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Swimming, Day 4 - Men's 50m breaststroke: Van der Burgh edges out Sprenger for gold

FINA Communication Department

Cameron van der Burgh (RSA) turned the tables on his 100m breaststroke conqueror Christian Sprenger (AUS) to reclaim the world 50m breaststroke crown by the tiny margin of one-hundredth of a second at the FINA World Championships. Olympic 100m breaststroke champion Van der Burgh had to settle for silver behind Sprenger in the 100 event on Day 2 but levelled the score in the 50. Van der Burgh, 50m gold medallist in 2009 and bronze medallist in 2007 and 2011, won the one-length sprint in 26.77, 0.10 seconds outside his own world record, with Sprenger - Olympic 100m breaststroke silver medallist behind Van der Burgh in 2012 - touching in 26.78. Giulio Zorzi, Van der Burgh's South African team-mate, snatched the bronze in 27.04, himself just 0.01 seconds ahead of fourth-placed Damir Dugonjic of Slovenia.

World Record: Cameron van der Burgh (RSA), 26.67 – July 29, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

Championships Record: Cameron van der Burgh (RSA), 26.67 – July 29, 2009 in Rome (ITA)

Best performance of the current season (since January 2013): Cameron van der Burgh (RSA), 26.77 – July 31, in

Barcelona (ESP)

2003-2011 winners in this event: 2003 – James Gibson (GBR, 27.56); 2005 – Mark Warnecke (GER, 27.63); 2007 – Oleg Lisogor (UKR, 27.66); 2009 – Cameron vd Burgh (RSA, 26.67); 2011 – Felipe Franca Silva (BRA, 27.01)

The best in this event (1. most victories or 2. fastest time): Oleg Lisogor (UKR, 2001 & 2007)

Not in the Olympic programme

{youtube}Bnp4GV9khDg{/youtube}

QUOTES:

Gold medal winner: Cameron van der Burgh (RSA)

"It's a special night. I got the gold but it's not as important as sharing the podium with my best friend, my training partner Giulio [Zorzi]. This is one of the best experiences we have in our friendship."

"The level in breaststroke has really improved a lot this last year because Christian [Sprenger] and I are pushing each other the whole time, there's no easy race between the two of us."

On successful Championships for South Africa: "The last Olympics brought up a new era in South African swimming, there's a lot of pressure at the same time because the more medals you bring, the more people expect you to win medal. In general, it's up now to the organisers of swimming South Africa to bring attraction to the sport, gain sponsorship and make swimming in South Africa bigger, we [the swimmers] do as much as we can."

Silver medal winner: Christian Sprenger (AUS)

"I did a PB so I couldn't be any happier. The 50m race is part of those events where you have to do everything right, it's always tough but my confidence is growing and I feel my ability to perform is getting stronger, so I can take a lot of positive things from this race."

Bronze medal winner: Giulio Zorzi (RSA)

On why he started competing that late: "I was a bit lazy in my teenager years. When I turned 21, Cameron offered to come and swim with him. I learned a lot from him, I'm so proud of this medal."
