



13th FINA World Championships start with Diving Men's 1m springboard Qin Kai (CHN), first 2009 World champion

The 13th FINA World Championships of Rome finally got underway this evening when some of the world's finest divers engaged in a battle for the 1m springboard title. This first final ended with complete success for China, whose two divers in this showdown – Olympic champion Qin Kai and Xinhua Zhang – collected the gold and silver medals with total scores of 449.00 and 445.90 respectively. Matthew Mitcham (AUS) – the 10m platform Olympic champion – took the bronze after trailing Kai in second for most of the final. Kai swept the gold with relative ease, and Mitcham – with a graceful series of dives - was the only diver presenting obvious opposition. Both champions delighted the audience with their skills. Zhang's silver medal sequence was more of a creeping conquest, as he improved with every round until he reached the top three. Beyond these winners, a notable performance was had by the fourth-place Great Britain's Peter Waterfield (432.60).

The 1m springboard event was introduced to the FINA World Championships programme in 1991. This win from Kai represents the fifth World Championship gold medal in the 1m springboard for China in the event's history, as Chinese male divers also claimed the gold in 1998, 2001, 2003 and 2007. It is also the third gold medal for Kai in FINA World Championship history, after he won the 3m springboard and 3m springboard synchro in 2007 in Melbourne. The bronze medal for Mitcham is his first from a FINA World Championships.

Several generally strong dives were displayed early in the competition, but all were quickly overshadowed by Matthew Mitcham, who swiftly took the lead with a beautiful opening effort (a back 2 ½ somersault tuck, DD 3.0). His closest competitor in the first round became Qin Kai, and it would be the opposition between these two divers that would form the core of the final. Their exceptional strength and experience was obvious.

When the second round commenced, Mitcham failed to equal his premier dive, and the competition got more interesting for some time.

Early on, the final's youngest competitor - Poland's Andrej Rzeszutek (born May 10, 1991) - remained fairly high in the rankings, taking fourth at the end of the second round after producing two solid opening efforts, but as the prowess of Mitcham and Kai became all the more obvious it was clear why he - and most others - were not among the favourites.

With the third round the leaders started to solidify their authority. Mitcham made up for lost points with a beautiful reverse 1 ½ somersault 2 ½ twists free marked by a flawless entry. In the meantime, Eric Sehn (CAN) struggled to move into medal contention; performing with a consistency that paid off: he settled into fourth as the final divers took to the boards almost halfway through the final after a nice inward 2 ½ somersault tuck, giving himself a temporary chance to battle for bronze with the third seeded Waterfield. Kai meanwhile – still in first - continued battling for the World title with Mitcham.

The fourth round; and the conclusion drew closer. Waterfield's fourth effort allowed him to recover some of the momentum he lost with a weaker third-round dive, and he remained among the leaders, but once again it paled in comparison with the excellence of Mitcham, who took to the board and made a dominating inward 2 ½ somersault tuck. In the meantime, Sehn faltered and made room for some fine efforts from Javier Illana (ESP) and Ilyia Kvasha (UKR), who also finished fifth in this event in Melbourne. Then, medal-hope Chris Colwill (USA), who finished second in the preliminaries, lost focus, gave an erroneous fourth round appearance with a flawed inward 2 ½ somersault pike that made him fall in the standings. The other Chinese competitor however – Xinhua Zhang – had by that time discreetly moved up to fourth.

With only two dives left until the competition was decided, the pressure was on and multiple divers appeared poised to claim a podium spot. Mitcham carried out his fifth dive – an energetic forward 3 ½ somersault tuck – with confidence, before Sehn climbed the board after him with a

Medals Table

after day 0

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	TOTAL
CHN	1	1	0	2
AUS	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	1	1	1	3

stubborn reverse 2 ½ somersault tuck that showed he wasn't ready to yield to his opponents. Afterwards, Ilya Zakharov (RUS) and Illana followed-up with impressive dives that continued to raise the competitive level. Kai took the board again with success, widening the gap between himself and Mitcham, but the breakthrough of the round came from Zhang, whose beautiful inward 2 ½ somersault pike allowed him to displace Waterfield and settle into third place.

In the sixth and final round, it was all or nothing for those who wanted to become the world's best on the 1m springboard. Waterfield stepped it up and put himself in a good position for a medal, as did Mitcham, whose last effort was a vigorous forward 2 ½ somersault 1 twist pike with notable height. Sehn's steady last dive was followed by an average effort from Zakharov and a nice last appearance from Illana that placed him briefly in the top three. Kai's last effort was perhaps his weakest, but did not compromise his lead. The competition ended with yet another beautiful dive from Zhang, which allowed him to secure the silver medal and ensure that China – true to its reputation as the country with the world's best divers – takes home the gold and silver Men's 1m springboard World Championships medals.

