

Twitter ban boosts Chinese sites during aquatics worlds

July 20 2011



World aquatics championships athletes faced with China's bans on Twitter and Facebook are opening accounts with local equivalents, boosting their profile in the country. British diving star Tom Daley (pictured) is leading the trend after he began posting updates and pictures on Tencent, one of the leaders in China's fast-growing microblogging sector.

World aquatics championships athletes faced with China's bans on Twitter and Facebook are opening accounts with local equivalents, boosting their profile in the country.

British diving star Tom Daley is leading the trend after he began posting updates and pictures on Tencent, one of the leaders in China's fast-growing microblogging sector.

Tencent staff member Norman Li said Daley, 17, attracted 10,000

followers in one day after he opened the account earlier this year. He now has around 343,000 followers -- more than triple the number he has on [Twitter](#).

"He's obviously very smart -- he found out how to use it and introduced the weibo (microblog) to Jack Laugher," Li said, referring to Daley's diving team-mate and close friend.

America's David Boudia and Mexican diver Yahel Castillo are also on Tencent, which is now chasing Australian Olympic champion Matthew Mitcham, Japanese swimmer Kosuke Kitajima and Germany's Paul Biedermann.

"If they want to promote themselves here in China, obviously it's the best way," said Li.

Chinese microblogs provide a possible solution to athletes who have adopted Twitter as an invaluable public relations tool. China has blocked Twitter along with [Facebook](#) since blaming it for fanning ethnic unrest in 2009.

"Flying to shanghai today, not too sure how much is going to be blocked on the Internet. But will try to get a tweet in, somehow!" Australian swimmer Eamon Sullivan tweeted on Monday.

Other keen tweeters include Australia's Stephanie Rice, Americans Ryan Lochte and Natalie Coughlin and 14-time Olympic champion Michael Phelps, who posted enthusiastically during Sunday's women's World Cup football final.

China now has nearly half-a-billion Internet users, with actress Yao Chen -- an unknown in the West -- attracting five million [followers](#), outstripping even US chatshow queen [Oprah Winfrey](#).

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: Twitter ban boosts Chinese sites during aquatics worlds (2011, July 20) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-07-twitter-boosts-chinese-sites-aquatics.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.