

Artistic swimmers seek California gold in World Series # 8

Aimee Berg, FINA Press Correspondent in the US

(LOS ANGELES) – The North American swing of the FINA World Series continues this week in Los Angeles, with a full slate of 10 artistic swimming events to be contested in an outdoor pool just 15km away from Disneyland (to the north) and 45km away from the famous Hollywood sign (to the south).

Many of the same athletes who competed last week in Surrey, Canada, have come to the Golden State for the eighth stop of the 10-city circuit.

Judging begins on June 7 with three technical events (solo, duet, and team) and ends on June 9 with four free events.

All told, nine nations will be represented – including Ukraine who scored eight medals in eight events in Surrey (including the gold in every team contest, in which eight to 10 swimmers compete). Its star, **Yelyzaveta Yakhno**, 20, was on all eight of those podiums (and took silver in every solo and duet event).

This time, however, Yakhno won't have to contend with Japan's Yukiko Inui who captured all four solo and duet golds in Surrey.

Instead, Yakhno's closest competitor in solo should be the upbeat Olympian from Canada, **Jacqueline Simoneau** (who took bronze in both solo events last week).

In duet, expect China's **Jiang twins (Wenwen and Tingting)** to be formidable opponents for Yakhno and her teammate **Anastasiya Savchuk**. Also keep an eye on the second Ukrainian pair, the **Aleksiiva twins (Vladyslava and Maryna)**. According to the rules, however, only one entry per country may win a medal in a particular World Series event, so that may open the door for duets from Canada, Japan, or the US.

In mixed duet, **Giorgio Minisini and Manila Flamini** of Italy should win easily, as they are the reigning world champions in the technical program. The Italians also claimed four medals earlier in the World Series, including gold and silver in the free. Note to Bill May fans: the 2015 world champion from the US will not be competing in Los Angeles.

In the team, highlight, and combination events, Ukraine should be unstoppable but Japan is a bit of a wild card because it swapped out all its swimmers from Surrey and sent a new batch from Tokyo. The US will have plenty to cheer, too, as its young team continues to use the World Series to polish its routines in advance of the 2018 FINA Junior World Championships in Budapest in July.

Schedule (all times Pacific):

Thursday, 7 June

11:25 Solo Technical

14:45 Duet Technical

17:20 Team Technical

Friday, 8 June

11:20 Mixed Duet Technical

11:40 Combination Free

16:50 Team Free

Saturday, 9 June

13:00 Solo Free

14:45 Highlight

15:00 Mixed Duet Free

15:50 Duet Free