FINA TECHNICAL CONGRESSES

The main decisions of the FINA Technical Congresses were:

Diving – July 15, 2009 – Rome (ITA)

- The inspection and approval of the diving facilities by the FINA delegate must now be done 120 days (instead of 90) before the start of the competition;
- It is no longer forbidden to hold diving competitions when swimming finals or water polo matches are being held in the same venue;
- Adjustments were made in the calculation of the degree of difficulty and precisions were also brought concerning the competition format in synchronised diving;
- In the statement of dives, this procedure can from now on also be made by the divers' representatives (and not only the divers themselves);
- Whenever possible, at Olympic Games, World Championships and World Cups, 11 judges (instead of 9) will be used for synchronised diving: five of them will judge the synchronization of the dive, three the execution of one diver and three the execution of the other diver – in consequence, the formula to calculate the score of synchronised dives has been updated. In all other competitions, nine judges can be used for synchronised diving;
- The judges' awards (without any other information about the standing of the competition) must now be seen by the judges on their score pads;
- In head first dives, if the feet enter the water before the head or hands, the referee shall declare a failed dive. The same situation applies if in feet first dives, the head or hands enter the water before the feet;
- The classification of the dives according to the score (0-10) received has changed as follows: 10 – Excellent, 8.5-9.5 – Very Good, 7.0-8.0 – Good, 5.0-6.5 – Satisfactory, 2.5-4.5 – Deficient, 0.5-2.0 – Unsatisfactory, 0 – Completely Failed;
- Some changes were done concerning the movements during the Starting Position, Armstand Dives, the Flight and the Entry;
- The FINA World Junior Diving Championships will have a minimum of six days (instead of five).

Open Water Swimming – July 15, 2009 – Rome (ITA)

- In terms of officials, there will now be a Chief Referee (one per race), a Chief Judge and a

Chief Finish Judge. The assignments for these three positions were defined in the rules. The Chief Referee has the authority to intervene at any stage of the competition to ensure that FINA rules are observed. He can also disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the rules he personally observes. The Chief Judge shall record and communicate any decision received from the Referees during the competition;

- Coaching and the giving of instructions by the approved swimmer's representatives on the feeding platform or in the escort safety craft is permitted;
- From now on, all swimmers shall have their competition numbers cleared displayed in waterproof ink on their upper back, arms and hands;
- When automatic timing system is being used, the microchip transponder technology must also provide split times during the race.

Synchronised Swimming – July 16, 2009 – Rome (ITA)

- The "Free Combination" event will be called from now on "Combination". The definition of this event is: "Combination has a maximum of 10 competitors who make a combination of routines". From these routines, at least two parts must have fewer than three competitors and at least two parts must have four to 10 competitors;
- New rules concerning the number of judges' panels and calculation of the final results have been approved. In Duet and Team, results can be rounded off to the fourth decimal places;
- New procedures were also approved concerning the Music Accompaniments, namely in the situation when the sound reproduction is not working during the competition;
- For Olympic Games, World Championships and World Cups, for the Free Routine and Combination sessions, each judge shall award three scores, from 0-10 points each. Technical Merit judges will enter scores for: Execution, Synchronisation and Difficulty. Artistic Impression judges will enter scores for: Choreography, Music Interpretation and Manner of Presentation. For the Technical Routine sessions, Execution judges shall record an individual score for each required element (70% of the total score) and will also record a score for the execution of the strokes, other figures, propulsion techniques and precision of patterns (30% of the total score). Moreover, in the Technical Routine sessions, the Overall Impression judges shall record an individual score for each component (Choreography and Use of Music, Synchronisation, Difficulty and Manner of Presentation). Finally, the routine

score shall be the sum of the Technical Merit and Artistic Impression scores in Free Routines and Execution and Overall Impression scores for the Technical Routines;

- Precisions on the penalties for incorrect movement or figures were also approved;
- From now on, video records and underwater video records of all routines will enable to check the use of the bottom of the pool.

Water Polo – July 16, 2009 – Rome (ITA)

- Penalty shootout can take place at one end of the pool only if conditions at one end of the field of play advantage and/or disadvantage a team;
- Should timeouts not be used in a match, they can be used in extra time as well as the third timeout;
- The toss of a coin for ends has been eliminated with the team mentioned first in the official programme having white caps and start from the left of the table;
- Ordinary fouls for waste of time are eliminated;
- Should the referees call a brutality foul at the same time on opposing team members then the team in possession of the ball shall have the first penalty throw, followed by the second team. Should a brutality foul occur in the interval period, no penalty shot is awarded but the team shall play one man down for four minutes;
- Referees start and restart matches while standing at opposing 5m lines;
- A yellow card to be issued to a player if the referee feels that player is simulating fouls. Persistent simulations earn a red card and exclusion from the game;
- Precisions about signals to be used by Officials were approved.



MEN – 1M SPRINGBOARD

1. QIN Kai CHN 449.00
2. ZHANG Xinhua CHN 445.90
3. MITCHAM Matthew AUS 440.20
4. WATERFIELD Peter GBR 432.60
5. KVASHA Ilyia UKR 413.10
6. ILLANA Javier ESP 395.55
7. SEHN Eric CAN 391.80
8. RZESZUTEK Andrzej POL 369.25
9. COLWILL Chris USA 350.30
10. ZAKHAROV Ilyia RUS 322.75
11. ROZENBERG Pavlo GER 320.65
12. CALVO Carlos ESP 307.60