



The Brazilian star wins the men's 100m free final Cielo's tears touch the crowd in Rome

In one of the most thrilling finals so far in these 13th FINA World Championships in Rome (ITA), Brazil's Cesar Cielo Filho had a perfect race in the men's 100m free and got the gold in a new WR of 46.91 - faster than Eamon Sullivan (AUS), who clocked a 47.05 at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Cielo's main obstacles in this race were the two French sprinters: Alain Bernard (Olympic champion in this event and fastest qualifier for the final in 47.27) and Fred Bousquet. With a bad start from which he was unable to recover, Bernard settled for silver in 47.12, while Bousquet, swimming in lane 8, took the bronze in 47.25.

Curiously, at the "Water Cube" of the Chinese capital, Cielo had already left two swimmers from France behind him in the 50m free (Amaury Leveaux, who finished second, and Bernard in third). It was Brazil's first gold medal at these championships and only the second one for the South American country in the swimming competitions of FINA's major event: before Cielo, only Ricardo Prado had earned a world title, in 1982, in the 400m individual medley. With his Olympic (also a first) and world gold, Cielo definitively becomes the most successful swimmer in Brazil's history. At the medal ceremony, like in Beijing, the Brazilian could not retain his tears, in what was the most touching "image" of the day - the crowd gave him strong support by applauding during the playing of his anthem.

Speaking later, Filho said he had had a "perfect finish" and, during the race he just focused on his lane and not on looking around. "I just focused on what I needed to do, and there was a little bit of luck thrown in there." Filho said there is no mystery to being a sprint champion, and that his victory came only after a long difficult season, with a lot of hard work and believing in himself. He had pushed himself so hard that he got to a point where I couldn't do more. "I got close to my limit," he said, "and that was key." When asked about his emotions on the podium, he said "It's not easy being Brazilian. Everyone expects that when you race, you should win, and coming in second is a disappointment. When I went to race, I couldn't

feel my hands; my face, yet I knew I had to perform even though I couldn't feel my body. When I got on the podium after it all, I relaxed a bit, but yes, I was emotional."

For France, this result was certainly a deception, as Bernard's was one of the main hopes for getting the first gold for his country in these championships. Bernard however, was very accepting of his silver medal, saying, "The main lesson I will take from this race is that, well, of course second was not ideal, but anyway, I worked very hard over the last year and I will continue to do that. I don't believe second is a failure. I put all my energy and strength into the final and making the final and I did it well."

After Phelps' decision not to compete in medley events in Rome, the men's 200m individual medley (the event that he won in 2003, 2005 and 2007) was an interesting duel between the two men that have been behind the American legend in the last years: his compatriot Ryan Lochte (third in 2005 and second in 2007) and Hungary's Laszlo Cseh (second in 2005 and third in 2007). Lochte was the fastest qualifier for the final (in 1:55.18) and in the decisive race his resolve did not shake: he got the gold in 1:54.10, a new World Record, bettering the 1:54.23 Phelps had clocked at the occasion of his 2008 Olympic title.

Lochte was also third at the "Water Cube", precisely behind Phelps and Cseh, but in Rome he managed the perfect race and controlled his main challenger very well, who got the silver in 1:55.24. The bronze medal went to the second US swimmer of the final, Eric Shanteau (1:55.36). It was Lochte's second individual gold medal at World Championships, after being first in the 200m backstroke at the 2007 Worlds in Melbourne.

"There were a lot of hard competitors out there and it was my best time and I got a world record, so I can't complain," Lochte said later, reflecting on his race. He was also asked how it felt to constantly find himself racing against Phelps, and often be compared to him.

Medals Table After day 13

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	TOTAL
CHN	10	6	10	26
RUS	7	6	3	16
USA	5	8	5	18
GER	5	3	0	8
ITA	4	1	4	9
AUS	3	4	3	10
GBR	3	1	2	6
ESP	1	6	2	9
BRA	1	1	1	3
RSA	1	0	2	3
JPN	1	0	1	2
MEX	1	0	0	1
NED	1	0	0	1
SRB	1	0	0	1
SWE	1	0	0	1
FRA	0	2	2	4
TUN	0	2	0	2
CAN	0	1	5	6
HUN	0	1	2	3
DEN	0	1	0	1
GRE	0	1	0	1
POL	0	1	0	1
CUB	0	0	1	1
MAS	0	0	1	1
ROU	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	45	45	45	135

"Phelps," Lochte said, "did such a good job for making a name for swimming; putting swimming on the map, so no, I don't mind. Also it's fun, I love swimming against him and I love a challenge, so no, I don't mind."

