4 games - 4 penalty shoot-outs

AUSTRALIA 11 KAZAKHSTAN 12

Results & Teams

Game 17. AUS 🇦🇺 vs. KAZ 🇧瑱 11-12 (0-4, 3-1, 1-2, 4-1, PSO 3-4)

Referees: Rafaele COLOMBO (ITA), Yosuke KAJIWARA (JPN)

Extra Man: AUS 4/13 KAZ 4/11

AUSTRALIA 🇦🇺: Edward Slade (2), Timothy Putt, George Ford, Joseph Kayes (PSO 1), Nathan Power (1), Lachlan Edwards, Jarrod Gilchrist, Aaron Younger (3, PSO 1), Andrew Ford (PSO 1), James Fannon, Lachlan Hollis (2), Brooks Nicholas, Anthony Hrysanthos.

KAZAKHSTAN 🇧瑱: Madikhan Makhmetov, Evgeniy Medvedev (2), Stanislav Shvedov, Roman Plipenko (1, PSO - 1), Altay Altayev, Alexey Shmider, Murat Shakenov, Yulian Verdes, Rustam Ukumanov (3, PSO - 1), Mikhail Ruday (1), Ravil Manafov (1, PSO - 1), Bolat Turlykhanov (PSO - 1), Valeriy Shlemov.

Report

For the first time at the Super Final in Ruza, Kazakhstan was happy to see themselves 4 goals up. Scoring 4 straight, as they killed their extra chances twice, Nemanja Knezevic side opened the second quarter at 0-4 in their favor.

Aaron Younger of Australia found his way to reply after two and a half minutes of the next period. He netted two extra, as his teammate Timothy Putt returned it to 2 via an action goal, 3-5.
After the break, Kazakhstan returned a comfortable +3, many thanks to Rustam Ukumanov, who collected his second goal in this match-up, 4-7. Australia was however, far from done. Hollis Lachlan, Edwards Lachlan and Nathan Power tied up the game at 7-7 at 3 minutes left in the regulation time. There raised a great pressure on goalkeepers, but they were pretty safe and sound with only two more shots conceded.

Ukumanov was lucky to seal counter-attack with 01:45 remaining in the game, as his vis-à-vis Younger raised hands in the air celebrating the last hope extra man goal at 0.09 to the buzzer. Consequently, a penalty shoot-out was staged to identify the winner of the game and holder of the 5-6 places final ticket.

Younger, Fannon and Ford of Australia converted their penalty chances as Brooks and Gilchrist could not. Medvedev was the only one of the Kazakhstan penalty shooters, who lost his chance, and Pilipenko, Ukumanov, Verdeshe and Turykhанов got their names on the screenboard. The win was sealed and celebrated to book the lucky Nemanja Knezevic side meeting Russia for the consolation 5th line in the chart. Australia, on their part, shall test Japanese to be able to rank as high as 7th.

Quotes

Nemanja Knezevic, team Kazakhstan head coach:

I am very happy today, because we have just celebrated the first win at the Super Final in Ruza. I hope, the first win will not be the last as tomorrow we will have a chance against Russia in the match for the 5th place. Playing Australia, we had good mood and were following our plan for the match. It was to pay special attention to defensive play and extra player chances. We were to gain control over Aaron Younger, Nathan Power and Edwards Lachlan, and we were close to that. We let Australia hit the last seconds equalizer, and that speaks of the fact we very much in need of international experience. Our goalkeeper was pretty safe today, he has survived the penalty shoot-out series, and he is a hero.

