

Lurz (GER) sets the pace in Cancun races

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German open water swimming icon Thomas Lurz triumphed in two races in Cancun (MEX), the fourth leg of the FINA 10km Marathon Swimming World Cup and third stop of the FINA Open Water Swimming Grand Prix, taking place on April 24 and 26, respectively. Brazilian World champion (25km) Ana Marcela Cunha was the best among women in the first race while Jana Pechavona from Czech Republic took out the second. Lurz powered home to win in 1h57m16s51 in the 10km race, closely followed by current World champion Spyridon Gianniotis from Greece, who finished in 1h57m16s55. Only a photo finish decided which one of them was the winner. Lurz was declared winner by a judges' decision. The Greek was victorious in the first three stages of the Series. Lurz' best result before Cancun was a second place in Eilat (ISR). Claiming third spot was Italy's Nicola Bolzonello, who clocked 1h57m16s56.

"I feel very, very happy with the result. It was a competition with a harsh climate, but also with a high level of competition. My end was perfect; I joined the group in the last stage, coming from behind," said Thomas Lurz on his strategical win.



Men's podium after 15km race, FINA Open Water Swimming Grand Prix

20-year-old Cunha finished in a time of 2h09m14s31 to capture the gold. The Brazilian swimmer led for most of the race, facing pressure from German Angela Maurer, who finished second with a time of 2h09m16s12. Martina Grimaldi from Italy completed the podium with a time of 2h09m19s25.

"Whenever I have good memories of Cancun; I won the race in 2010, last year and now I come back and win again. I'm happy and satisfied. It was a hard race because my opponents were strong. This competition is important because I will not take part in the London Olympics," said Cunha, who confirmed she would compete in the remaining stages of the World Cup Series.

In the Grand Prix race, Lurz cranked up his powerful swim again in the 15km race, winning in a time of 2h59m55s51. The silver medal went to Brian Ryckeman from Belgium, clocking 2h59m55s83 while the bronze that day was reserved for Andreas Waschburger (GER), who crossed the finish line at 2h59m57s41.

In the women's race, Jana Pechavona (CZE) finished first with a time of 3h13m14s21. German Angela Maurer continued to look strong, clocking 3h13m14s54 while compatriot Nadine Reichert was happy with the bronze (3h15m45s56).

Many internationally recognised open water swimmers gathered in Cancun for the two races on FINA's open water swimming circuit in order to fine-tune their preparation for the upcoming Olympic Marathon Swim Qualifier, taking place in Setubal (POR) from June 9-10.
