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Russia takes two gold during first final session (Day 4) at World Junior Synchro Championships

FINA Communication Department

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DUO COMPETITION

The first final of the 11th FINA World Junior Synchronised Swimming Championships 2008, in the duo competition, brought the first gold medal to the Russian team. Elena Ternovskaya and Anna Udovik were absolutely brilliant in figures the day before (the athletes scored 38.891, which was 0.328 more than the second-place result of Jo-Annie Fortin and Chloe Isaak (CAN)).

The Russian duo had very high speed movements and a complicated routine and finished the free program with 47.800 for technical merit and 47,500 for artistic impression. They got the same points (95.300) in the preliminaries, so the victory of Ternovskaya/Udovik was quite predictable.

The performance of the first group of six teams started with a technical incident. When the Greek duo (Nektaria Ramnioti and Despoina Solomou) were almost finished their performance, the music stopped unexpectedly. It happened just several seconds before the end of their program.

The same thing had happened in the preliminaries with the Canadian group. But they were 5 seconds more “lucky”: their music stopped 15 seconds before the end.

After a short discussion with the judges it was decided to give another attempt for the Greek athletes at the end of the event. Ramnioti/Solomou repeated the routine and was strong enough to take fourth position in general.

The Canadian team (Fortin/Isaak) improved on their preliminary result greatly. They had also been quite successful in the figures, and proceeded to score 90.800 for the free program in the final, while their preliminary result totaled 88.100. This helped the team jump from 5th preliminary position to the podium, and it was the biggest Canadian junior success since 2004.

China delivered a bit of a surprise with their performance. Chinese junior swimmers impressed the audience greatly during the Junior Worlds of 2006 in China, but their performance in St. Petersburg looked not so strong and complicated. Some technical mistakes also took place. The Chinese swimmers started right after the Japanese duo (Yukiko Inui/Mariko Sakai) and looked much heavier and “low” in the water. Yukiko Inui/Mariko Sakai got silver medals, while China finished at 6th position.

GROUP COMPETITION

The leaders of a group competition after the first two preliminary days of the Championships were Russia (86.541), China (83.486) and Japan (83.102). The athletes of those countries had got the highest marks for the figures as well.

The gold medallist’s free composition was really outstanding by all parts. Russia did more complicated lifts, acrobatic jumps of high quality and good balance, the team covered the pool surface better than any other competitor and showed a lot of simultaneous and synchronised leg work.

One of the most original executions came from China. The only serious mistake was done in the third lift: the upper girl lost her balance and it was possible to see on the underwater camera picture that this mistake was the result of erroneous movements on the “down floor”.

One of the most famous synchronised routines ended with a disappointment. The team from Spain chose the Olympic-2004 and Worlds-2005 free program of Spanish senior team for the performance. It was quite strange to see such a famous routine with such a lot mistakes. The swimmers failed to do the first lift, lost balance in the second, didn’t show good jumps or better to say – dives: the entries to the water after those elements looked poor.

The group from Canada showed a lot of interesting combinations and lifts, but the lack of training was evident: the girls had worked together just 5 weeks before the Championships.
