

[illegible]

The rules state that placings are determined on whose torso crosses the line first. Even if it was a deliberate dive, Miller would not have contravened the rules but, bloodied and bruised afterwards, she said she could not remember the winning moment.

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I was thinking, "Oh my gosh, I am lying on the ground right now",' said Miller. 'I don't know what happened. My mind just went blank. I heard my mum screaming. When I heard that, I was like, "OK, I must have won the race".'

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Miller, a former world junior champion, was awarded the victory in a personal best time of 49.44sec. She spent several minutes afterwards lying on the track as a smiling Felix went to offer her congratulations.

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It's such an amazing feeling,' said Miller. 'My coaches were so pumped. This is the moment I've been waiting for. I just gave it my all. I have cuts and bruises, a few burns — but, hey, I got a medal out of it.'

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Her coach Lance Brauman was quick to dispel rumours of cheating. 'She gave everything she had and her legs gave out at the line,' he said. 'It was not intentional.'

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Sportmail understands athletics' governing body, the IAAF, will review the rule but it is thought it will not lead to a change.

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A source said: 'If we were seeing people diving across the line in every race it might provoke an alteration but it's unlikely this case will make a difference as it's not even clear if she did it deliberately.'

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But earlier in the night Brazilian 110m hurdler Joao Vitor De Oliveira had assured his place in the semi-finals by diving across the line to finish in the first four in his heat. He made no attempt to disguise his methods.

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'I always do that,' he said. 'It's no accident, I broke my ribs doing it in China.'

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Felix's elegant running style and easy stride make her one of the most watchable athletes in the world and one of the biggest stars. She had planned to go for a historic 200m and 400m double but did not even have the opportunity to defend her Olympic title over the shorter distance after she was beaten at the US trials in June.

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She was defeated in similar circumstances on that occasion as her compatriot Jenna Prandini tripped over the line, but she also said it had been unintentional.

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It's painful,' said Felix. 'I feel emotionally and physically drained at this point. I don't think I've quite had a year this tough. I really wanted it.'

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Nevertheless the silver was her seventh Olympic medal, pushing her ahead of Jackie Joyner-Kersey as the most decorated American athlete in history.

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