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Water Polo Women: Day 3: ESP 20 UZB 4

FINA Communication Department

Spain grabbed second place in Group A with a 20-4 margin over Uzbekistan in the final group match of the women's championship. As in the day's opening game, a minute's silence was observed for the victims of the train crash in the north-western province of Galicia. As if in support of those families left behind, Spanish captain Jennifer Pareja scored the championship's fastest goal at just 12 seconds when she converted a penalty attempt.

This was the first clash between the two teams at this level. Before the match, Uzbekistan had conceded 16.9 goals on average in its 17 World Championship matches. Spain had scored an average of 8.2 goals in its 42 matches.

Andrea Blas scored a record for these championships with five goals in the first half, mainly from centre forward.

Uzbekistan settled well into the second quarter and held Spain to three goals but let the match slip in the third period with six against.

The parochial Spanish crowd in the first quarter seemed to turn allegiance to Uzbekistan, especially when Ramilja Halikova scored on extra-man attack. The crowd did applaud good Uzbek play but really only had eyes for the Spanish women.

In the final quarter, Blas collected her sixth goal and the score moved to 19-1. Then Uzbekistan gained some luck with its shooting when Natalya Plyusova scored on extra and then Halikova fired in a moon shot from near halfway, sailing in on a high arc over international debutante Patricia Herrera's head. Marta Bach became the last Spanish field player to gain a goal with 21 seconds.

The theatre was not complete until Natalya Plyusova fired from well past halfway as the final buzzer sounded, only for the ball to drop into goal for 20-4.

Match 21: 21:30, Group A, SPAIN 20 UZBEKISTAN 4

Quarters: 8-1, 3-0, 6-0, 3-3

Referees: Gabor Vogel (HUN), Amber Drury (USA).

Extra Man: ESP: 6/9. UZB: 1/4

Teams:

SPAIN:

Laura Ester, Marta Bach (1), Anna Espar (2), Roser Tarrago (1), Matilda Ortiz (1), Jennifer Pareja (2), Lorena Miranda (1), Pilar Pena (2), Andrea Blas (6), Ona Meseguer (2), Maica Garcia (2), Laura Lopez, Patricia Herrera. Head Coach: Miguel Oca.

UZBEKISTAN: Elena

Dukhanova, Diana Dadabaeva, Aleksandra Sarancha, Angelina Djumalieva, Evgeniya Ivanova, Ekaterina Morozova, Natalya Plyusova (2), Anna Shcheglova, Ramilya Halikova (2), Adelina Zinurova, Guzelya Khamitova, Anna Plyusova, Natalya Shlyonskaya. Head Coach: Akbar Sadikov.

FLASH QUOTES:

Patricia Herrera (ESP):

“It has not been a very tough game, but it has helped us to keep up the competition rhythm to be ready for the upcoming games. I’m very proud and happy for my first appearance with the national team, I felt a little bit nervous at the beginning but after everything was just fine, feeling more and more comfortable in the pool.”

Matilde Ortiz (ESP):

“It’s good for us to have games less physically demanding to be in a better condition for the next game. New Zealand is a strong team and we need to be focus all the time.”

Jennifer Pareja (ESP):

“From now on we need to concentrate all the time and play our best to be able to fight for the medals, and we hope people keep supporting us like this.”

Natalya Plyusova (UZB):

“Spain is a very strong team but we tried to play our best. We know Australia, our next game, from the World League and they are also a very strong team, we will try to do a good performance. I like Barcelona very much, it is a very beautiful city, and we are enjoying the championship and learning for the future.”
