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## Swimming, Day 1 - Women's 4x100m free: 10 years later, USA gets the title

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In a thrilling race, the team of USA got the gold medal in the first relay final of these Championships, proving that Barcelona brings luck to North American quartets. In fact, their last title dated from 2003, when they also triumphed in the Catalan capital. Since then, Australia in 2005 and 2007, and Netherlands in 2009 and 2011 had stolen the show. At the Palau Sant Jordi, Australia started by dominating the operations, leading the way until the 300m-mark, but a very fast leg from Megan Romano gave the victory to USA in 3:32.31, better than the time (3:33.15) it took Australia to get the Olympic gold in 2012 in London. The Aussies got this time the silver in 3:32.43 (Alicia Coutts, swimming her third race of the afternoon, anchored her team's relay), while the 2011 champions – Netherlands – had to content with the bronze (3:35.77).

With this win, United States becomes the most successful nation in this event in the history of the championships, with five titles (1978, 1991, 1998, 2003 and 2013).

**World Record:** Netherlands, 3:31.72 – July 26, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

**Championships Record:** Netherlands, 3:31.72 – July 26, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

**2003-2011 winners in this event:** 2003 – United States (3:38.09); 2005 – Australia (3:37.32); 2007 – Australia (3:35.48);

2009 – Netherlands (3:31.72); 2011 – Netherlands (3:36.05)

**The best in this event (1. most victories or 2. fastest time):** United States (1978, 1991, 1998, 2003 & 2013)

**2012 Olympic podium:** 1. Australia (3:33.15), 2. Netherlands (3:33.79), 3. United States (3:34.24)

{youtube}JnEg2KeVHjM{/youtube}

QUOTES:

#### **Gold medal team: USA**

Natalie Coughlin: "Megan [Romano] swam insanely fast [52.60], I knew we could rely on her, she's been so good on the anchor the last three times she swam that for the US team. Shannon [Vreeland] has been wonderful too and this is the very first time for the US team that we had four very good splits. We broke the American record tonight, it's such an honour to be part of this team."

"It feels so good to be back in Barcelona and be successful here, I had one of the toughest meets in my life here 10 years ago. I had the worst fever ever, so to win tonight feels like it's redemption. It's crazy how much I remember from that meet, I'm 30 now I was 20 then, it's great to be back and enjoy the meet." "We know our opponents are always going to be tough so we'll never rest on our laurels and we're always going to fight."

#### **Silver medal team: Australia**

Emma McKeon: "It's nice to get the first swim out of the way, very few people in the world get to experience that so it's nice and it sets you well for the rest of the meet."

Cate Campbell, on winning with sister Bronte: "We've been dreaming about this since we both discovered that we could swim, I couldn't have asked for anything more, we did a fantastic job tonight."

**Bronze medal team: Netherlands**

Inge Dekker: "Our strategy was to put our stronger swimmers at the end and it seems it worked because we won the bronze medal."

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