



## Synchro: Solo Free

## Italy enters the world's "elite club"

Natalia Ishchenko gave Russia its fourth gold medal of the synchronised swimming competitions at the 13th FINA World Championships Rome 2009 by winning the final of the Solo Free event. After the victories in the Team Technical, Solo Technical (also Ishchenko) and Duet Technical, Russia is dominating the operations, but is also being closely followed by Spain, who conquered the silver medal (its fourth, in the events where Russians were first), one day after getting its first World Championships' gold in the Free Combination. In third, a new nation made its entry into the "club" of countries having medalled at the FINA World Championships – Italy (with its star Beatrice Adelizzi).

Ishchenko got the first perfect '10' of the championships and finished her final with a total of 98.833, half a point more than Mengual (98.333). However, the silver medal of the Iberian icon was more celebrated by the Italian public than Ishchenko's gold and in the Press Conference, Mengual could not contain her emotion when recalling the support she received in the stands of the pool at the Foro Italico: "For me, it's like I have won the gold medal," confessed Mengual, who was indeed hoping for a gold in this event (in direct confrontation with the Russians, who did not swim the Free Combination event). "We have tried everything, but we still couldn't manage to get the gold. We have displayed some new ideas on a technical and artistic point of view, but the marks did not follow our effort," commented the Spanish head coach Anna Tarres.

Performing to a "modern" version of John Lennon's "Yesterday", Mengual was asked if the title of this music could symbolise her imminent retirement from the pools after the 2009 FINA World Championships (Mengual is now 32 years old), the Iberian star could not hold her tears: "I have been competing for so many years at the highest level... I think I now deserve some vacation..." she said, avoiding going further into her thoughts. The mystery remains...

The other highlight of the day was the third place of Beatrice Adelizzi – the first Italian medal in synchronised swimming at a FINA World Championships. Until the start of the competition in Rome, only six countries had made it to the podium in the history of this competition: USA, Canada, Russia, Japan, France and Spain. After the first five events of the programme, two more nations have made their entry into this group: China (two bronze and one silver, but no participation in the solo events), and now Italy. Adelizzi (born in November 1988) was evidently very happy with this result: "It has a special taste, as it was obtained in Rome, the city where I train with my teammates. This medal represents a lot of effort and was also obtained thanks to the outstanding support of the crowd, which was fantastic".

Before this result, Italians were close to the podium in these championships at home, coming fourth in the Solo Technical (also Adelizzi) and Free Combination. Canada, already with two bronze medals in Rome, was fourth this time, with a very solid performance from Chloé Isaac, while Japan's Yumi Adachi finished fifth.

## DIVING

## Chong He gives China fifth gold

Chong He (CHN) has proved his superiority on 3m springboard again today at the 13th FINA World Championships. He, who won this event a year ago at the Beijing Olympic Games, took the title over US veteran and silver medalist Troy Dumais, while Alexandre Despatie (CAN) took third. This victory gives Chong He his fourth World Championships medal, as he won the 3m synchro gold and 3m individual bronze in 2005, as well as a gold in the 10m platform in 2003.

It is not easy to explain but the 3m springboard has been the least fortunate event for China's divers than any other discipline. They have

Medals Table  
After day 6

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	TOTAL
CHN	5	5	5	15
RUS	5	2	0	7
GBR	2	0	0	2
GER	2	0	0	2
ESP	1	4	0	5
AUS	1	0	1	2
MEX	1	0	0	1
USA	0	4	1	5
CAN	0	1	4	5
GRE	0	1	0	1
ITA	0	0	3	3
BRA	0	0	1	1
MAS	0	0	1	1
RSA	0	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>51</b>

managed to secure first place just two times in the history of the World Championships – in 1994 (with Zhuocheng Yu) and in 2007 (Qin Kai). This discipline can be historically associated with Dmitry Sautin (RUS), who was the owner of the 3m world crown twice, and wanted to finish his great career precisely here in Rome, but after the Russian pair failed to get a medal in synchro (on July 18), Sautin decided not to compete in the individual 3m at all.

This decision appeared reasonable. Diving progress usually moves in waves: the difficulty of the dives increases first and later the quality of the execution follows suit. When a diver is still able to demonstrate perfect quality, but must refuse the elevated degree of difficulty because of the age or injuries (like Sautin has) it means that his time for medals has gone.

