

PR 31- FINA Champions Swim Series off to a winning start in Guangzhou

FINA Communications Department

[The FINA Champions Swim Series](#) [1] made a successful debut in Guangzhou this weekend, featuring many of the world's best in an innovative competition format that rewards both swimmers and fans. The winner of each race earned \$10,000 USD, followed by \$8,000 for second, \$6,000 for third, and \$5,000 for fourth.

Between them, the entrants for Guangzhou had already won 145 medals at FINA World Championship level, 55 of them gold, sharing a further 62 Olympic medals. And they showed why they are among the best of the world rankings.

With the swimmers going straight to finals composed of four--instead of the usual eight participants—fans were treated to some exceptional races. Star of the FINA World Cup Series Katinka Hosszu (HUN) took on her customary challenging workload and showed why she has earned the title “Iron Lady”, winning the 400m freestyle in 4:05.16, defeating the three Chinese swimmers Li Binjie, Zhang Yuhan and Wang Jianjiahe on the first competition day, as well as an extra two gold medal on Sunday April 28 in the 200m back (2:09.05) and 200m IM (2:08.72).

Other female winners this weekend included Swedish swimming sensation Sarah Sjostrom. She took two gold on Day 1 in the 200m free (1:57.62) and 100m fly (57.16) and clinched another two victories on Day 2 in the 100m free (52.82) and 50m fly (25.55); Fu Yuanhui of China, also a double winner on Day 1 in the 50 and 100m back in 27.60 and 59.60 respectively, while teammates Ye Shiwen and Zhang Yufei were the fastest in the 100m breast (1:07.48) and 200m fly (2:07.36). Ye then touched home first in the 200m breast (2:22.53) on Sunday.

Still among the women's stars, Australia's Cate Campbell won the freestyle sprint in 24.00 and Imogen Clarke of Great Britain earned the 50m breast crown, touching home at 30.71.

In the men's races, Brazil veterans Nicholas Santos and Felipe Lima started the meet on a high with a victory each in the 50m fly (23.01) and the 50m breast (26.68) respectively, while crowd favourite Xu Jiayu (CHN) was also a double winner of the first day with golds in the 100m and 200m back (52.98 and 1:55.24) and his teammate Wang Shun (1:57.24) pocketed the gold at stake in the 200m IM. Belgium's Pieter Timmers (100m free, 48.60) and Japan's Masato Sakai (200m fly, 1:56.44) touched home first in their respective Day 1 races too.

Sun Yang was the second competition's day star as the Chinese Olympic champion topped the 200m and 400m free in 1:46.12 and 3:42.75 respectively. Three Russians, Kliment Kolesnikov (50m back 24.58), Anton Chupkov (200m breast, 2:07.48) and Andrei Minakov (100m fly, 51.44) also displayed their best form in Guangzhou on Sunday by winning a gold medal each. Italy's Fabio Scozzoli gave no chance to his opponent in the 100m breast, clocking a time of 59.74.

Mixed relays saw men and women of different nationalities coming together in the same team for a FINA first.

He Junyi, Benjamin Proud, Ranomi Kromowidjojo and Georgia Davis composed the mixed team that won the 4x100 freestyle relay on Saturday, while Benjamin Proud and Ranomi Kromowidjojo together with two other swimmers, Joao Gomes Junior and Kelsi Dahlia, claimed the 4x100m medley relay gold on Sunday.

The competition in Guangzhou has now conclude and will resume on May 11-12 in Budapest (HUN), before Indianapolis stages the last leg from May 31-June 1.

“What a wonderful weekend of swimming! FINA is delighted at the success of this first leg of the FINA Champions Swim Series. Feedback received from the athletes competing or attending the inaugural meet was very positive. Only four months have passed since the Series was announced, and in that time FINA has shown how to turn ambitious plans into reality, serving swimmers and fans alike,” said FINA President Julio Maglione. ??

“FINA launched the exclusive Champions Swim Series with the clear intent of creating a real swimming show that brought together the best swimmers with the best sports presentation and the best broadcast technology. Anyone watching this weekend’s competition, either in person, on NBC in the U.S., or screens around the world, will have seen that we succeeded. FINA’s challenge now is to do even better at the next legs of the series this year and in future years to achieve new standards and values for our sport and FINA.”

The weekend saw firsts on and around the pool deck too. The medal table reflected individual performances, not those of countries or teams, demonstrating FINA’s commitment to help the sport’s stars to shine. Five-time Olympic gold medallist Missy Franklin also made her welcome start as a broadcast commentator for the Olympic rights-holder NBC.

Participants in the FINA Champions Swim Series all have their flights and accommodation paid for by FINA, and share over \$3,000,000 USD in prize money throughout the series.

[Winners in Guangzhou \(CHN\)](#) [2]

50m free: Men – Benjamin Proud (GBR) 21.48; Women – Cate Campbell (AUS) 24.00

100m free: Men – Pieter Timmers (BEL) 48.60; Women – Sarah Sjöström (SWE) 52.82

200m free: Men – Sun Yang (CHN) 1:46.12; Women – Sarah Sjöström (SWE) 1:57.62

400m free: Men – Sun Yang (CHN) 3:42.75; Women – Katinka Hosszu (HUN) 4:05.16

50m back: Men – Kliment Kolesnikov (RUS) 24.58; Women – Fu Yuanhui (CHN) 27.60

100m back: Men – Xu Jiayu (CHN) 52.98; Women – Fu Yuanhui (CHN) 59.60

200m back: Men – Xu Jiayu (CHN) 1:55.24; Women – Katinka Hosszu (HUN) 2:09.05

50m breast: Men – Felipe Lima (BRA) 26.68; Women – Imogen Clark (GBR) 30.71

100m breast: Men – Fabio Scozzoli (ITA) 59.74; Women – Ye Shiwen (CHN) 1:07.48

200m breast: Men – Anton Chupkov (RUS) 2:07.48; Women – Ye Shiwen (CHN) 2:22.53

50m fly: Men – Nicholas Santos (BRA) 23.01; Women – Sarah Sjöström (SWE) 25.55

100m fly: Men – Andrei Minakov (RUS) 51.44; Women – Sarah Sjöström (SWE) 57.16

200m fly: Men – Masato Sakai (JPN) 1:56.44; Women – Zhang Yufei 2:07.36

200m IM: Men – Wang Shun (CHN) 1:57.24; Women – Katinka Hosszu (HUN) 2:08.72

4x50m free mixed: FINA 3 3:28.84 (He Junyi, Benjamin Proud, Ranomi Kromowidjojo, Georgia Davis)

4x50m medley mixed: FINA 3 3:48.55 (Ranomi Kromowidjojo, Joao Gomes Junior, Kelsi Dahlia, Benjamin Proud)

All three meets of the Champions Swim Series are qualifying events for both the [FINA World Championships Gwangju 2019](#) [3] and the [Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games](#) [4].

You can re-watch all the races on VoD on [FINA tv](#) [5] and the results are available on [FINA website](#) [6] and [FINA mobile app](#) [7].
