, did not eat any oily food, we lived together with our coach and we just did our best to focus on this event."

China's Wang Mingwei said he was disappointed to only come third in front of his home fans at the Guangzhou Velodrome.

"We expected to be champions, but we made some mistakes," he said.

"This time we lacked a bit of luck, but that is cycling — if you could predict who would win, there would be no charm to the sport."

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