

## Day 7 Men's Water Polo: Croatia spoils Hungary's night with second crown

45. Class 7-8: RUSSIA 7 AUSTRALIA 10  
Results & Teams

**Match 45, 12:00, RUSSIA 7 AUSTRALIA 10**

*Classification 7-8*

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

Referees: Stanko Ivanovski (MNE), Frank Ohme (GER).

Penalties: Nil:

Extra Man: RUS: 0/10. AUS: 4/7.

### **Teams:**

**RUSSIA:** Kirill Korneev, Nikolay Lazarev, Egor Vasilyev, Nikita Dereviankin (1), Alexey Bugaychuk, Artem Ashaev, Daniil Merkulov (2), Ivan Nagaev, Ivan Suchkov, Dmitrii Kholod (3), Sergey Lisunov (1), Roman Shepelev, Vitaly Statsenko. Head Coach: Sergey Evstigneev.

**AUSTRALIA:** Edward Slade, Timothy Putt (1), George Ford, Joseph Kayes (1), Nathan Power (1), Lachlan Edwards (2), Jarrod Gilchrist (1), Aaron Younger (2), Andrew Ford (1), James Fannon, Lachlan Hollis (1), Nicholas Brooks, Anthony Hrysanthos. Head Coach: Elvis Fatovic.

### Report

Australia departs Budapest with three victories and seventh place, one better than Kazan 2015. For Russia, it was not a bad result, having improved incredibly from 14<sup>th</sup> in Kazan. The Aussies Sharks directed play in the first quarter and came up trumps, leading 4-2 with Russia pulling one back and passing up on the opportunity for an equaliser in the dying minute. One player had an open goal and elected to cross pass instead and the resulting shot and rebound shot hit the upright then the crossbar. Kholod gained his second with the equaliser from the top on extra to start the second quarter. Edwards impressed with his second, firing in a fine backhand from the chaos of centre forward. Merkulov brought it to 5-5 crossing the cage from the left. Joe Kayes gave Australia the halftime lead at 6-5, finishing off extra. Timothy Putt and captain Aaron Younger took the margin to three at the start of the third. Merkulov bought one back from the deep right. Both teams went to a timeout in the final two minutes for no gain, although Younger finished off a move for 9-6 at 0:48. The Sharks had another chance in the last few seconds with the shot chesting goalkeeper Kirill Korneev. Andrew Ford converted extra inside the first minute of the fourth period and Kholod collected his third from the wide left wing at 6:33 for 10-7, which proved to be the final scoring. Australia's best was fourth in Perth 1998 and in Kazan 2015, finished eighth. Topping Australia's championship scoring list were Younger and Kayes with eight apiece. Australia, with eight different scorers, looked the better team, which surprised slightly as Russia has had some excellent periods of play and looks to be an emerging force in the game. The extra-man count did not help Russia, whose best finishes were two

bronzes, although as part of the Soviet Union, titles were won in Guayaquil 1982 and Cali 1975. Russia's joint top scorers for the tournament were captain Sergey Lisunov and Merkulov with 13 each.

## Quotes

### **Elvis Fatovic (AUS) —Head Coach**

*“We are very happy to have won our last match in the tournament. This is the first time in 20 years that Australia has reached the seventh place, which is, with this team, a big success. We are aware of the fact that we can do a lot better, and in the coming years, we will work hard to come close to the teams that are in front of us. I don't think it's impossible, because I felt that we have been getting better with every match we played, and the last two have definitely been our best ones.”*

### **Aaron Younger (AUS) — Captain and two goals**

*“It was a good game, though we are a bit disappointed that we didn't finish higher, but with a win like this we are really happy, I think seventh place is good for our team, which is still quite new and young. It is a good start for us towards Tokyo (2020). The tournament has been great, I think, one of the best World Championships. We are going to keep building from here.”*

46. Class 5-6: MONTENEGRO 5 ITALY 4

Results & Teams

### **Match 46. 13:30, MONTENEGRO 5 ITALY 4**

#### ***Classification 5-6***

Quarters: 1-1, 1-1, 3-2, 0-0

Referees: Georgios Stavridis (GRE), Francesc Buch (ESP).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: MNE: 2/7. ITA: 1/7.