Sitting beside him, Shanteau also gave some minor explanations for his competitive progress, saying he has gone back to being "a work horse in college" and "competing like he did 5-6 years ago when I was doing 2-3 events an hour." Shanteau also expressed satisfaction about finally coming into the swimming spotlight at this competition, as he has generally been associated with overcoming cancer, an illness he discovered prior to the Beijing Olympics.



"Having the title of cancer survivor, it's nice and I am happy to be one, but it's nice that people are focusing on the swimming now too."

In the women's 200m butterfly, the 2008 Olympic champion Zige Liu (CHN) seemed to dominate the operations, but in the last 50m, Australia's Jessicah Schipper accelerated to the victory and touched first in 2:03.41 - a new World Record and faster than the previous best mark established by US Mary Descenza (who is competing in her ninth consecutive FINA World Championships, both in 50m and 25m-pool) in the heats of the event. Despite clocking then 2:04.14, the American did not medal in the final, concluding in fourth. The silver went to Liu (2:03.90, also under the previous WR), while the bronze was obtained by one of the revelations of these championships, 20-year-old Katinka Hosszu (HUN, already third in the 200m individual medley). Schipper had been third at the Olympics, victorious two years ago in Melbourne and third in 2005 (Montreal).

China would take its revenge in the women's 50m breaststroke, with the victory of Jing Zhao (18 years old) in a new WR of 27.06, improving the best mark established by Anastasia Zueva (RUS) in the semi-finals (27.38). Zueva was only fourth in the decisive race, behind Daniela Samulski (GER, 27.23), also under the former WR, and the second Chinese of the final, silver winner Chang Gao (27.28). It was the fifth and sixth Chinese medals of the swimming competitions at these championships. Zhao was third in the 4x100m medley relay at the Olympics and fourth in the 50m backstroke two years ago in Melbourne.

In the fifth and last final of the session, the women's 4x200m free relay, China got its seventh swimming award in Rome (and third gold), with a very solid victory in 7:42.08, a new WR (number 29 of the championships) that improved the best mark set by Australia at the 2008 Olympics (7:44.31). Formed by Yu Yang, Qianwei Zhu, Jing Liu and Jiaying Pang, the Chinese quartet put an end to a period of US hegemony in this event (triumphs in 2003, 2005 and 2007). This time, the Americans were second (7:42.56) despite a brilliant final leg by Allison Schmitt (1:54.21), in front of Great Britain (bronze in 7:45.51). In fourth (7:46.57), Italy managed to climb from an eighth position at the 600m-mark thanks to a wonderful Federica Pellegrini, who did everything she could to recuperate the gap by swimming the fastest 200m of all finalists (1:53.45). Australia finished in a disappointing fifth position.

In the women's 200m breaststroke semi-final,

Annamay Pierse, from Canada, established a new WR of 2:20.12, improving the time set by Rebecca Soni (USA) at the 2008 Olympics, when she got the gold in 2:20.22. Pierse is also the world record holder of the distance in 25m-pool, with 2:17.50. The other WR of the day in semi-finals was achieved by Christian Sprenger (AUS) in the men's 200m breaststroke - the Australian clocked 2:07.31, improving the time achieved by Kosuke Kitajima (JPN) in June 2008 (2:07.51).

WATER POLO

Serbia and Spain to clash for gold in men's water polo

Serbia will play Spain for the gold medal at the FINA World Championships men's water polo competition on Saturday night.

Serbia ended the reign of Croatia in a spectacular game of tough, rugged and skilled water polo in front of a large crowd at the Foro Italico.

Spain upset world No 2 United States of America 7-6 after trailing for much of the first half.

Croatia looked the team to beat and started with the first two goals but Serbia took 4-3, 7-6 and 10-9 leads at the break and kept clear until the end of the game.

Croatia had the final chance to level but the shot speared across the crossbar and Serbia, the bronze medallist from the Beijing Olympic Games, guaranteed a better finish than fourth at Melbourne two years ago.

