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Water Polo Women: Day 3: RUS 12 NED 12

FINA Communication Department

Russia threw away a 7-3 advantage over Netherlands only to see the Dutch draw level four times for a 12-12 draw, but it was enough to take out Group A and consign the 2008 Olympic champion to third place. It was a game of highs and lows and the strong Dutch supporter base was thrilled with its comeback and heroic final quarter, which it won 5-4. Olga Beliaeva opened for Russia with identical centre-forward goals.

The Dutch replied for 2-2 and goals were swapped for 3-3 at the first break. Just like the first quarter, a Russian opened with two goals, in this case captain Evgeniya Ivanova, one of the stars of the tournament to date. She whistled in a shot from eight metres into the top left and swam the length of the pool to score from the deep right.

Ekaterina Prokofyeva, who played under head coach Mikhail Nakoryakov when Russia won the world youth crown in Siberia in 2009, had a penalty shot blocked by Dutch goalkeeper Ilse van der Meijden. Never mind, Beliaeva struck with her third centre-forward goal and fourth of the championship — followed by a Anna Timofeeva strike for an impressive 7-3.

The Dutch would not fold and the next four goals went their way with two just before halftime and two after. Russia hit back quickly through Olga Belova with an accurate shot into the bottom left but then the goals dried up. Five minutes later, Netherlands took a timeout with no result and Russia had an 8-7 lead at the final break.

It was the 30th match between Russia and Netherlands at all the major championship, including European. Russia had won seven of the previous eight, only losing one of the two encounters in this year's World League.

Match 22: 17:30, Group A, RUSSIA 12 NETHERLANDS 12

Quarters: 3-3, 4-2, 1-2, 4-5

Referees: Mario Bianchi (ITA), Georgios Stavridis (GRE).

Extra Man: RUS: 2/3. NED: 4/5.

Pens: RUS: 0/1. NED: 1/1.

Teams:

RUSSIA:

Anna Ustyukhina, Diana Antonova, Ekaterina Prokofyeva, Elvina Karimova (1), Alexandra Antonova (1), Olga Belova (2), Ekaterina Tankeeva (1), Anna Grineva, Anna Timofeeva (1), Olga Beliaeva (3), Evgeniya Ivanova (3), Ekaterina Zelentsova, Anna Karnaukh. Head Coach: Mikhail Nakoryakov.

NETHERLANDS: Ilse van der Meijden, Yasemin Smit (1), Marloes Nijhuis, Biurakn Hakhverdian, Sabrina van der Sloot (1), Nomi Stomphorst, Iefke van Belkum (2), Vivian Sevenich (1), Carolina Slagter, Dagmar Genee (2), Lieke Klaassen (4), Leonie van der Molen (1), Anne Heinis. Head Coach: Mauro Maugeri.

FLASH QUOTES:**Olga Beliaeva (RUS):**

"We are satisfied with the leadership. Now we will take a rest and practice to prepare the next game. About today, it has been an equal and difficult match. They have experienced players. I didn't like our defence, it was better against Spain, but I'm happy."

Carolina Slagter (NED):

"We created a lot of opportunities after the third quarter. We didn't score more goals which cost us the victory. The next match will be important and we'll need to focus. "

Lieke Klaassen (NED):

"We let them score so easily at the beginning of the game. Now we need to focus on the next game and avoid the mistakes we did today. For us, playing against New Zealand would be easier than China. It will be our last chance for the medals."
