

Water Polo Men, Day 7: 7th & 8th - SRB 12 AUS 7

FINA Communication Department

Serbia may be unused to playing off for seventh in a major championship but it's not unused to playing Australia, having won 10-7 on day one. It became two from two in Barcelona when Serbia defeated the Aussie Sharks 12-7 for seventh place. Filip Filipovic, a new father who will now want to rush home to see his baby son for the first time, was the star of the show with five goals from six attempts. It could have been six but for a penalty save of his shot against Australian goalkeeper Joel Dennerley. Only one of his left-arm shots came on extra but his run was stopped when he injured his shooting thumb on the follow through of his last score. He finished with 16 goals for the championship.

Serbia was the class team in the water, although Australia battled hard for its goals with centre forward Joel Swift scoring twice, an area where Australia did not concentrate its efforts strongly.

Filipovic scored two of his goals and missed his penalty shot in the first quarter for 3-2. The second period was even with Serbia then drumming in the goals for a 9-6 lead at the third break.

Australian captain Rhys Howden blasted in his second to close the gap to 9-7 only for a succession of Serbian goals to close out the match. One of the best goals of the tournament was when Vanja Udovicic collected a loose ball in the deep left area, backhanding it high across the face of the goal for Slobodan Nikic to rise high and drag it down on the far-post position for the final score at 13-7.

Richard Campbell, kept scoreless today, was the Australians' best scorer with 11.

Match 41: 15:00, Classification 7-8, AUSTRALIA 7 SERBIA 13

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

Referees: Nenad Peris (CRO), German Moller (ARG)

Extra Man: AUS: 1/3 (1/6). SRB: 2/4 (2/8).

Pens: SRB: 0/1

Teams:

AUSTRALIA:

Joel Dennerley, Richard Campbell, Matthew Martin, John Cotterill, Nathan Power, Jarrod Gilchrist, Aidan Roach (1), Aaron Younger (1), Joel Swift (2), Tyler Martin, Rhys Howden (2), William Miller (1), James Clark. Head Coach: Elvis Fatovic.

SERBIA: Branislav Mitrovic, Dusan

Mandic, Zivko Gocic (2), Vanja Udovicic (1), Milos Cuk, Dusko Pijetlovic (2), Slobodan Nikic (1), Milan Aleksic, Nikola Radjen (1), Filip Filipovic (5), Andrea Prlainovic, Stefan Mitrovic (1), Gojko Pijetlovic.

Head Coach: Dejan Savic.

FLASH QUOTES:

Zivko Gocic (SRB):

“This championship has been a disappointment for us for sure, a very big disappointment. The defeat against Spain was very painful. We feel a lot of pressure because this team has been on the podium since 2007.”

Vanja Udovicic (SRB):

“Australia seems to have given up even before the match started, this was not the same team we played against in the group stage. This tournament has been a big learning curve for us.”

Filip Filipovic (SRB):

“One goal made all the difference for us in this tournament, but we can’t be depressed about it. We now need a well-deserved break.”

Andrija Prlainovic (SRB):

“It is better to win than to lose this game, even though the seventh and eighth positions are similar. We did not expect to come seventh in this tournament, but that’s sport.”

Rhys Howden (AUS):

“Serbia is a good team with very experienced players. We made some silly mistakes and our defence needs improving. Even though, we surprised ourselves with the final result.”

John Cotterill (AUS):

“In this championship we could have beaten Croatia and in the semifinals we would have faced Hungary, against whom we tied previously, so we saw ourselves in the final. The defeat really hurt us. In the last two games we lost respect in ourselves but we have three years from now to improve as a new team.”

Elvis Fatovic (AUS Head Coach):

“We played really well until the quarterfinals. After that I was a little bit disappointed with my team. After this championship we are one step closer to the European teams, as we have played against great teams. Our goal was to play well and we did very well for five games. We had a hard group with no easy games, so now my players are really tired.”
