

## Water Polo Men, Day 7 - 5th & 6th: ESP 10 GRE 8

FINA Communication Department

For the fifth time in World Championship history, Spain finished fifth in beating Greece 10-8 at the Bernat Picornell Pool. In the 43rd match of the championship, Spain made it special for the stand-in captain, Xavier Valles, a veteran of the team and playing his last international. Felipe Perrone stood down for the match to allow Valles to lead the team into the pool. He scored his last goal at this level for the go-ahead 4-3 in the second quarter. A champion player, he leaves the international stage as a character and an exceptional athlete. Greece won the first period 2-1 and then Albert Espanol set the pool alight when he went rampant, lift his team to 6-4 at halftime with four goals. He scored from his favourite deep left and from the penalty line to give his team the upperhand in the middle stage of the match.

When Evangelos Delakas scored his third goal with a tip in on extra-man attack at the start of the third period, he started something that did not please the near capacity crowd filling the stadium for the following gold-medal match. As an experiment of splitting the two medal finals — the bronze in the first session and the gold in the last — the bronze attracted many more people than the women's corresponding match on Friday.

Xavier Garcia replied for 7-5; Angelos Vlachopoulos scored from the deep right and Guillermo Molina fired in a missile from the top. Christodoulos Kolomvos tipped in a pass off the left-post position and Ioannis Fountoulis netted his second from the penalty line for 8-8 just before the final break.

Spain pleased the crowd when Marc Minguell with a dynamic spin tip on the right post and then Espanol with his fifth from top left off a cross pass at 3:45 had the host team 10-8 ahead. Greece took two timeouts inside the final two minutes with no success.

Spain had won 10 of the previous 12 matches between these teams in major championships so it progresses to 11.

### **Match 42: 16:40, Classification 5-6, GREECE 8 SPAIN 10**

Quarters: 2-1, 2-5, 4-2, 0-2

Referees: Nenad Golijanin (SRB), Daniel Flahive (AUS)

Extra Man: GRE: 3/5 (3/8). ESP: 5/8 (5/10).

Pens: GRE: 1/1. ESP: 1/1

### **Teams:**

GREECE:

Konstantinos Tsalkanis, Emmanouill Mylonakis, Konstantinos Gouvis, Konstantinos Genidounios, Ioannis Fountoulis (2), Kyriakos Pontikeas, Christos Afroudakis, Evangelos Delakas (3), Konstantinos Mourikis, Christodoulos Kolomvos (1), Alexandros Gounas (1), Angelos Vlachopoulos (1), Konstantinos Galanidis. Head Coach: Athanasios Kechagias.

**SPAIN:**

Inake Aguilar, Alberto Munarrez, Ruben Do Lera, Ricard Alarcon, Guillermo Molina (2), Marc Minguell (1), Balazs Sziranyi, Albert Espanol (5), Xavier Valles (1), Felipe Perrone, Pere Estrany, Xavier Garcia (1), Daniel Lopez. Head Coach: Rafael Aguilar.

**FLASH QUOTES:**

**Felipe Perrone (ESP):**

"It was not our objective to finish fifth. Now we have a hard time with the retirement of Xavi Valles, one of the best centres in the world. It has been the end of a cycle, and the beginning of another."

**Xavier Valles (ESP):**

"I'm very happy to finish the tournament and also my career in front of this crowd. I have no words to describe my feelings."

**Christos Afroudakis (GRE):**

"We had our chances to win today, but we were unlucky in the crucial moments. Overall, we have a bitter feeling with the tournament, after not being present in the last two tournaments, the result is good but I wish we wouldn't lost the game against Hungary, as we were playing very well till then."

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