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DWS-2019 in Kazan, Day 2: China, Great Britain and North Korea golden

Olga Kamardina, FINA Correspondent in Russia

The 4th leg of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series continues to flourish in the ancient city of Kazan, Russia, as representatives of 5 nations climbed up the podium on a busy Competition Day 2.

Heavy favorites China were not the major newsmakers this time as their only gold credited to their rookie teenagers, which showed class in the 10m mixed synchro platform. Hosts did their utmost to stay competitive, but ended up claiming silver, whereas North Korea and Great Britain celebrated their well-deserved breakthrough golden wins.

10m platform women: youngsters battle in action



Photo (LOC): Kim Mi Rae of North Korea, winner of the women's 10m platform

It turned out to be the youngest podium ever. All medal chasers in the final have been but 18. Teenagers of China, first heading into the decisive round, had been on top after the first two attempts as 14-years Chen Yuxi, victorious in 10m synchro event on competition day 1, passed on the leader's button to compatriot Zhang Minjie. Unexpectedly, round#3 changed luck to help their North Korean opponent. Kim Mi Rae, celebrated 18 this April, posted her best dive of the day, Back 3.5 Somersaults Tuck, right in the midst of the heat. Earning 82.50, she moved into the lead and later succeeded strengthening positions. However, the gap was not overwhelming. Totalling 373.40, she sealed her first platform champions title of the 2019 FINA/CNSG Diving World Series.

“The overall seems quite good, as I have managed to improve the one earned in Montreal 2 weeks ago by roughly 4 points. The dynamics is good, but it is no way my personal best, which I set in Budapest at the FINA World Championships, in 2017. This year, we will have this major event, and I am going to reach my best shape by July”, -

emphasized **Kim Mi Rae**.

Zhang Minjie of China collected silver, 8.80 points adrift to the winner, as Chen Yuxi were up to bronze on 356.95 points.

“We have been training very hard, 7 hours a day, to improve our diving skills, - said **Zhang Minjie** to the media. -

We wanted to win very much, but the competitions showed that there is a lot to look into when we return home. My teammate and I both came across problems with Back 2.5 Somersaults 1.5Twists pike on the final dive, and we have to analyse the reasons of it”.

As to their young age comparing to the other competitors, she noted:

“Everyone is in the same boat. If you train hard – you win”.

Iulia Timoshinina of Russia, regarded as a home hope, did not stand the pressure. 6th heading into the final, she stayed always 6th with no chances to reach her closest competitor - Rin Kaneto, who finished on 302.20 points. Another North Korean in the final today, Kim Mi Hwa, stopped 13 points to the podium, 4th place - 343.55 points.

3m springboard men: Great Britain earns second gold in the circuit



Photo (LOC): Jack Laugher of the Great Britain, winner of the men's 3m springboard

Another unpredictable story on the springboard highlighted Kazan's leg of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series. Like the day before in the men's 3m synchro event, participants of individual contest engineered up a show of complex nature and spectacular character.

“Everyone in the final has had a strong program, so it was a pleasure to compete, - highlighted **Peng Jiafeng** of

China, eventual bronze medalist of the competition. – Diving becomes more and more complex technically, so we have to spend more and more time training to obtain steady skills. The lack of training is the reason for many mistakes on the show”.

Peng Jiafeng of China took a good start in the evening session. His first top difficulty dives, including Forward 2.5

Somersaults 3 Twists pike, on 3.9 DD, could score a better margin for the athlete, but for the execution wraps, which minimized the possible cream. At the same time Jack Laugher of Great Britain, silver medalist of Olympic Games in this event, stood close to the top, ready for a jump. He took his chance flying, executing his version of 5156B and collected 91.65 points and naturally raised his rank. The two closing attempts done by the British, were not at all flawless, but consistent enough to seal the golden win, 499.30.

“The overall is good, but I am not happy about the entries, - commented the winner. – I am determined to return home and work hard to get improved by the next (and the last) Leg of the FINA Diving World Series this year.

I never track opponents diving, - added **Jack Laugher**. – I prefer to listen to music, especially hip-hop style, to get better concentrated setting a good rhythm”.

Another breakthrough performance came by another Olympic medalist. Russian Evgeny Kuznetsov managed to recover from 6th in the first round to 2nd by the round 6th. His cheapest dive brought him 66.30 only as his most expensive – Forward 4.5 Somersaults tuck, booked him a deal - 93.10. Diving the last, he narrowly overtook Peng by rough 2 points, 466.60, and forced him be content landing bronze.

“In Russia we say, that at first we create troubles, than we do outmost to overcome them, - commented **Evgeny**

Kuznetsov on his silver medal. – This is my first podium on individual springboard this season dives me much food for analyses.”