Elvis Fatovic, team Australia head coach:

We lost today, because we did not start well. Obviously we were not prepared enough for such a game. It was 4-0 for the opponent team after the first quarter, and it was pretty difficult to come back. In the third quarter we started to play more aggressively, press more and were more mobile. We levelled the score, but Kazakhstan won the shoot-out series. They have deserved the win.
Game 18. RUS – JPN 18-17 (3-4, 5-2, 4-3, 0-3, PSO 6-5)

Referees: Miroslav VLASIC (CRO), Andreja STANOJEVIC (SRB)

Extra Man: RUS 3/6 JPN 3/7

Penalty shots: RUS 0/1 JPN 2/2

RUSSIA: Kirill Korneev, Nikolay Lazarev (PSO 1), Egor Vasilyev, Nikita Dereviankin (2), Alexey Bugaychuk, Artem Ashaev (3, PSO 2), Daniil Merkulov (4, PSO 1), Ivan Nagaev (PSO 1), Ivan Suchkov, Dmitriy Kholod (PSO 1), Sergey Lisunov (3), Roman Shepelev, Victor Ivanov.

JAPAN: Katsuyuki Tanamura, Seiya Adachi (2, PSO 2), Shuma Kawamoto, Mitsuaki Shiga (PSO 1), Takuma Yoshida (2), Atsuto Iida (1), Yusuke Shimizu (1), Mitsuru Takata, Atsushi Arai (3, PSO 1), Kohei Inaba, Keigo Okawa (2, PSO 1), Kenta Araki (1), Tomoyoshi Fukushima.

Report

It was all about Japanese and their pressing. Russians, as all other European teams, were stuck as they pressed full court, both offensively and in defense, which helped the Rising Sun nation stay competitive for fully 10 minutes.

Danil Merkulov of Russia got his team on the scoreboard after one and a half minute of play. Opponents did not hesitate to respond, which came in the face of the Japanese cap Yusuke Shimizu, 1-1. Two penalty shots successfully converted (Adachi Seiya and Takuma Yoshida) together with an action goal by Adachi Seiya were to compete against host side Merkulov and Artem Ashaev, both killed their powerplay chances, 3-4.

Russia’s Sergey Lisunov set an equalizer early in the second quarter, and some 3 minutes later his team constructed a 3 points gap. Okawa Keigo & Č occasionally had it cut to 2 after the first half, 8-6, but the third period sent it back to +3, 12-9 for Sergey Evstigneev coached side.

The last quarter of the clash against Japan had a good resemblance to the yesterday’s quarter-finals, which Russians did against the USA. The hosts started malfunctioning and were about to loose control. Arai Atshushi and Keigo Okawa nailed their third in the match, and then Takuma Yoshida got his name on the scoreboard,
booking a tie 26 seconds to the buzzer. Russians got strong enough to recover and pulled together. A long penalty shoot-out series followed to see the hosts hitting 6 as Japanese 5.

Impossible to imagine the joy of the home crowd ensamblad at the tribunes of the Aquatic Palace of Ruza that evening as their side confirmed participation in the 5th place match-up. Their next opponent will come in the face of Kazakhstan, as Joji Omoto’s team will conclude their Super Final-2017 trip playing Australia.

Quotes

Omoto Yoji, team Japan head coach:

Today it was a very difficult game. Our unique defense was pretty good today. We created a lot of chances. These are the good points for our today’s game. Water polo must be more speedy and quick, not like that physical water polo we are used to. We lost this match-up against Russia, but we showed a good fight and our strong sports character.

Marat Zakirov, team Russia assistant coach:

The match was very difficult from the psychological viewpoint. Yesterday we had some big disappointment loosing the quarter-finals to the USA. As a result, the mood was pretty bad and we had to overcome that bad spirit. We were leading in course of the game, but some personal mistakes made it a tie. Anyway, we showed character and won the race for the chance to claim the 5th place. To play Japanese is always uneasy, as they are always teasing everyone pressing in a very special manner. They are a great team, very brave one. They were very competitive today and had all reasons to claim the win.

ITALY 9 CROATIA 7

Results & Teams

Game 19. ITA – CRO (1-1, 3-2, 1-2, 1-1, PSO 3-1)
Referees: Francesc BUCH (ESP), Sergey KRYZHANOFSKY (RUS)
Extra Man: ITA 2/8 CRO 1/10
Penalty shots: ITA 1/1 CRO 0/0

ITALY: Marco Del Lungo, Francesco Di Fulvio (1, PSO 1), Niccolo Gitto, Pietro Figlioli (2, PSO 1), Cristiano Mirarchi, Alessandro Velotto (1), Alessandro Nora, Valentino Gallo (2, PSO 1), Vincenzo Renzuto Iodice, Michael Alexandre Bodegas, Matteo Aicardi, Zeno Bertoli, Goran Volarevic.