Serbian head coach Dejan UDOVICIC said: "Both teams played a great game. We had a few problems in the first quarter but then we started playing the way we wanted to. We were good in defence and the guys strictly followed what I wanted them to do. We have almost reached the top of the mountain and on Saturday we will know who will be the world champion.

"We showed our power, even though we had some players out of the pool. It's exciting to win in these conditions," he said.

But Croatian head coach Ratko RUDIC said his team was "too nervous and played hastily".

"We had to chase them for the whole match and when we drew we were incapable of taking advantage of the situation."

"I'm not used to it. We played a wonderful match, although there were many fouls (32)."

The USA could not advance the game plan past a two-goal margin in the first quarter and allowed Spain to return and eventually lead there times in the second half. The third lead

proved an unassailable mountain and Spain will now shoot for a third title to go with those won in Perth in 1998 and Fukuoka in 2001.

Sitting in the stands was former Spanish coach Juan JANE who took Spain to those glory days, including the Olympic title in Atlanta in 1996.

The Spanish duo of Guillermo MOLINA (three goals) and Xavier Garcia (two) prove a thorn that the USA could not pluck from under its skin.

The USA won silver in Beijing but now must be content with a bronze-medal shot at Croatia.

Hungary sauntered into the play-off for fifth with a 13-8 victory over Romania but only led by two goals at halftime.

Germany will face Hungary for fifth after turning a 5-1 lead into a 9-5 difference against Canada. Australia blew a three-goal advantage in the final quarter to give FINA World League and European champion Montenegro ninth place with an 8-7 victory. The calm Montenegrins did what was needed, keeping the Aussie Sharks scoreless for six minutes.

In the play-off for 11th and 12th, Italy won 14-7 a far cry from victory here in 1994.

It is gold-medal day in women's water polo on Friday with a North American final between Canada and the United States of America at 21:00.

The bronze medal will be battled out at 16:00 between Russia and Greece.

Olympic champion Netherlands and World Cup champion Australia will play for fifth at 10:40 and Russia and Spain will face off for seventh at 09:00.

Game 83, 09:00, men, CHN 7 ITA 14

Classification 11th-12th

Referees: Radu MATAACHE (ROU), Steve ROTSART (USA).

Quarters: 2-4, 2-2, 1-5, 2-3

Extra man: CHN 4/9; ITA 2/6

The difference was finesse versus brute strength. The Chinese have the strength and the outside shooting prowess (wayward in the second and third periods) but the Italians had typical flair, simple touches and time to use situations to their advantage. Sometimes they tried tricky passing to no avail but they had the time and goal differential to please one of the smallest attendances of the tournament. It was, after all, the play-off for 11th place. MISTRANGELO and AICARDI revelled in the chance to score more goals than they could have hoped for while their regular head coach, Alessandro CAMPAGNA, watched from the stands while serving a game suspension. Eleventh place is a long way from the last time the championships were staged here when Italy won gold. China moved up one placing from 2007. The match marked the end of an era in

which captain CALCATERRA announced his retirement from the national team, following the lead of Italian women's captain Tania DI MARIO and team-mate Sylvia BOSURGI the previous day. CALCATERRA had been a fixture in the Italian team since the early 1990s.

Game 84, 10:20, men, MNE 8 AUS 7

Classification 9th-10th

Referees: Alan BALFANBAYEV (KAZ), Nikolaos STAVROPOULOS (GRE).

Quarters: 1-3, 2-1, 1-2, 4-1

Extra man: MNE 1/9; AUS 1/10

Australia imploded in the final four minutes of their encounter with World League and European champion Montenegro, turning a 7-4 lead into an 8-7 loss. Australia had the better of more than three quarters of the match only to abandon the game plan and planned extra-man plays and gift the game to the determined Montenegrins. When CAMPBELL took Australia 7-4 ahead early in the fourth with a long, low shot, the writing was on the wall. Montenegro turned that to graffiti with a sculptured game that saw Nikola JANOVIC from five metres, Jokic on extra, Ivovic from the field and, despite two Australian timeouts, ZLOKOVIC with a backhand goal from two metres for victory. Australia had no answer. At the Beijing Olympics the match-up saw a tie; at the FINA World League this year it was Montenegro by two and here in Rome it was one goal to the Europeans — enough not to go into double-digit ranking. ZLOKOVIC said after the match: "Today it was important to win because we proved we can be better than our ninth place. We usually have a bad start and then we are obliged to come back in the second half of the game or in the last period. We should still improve this."