Another Chinese man in the 6-man final Wang Zongyuan, who collected 433.15 points to rank fourth, followed by yesterday's newsmaker Oleg Kolodiy of Ukraine, 438.95, and Philippe Gagne of Canada, 425.30.

10m mixed synchro platform: China rules



Photo (LOC): Duan/Zhang of China, winner of the 10m mixed synchro platform

There were 5 contenders for the 10m mixed synchro merits, and the youngest of them - Chinese - turned out to be a head above the rest of the field. Yu Duan, 14, teamed Zhang Minjie, one year older, 6 months ago. Their synchro international debut wrote a new page in their career.

The duo had been unbeatable all the way through to the final buzzer. Opening the competition with excellent 9.0 on their compulsory dives, 201B and 301B, Chinese failed to achieve top scores on their following routine, which cut back their lead to +7.80. They seemed not to be worrying. Coming back strongly, they produced the best dives of the evening, Inward 3.5 Somersaults tuck and Back 2.5 Somersaults 1.5 Twists pike, assessed by 81.60 and 83.52 respectively, en route to the impressive 339.42 tally.

“Great feeling to win, - said **Duan Yu** of China. – We loved diving in Kazan. Fans were a good help. A lot of

Chinese students come to support every day, which gives us energy to win. Mixed was a new story for us, and we had been training hard to reach good level. 8 hours a day, and if our coach says it’s not enough, we shall train even more”.

Russia, #2 in the ranking, had a strong diving list and were regarded as an experienced duo. However close they might come to claim their another silver, Nikita Shleikher and Iuliia Timoshinina ended up at an inch to the bronze. They had been keeping to the top 3 all the way up to the fifth round, but averagely performed 6th dive, 5253B, pushed them down to fourth.

Canadians Vincent Riendeau/Caeli McKay overtook them by 6 points.

“It’s a pity we have missed the medal, - confessed **Iuliia Timoshinina** of Russia. – It was not the best day, nor the

best performance. We congratulate the medal winners, they had been better consistent than we did. For Our Canadian more lucky challengers it is the first win in the DWS-2019, which will be a good reminiscence from the trip to Kazan”.

Silver medal of the North Korean duo had also never been for granted. Starting lowly sixth, they kept on fighting till the end, posting good dives, and were rewarded accordingly. Totalling 314.28 points they celebrated second silver to go for their nation.

“We have been diving together for a few months now, - noted **Hyong Il Myong**. – We like diving together, and we like the discipline. To win a better color of the medal we shall give 100% of ourselves, which is not at all easy.”.



Photo (LOC): Shleikher/Timoshinina of Russia, 4th place at the 10m mixed synchro platform

Summary: After Competition Day 2, the team overall chart sees 8 medal winning nations and China on top with a 4 -1 – 2 record. Great Britain, Ukraine and North Korea got one gold apiece together with some other pieces adding to their credit. Russia collected 2 silvers and bronze, where as Mexico and Canada checked in on the 3rd place of the podium.

The 4th Leg of the FINA Diving World Series, staged in Kazan, will reach its height tomorrow with the remaining 3 medals sets on offer – 3m springboard women, 10m platform men and 3m mixed synchro. Then, the circuit is due to travel to London, the capital of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which will shall be decisive and final for the overall chart of 2019.

Competition results. FINA/CNSG Diving World Series 2019. Leg#4.

Day 2 May, 11

10m platform women

1. KIM Mi Rae (PRK) 373.40
2. ZHANG Minjie (CHN) 364.60
3. CHEN Yuxi (CHN) 356.95
4. KIM Mi Hwa (PRK) 343.55
5. KANETO Rin (JPN) 302.20
6. TIMOSHININA Iuliia (RUS) 258.90

3m springboard men

1. LAUGHER Jack (GBR) 499.30
2. KUZNETSOV Evgenii (RUS) 466.60
3. PENG Jianfeng (CHN) 464.95
4. WANG Zongyuan (CHN) 443.15
5. KOLODIY Oleg (UKR) 438.95
6. GAGNE Philippe (CAN) 425.30

10m mixed synchro platform

1. DUAN Yu/ZHANG Minjie (CHN) 339.42
 2. HYON Il Myong/JO Jin Mi (PRK) 314.28
 3. RIENDEAU Vincent/McKAY Caeli (CAN) 312.42
 4. SHLEIKHER Nikita/TIMOSHININA Iuliia (RUS) 306.84
 5. JAYA SURYA Hanis Nazirul/LEONG Mun Yee (MAS) 278.40
 6. LEE Matthew/BIRCH Robyn (GBR) 270.06
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