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## Water Polo Men, Day 6: ESP 14 SRB 13

FINA Communication Department

Spain inflicted pain on Serbia by sending it to the play-off for seventh place against Australia after a dramatic sudden death, penalty shootout that Spain eventually won 14-13. The scoreline was the same as the match between the two in the 2009 Rome World Championships. Serbia won that day and went on to win eight further matches against Spain in major competitions. It was time for Spain to redress the situation.

The match promised much in the first quarter with two goals each and then went to a defensive game where passes were pressed heavily and few shooting chances were offered. In the third period, Spain drew level at 5-5 as the goalkeepers were kept busy and in the fourth, a goal apiece meant the two extra periods.

Serbia opened the match and goals were traded until quarter time with goals coming on extra-man advantage, penalty, counter and centre forward.

Filip Filipovic scored the only goal of the second period, on extra-man attack from the bottom right.

Albert Espanol converted extra and Dusan Mandic replied before Alberto Munarriz scored twice in a row — his first of the championship. It gave Spain the lead for the first time, something it enjoyed for just 28 seconds, as Pijetlovic was found free on two metres to level at 5-5 to lose the third period.

Spanish captain Felipe Perrone scored his eighth goal in Barcelona with a low shot from the top into the bottom left early in the fourth quarter. Milos Cuk made it 6-6 on extra on the next attack.

Serbia had a timeout to no effect and Dusko Pijetlovic sent his open chance at two metres into Inaki Aguilar for his 14th save. Perrone tried a 5m shot at the other end. Prlainovic fired and Serbia regained, earned an ejection on Munarriz and Stefan Mitrovic climbed high and shattered the crossbar on full time to send the game into extra time.

Serbian goalkeeper Branislav Mitrovic had 17 saves by full time.

Spain had five attacks and Serbia two in the first period of extra, including the first three for no goal. Filip Filipovic, the Shanghai 2011 Most Valuable Player, sent Serbia ahead; Marc Minguell cleaned up a rebound at two metres and Andrija Prlainovic did the same but found himself totally free on the deep left for 8-7, nine seconds from the buzzer.

Minguell levelled at 8-8 from the deep left through two players, deflecting past Mitrovic. Serbia could not convert an extra-man play, thanks to Aguilar — his 15th save — and Spain earned the ejection and called a timeout at 0:22. Xavier Garcia took the shot before the buzzer and Mitrovic made his 22nd save to send the match to penalty shots.

In the shootout, Serbia won the toss to shoot first. Both teams missed two shots in the first rotation, forcing the match to

sudden death. Both teams scored twice and Mitrovic, who scored in the rotation, hit the right post. Garcia swam up and converted to win the match.

**Match 38: 17:00, Semifinal Round 5-8, SERBIA 13 SPAIN 14 in sudden death penalty shootout (FT: 6-6. ET: 8-8.**

**Pens: 5-6).**

Quarters: 2-2, 1-0, 2-3, 1-1, 2-1, 0-1

Referees: Mark Koganov (AZE), German Moller (ARG)

Extra Man: SRB: 2/4 (2/7). ESP: 2/7 (7/9).

Pens: ESP: 1/1.

Shootout: SRB: 5/8. ESP: 6/8.

#### **Teams:**

##### **SERBIA:**

Branislav Mitrovic, Dusan Mandic (1), Zivko Gocic, Vanja Udovicic (1), Milos Cuk (2), Dusko Pijetlovic (2), Slobodan Nikic, Milan Aleksic, Nikola Radjen, Filip Filipovic (4), Andrea Prlainovic (2), Stefan Mitrovic (1), Gojko Pijetlovic. Head Coach: Dejan Savic.

##### **SPAIN: Inake**

Aguilar, Alberto Munarrez (2), Ruben Do Lera, Ricard Alarcon, Guillermo Molina (1), Marc Minguell (2), Balazs Sziranyi (1), Albert Espanol (4), Xavier Valles, Felipe Perrone (2), Pere Estrany, Xavier Garcia (2), Daniel Lopez. Head Coach: Rafael Aguilar.

#### **FLASH QUOTES:**

**Inaki Aguilar (ESP):**

“The key to the match has been our solid and compact defence. My saves (17) are the consequence of the good work of my team mates.”

**Ruben de Lera (ESP):**

“It was a very long and tiring game, and it was decided at the end and luck has been very important. In the next match against Greece we will fight until the end once again. It will be hard but we want to have fifth place for us and for our fans.”

**Albert Espanol (ESP):**

“It was a very long game and very physical. The victory is good to taste as opposed to that of our match against USA. During this competition we have noticed that we have very good defence, but we lack the strong attack. If we had been more successful in attack we could have gone further.”

**Branislav Mitrovic (SRB):**

“We lost this match. We were upset because of the last match. We played well, with many chances but we weren't concentrating on the game. It's not finished, we have to focus on the next match and to give our best.”

**Zivko Gocic (SRB):**

“We could have won, we had a 101 chances to score. But we found it impossible to give ourselves any serious motivation to win this match. I am devastated, the quarterfinals clearly left their mark on us.”

**Filip Filipovic (SRB):**

“There is no point in me even commenting on this game. We played goal by goal but did not have the extra motivation needed to win. We lost concentration, we felt like we were playing because we have to. I don’t see this as a tragedy; places 5-8 are all the same to us.”Inaki Aguilar (ESP):

“The key to the match has been our solid and compact defence. My saves (17) are the consequence of the good work of my team mates.”

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