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## Spain more "brilliant" than ever

Pedro Adrega

ophy 2008

Spain confirmed its favouritism for the final victory, at home, in the 3rd FINA Synchronised Swimming World Trophy, organised in Madrid from December 5-7. In the team free event, the Spaniards displayed the successful routine – “Africa” – that led them to the silver medal at both the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the 2007 FINA World Championships in Melbourne (AUS). But this time, the Iberians were literally more ‘shiny’ than ever: they have incorporated lights in their swimsuit, enhancing the spectacular character of their presentation. In a scheme that is now well assimilated by the Spanish athletes (this time, their icon Gemma Mengual did not swim), they got three perfect 10 from the judges and finished with a total of 99.666. With the victory on Day 1 in the duet ‘combined’ event (free and thematic), Spain is close to getting first place of this year’s overall ranking of the World Trophy – in 2006 and 2007, Russia won – a competition attended by FINA Honorary Treasurer Dr. Julio Maglione.

And if Spain’s rise to first place in the world hierarchy now seems possible, the World Trophy in Madrid was a precious indication for the traditional – for a decade now – number 1 in this discipline, Russia. With their stars Anastasia Ermakova and Anastasia Davydova absent in 2009, and with a new team with plenty of young swimmers, Russia is in a period of renovation and tested its new ‘weapons’ in the Spanish capital. In Duet, the new pairs finished third and in the team event, they were also bronze medallists, with a total of 97.000 and a 10 from one of the five judges officiating in the event. Despite the youth of its new values, Russia is definitively ready for the next major international events and will continue fighting for the top of the world hierarchy.

CHN Team

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On this difficult path, they will face a hyper-motivated team of China, clearly the revelation of the last couple of years. Bronze medallists at the 2008 Games in the ‘Water Cube’ in Beijing, the Chinese continue to impress in Madrid, clearly assuming the position of runner-up behind Spain. After very solid duet presentations on the first day of the competition, the team was also second, totalling 98.000. Very correct technically (an aspect that is not being judged at the World Trophy), the Chinese are also gaining in elegance and in the capacity of showing surprising routines, plenty of difficult acrobatic movements. The bronze medal in Beijing was naturally a consequence of the Chinese evolution over recent years, but will certainly constitute a cause for further improvement and inspiration for the present and future synchronised swimmers in the most populated country on the planet.

One of the other sensations of the day was Japan, who continued ‘playing the game’ of additional accessories during their programme. After the thematic duet, the event in which this possibility was launched, Japan appeared in the team event with some accessories in the starting platform and finished its programme with one of the swimmers agitating a big scarf. This innovation, together with an inspired programme, gave the Asian delegation the fourth place (96.000) in this event.

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Also spectacular were the routines of both Canada and Italy. For the North Americans, it was a repetition of the presentation displayed at the 2008 Olympics, under the theme of the Chinese Horoscope. As in Beijing, this idea delighted spectators, but also the judges, who gave Canada a total of 95.334 (fifth place). Italy also presented a brilliant presentation, plenty of risky lifts and throws, finishing the team competition in sixth (94.666). As with the duets, Great Britain and Egypt closed the ranking, with the European taking advantage over the Africans – 88.334 (seventh) for the country organising the 2012 Olympic Games in London), and 82.000 (eighth) for the country that has always been present in the World Trophy since its creation in 2006.

## **RESULTS**

Team Free

1. Spain 99.666

*Andrea Fuentes, Irina Rodriguez, Raquel Corral, Alba Cabello, Thais Henriquez, Margalida Crespi, Paula Klamburg, Ona*

*Carbonell*

2. China 98.000

*Xiao Huan Zhang, Beibei Gu, Na Wang, Wenwen Jiang, Tingting Jiang, Ou Liu, Xi Luo, Yi Wen Wu*

3. Russia 97.000

*Aleksandra Patskevich, Anzhelika Timanina, Daria Korobova, Ekaterina Zozulina, Aleksandra Elchinova, Daria Magan,*

*Svetlana Ponkratova, Victoria Shestakovich*

4. Japan 96.000

*Yumi Adachi, Chisa Kobayashi, Erina Suzuki, Yukako Kobayashi, Saya Kimura, Maya Kimura, Mai Nakamura, Saki Iida*

5. Canada 95.334

*Marie-Pier Boudreau Gagnon, Chloe Isaac, Tracy Little, Elise Marcotte, Alison McKenny, Jo Annie Fortin, Valerie Welsh,*

*Karine Thomas*

6. Italy 94.666

*Alessia Bigi, Camilla Cattaneo, Costanza Fiorentini, Elisa Bozzo, Francesca Gangemi, Manila Flamini, Mariangela*

*Perrupato, Sara Sgarzi*

7. Great Britain 88.334

*Olivia Allison, Katrina Dawkins, Helen Morris, Asha Randall, Jenna Randall, Katherine Skelton, Jazmine Stanburry,*

*Louise Woolley*

8. Egypt 82.000

*May Mosaad, Lamia Mohsen, Aziza Mahmoud, Youmna Amr, Heba Magd, Dalia Gebaly, Reem Wal, Shaza Yeha*

## **OVERALL SCORING AFTER DAY 2**

1. ESP 297.666
  2. CHN 292.000
  3. RUS 288.667
  4. JPN 286.667
  5. CAN 285.668
  6. ITA 282.333
  7. GBR 265.667
  8. EGY 245.667
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