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## PR 79 - Russia revalidates title in Funchal (POR)

FINA Communications Department

The team of Russia was the winner of the 2019 edition of the FINA World Women's Junior Water Polo Championships, held in Funchal (POR), from September 9-15, after beating the Netherlands by 11-5 in the final of the competition. The Russians managed to revalidate the 2017 title and were victorious in all the six matches of the tournament in Portugal. Before these two consecutive titles, the team of Russia had also won the Championships in 2009.

In the decisive game of the competition, the gold medallists built up a decisive advantage (7-3), by the end of the second period, with the Dutch then balancing the match (2-2) in the third period. This effort was not sufficient, as the Russians scored two unanswered goals in the fourth quarter to seal the victory in 11-5. Polina Kempf (four) and Lieke Rogge (three) were respectively the best scorers of the final for Russia and the Netherlands.

The bronze medal game opposed Italy to Greece and the result was undecided until the end, with the Italians eventually prevailing by a tangential 9-8. The Italians seem to conduct the game at half time (6-3), but the Hellenic squad was better in the second part of the match, with a 3-2 and a 2-1 partial in the third and fourth quarter respectively. Agnese Cocchiere (ITA), with three goals, was the most prolific scorer of the game.

To close the top-8 ranking of the competition, Spain narrowly beat USA by 10-9 for the fifth position, while Hungary was better (12-7) than China in the match deciding places 7-8.

In terms of individual awards, Russia had in Evgeniia Golovina and Margarita Pystina (21 goals) respectively the best goalkeeper and scorer of the tournament, while Simone van de Kraats (NED) was the Most Valuable Player of the Championships.

The **final ranking** of the 2019 FINA World Women's Junior Water Polo Championships was as follows:

**1. Russia; 2. Netherlands; 3. Italy;** 4. Greece; 5. Spain; 6. United States; 7. Hungary; 8. China; 9. Australia; 10. Canada;

11. Brazil; 12. South Africa; 13. Japan; 14. New Zealand; 15. Kazakhstan; 16. Portugal.

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