

## **OWS GP 2008, Overview of Race 1 (Santa Fe, ARG)**

FINA Communication Department

As reported by FINA delegate Tomas Haces German (Member of the FINA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee), 21 swimmers participated in the race; 11 men and 10 women representing 10 different countries. There was wind during the race, and at times it was strong. Air temperature was 24°Celsius and water temperature was 26°Celsius. There was full national and international radio, newspaper and television media coverage of the event, which was attended by thousands of spectators who gathered at the start area, in towns near the river, and at the finish area.

Thirty-five minutes after the race commenced, Natalya Pankina separated herself from the first group. She proceeded to swim alone, leading the race, for 7h 32 minutes. Four hours after the start, she was just six minutes ahead of the first group composed of 17 swimmers. Finally, about 50 minutes before the race finished, a small group composed of Petar Stoychev, Damian Blaum, Stephan Gomez, Pankina, and Rodolfo Valenti were changing positions and struggling to take the lead. Then, after he was within 300m of the finish area, Stoychev held the lead until the end. The race was well-organised and the Coast Guard was on the scene to ensure security.

The race was organised by the Asociacion Acuatica Rio Coronda, with the support of over 20 institutions and sponsorship and supplies from about 25 enterprises. Directors of the race were Marcelo O. Micocci and Diego Degano. Referee was Silvia Dalotto and assistant referees were Alberto Marquez and Horacio Migliaro. The award ceremony was attended by the National Youth Minister, the city's Mayor (who was also the race-starter) and Director of Education and Sports, as well as other distinguished guests. Please consult the final results for full details on the winners.

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