Report
Italy is into the climax of the FINA World League Super Final 2017 as they survived a tight clash against Croatia to squeeze through to their gold final on penalties following a 6-6 draw.

Opponents were on a familiar terms. They were similar and different at the same time. Both are of the elitarian water polo pool, who reached podium at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. Croatia then got silver and Italy ended with bronze. They are of different water polo schools, keeping to the unlike game's styles. Therefore, the meet was very much anticipated and proved the expectations laid. It was a fierce battle, crowned by a penalty shoot-out, set to decide the winner.

Exchanging favors in the first period, as Luka Loncar of Croatia and Italian Valentino Gallo hit two action goals, made it certain, it would be a close fight. Then Italy was one point up as Alessandro Velotto in extra-man, Francesco di Fulvio and again Valentino Galo in action netted their home-set combinations. Ante Vukicevic and Andelo Setka responded to keep on trailing, 4-3. Croats made the game tied as Loren Fatovic punished an easy mistake of Marco del Lungo at the goals, and Andelo Setka converted extra to register his second hit in the match, 5-5. Booking a minimum lead early in the last quarter, Ivan Buljubasic locked a diagonal pass ideally served, 5-6, and a penalty chance to save the life of Italians was killed by Pietro Figlioli at 21 seconds left in the game. Luck was definitely on their side that night, as they won the penalty shoot-out by 3-1.

Tomorrow the lucky Italy will play all-round champion Serbia for gold, as Croatia shall find motivation in their side to contest bronze against the USA.

Quotes

Andro Buslje, team Croatia:

It was a very sensitive defeat. We played a good defence, but extra man was not that lucky for our side. Of course, every one is getting ready for the FINA World Championships in Budapest, but World Water Polo League means a lot for us, and we had every reason to claim gold. Our opponents were very strong, and they forced us make many mistakes. And then, Italy was a better side on penalties. We are sad we have lost today, but will definitely play them the next time and win.

Alessandro Campagna, team Italy head coach:

It was a tough game for both sides. We did not play that well in defence as we conceded a number of easy goals. However, we had the courage to stay in the game until the very end, we survived the penalty shoot-out series, and I think, we have deserved the win.

USA 11 SERBIA 13

Results & Teams

Game 20. USA 🇺🇸 - SRB 🇷🇸 11-13 (0-0, 4-3, 2-2, 2-3, PSO 3-5)

Referees: Nikolaos BOUDRAMIS (GRE), Benjamin MERCIER (FRA)

Extra Man: USA 4/11 SRB 3/10

SERBIA 🇷🇸: Gojko Pijetlovic, Gavril Subotic (PSO 1), Viktor Rasovic (1), Sava Randelovic, Milos Cuk (PSO 1), Dusko Pietlovic (1), Nemanja Ubovic, Milan Alekovic (2, PSO 1), Radomir Drasovic, Filip Filipovic (1, PSO 1), Andrija Prlainovic (2, PSO 1), Stefan Mitrovic (1), Branislav Mitrovic.
McQuin Baron, Johnathan Hooper (1), Matthew DeTrane (1, PSO 1), Alexander Obert, Benjamin Hallock (1), Marko Vavic, Thomas Dunstan (1), Nicholas Carniglia, Alexander Bowen (2, PSO 1), Chancellor Ramirez, Alex Roelse (2, PSO 1), Maxwell Irving, Drew Holland.

Who could believe, that winner of the semi-final clash seeing participation of the all-round crown Serbia would need a penalty shoot-out to register the winner. Serbs competed Americans, which proved to be very hardworking and skilled, despite of the generation change process, got launched for their team after the 2016 Olympics. They had a very high mood and top motivation playing Dejan Savic & C, and well deserved their share of compliments. Dejan Udovicic's side were not just trailing the unspoken favorite, but on the contrary, controlled the pace and rhythm, and occasionally lead.

