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Swimming, Day 4 - Women's 200m freestyle: Franklin nets third Barcelona gold

FINA Communication Department

Missy Franklin (USA) claimed her third gold medal of the Barcelona World Championships, beating world record holder Federica Pellegrini (ITA), the defending champion, in the final of the 200m freestyle. Franklin, already a gold medallist in the 4x100m freestyle relay and 100m backstroke, led just inside world record pace at the 100m mark, with Olympic 400m freestyle champion Camille Muffat (FRA) second and Pellegrini fifth. Pellegrini, fourth with 50m to go, piled on the pressure on the last length but could not catch the 18-year-old American. Franklin, fourth in the event at the 2012 Olympics, won in 1:54.81 as Pellegrini charged through for the silver in 1:55.14, with Muffat taking the bronze in 1:55.72. Pellegrini, the 2008 Olympic champion, who had been chasing a third consecutive world title in this event, has won 200m freestyle medals at five World Championships in a row, having claimed silver in 2005, bronze in 2007, gold in 2009 and 2011 and now another silver. She set her world record of 1:52.98 when she won her 2009 title, in the era of the fast-suits.

Muffat, seventh in the Barcelona 400, was a double bronze medallist in the 200 and 400 freestyle at the 2011 Worlds. Sarah Sjöström (SWE), who regained the 100m butterfly crown on Day 2, was fourth behind Muffat in 1:56.53. Olympic champion Allison Schmitt (USA) did not contest the event.

World Record: Federica Pellegrini (ITA), 1:52.98 – July 29, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

Championships Record: Federica Pellegrini (ITA), 1:52.98 – July 29, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

Best performance of the current season (since January 2013): Missy Franklin (USA), 1:54.81 – July 31 in Barcelona

(ESP)

2003-2011 winners in this event: 2003 – Alena Popchanka (BLR, 1:58.32); 2005 – Solenne Fignes (FRA, 1:58.60); 2007 – Laure Manaudou (FRA, 1:55.52); 2009 – Federica Pellegrini (ITA, 1:52.98); 2011 – Federica Pellegrini (ITA, 1:55.58)

The best in this event (1. most victories or 2. fastest time): Federica Pellegrini (ITA, 2009 & 2011)

2012 Olympic podium: 1. Allison Schmitt (USA, 1:53.61), 2. Camille Muffat (FRA, 1:55.58), 3. Bronte Barratt (AUS, 1:55.81)

{youtube}fQ53egGcycs{/youtube}

QUOTES:

Gold medal winner: Missy Franklin (USA)

"I'm very happy after winning three gold medals, this is my first best time of the meet, I swam under 1:55 so I'm ecstatic."

"I did a lot of pace work to improve my speed and a lot of it was mental too. I really had to concentrate on my own race. Swimming so many events was absolutely incredible and winning every single one of them."

Silver medal winner: Federica Pellegrini (ITA)

"I'm really surprised with the silver medal. I decided with my coach to finally swim the 200m free because I wanted to give it a try. I'm very happy about my time, both in the semi and final."

"It's not just a medal, it's great news for the future because I didn't train for this race (I trained only backstroke this year) and it means I can do better next year."

Bronze medal winner: Camille Muffat (FRA)

"I knew that I could swim really fast and even faster than what I did. The strategy was to take a good start."

"I knew Missy Franklin was going to win the race, she was stronger."