#### **Teams:**

**MONTENEGRO:** Dejan Lazovic, Drasko Brguljan (3), Bojan Banicevic, Marko Petkovic, Darko Brguljan, Aleksandar Radovic, Dragan Draskovic (2), Aleksa Ukropina, Duro Radovic, Sasa Misic, Uros Cuckovic, Nikola Murisic, Milos Scepanovic. Head Coach: Vladimir Gojkovic.

**ITALY:** Stefano Tempesti, Francesco Di Fulvio, Niccolo Gitto, Pietro Figlioli, Nicholas Presciutti, Cristiano Mirarchi (2), Alessandro Nora, Andrea Fondelli, Vincenzo Renzuto (1), Michael Bodegas (1), Matteo Aicardi, Zeno Bertoli, Goran Volarevic. Head Coach: Alessandro Campagna.

## Report

Montenegro retained its position from Kazan 2015 with a dour result over Italy, a match that Italy would best forget. Drasko Brguljan opened the scoring and Vincenzo Renzuto snared his 11<sup>th</sup> on extra by 5:29. Such was the defence and the goalkeeper work that neither side could break the line before the break. Drasko Brguljan started the second just like the first with a shot from deep right with his right arm. Campagna was upset when Italy botched consecutive extra-man attacks and Montenegro went to a timeout for no joy, but with a couple of good defensive plays. At the other end Nicholas Presciutti had an open counter and Montenegro captain Milos Scepanovic blocked his shot. He blocked another Presciutti attempt soon after. The frustration was getting on top of the team, mainly thanks to Scepanovic. The only joy for Italy was the unusual shooting of Michael Bodegas with his 11<sup>th</sup> goal on the left post on extra, dragging it back by the narrowest margin with his right arm on extra for 2-2. The third period was more active in the scoring

department, but there were too many bad passes that further added to the frustration. This boiled over at 3:04 when Italian centre forward Matteo Aicardi was red-carded. Earlier, Montenegro head coach Vladimir Gojkovic was yellow carded and then Drasko Brguljan gained his third with a nice drive down the left, accepting the ball and taking the score to 4-2. Cristiano Mirarchi scored the first of his two goals of the period, Aicardi walked, or literally dragged from the side of the pool, and Draskovic took it to 5-3 on extra. Mirarchi's deep-right goal with the right arm gave Italy hope at 1:00 and 5-4 behind. Both teams shut up shop in the final quarter, scoreless, mainly through the efforts of both goalkeepers. One feels that veteran Italian goalkeeper Stefano Tempesti relished the poolside moment, leaving the pool deck slowly, taking one last glance and then departing. Twice he has been named top goalkeeper in the Worlds. At 38, he deserves retirement, although he would have wished to go out on a winning note. He made seven crucial saves in his half a match. Scepanovic, at the other end made 11, but it seemed like a lot more. However, Italy's final attack had the ball ripped from its control. Aleksandar Radovic, scoreless in the match, top scored for Montenegro with 11. Italy's best was Francesco di Fulvio with 14. He and captain Pietro Figlioli were kept scoreless and as they were the leading scorers for Italy, it proved crucial. Montenegro's best in World Championships was a silver medal at Barcelona 2013 when it lost to Tibor Benedek's Hungary. Italy has a proud record at Worlds, with three titles, two silvers and two bronzes. Its titles were in Shanghai 2011 and Rome 1994.

## Quotes

### **Vladimir Gojkovic (MNE) — Head coach (MNE):**

*"I wish we had played that well against Greece. The strategy that took us ahead all year is based on our good defence. It helped us today, too. I'm proud of my young team. They fought wholeheartedly for the fifth place. We wanted to show that we are a sports nation and we can be motivated."*

### **Aleksandar Radovic (MNE) — Player**

*"We are satisfied with the result. There was big pressure on us; we fought hard, our defence was great from the beginning. The 5-4 result is great against Italy."*

### **Alessandro Campagna (ITA) — Head Coach**

*"To be honest we played badly, we were tired and even if I tried to train the team to perform better I wasn't able to do it and I could say that today it is my fault. By the way, despite our sixth final position I think we played very well in the group stage against Hungary and Australia and I think we played at the same level as the teams ranked better than us at this World Championships. Now we will start to work on the future."*

