

PR 105 - Swimming short-course World Championships is officially underway in Hangzhou (CHN)

FINA Communications Department

The [14th FINA World Swimming Championships \(25m\)](#) [1] kicked-off this morning, December 11, in Hangzhou, China, as 960 athletes from 178 countries are set to compete for 46 world titles from December 11-16.

The official competition venue of the World Swimming Championships is located at the Tennis Center at the Hangzhou Olympic and International Expo Center — a uniquely shaped "lotus bowl". The venue has a 8,000 seat capacity. The temporary competition swimming pool and pool decks, and the main competition pool, have been built above the main court of the Tennis Center by FINA partner Myrtha Pools.

Daily heats will be held at 9:30 every morning, while finals will be at 19:00 in the evening (local time).

Take a look at the [SCHEDULE](#) [2] and the [ENTRIES](#) [3]

Speaking at today's opening press conference, FINA President Dr. Julio Maglione said:

"The city authorities and the organisers of this event have made an outstanding job in creating ideal conditions for our athletes, coaches and officials. Over 960 athletes from almost 180 nations are competing here and will certainly provide spectacular performances. Swimming is progressing fast in the five continents and the IOC recognised this achievement by adding three new events in the Swimming programme of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. For the first time in our history, Aquatics will be the Sport with the highest number of medals (49) in the Games' programme. I take this opportunity to express FINA's gratitude for the support and professionalism of our Chinese hosts. My final words are for you, dear friends. Your support is essential for the success of our activities. Thank you for what you are doing to promote and enhance Aquatics around the world!"

FINA Executive Director Cornel Marculescu added: *"I would like to underline that with the great support of the Vice Mayor of the city and Mr Jin we have achieved a fantastic job, state-of-the-art facilities for these Championships on top of this Olympic and International Expo Centre in Hangzhou. The transformation has been impressive. We are normally using temporary facilities as much as possible which gives another perspective to existing venues."*

He concluded: "You, the media, are very important to us because you are telling our story to the rest of the world."

China Swimming Association President Ms Zhou Jihong, who played a crucial role in the organisation, welcomed the media: *"As we all know today we are finally officially kicking-off the 14th FINA Swimming World Championships in Hangzhou and all together almost 1000 athletes are taking part in this competition. We really look forward to witnessing outstanding performances for the next six days. In the past four years the government and the local authorities have made great efforts, this is why we can today host this exceptional event. We are very impressed by the*

professionalism of the local authorities. And finally I would like to thank the media for your support in promoting the event."

On the occasion, FINA long-term partner Yakult and FINA announced the extension of the sponsorship agreement. Yakult remains an official partner for the FINA World Championships and the FINA World Swimming Championships (25m) for the next 10 years (2019-2028).

Before the signing ceremony, Yakult Honsha General Manager, Mr Makoto Shimura said: *"I am pleased to announce that Yakult and FINA have agreed to renew their existing long-time sponsorship agreement. The new partnership will take place in 2019 and will run until 2028, covering the FINA World Championships and FINA World Swimming Championships (25m). Yakult is FINA partner since 2005 and has been contributing to the health and happiness of people around the world since. Yakult will continue to promote its globalisation by working with FINA for the years to come."*

With this extension, Yakult will be able to exercise exclusive marketing rights in the non-alcoholic beverages and dairy product category at FINA's two signature events. Yakult will conduct sponsorship activities such as displaying the corporate logo on the bibs of female athletes, on the swim caps of both the male and female athletes and on pool-side branding.

President Maglione said: *"Over the years, we have counted on a very fruitful cooperation from Yakult, and they are now part of our World Championships' identity. Their strong presence in our events is highly appreciated by our athletes, coaches, officials, but also media and all those taking part and promoting our major competitions. Thank you very much Yakult for your great support to our activities!"*

You can follow the World Championships LIVE on [FINAtv](#) [4] and results are instantly available on the [FINA mobile app](#) [5] or on Omega timing [website](#) [6].
