

Water Polo Men: Day 2: CRO 13 CAN 8

FINA Communication Department

Croatia inflicted a record 54th loss on Canada at FINA World Championship level in winning a Group B match 13-8. The

spirit in which Canada played and resistance given after a poor start was more than commendable and spectators were treated to an excellent effort. While Petar Muslim was helping the Croatian surge, the Olympic champion at times wondered what to do against the Canadians and head coach Ivica Tucak looked frustrated.

For Canada's part, Nicolas Constantin-Bicari was in fine form, converting a penalty at 8-4 and scoring a off an engineered drive. He then was fronted at centre forward but he reached under his defender, popped the ball over his head and earned a penalty shot, which, sadly, captain Kevin Graham could not convert.

That penalty save was by one of the world's best goalkeepers, Josip Pavic, who was enjoying a relatively quiet day thanks to his defence. He only had to make four saves while Robin Randall at the other end stopped nine.

Croatia started well but then let Canada into the match with a 3-3 second quarter. Canada hung on relentlessly, losing the other two quarters by a single goal.

A referee mistake in the second quarter sent Paulo Obradovic from the water when a penalty was called. Obradovic thought he had been sent from the match as the referee gesticulated suspension with substitution. The scoreboard had "OUT" against his name. This was subsequently changed to "2" and he could return but Tucak elected to keep him on the bench for the rest of the bench, even though he had scored two goals.

Eight goals against the Olympic champion is no mean feat and Canada will not be worried by match-losing statistic. This tournament has a long way to go yet.

Match 10: 10:50, Group B, CROATIA 13 CANADA 8

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

Referees: Mark Koganov (GER), Masoud Rezvani (IRI).

Extra Man: CRO: 1/2. CAN: 2/2

Pens: CRO: 1/1. CAN: 2/2.

Teams:

CROATIA: Josip Pavic, Luke Loncar, Ivan Milakovic, Fran Paskuvalin (1), Maro Jokovic (2), Luka Bukic, Petar Muslim (3), Andro Butuje, Sandro Sukno (3), Niksa Dobud (1), Andelo Setka (1), Paul Obradovic (2), Marko Bijac. Head Coach: Ivica Tucak.

CANADA: Robin Randall, Constantine Kudaba, Oliver Vikalo (1), Nicolas Constantin-Bicari (2), Justin Boyd, (1) Scott Robinson (1), Alec Taschereau, Kevin Graham (1), Devon Diggle (1), John Conway (1), Luka Gasic, Jared McElroy, Ivan Marcisin. Head Coach: Alex Beslin.

FLASH QUOTES:

Petar Muslim (CRO):

“This was a very good game. We opened it well, but it is impossible to keep up that rhythm for the entire game, so the third quarter saw some mistakes, but overall I am very happy we how it went.”

Sandro Sukno (CRO):

“We had the upper hand for most of the game. We showed our team’s quality and we will be even better in the next game.”

Ivica Tucak (Head Coach)

“We played well and controlled the game, except some small mistakes in defence we did a good job.”

Paulo Obradovic (CRO):

“We played well, the most important thing is that we are the first in our group so this makes our path to the semifinals much easier.”

Alel Tascherreau (CAN):

“It’s a pity we didn’t start well in the first quarter because otherwise we could have gotten a better result. The next game against USA will be tough for us. It’s my first international competition and we still have a young team, so we need more time.”

Kevin Graham (CAN):

“It was a very important game, Croatia is a strong team and we are a young team so we are still developing. It was an OK game, we have to become more stable in defence so we can play better. The performance was disappointing, but not the result — we missed a lot of chances.”