### **Goran Volarevic (ITA) — Goalkeeper**

*"We tried to give our best in this match, but we were very tired and frustrated by the match lost against Croatia. We missed many opportunities and Montenegro's goalkeeper was very clever and skilled. He showed a very good performance. We must also consider that three players had to stay at home just few days before the competition started. I want to thank our team for everything we did, hoping for a better future."*

47. Class 3-4: GREECE 8 SERBIA 11  
Results & Teams

**Match 47. 15:00, GREECE 8 SERBIA 11**

### ***Classification 3-4***

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

Referees: Sergey Naumov (RUS), Benjamin Mercier (FRA).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: GRE:

### Teams:

**GREECE:** Konstantinos Flegkas, Konstantinos Genidounias (1), Evangelos Delakas (1), Georgios Dervisis, Ioannis Fountoulis (3), Marios Kapotsis, Kyriakos Pontikeas (1), Kanakakis Argyropoulos, Konstantinos Mourikis, Christodoulos Kolomvos, Alexandros Gounas, Angelos Vlachopoulos (2), Emmanouil Zerdevas. Head Coach: Theodoros Vlachos.

**SERBIA:** Gojko Pijetlovic, Dusan Mandic (1), Viktor Rasovic (1), Sava Randelovic (2), Milos Cuk (1), Dusko Pijetlovic (2), Nemanja Ubovic (1), Milan Aleksic (1), Nikola Jaksic, Filip Filipovic (1), Andrija Prlainovic (1), Stefan Mitrovic, Branislav Mitrovic. Head Coach: Dejan Savic.

Report:

### Report

Serbia finished in the unusual position of bottom on the victory dais, breaking a string of championships going all the way back to 2014. In Barcelona 2013 it finished seventh. That's a lot of gold medals, including Olympic, World, World Cup, World League and European. Today it was making sure that the medal would be obtained despite the constant pestering of Greece. Head coach Dejan Savic also used his full bench so every player could enjoy the occasion. In the end it was the first quarter that proved the difference, giving Serbia a buffer. Serbia rattled off three goals — Dusan Mandic, Sava Randelovic and Dusko Pijetlovic — before Greece could get out of the starting block. A timeout led to two Ioannis Fountoulis goals and Greece was back on track. Serbia took it out to 5-3 through Pijetlovic on extra and Nemanja Ubovic from centre forward. Angelos Vlachopoulos dragged one back for 5-3, a complete contrast to the previous match. It was quieter in the second period with Milan Aleksic from the point and Milos Cuk from wide left for 7-3. Konstantinos Genidounias, with eight goals coming into the match, finished the period's scoring from deep right. Viktor Rasovic repeated the shot at the top of the third quarter for 8-4. Fountoulis converted a penalty and stretched his amazing lead in the goal-scoring competition to 23. Both teams went to a timeout and it was Greece who came up with a score, Evangelos Delakas snapping in a rebound from one metre, sending Dejan Savic into a seizure as he claimed Delakas was inside two. The original shot was taken from one metre. Captain Filip Filipovic scored his 11<sup>th</sup> of the tournament. Pontikeas replied for 9-7 and Randelovic on extra, notched his third, doubling his championship contribution. Serbia had the three-goal margin heading into the fourth period. Andrija Prlainovic, who scored six goals in the losing semifinal clash with Croatia, converted extra for his 15<sup>th</sup> of the championship, the team's best. Vlachopoulos kept Serbia honest, scoring at 4:51 and there the defence took over. Serbia swept all before it in recent years, with Olympic, World, World Cup, World League and European crowns, defeating Croatia in the Rio 2016 Olympics and the Kazan 2015 World Championships. Greece previously won bronzes in 2015 and 2005. Greece was sixth in Rio, and the bronze medallist in Kazan 2015.

