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Swimming, Day 5 - Men's 200m individual medley: Lochte (USA) gets first gold in Barcelona

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The World record holder, champion in 2011 and best performer of the season, US Ryan Lochte (USA) was the favourite of this race and did not disappoint: the North American star, fourth in the 200m free and silver medallist in the 4x100m free relay at the Palau Sant Jordi, got his first title in Barcelona, touching home in 1:54.98, faster than the 1:55.44 he had clocked in June in Indianapolis. With this victory, Lochte, who has 11 Olympic podium presences, totals 21 medals at FINA World Championships and like Phelps in 2003, 2005 and 2007, has now three consecutive wins in the event, after his 2009 and 2011 successes. The silver went to Japan's Kosuke Hagino, who won the duel with Thiago Pereira from Brazil. The Asian swimmer, 2012 Olympic bronze medallist in the 400m IM, clocked 1:56.29 against Pereira's 1:56.30. It is the first success at this level for the Brazilian, who won silver in London in the longer distance. Hagino has also won silver in the 400m free here in Barcelona.

The deception of the final was Hungary's Laszlo Cseh, only fifth in 1:57.70. The Magyar swimmer has won the bronze at the Olympics in this same event behind Phelps and Lochte and was also third in 2011 in Shanghai (CHN).

World Record: Ryan Lochte (USA), 1:54.00 – July 28, 2011 in Shanghai (CHN)

Championships Record: Ryan Lochte (USA), 1:54.00 – July 28, 2011 in Shanghai (CHN)

Best performance of the current season (since January 2013): Ryan Lochte (USA), 1:54.98 – August 1, in Barcelona

(ESP)

2003-2011 winners in this event: 2003 – Michael Phelps (USA, 1:56.04); 2005 – Michael Phelps (USA, 1:56.68); 2007 – Michael Phelps (USA, 1:54.98); 2009 – Ryan Lochte (USA, 1:54.10); 2011 – Ryan Lochte (USA, 1:54.00)

The best in this event (1. most victories or 2. fastest time): Michael Phelps (USA, 2003, 2005 & 2007) and Ryan Lochte (USA, 2009, 2011 & 2013)

2012 Olympic podium: 1. Michael Phelps (USA, 1:54.27), 2. Ryan Lochte (USA, 1:54.90), 3. Laszlo Cseh (HUN, 1:56.22)

QUOTES:

Gold medal winner: Ryan Lochte (USA)

"The first 2 days of the Championships, I wasn't myself. I was too worried about the outcome of each race, about me finishing first or the time that I was going. That's not me. I'm a swimmer that is just really relaxed, just thinking about going up there, racing and having a good time. Waking up this morning I was happy, I don't know what it was but I felt like myself again."

"I have four more races left, I'm not even going to think about the outcome, not even about winning, I'm just going to enjoy the excitement I have on these blocks, racing the best people in the world."

On the 200 IM being his best event: "It's a hard question, some people might say that's my best event because I have the World Record in it. But I don't think so, I can't say it's my special event. One of my favourites is the 400 IM. As much as it hurts, and not many people like swimming it, I like it because it's a challenge. The 200 IM is one lap of each stroke, it's fun."

Silver medal winner: Kosuke Hagino (JPN)

"My target was to beat Japan's national record. I didn't make it but my time wasn't that bad. I could have done better in the last 50m but I'm happy."

Bronze medal winner: Thiago Pereira (BRA)

"The bronze was missing to my resume so I'm pretty happy about that. It was a little harder in the first 100m."

"I know I can do much better in the breaststroke and the freestyle, I still have 3 years to go to the Olympic Games, my ultimate goal."

On racing Hagino: "He is a very good swimmer. I was laughing with him at the end of the race because we did pretty much the same thing in London last year. I got him at the end by a very small margin and he got me tonight by 0.01. I know he will be a tough competitor with me until the Olympics."
