

Written by Amanda Turner  
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The second day of qualification continues Saturday afternoon at the 46th Artistic Gymnastics World Championships at the SSE Hydro Arena in Glasgow, Scotland. The reigning world and Olympic champion United States is set to compete and shake up the standings.

The competition is the first of two qualifications for next year's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. Only the top eight countries will clinch berths to send teams to the Olympics. Teams finishing ninth to 16th will advance to the second Olympic qualification next April in Rio, where four more teams will earn tickets to the Olympics. Also at stake are spots in the all-around final (top 24) and apparatus finals (top eight on each event). Individual gymnasts competing without teams can earn automatic berths to Rio by winning a medal in Glasgow.



American Simone Biles begins her quest for a third consecutive world all-around title.



#### Mixed Group 22: Vault

Mixed Group 22 includes three gymnasts each from Ireland and Latvia. The Irish will no doubt have tremendous support in Glasgow. Ireland sent a full team to the 2014 Worlds in Nanning, where they finished 35th. **Ellis O'Reilly**, from Northern Ireland, switched from Great Britain to Ireland in 2014. Latvia is led by **Valerija Grisane**, a frequent World Cup competitor and was a finalist this year in Doha, Sao Paulo, Osijek and Ljubljana.



#### Netherlands: Uneven Bars

The Netherlands was 10th at the 2014 Worlds and is returning half the team: **Lisa Top** and twins **Sanne** and **Lieke Wevers**.

. The Dutch gymnasts are always attractive to watch for their clean and innovative gymnastics,

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and could surprise some other teams here. Lieke had her best competition ever this year at the European Games this summer in Baku, where she placed third with the Dutch team, third all-around, first on balance beam and third on floor. In Baku, Top also won the bronze on vault. Sanne won the bronze medal on uneven bars at this year's European championships, and her fantastic beam — including the double turn with leg horizontal named after her — is more than worthy of a place in the final.

### **Eythora Thorsdottir**

meanwhile took the gold medal on floor exercise at this year's World Cup in Ljubljana.



### Mixed Group 3: Balance Beam

India's sole entrant, **Dipa Karmakar**, is alone in Mixed Group 3. Karmakar is known less for her Produnova vault as she is for its frightening landing. She also vaults a double-twisting Tsukahara, so if she has any luck, she could become the first Indian gymnast to make a world final.



### United States: Floor Exercise

The powerful U.S. squad boasts not only two-time defending world champion **Simone Biles**, but 2012 Olympic champions

### **Gabby Douglas**

and

### **Alexandra Raisman**

who made their comebacks this year. The Americans are the only team with no weak event, and boast the most difficulty on floor exercise and vault, where five of the six gymnasts in the lineup threw Amanars in training.

### **Madison Kocian**

returns from the 2014 world champion squad, while

### **Brenda Dowell**

and

### **Maggie Nichols**

are making their world debut. The competition among the Americans will be tough and exciting as only two can advance to any final. Biles, Biles begins her quest for a historic third consecutive world all-around title, while Douglas and Raisman are all doing the all-around. Kocian doing bars and beam, Nichols sitting out bars, and Dowell skipping balance beam. Meanwhile Biles, the runner-up on vault at the past two world championships, is the only American trying for the vault final, where she hopes to finally take the gold. She already owns an astonishing nine world medals won over the past two years and once again appears set to dominate the competition.

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**Next Up:** Full teams from Mexico and Greece!

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