The Chinese divers were the first to reach very high level in both categories. They were especially successful at the Olympics (four victories at the last four Games). Chong He

won in Beijing with very high result (572.90), and of course many of the competitors knew he was the athlete to beat in the final here in Rome.

Alexander Despatie has come pretty close to doing it. He finished second in Beijing as well as at the last World Championships in Melbourne, scoring the highest points here in Rome in the preliminaries, but just earning bronze in the final.

"Two years ago I had more competitions and it was important. A diver must be mentally ready, not only physically," he said, adding: "I needed the last dive to give me something better. I wish it was better. I didn't know where I was standing during the competition. I have gotten two bronze at these world championships and it is a good result considering my injuries this year. I am happy, now I will go for a short holiday and prepare for next season which will be full of competitions".

The results of the medallists were not too high. The conditions of outdoor pool can't be compared with an indoor. The air temperature was very high and this always makes athletes tired. Besides the fact that it was difficult to concentrate, they were doing a free programme with plenty of complicated combinations for the third time in two days.

These were the reasons for the mistakes. Chong He was not perfect in his second, fourth and sixth attempts (receiving a mark of 7.0 was absolutely unfamiliar to him), and Dumais missed the entry a little bit in the 3rd and 4th round, while Despatie spoiled the last dive – before that he was keeping a second position just 5.70 behind Chong.

Troy Dumais who lost by 6.80 to the winner, also had complicated feelings about his performance: "Silver is great, but I know I can do better. I did not feel the pressure going into the last dive because back home we practice this last dive all the time. My coach gives me a score to aim for and that keeps it fun and real. He has great faith in me and this is why I came into this event mentally strong."

Even the winner was a little bit disappointed. He said at the press conference: "I think I performed average. The level of difficulty of my dives was quite high. I did not have any particularly bad dive. But I just think I could have done better in each one of them"

## WATER POLO

### Top four decided in women's water polo

Hungary, Russia, Australia and Spain have qualified top of their groups and will contest the quarter-finals of the women's water polo competition at the FINA World Championships next week.

In the meantime, the second and third-ranked teams in each group will play the second round on Saturday to decide who will join the top four in the hunt for medals.

It was a day where the leading teams had little trouble in getting through as the draw displayed the better match-ups earlier in the week.

Group A was mastered by 2005 champion Hungary with an 18-5 victory over Uzbekistan. The real action came in the evening's last match when 2004 Olympic champion Italy needed a 1-0 final quarter to beat China 11-10 and finish second in the group.

Group B saw Russia win with a 23-4 demolition of Kazakhstan while the World League champion United States of America downed Greece 12-8.

Group C was claimed by World Cup champion Australia on the tiebreak, defeating neighbour New Zealand 14-4. Canada came second with a 20-5 scuttling of South Africa.

Group D went to Spain on countback from Olympic champion Netherlands. Spain beat Brazil 12-6 while the Dutch will have to fight through the second round despite defeating Germany 8-6.

Friday's men's action will see Serbia and Australia clashing at 10:50; the USA taking on Romania at 12:10 and Italy looking for a first victory over Macedonia at 21:00.

### Game 33, 09.30, women, NZL 4 AUS 14

Referees: Mihaljo CIRIC (SRB), Decio PATELLI (BRA).

Quarters: 2-3 2-4, 0-2, 0-5

Extra man: NZL 0/12; AUS 1/6

Australia needed a seven-goal difference to advance to the quarter-finals as the Group C winner. It took a long time coming with the margin achieved five minutes from time. The game was evenly poised at the midway point of the second quarter with New Zealand rebounding from three down to claw back to 4-4, thanks to two long-range shots from

HUDSON. New Zealand was never going to win but made life hard for the Aussie Stingers. Like in the game against Canada, New Zealand wilted under the superior fitness and counter-attack of the opposition in the final quarter. Neither side could convert extra with ease. In fact, the Kiwis missed all 12 chances. Only one from 18 shows terrific defence.

### Game 34, 10:50, women, CAN 20 RSA 5

Referees: Gideon REEMNET (NED), Ulrich SPIEGEL (GER).

