Simone Biles dazzled on her Olympics return as the world's most decorated gymnast showed she was back to her best three years after suffering the 'twisties'.

The American, who has 37 world and Olympic medals, pulled out of several events at the Tokyo Games with the disorientating mental block, and many wondered if she would compete again. But after a two-year break she came back and set her sights on Paris.

She had won more world medals since Tokyo, introduced a new skill and looked sharp in training, but no-one really knew what to expect when she entered the Bercy Arena to an eruption of cheers, with A-list celebrities in the stands and a global television audience of millions.

But we soon found out.

An acrobatic beam routine came before an energetic floor programme that featured one of the five skills named after her. Then she delivered her big Biles II vault but decided not to attempt the new skill she is planning on uneven bars.

It was not all smooth, though, as she required strapping on her calf before her floor routine. She seemed in discomfort afterwards, limping a little, but still went on to top the all-around standings with a total of 59.566 - a score that would have won the last three World Championships.

When her bars dismount marked the end of her work for the day, it was then that it was clear what this had meant to her as the joy swept her face and she waved at the crowd before hugging her team-mates.

The 27-year-old will have the chance to win five medals here, qualifying for the team, all-around, vault, floor and beam finals.

Hottest ticket in town



Sub-division two of women's gymnastics qualifying was the hottest ticket in town, with rapper Snoop Dogg, actor Tom Cruise, Vogue editor Anna Wintour and singer Ariana Grande among those at the arena to watch Biles.

It seemed fitting that Biles began her day on beam - the last apparatus on which she competed at Tokyo 2020, taking an emotional bronze after skipping her other individual finals to focus on her mental health.

Her warm-up drew excitement from fans as if it was the real thing, while the photographers' cameras went into overdrive.

But she was not fazed - or at least, not that we saw.

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She delivered her acrobatic skills on the 10cm-wide apparatus with confidence, nailed a delightful triple spin and a complex twisting dismount to score 14.733.

She opened her floor routine with her eponymous Biles II - a triple-twisting double somersault - and while she stepped out of the floor area, it did not matter as the performance was packed with so many high-value skills it scored 14.600.

She paused afterwards to sit on a step, raising concerns her left ankle might be bothering her, and she crawled along the runway after a warm-up vault. But she was soon powering down it to perform the Biles II, which she introduced last year. It was not as good as the one she had stuck earlier in the week in training but still earned her a huge 15.800.

Coach Cecile Landi told reporters Biles had "just a little pain in her calf".

There was a ripple of excitement as the American approached the uneven bars - was she about to become the only active gymnast to have a skill named after her on every apparatus, a sort of gymnastics skills grand slam?

But she played it safer with a routine that scored 14.433, which was not quite enough to book a spot in that apparatus final.

She will have other opportunities in the team and all-around finals to try that new skill though.

Just another reason why she will have left many people feeling excited for what might come next from her at these Games as seeks to add to her seven Olympic medals.



'The ultimate athlete at these Games'

The USA team have been keeping the pressure off Biles this week and the gymnast once again opted against speaking to reporters on her way out of the arena.

But there were plenty of others who had a lot to say about what they had witnessed.

"Just to be back, it's incredible that she is here to write a different ending," Matt Baker said on BBC TV.

"In my eyes she is the ultimate athlete here at these Olympic Games. Those scores are just going to keep on coming because Simone Biles is back where she belongs."

Retired gymnast Louis Smith added: "She's really showing why she's the best in the world at gymnastics. This amount of pressure and it's not fazing her.

"She is phenomenal. She looks in great shape. She is the Usain Bolt of this sport."

Great Britain's Becky Downie, who competed in the sub-division before Biles, told reporters: "We probably won't see anyone like Simone again for a long time - it's really exciting what she brings to the sport."

"It's incredible that she's come back.

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Activity 1: Listening Comprehension

Instructions: Listen to the audio clip summarizing Simone Biles' return to the Olympics. After listening, answer the following questions using the simple past tense.

1. What did Simone Biles do three years after suffering from the 'twisties'?
2. How many world and Olympic medals did Simone Biles have before the event?
3. What event did Simone Biles start with at the Bercy Arena?
4. How did she feel after her bars dismount?

Audio Clip Length: 2 minutes

Activity 2: Writing

Instructions: Write a short paragraph (5-7 sentences) about Simone Biles' performance, using the simple past tense. Use the information provided in the article to describe her achievements and challenges during her return to the Olympics.

Example: Simone Biles dazzled the audience with her performances. She introduced a new skill on the floor but chose not to attempt a new skill on the uneven bars. Despite feeling discomfort, she still scored high in the all-around standings.

Activity 3: Speaking

Instructions: In pairs or groups, discuss the following questions. Use the simple past tense to respond to each question.

1. What did Simone Biles achieve at the Tokyo Olympics that caused concern about her future?
2. How did she prepare for her return to the Olympics in Paris?
3. What was the reaction of celebrities and fans when she performed at the Bercy Arena?
4. What did the commentators say about her performance?
5. Why did Simone has to leave the past olympics games?

Activity 4: Reading Comprehension

Instructions: Read the passage below about Simone Biles' return to the Olympics and answer the questions that follow.

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Passage: Simone Biles dazzled on her Olympics return as the world's most decorated gymnast. She had pulled out of several events at the Tokyo Games due to the 'twisties' but came back with determination. At the Bercy Arena, she performed an acrobatic beam routine, an energetic floor program, and a big vault. Despite some discomfort, she topped the all-around standings with a score of 59.566.

Questions:

1. Why did Simone Biles pull out of several events at the Tokyo Games?
2. What did she perform at the Bercy Arena?
3. What was her score in the all-around standings?

Activity 5: Use of English

Instructions: Fill in the blanks using the simple past tense of the verbs provided in parentheses.

1. Simone Biles _____ (return) to the Olympics after a two-year break.
2. She _____ (perform) a new skill on the floor but _____ (decide) not to try it on the uneven bars.
3. The crowd _____ (cheer) loudly when she _____ (enter) the Bercy Arena.
4. Despite feeling some discomfort, she _____ (score) very high in the all-around standings.

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