Game 85, 11:40, men, HUN 13 ROU 8

Semifinals 5th-8th

Referees: Sergio BORRELL (ESP), Irfan SADEKOV (RUS).

Quarters: 3-1, 3-3, 4-2, 3-2

Extra man: HUN 1/7; ROU 0/5

Hungary, without the services of head coach Denes KEMENY, who was ostracised to the stands following a red card two days earlier, cruised to a 13-8 victory over Romania but it wasn't easy in the middle stages. Hungary was comfortable in the first quarter but Romania resisted the temptation to roll over against the Olympic champion and stuck close until halftime. But then the relentless assaults of Hungary, swift passing and pinpoint shots were like a rolling train. Still, the advantage was just four at the final break. Hungary released its built-up tensions at not making the medal round and romped away in the final quarter, gaining a

shot a fifth place on Saturday.

Game 86, 15:30, men, CAN 5 GER 9

Semifinals 5th-8th

Referees: Erhan TULGA (TUR), Mark KOGANOV (AZE).

Quarters: 0-2, 1-1, 1-3, 3-3

Extra man: CAN 3/6; GER 3/7

Germany rammed its way into the play-off for fifth against Hungary with a solid yet unexciting display. Canada has appealed for parts of the tournament but not so in this game until the final quarter when the odds were stacked highly against it. Germany started strongly but could not maintain the momentum before halftime. Added drive came at the start of the third period and the impetus was retained until the break with captain POLITZE firing in a penalty goal 11 seconds from time. Canada struck form with two goals in a minute but SAVIC lobbed RANDALL for 7-4 at 6:33. BOYD responded but the Canadian push stopped there, leaving Germany to rifle in the last two goals, one on penalty to POLITZE and the last by NAROSKA.

Game 87, 16:50, men, SRB 12 CRO 11

Semifinals 1st-4th

Referees: Gabor KISZELLY (HUN), Felipe GOMEZ (ITA).

Quarters: 4-3, 3-3, 3-3, 2-2

Extra man: SRB 5/11; CRO 4/15

Serbia ended the rein of Croatia as world champion with a controlled match against a team expected to go back to back under super coach Ratko RUDIC. It was not to be despite a 2-0 lead to the Croatians at the start. Then, with PRLAINOVIC and FILPOVIC combining with the exceptional captain UDOVICIC, Serbia was in the box seat. This trio scored nine of the goals as Serbia had the better of the shooting if not the foul count, which was mounting and a problem should the game go into extra time. Three times Serbia led by two goals in the second quarter and only twice in the third. FILIPOVIC sent in a slow five-metre, free-throw shot that RUDIC disputed late in the third quarter that gave Serbia a 10-9 advantage after DOBUD levelled the game on a superb cross pass in front of goal. PRLAINOVIC and FILIPOVIC gave Serbia two-goal margins in the fourth either side of a KARAC penalty by 2:32. BULJUBASIC hit the crossbar and the ball fell just over the line at 1:17 for 12-11, setting the scene for a fantastic finale. Serbia took a timeout but could not score and Croatia gained the final phase after a timeout, earning a short period on extra. No one wanted to shoot and the final shot came from the top but it was at least 30cm above the bar and Croatia's reign had ended. The story is in the major fouls. Croatia managed to get four Serbians excluded

on three majors — including UDOVICIC —but netting the chances proved fatal.

Game 88, 21:00, men, ESP 7 USA 6

Semifinals 1st-4th

Referees: Boris MARGETA (SLO), Mario BRGULJAN (MNE).

Quarters: 1-2, 3-2, 1-1, 2-1

Spain will be out to recreate history when it takes on Serbia in the gold-medal final on Saturday night. Spain trailed for much of the first quarter before drawing level at halftime and scoring three go-ahead goals to win the encounter. The USA began the better of the two with two with KRUMPHOLZ on extra and then POWERS who received a long pass on to the hand on the far post to score. MOLINA drilled from the top to round out the first quarter. GARCIA showed why is one of the best players here with a shot from the top for 2-2. BAILEY used his bulk to score from two metres but PERRONE scored from deep left for 3-3. AZEVEDO scored his 10th goal of the tournament on counter but GARCIA was at it again, spoiling the USA's party with a pile-driver from the top. MOLINA took Spain ahead for the first time at 2:59 of the third period with POWERS replying for 5-5 at the close of the third. PEREZ, the sleeping giant, emerged with a score off the post on extra at 6:31 for 6-5. The USA squared the game on extra when HUTTEN received the last of three swift passes on the far post to score at 4:19. MOLINA struck again at 3:38 on extra when Spain received two shots after MOSES deflected the first attempt. The USA went to a timeout with a minute to go but lost the ball. With 25 seconds left the USA regained the ball and employed two centre forwards. Spain went into power defence and the final shot came from the hard-working BEAUBIEN but AGUILAR stopped it and the game was over.

