《马拉松中国选手冲刺争冠被志愿者递国旗干扰 憾失金牌还受到指责》

上周日，苏州太湖马拉松比赛中，一名中国选手因受到志愿者递国旗的干扰，未能追上埃塞俄比亚选手，憾失金牌，还受到网友的指责。

A Chinese marathon runner failed to catch up to her Ethiopian opponent and fell to second place after being approached by flag-handling volunteers who affected her sprint to win the race during the 2018 Suzhou Taihu Marathon on Sunday.

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A live stream by CCTV5 shows China’s He Yinli and Ethiopia’s Ayantu Abera Demissie were head-to-head during the last sprint when two different volunteers on the route tried to give her national flags.

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At first, a volunteer tried to hand a national flag to He but the latter missed it. The volunteer even tried to catch her and hand it to her again but didn’t make it.

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Later, another volunteer handed He a national flag. She caught it this time but dropped it later after she ran with the flag in her hand for a while.

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Her dropping the national flag during the match sparked a heated discussion online across the country. Some people criticized her saying, "She had no excuse to do it". She explained, "I didn’t throw the national flag. The flag was soaking wet. My arm was stiff and I accidentally dropped it when I moved my arm while running. I’m terribly sorry."

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Some netizens questioned the organizer for allowing volunteers to get so close to runners during the race. One said, "There is something wrong with the game itself. How can volunteers stand on the track?" Others said, "Handing a national flag to athletes before they cross the finish line violates the rules."

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Something similar happened earlier this year during the Chengdu International Marathon, when a volunteer standing on the route handed Chinese runner Li Zhixuan a national lag, but Li still managed to claim the gold with a time of 2:36.16.

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During international marathons, it is not a common gesture to present runners with national flags during the race. For example, Desi Linden won the Boston Marathon earlier this year, effectively ending the 33-year title drought for American women. A volunteer didn’t present her with a national flag until she crossed the finish line.

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According to a marathon expert, any volunteer directly walking into the venue violates the rules for international marathons. It is stipulated that only referees and athletes have access to the track, while the rest are only allowed to hand runners things from the sides.

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