Both participants of the semi-final have been scoreless in the first period.

Then, Dejan Savic coached side easily got 2 points up, earned by Milan Aleksic in action and Stefan Mitrovic in extra-man, and the very easy way conceded 4 more by the end of the period, 4-3. Alexander Bowen, Benjamin Hallock, Matthew de Trane and Johnathan Hooper got their names on the scoreboard, 4 goals straight.

After the break, the US side raised the difference to +2, Alexander Roelse and Alexander Bowen were on their way to a semi-finals hat-trick, however the ultimate term launched seeing the game tied at 6-6, and then 8-8, kept up till the final buzzer. In the penalty shoot-out chapter Serbs were irreproachable, killing all 5 chances and will compete Italy for gold, as USA nailed 3 to book their ticket to the 3rd place final.
Quotes

Milan Aleksic, team Serbia (2 goals, PSO – 1):

It was a hard game for us. The schedule here is very strict. 5 games within 5 days, it is too difficult for the players. We could expect the other game out of the current clash, and it is pretty good that we have won the ticket to the gold final. Congratulations to my team. They shall do our best tomorrow to win the Trophy.

Alex Roelse, team USA (2 goals, PSO – 1):

It was a very physical game. Both teams could score their chances and go for the win. It is a big step for our team as we played Serbia pretty well, and it shows that our young guys have good prospects. It’s great to see that in such a game against the best team in the world we can come out and stay competitive. There was a lot of swimming and battling in the game, very spectacular. The shout-out series came as a lottery. Our goalkeeper was pretty good and did great job.

Olga Kamardina, FINA Correspondent in Russia

For the first time ever Water Polo World League Super Finals saw all elimination games tied in the regulation time, having the penalty shoot-out to confirm the list for the finals.

With the finalists decided and 16 matches already behind us, the FINA Men’s Water Polo World League Super Final 2017 is reaching its climax in Ruza, Russian Federation. Competition Day 5 pictured a lot of fine goals, great saves and four impressive semi-final wins.
Bronze Olympic medal holder Italy saved their life against Croatia booking penalty shoot-out series 20 seconds to the final buzzer, and then nailed a gold match ticket at 9-7.

Their opponent in the decisive battle will be the reigning kings Serbia, which on their part, astonished everyone as their American rendezvous ended in a draw, and were up to seal their gold chance via the “hitting lottery”, 13-11.

As for Croatia and the USA will be contesting bronze, the 5th place consolation final shall feature Russia and Kazakhstan. Competition day 5 saw them both celebrating penalty shoot-out series wins over Japan and Australia, who will be up to play for the 7th-8th line in the chart of the Super Final.

Semi-finals / Day 5 / 24 June, 2017

Game 17. L13 – L16 AUS – KAZ 11-12 (0-4, 3-1, 1-2, 4-1, PSO 3-4)

Game 18. L14 – L15 RUS – JPN 18-17 (3-4, 5-2, 4-3, 0-3, PSO 6-5)

Game 19. W13 – W16 ITA – CRO 9-7 (1-1, 3-2, 1-2, 1-1, PSO 3-1)

Game 20. W14 – W15 SRB – USA 11-13 (0-0, 4-3, 2-2-3, PSO 3-5)
Finals schedule / Day 6 / 25 June, 2017

Game 21. 12:00 L17 – L18 (7 – 8 places) AUS 🇦🇺 – JPN 🇯🇵

Game 22. 13:20 W17 – W18 (5 – 6 places) KAZ 🇰🇿 – RUS 🇷🇺

Game 23. 14:40 L19 – L20 (3 – 4 places) CRO 🇭🇷 – USA 🇺🇸

Game 24. 16:00 W19 – W20 (1 – 2 places) ITA 🇮🇹 – W15 SRB 🇷🇸

*Local time