Quotes

### Dusan Mandic (SRB) — Goal scorer

*"I'm really satisfied with the medal; we corrected our mistakes from the past. With today's victory we achieved our personal goals, we couldn't suffer defeat on two occasions following each other. This is a great team, the same we had in the past years, nothing changed. There is no tragedy, we made a mistake in the semifinal but we are really happy about the final result."*

## **Nikola Jaksic (SRB) — Player**

*“We deserved today’s victory and the bronze medal. We played as well as during the group stages. What could I say, I’m really proud of my team. We gave our maximum from the beginning, defeat was no option.”*

## **Theodoros Vlachos (GRE) —Head Coach**

*“My emotions are mixed. I am happy that we are in the four best teams in the world, but I am not so satisfied with our performance in the last two matches. Due to some mistakes, we were not able to get any qualification or medal, but I hope that we will learn from our mistakes and we will be better in the future.”*

## **Ioannis Fountoulis (GRE) — Captain and tournament top scorer**

*“We came here with a goal, to get in the four best teams of the championship. We achieved that goal, but when someone achieves it, he can't stop expecting more and more. So, we are a bit unsatisfied with our last appearances because I think that this team has a great potential. This championship was a great experience for all the players and it really helped us become better.”*

48: Class 1-2: HUNGARY CROATIA

Results & Teams

## **Match 48, 20:30, HUNGARY 6 CROATIA 8**

### ***Classification 1-2***

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

Referees: Adrian Alexandrescu (ROU), Alessandro Severo (ITA).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: HUN: 3/12. CRO: 3/10.

Teams:

**HUNGARY:** Viktor Nagy, Bela Torok (1), Krisztian Manhercz (1), Gergo Zalanki, Marton Vamos (3), Norbert Hosnyanszky, Adam Decker, Miklos Gor-Nagy, Balazs Erdelyi (1), Denes Varga, Tamas Mezei, Balazs Harai, Attila Decker. Head Coach: Tamas Marcz.

**CROATIA:** Marko Bijac, Marko Macan (1), Loren Fatovic, Luka Loncar (1), Maro Jokovic (1), Ivan Buljubasic, Ante Vukicevic, Andro Buslje, Sandro Sukno (3), Ivan Krapic, Anđelo Setka, Javier Garcia Gadea (3), Ivan Marcelic. Head Coach: Ivica Tucak.

Report

Croatian captain Sandro Sukno blasted his team to gold with two last-quarter missiles that gave his country a second World Championship gold medal after Melbourne 2007, with the team coached by the legendary Ratko Rudic. Javier Garcia, the former Spanish star who finished with silver at Melbourne, went one better when he netted twice and tasted golden glory. Hungary was denied its fourth World Championship title from 10 finals and now has a record 11 medals overall — three golds, seven silvers and one bronze.

Croatia lost to Serbia in both Rio 2016 and Kazan 2015 so it was due for a win. Its record at World Championships now reads two golds, one silver and three bronzes.

Hungary had a horror start to the final, conceding four goals in the opening quarter and not ticking over the scoreboard until the first attack of the second quarter. It was Croatian captain Sandro Sukno who led the way from the deep left, followed by Luka Loncar on extra. Maro Jokovic found himself free on the left post and tapped the ball into goal. Croatia was 3-0 up at 2:52. Hungary called a timeout to no effect. With just 23 seconds left to the first break, it was Marko Macan, with no goal in Budapest, saving himself for the final, tipping the ball in on the right post on extra — 4-0.

It was then time for Hungary to rise to the occasion for the crowd, filling every gap in the stadium. On the first attack, Marton Vamos drilled one from outside. Bela Torok scored his third of the championship, sending the shot into the bottom right for 4-2. Both teams took a timeout with no success. In fact, for the rest of the period Croatia was kept scoreless and the goalkeeper of the tournament, Hungary's Viktor Nagy, was back to his normal best after being shell-shocked earlier. Balasz Erdelyi lifted his tournament tally to three, converting extra from deep left to narrow the margin to one. Hungary was slowly coming back into the match. Probably 8000 people had crammed into the arena and up to 20,000 in the fan zone in the Margaret Island athletic stadium. This was a big event in Budapest on the eve of the Hungarian F1 Grand Prix. Hungary withstood some wicked Croatian shots and Nagy was equal to the task, as was the wood. Hungary had a timeout, gained the exclusion and Krisztian Manhercz delivered for a jubilant Hungarian crown, levelling at 4-4. On the following Croatian attack, Miklos Gor-Nagy was sent for his third major foul and Javier Garcia fired in the go-ahead goal. He scored from nine metres on the next attack with total disdain for the defence. Both goals gained deflections en route. Croatia called a timeout at 0:54 when 6-4 up, but no increase in the score by the final break. Three minutes into the final period, Croatia had a clear shot only for Nagy to block. The high rebound was patted towards goal to no effect but the ball went outside and Sukno dulled the crown with the 7-4 goal. Vamos stirred his team with two goals on extra two minutes apart. However, Sukno responded to keep the margin at two. There was confusion at 1:59 over a supposed Croatia timeout Croatian head coach Ivica Tucak was yellow carded and then Hungarian Balasz Harai was red-carded after a skirmish. Croatia wasted its time and Hungary moved the ball upfield only for the final shot to go wide. Hungary was sixth in Kazan 2015 and fifth in Rio 2016.