RESULTS



MEN

200m INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

1. LOCHTE Ryan USA 1:54.10 WR
2. CSEH Laszlo HUN 1:55.24
3. SHANTEAU Eric USA 1:55.36
4. PEREIRA Thiago BRA 1:55.55
5. BRODIE Leith AUS 1:56.69
6. GODDARD James GBR 1:57.93
7. TAKAKUWA Ken JPN 1:58.02
8. KIS Gergo HUN 1:59.32

100m FREE

1. CIELO FILHO Cesar BRA 46.91 WR
2. BERNARD Alain FRA 47.12
3. BOUSQUET Frederick FRA 47.25
4. HAYDEN Brent CAN 47.27
5. WALTERS David USA 47.33
6. NYSTRAND Stefan SWE 47.37
7. FERNS Lyndon RSA 47.94
8. OLIVEIRA Nicolas BRA 48.01

WOMEN

200m BUTTERFLY

1. SCHIPPER Jessicah AUS 2:03.41 WR
2. LIU Zige CHN 2:03.90
3. HOSSZU Katinka HUN 2:04.28
4. DESCENZA Mary USA 2:04.41
5. JIAO Liuyang CHN 2:04.50
6. MONGEL Aurore FRA 2:05.48
7. LACROIX Audrey CAN 2:05.95
8. HAMILL Samantha AUS 2:06.11

50m BACKSTROKE

1. ZHAO Jing CHN 27.06 WR
2. SAMULSKI Daniela GER 27.23
3. GAO Chang CHN 27.28
4. ZUEVA Anastasia RUS 27.31
5. GERASIMENYA Aleksandra BLR 27.62
6. EDINGTON Sophie AUS 27.73
7. SEEBOHM Emily AUS 27.83
8. MOLINA Fabiola BRA 27.88

4x200m FREE RELAY

1. CHN P.R. of China 7:42.08 WR
2. USA United States of America 7:42.56
3. GBR Great Britain 7:45.51
4. ITA Italy 7:46.57
5. AUS Australia 7:46.85
6. HUN Hungary 7:48.04
7. FRA France 7:48.44
8. CAN Canada 7:49.14

RECORDS (DAY 5)

7 WORLD RECORDS

- 200 IM Men 1:54.10 Ryan Lochte USA
 200 Fly Women 2:03.41 Jessica Schipper,AUS
 100 Free Men 46.91 Cesar Cielo Filho BRA
 200 Breast Women 2:20.12sf Annamay Pierse US
 200 Breast Men 2:07.31sf Christian Sprenger AUS
 4x200 Free Women 7:42.08 China CHN
 50 Back Women 27.06 Jing Zhao,CHN

15 CHAMPIONSHIPS RECORDS

- 200 IM Men 1:54.10 Ryan Lochte USA
 200 Fly Women 2:03.41 Jessica Schipper,AUS
 100 Free Men 46.91 Cesar Cielo Filho BRA
 200 Breast Men 2:07.31sf Christian Sprenger AUS
 200 Breast Men 2:08.55h Eric Shanteau USA
 200 Breast Men 2:08.85h Loris Facci, ITA
 200 Breast Men 2:09.22h Henrique Barbosa BRA
 200 Breast Men 2:09.26h Yevgeniy Ryzhkov KAZ
 200 Breast Men 2:09.28h Giedrius Titenis,LTU
 200 Breast Women 2:20.12sf Annamay Pierse US
 200 Breast Women 2:20.22sf Rebecca Soni USA
 200 Breast Women 2:21.68h Annamay Pierse US,
 200 Back Men 1:54.06sf Aaron Peirsol USA
 50 Back Women 27.06 Jing Zhao,CHN
 4x200 Free Women 7:42.08 China CHN
 4x200 Free Women 7:49.04 Great Britain GBR