Quarters: 3-3, 6-1, 6-0, 5-1

Extra man: CAN 5/8; RSA 0/7

Canada and South Africa were playing for pride as the group winner had already been decided and Canada was expected to win easily. This gave coach OATEN a chance to play his team, work on tactics and combinations for the important second round and possible medal hunt. South Africa did well to score five times against Canada but will look to the 13th-16th play-offs on Saturday and Monday.

### Game 35, 12:10, women, GER 6 NED 8

Referees: Irfan SADEKOV (RUS), Nenad PERIS (CRO).

Quarters: 0-4, 1-0, 3-3, 2-1

Extra man: GER 2/4; NED 2/15

The Netherlands looked to be a runaway winner of this game following a strong opening quarter but the Germans worked tirelessly to get back into the game aq7 4-2 only to see the Dutch go 7-4 ahead at the end of the third period. Two Dutch goals from the VAN DER SLOOT sisters had their team in a commanding position two minutes into the final quarter. Germany's consolation goals came within the final two minutes when the winner had already been decided.

### Game 36, 13:30, women, BRA 6 ESP 12

Referees: Guy PINKER (RSA), NI Shi Wei (CHN).

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

Extra man: BRA 3/4; ESP 1/5

Spain won Group D by virtue of breaking the tie with the Netherlands. Spain needed a two-goal margin to advance to the quarter-finals and leave Olympic champion Netherlands to battle through the second round. Spain started well at 5-2 by the first break and stretched to 7-3 by halftime. Brazil always pressured the Spaniards, who now must be regarded as a real medal threat under the control of Olympic and world champion coach Joan Jane. Brazil missed by two goals slipping into third and will now have to play in the 13-16 group.

### Game 37, 17:00, women, UZB 5 HUN 18

Referees: Stephen KNIGHTS (NZL), Farid MONER (EGY).

Quarters: 2-4, 0-3, 0-4, 3-7.

Extra man: UZB 2/8; HUN 4/8

Hungary moved one step closer to the glory days of 2005 when it last won the world crown. The clash with Uzbekistan was no more than a training session as Hungary claimed Group A with three victories. The game was virtually over by halftime as Hungary commanded the game and then pushed the score out to 11-2 at the final break and 15-3 midway through the final quarter to coast to victory.

### Game 38, 18:20, women, RUS 23 KAZ 4

Referees: Nikolaos STAVROPOULOS (GRE), Nader GHAFOURI (IRI).

Quarters: 4-1, 6-1, 6-1, 7-1

Extra man: RUS 2/3; KAZ 0/3

Russia made no mistake at pushing home a superior advantage and gaining valuable experience for later rounds, which won't start until the quarter-finals. By winning Group B, Russia sent its intention to be a serious contender for the medal round. Strong counter-attacks and sharp drives proved the telling point for the Russians and sent Kazakhstan to the round of 13-16.

### Game 39, 19:40, women, USA 12 GRE 8

Referees: Radu MATCHE (ROM), Filipe GOMEZ (ITA).

Quarters: 1-1, 3-0, 4-3,

Extra man: USA 4/12; GRE 3/16

The USA eased into second place in Group B. The halftime score showed USA's prowess and even at 8-4 heading into the last it was unthinkable the win could go any other way. The final quarter was a goal-fest but the see-saw nature of the scoring meant there was no real change to the final outcome.

While goals came from all parts of the field the scoring on the extra-man play was not so comfortable with Greece suffering badly.

### Game 40, 21:00, women, CHN 10 ITA 11

Referees: Boris MARGETA (SLO), Ursula WENGERROTH (SUI).

Quarters: 3-4, 3-3, 4-3, 0-1

Italy managed to hold off China, the recent winner of the World Student Games. Italy always held sway following a lightning start when CASANOVA twice converted from the two-metre line in the opening minute. She added another in the second quarter for 5-4 and sent kisses to the air. China came back twice to level in the third but Italy went to the turn at 7-6. Three times Italy went two up but the sun shone on China as SUN Yating scored three goals for 10-10 in a quarter where both teams missed a

penalty shot. Italy pounced on a missed corner decision, called a timeout and ABBATE scored off the near post to open scoring in the fourth quarter. China went to a timeout at 3:38 but the resulting shot went over the top. China had another attempt on extra inside the last minute but Teng had her shot stopped by GIGLI. China took another timeout at 15 seconds but GAO Ao's shot was stopped by Gigli, delighting the huge crowd.

