



FÉDÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE
DE NATATION

Published on *fina.org* - Official FINA website (<https://www.fina.org>)

Water Polo Men: Day 3: SRB 16 CHN 9

FINA Communication Department

Serbia walked into the next round with three victories, beating a stubborn China 16-9 in their Group C encounter. While Serbia would be expected to win comfortably, Rick Azevedo, China's coach from the USA, seems have steered the team into a more cohesive unit, utilising its tremendous firepower. China worked hard until the end of the game, especially against such a powerful team like Serbia. China's brand of water polo is infectious, as different as it is from Serbia's.

The man with the new baby, Filip Filipovic, opened the scoring and Serbia led 4-1 at the quarter break. It could have been higher if Dusan Mandic had not had his penalty attempt blocked by Honghui Wu.

Each time Serbia took a two-goal margin in the second period, China hit back until Dusko Pijetlovic scored the first of his three goals just before Halftime for 8-5.

This stretched to 11-5 early in the third quarter, then became 11-7 and then 13-8 by the final break.

Pijetlovic's goal from wide on the two-metre line after a centre-forward drift, was excellent. He scored Serbia's 14th goal and the match rounded out to 16-9, a good result for both teams.

Serbia has won six of seven matches against China, only losing a World League encounter in 2010 — Serbia's biggest international defeat at 17-4. Serbia went on to win the World League that year, beating Montenegro in the final.

Match 17: 09:30, Group C, SERBIA 16 CHINA 9

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

Referees: Cory Williams (NZL), German Moller (ARG).

Extra Man: SRB: 2/4. CHN: 4/4

Pens: SRB: 2/3.

Teams:

SERBIA:

Branislav Mitrovic, Dusan Mandic, Zivko Gocic (1), Vanja Udovicic (3), Milos Cuk (1), Dusko Pijetlovic (3), Slobodan Nikic (1), Milan Aleksic, Nikola Radjen, Filip Filipovic (2), Andrea Prlainovic (1), Stefan Mitrovic (4), Gojko Pijetlovic. Head Coach: Dejan Savic.

CHINA:

Weiging Ge, Feihu Tan, Zhongxing Liang (2), Bin Jiang, Junliang Guo, Ning Pan (2), Bin Li, Yang Wang, Junmin Xie (2), Jian Zhang, Chufeng Zhang, (2) Nianxiang Liang (1), Honghui Wu. Head Coach: Rick Azevedo.

FLASH QUOTES:**Milos Cuk (SRB):**

“At the beginning of the match we were too laid back, but in the following quarters everything was fine.”

Stefan Mitrovic (SRB):

“It is still morning, so we are so tired. We weren't concentrated on the game and our tempo slowed down. This was the last match in our group, we're in the first place and that's the most important thing.”

Filip Filipovic (SRB):

“This is my first game as a father and it feels great, but this is a team effort and the team is most important.”

Gojko Pijetlovic (SRB):

“We had a bad start. We were expecting it to be easy but were not expecting all their goals in the first half.”

“We are not upset for the result because to score nine goals against such a strong team as Serbia is good enough for our level. We were weak facing the powerful counter-attacks of Serbia. We have learnt how to play, now we need to learn how to win.”

Ning Pan (CHN):

“We are used to playing against Serbia, since we have met them for the last four times in the same group. I’m tired of meeting them; they are still too strong for us. We were sure we couldn’t beat them, even at halftime when the difference in goals wasn’t that big.”

Rick Azevedo (CHN Head Coach):

“Serbia is a very strong team. They are our teachers and we are their students. In this game, we had good defence but we have been weak in counter-attack. We are a young team, we have been playing together for only four years. Our goal in this tournament is to accumulate experience, to play as many matches as possible, and to grow to prepare for the next Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.”