## Quotes

### **Mile Smodlaka (CRO) — Assistant Coach**

*"We started well and that has determined the match. We were able to keep the game under our control all the time. The arena was fantastic, the whole World Championship was amazing. Thanks for having us here; the organisation was great."*

### **Luka Loncar (CRO) — Centre Forward of the Tournament**

*"This was a great tournament; I can congratulate the Hungarians as well. It was difficult to play in such circumstances, but we could show our strength during the two weeks. I believe that victory does not have to be explained."*

### **Tamas Marcz (HUN) — Head Coach**

*"It is very difficult to bring a World Championship (final) back from 0-4. The boys did everything, unfortunately we did not have luck. A good team, a very good team, beat us deservedly. Thank you to the players and the audience! Now it's really bad, we were pretty sure we were going to succeed tonight. "*

### **Marton Vamos (HUN) — Tournament Most Valuable Player and three goals**

*"We started very badly, and the relapse took so much energy out of us that we could not move forward. Those who work for it have luck, but we did work on it though; seems like the Croatians did it a bit more. We've been fighting all over, we did not give up, but the fact that the beginning was so bad decided the end result."*

### **Viktor Nagy (HUN) — Goalkeeper of the Tournament**

*"I'm sad, because we came here to win today, and that we did not succeed. I'm sorry if we made the fans disappointed. This is sport. Our opponent was better today."*

Russell McKinnon, FINA Media Committee

Budapest, Hungary, July 29.— Croatia denied Hungary a fairytale ending to the FINA World Championships men's water polo competition, winning 8-6 and adding to its only other title, attained in Melbourne, Australia, 10 years ago.

Croatia won the opening period 4-0, Hungary levelled at 4-4; Croatia went 7-4 up early in the fourth and carried the advantage to the end at the Alfred Hajos Pool here tonight. Captain Sandro Sukno scored twice in the last eight minutes for three goals and Championship Most Valuable Player Marton Vamos netted three for Hungary.

It was probably fair that Croatia should win, having sent multi-titled Serbia packing in a heart-stopping and energy-sapping semifinal on Thursday night.

Hungarian goalkeeper Viktor Nagy was heroic throughout the two weeks and deservedly was named the tournament's best goalkeeper.

Hungary was denied its fourth World Championship title from 10 finals and now has a record 11 medals overall — three golds, seven silvers and one bronze.

Croatia lost to Serbia in both Rio 2016 and Kazan 2015 so it was due for a win. Its record at World Championships now reads two golds, one silver and three bronzes.

In the bronze-medal match, outgoing world champion Serbia made sure of bronze against Greece with an 11-8 decision. Serbia had nine players make the scoresheet. Greek captain Ioannis Fountoulis scored three goals and finished the tournament as the top goal-scorer with 23, streeting his rivals.

Montenegro took out fifth position, beating Italy 5-4 in a low-scoring and mistake-ridden match. Drasko Brguljan sent in three goals for the victor.

In the classification 7-8 match, Australia defeated Russia 10-7 with Australia using eight scorers and Russia's best was Dmitri Kholod with three goals.

**Media All Star Team:** Goalkeeper: Viktor Nagy (HUN). Centre forward Luka Loncar (CRO). Field players: Francesco di Fulvio (ITA), Ioannis Fountoulis (GRE), Andrija Prlainovic (SRB), Sandro Sukno (CRO), Marton Vamos (HUN).

**Most Valuable Player:** Marton Vamos (HUN).

**Best Goalkeeper:** Viktor Nagy (HUN).

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*Classification 1-2*

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