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Silver lining for young star of the Olympics

By **Euan O'Byrne Mulligan**
Reporter

ALEX Yee's rapid rise to the top of triathlon brought him a silver medal on his Olympic debut in Tokyo, and with the promise of much more to come in the future.

The 23-year-old from Lewisham was looking to follow in the footsteps of Alistair Brownlee by making it three successive British golds at the Games but it was Norway's Kristian Blummenfelt who proved the strongest at Odaiba Marine Park.

Jonny Brownlee, who was bidding for a medal at a third

successive Olympics having won bronze in London and silver in Rio, had to settle for fifth. Yee is the fastest pure runner in the history of triathlon but over the past couple of years he has proved himself capable of living with the best on the swim and bike as well, making him a formidable competitor.

After standing on the podium to receive his medal, Yee said: "It hasn't really sunk in quite yet, it doesn't feel quite real that it's me yet."

"I still just feel like a normal boy from south east London. I hope I can just serve as inspiration to many people that this is possible. I'm not anything special, I just really enjoy sport and I've been

really lucky that it was me. I still feel like I'm a child of the sport, I'm going into every race trying to learn things. If I can carry on improving my swim then I can be a bit higher up and be in the race every time and that's the goal for me, just to become the complete athlete rather than be winning everything, and fame and money."

The race started at 6.30am to avoid the worst of the heat and humidity but there were farcical scenes as a boat blocked half of the competitors when the gun went off and the other half had to be stopped and escorted back to the pontoon for a restart. French double world champion Vincent Luis led the

way after the 1.5 kilometres swim, with Brownlee in a nine-strong lead group on the bike and Yee heading the chasers 30 seconds down. By the fourth lap of the 40km, the two groups were together, meaning the medals would come down to who was the stronger on the 10km run.

Burly Blummenfelt, his kit soaked in sweat and virtually transparent, made the first move on the third lap, pulling Yee, whose career was nearly ended by a serious bike crash in 2017, and Hayden Wilde of New Zealand away from the rest. The Norwegian then kicked for home and, although Yee tried to chase him down, he had to settle for silver.



Alex Yee

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