## FINA CONGRESSES

### Swimming and Extraordinary (on Masters Rules)

FINA held two Congresses on July 23, 2009 in Rome (ITA), with the occasion of the 13th FINA World Championships 2009: the FINA Technical Swimming Congress and the FINA Extraordinary Congress (the latter exclusively devoted to the update of the Masters rules).

The main decisions were as follows:

#### FINA Technical Swimming Congress

- Provisions have been made concerning the use of 10-lane pools: in this case, the fastest swimmer shall be placed in lane 5, and the swim-off will take place in the event of equal times in the heats for the tenth place or twentieth place;
- From now on, swimmers must proceed to the first call room 20 minutes before the start of their events. Then, after inspection, they proceed to the final call room;
- Precisions on the breaststroke technique were made;
- In medley swimming, it was clarified that each stroke must cover  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the distance;
- It was precisely defined that all individual races must be held as separate gender events;
- On SW 10.7, "swimsuit" was added to the rule stipulating that the swimmer cannot be aided in his/her speed, buoyancy or endurance by any device. Moreover, the use of tape on the body is not permitted, unless otherwise stipulated by medical reasons;
- World Records can be established only in fresh water and by competitors wearing swimsuits approved by FINA.

#### FINA Extraordinary Congress

- In masters diving synchro competitions, competitors from different clubs within the same Federation are permitted to take part as a team;
- New events were added to the masters swimming programme and clarifications were made in breaststroke;

• In masters water polo competitions, it is now clarified that all players listed on the game roster will be entitled to play. Moreover, for age groups 30+, 35+, 40+ and 45+, the game will consist of four periods of seven minutes each; for age groups 50+, 55+, 60+, etc, each of these periods will be of six minutes;

• In masters synchro competitions, the events are solo, duet, trio, team and combination. The technical and free routines of solo, duet, trio and team count as one event. The Combination - by itself - is one event. At the World Championships, the programme shall be the Technical and Free Routines and Combination. A competitor shall be permitted to swim a routine in only one age group. Finally, new specifications regarding the reserves and the draw in synchro were approved, and the age was defined as being the one as of December 31 of the year of competition.

## RESULTS



### SOLO FREE

1. ISHCHENKO Natalia RUS 98.833
2. MENGUAL Gemma ESP 98.333
3. ADELIZZI Beatrice ITA 95.500
4. ISAAC Chloé CAN 95.000
5. ADACHI Yumi JPN 93.167
6. ANANASOVA Lolita UKR 92.500
7. WILLHELM Chloe FRA 91.500
8. ANTHOPOULOU Natalia GRE 90.834
9. RANDALL Jenna GBR 89.167
10. WANG Ok Gyong PRK 88.666
11. BERNARDOVA Sona CZE 87.833
12. PARK Hyunsun KOR 87.666



### MEN - 10km

1. LURZ Thomas GER 1:52:06.9
2. GEMMELL Andrew USA 1:52:08.3
3. CRIPPEN Francis USA 1:52:10.7
4. CLERI Valerio ITA 1:52:11.4
5. RYCKEMAN Brian BEL 1:52:13.1
6. GIANNIOTIS Spyridon GRE 1:52:13.6
7. HERVAS Francisco Jose ESP 1:52:14.7
8. GRIMSEY Trent AUS 1:52:14.8
9. METWALY Mazen EGY 1:52:14.9
10. DRATTSEV Evgeny RUS 1:52:15.0
11. ESCOBAR Luis MEX 1:52:18.0
12. FICHTL Jakub CZE 1:52:24.0



### MEN - 3m SPRINGBOARD

1. HE Chong CHN 505.20
2. DUMAIS Troy USA 498.40
3. DESPATIE Alexandre CAN 490.30
4. ZHANG Xinhua CHN 487.75
5. CASTRO Cesar BRA 466.90
6. CASTILLO Yahel MEX 459.90
7. ILLANA Javier ESP 452.10
8. COLWILL Chris USA 451.70
9. MITCHAM Matthew AUS 431.30
10. HAUSDING Patrick GER 426.45
11. ROSS Reuben CAN 425.30
12. BENEDETTI Michele ITA 415.70