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Swimming World Juniors, Day 4: Ruta Meilutyte: two gold medals in 40 minutes

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DUBAI (United Arab Emirates), 29 August – Two titles in 40 minutes to Ruta Meilutyte, both in Championships Record time – the Lithuanian star proved her outstanding class again by winning the 100m breaststroke and the 200m individual medley (and also taking part in the 50m back semis). Six more Championship Records fell on Day 4 which also saw a hat-trick for Russia in the first three finals. You can't start breaking records too early: Gabrielle Fa'Amausili (NZL) bettered the Championship Record in the girls 50m back just a few minutes past 10am. Add that she is only 14 years old, so far the youngest who managed to crack a CR in Dubai. Later a flood of records followed in the desert (the Hamdan Sports Complex is surrounded by dunes of sands): another one in the morning by the British boys in the 4x200m free relay heats, and the series went on in the afternoon.

The first four finals all brought a new record. Aleksander Palatov (RUS) was the first in the line in the boys 200m breast; the Russian raced brilliantly, his powerful second 100m was unmatchable for the others, he built a 1.2sec advantage towards the end. Hungary's latest breaststroke prodigy David Horvath – one year younger than the winner – managed to sneak into the second position besides the two Russians as Mikhail Dorinov came third.

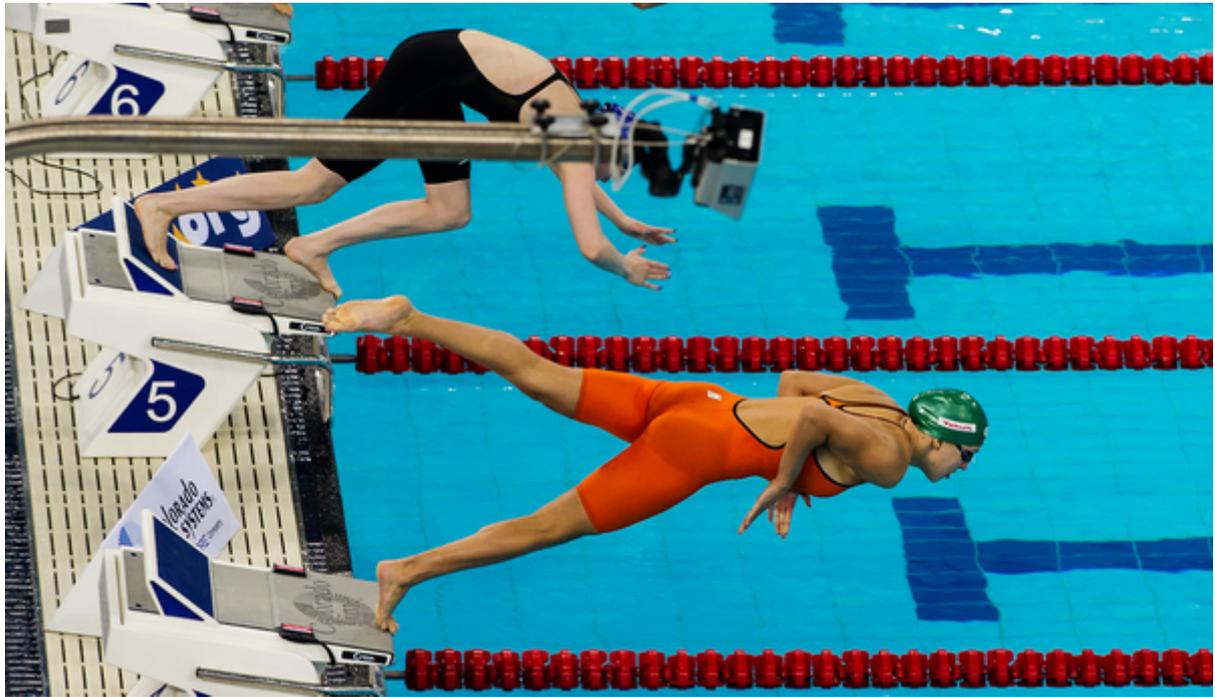


Aleksander Palatov (RUS) - *credit: Rita Pannunzi/Deepbluemia*

Another Russian triumph followed, Svetlana Chimrova set a new CR in each of her appearances in the 50m fly, after the heats (26.62) and semis (26.40) she clocked 26.36 this time and despite racing in the dash she scored a clear win.

The Russian hat-trick was completed by Grigory Tarasevich in the 50m back, who, together with Carl Louis Schwarz (GER) 'escaped' on lane 1-2, and surprised the favourites swimming in the middle lanes. Naturally, Tarasevich also set a new CR.

Ruta Meilutyte (LTU) proved her superiority in her trademark event: the reigning Olympic and World champion of the 100m breast enjoyed an easy cruise after a perfect start and a powerful first 50m. Her 30.32 first leg was just as good as she swam in Barcelona (30.10), all others were outside 32sec. Leading with more than a bodylength, Meilutyte slowed herself down in the last metres, keeping in mind that she had a busy schedule this afternoon as she had already competed in the 50m back semis and the 200m IM was still ahead (where she clocked the best time in the morning). Still, she broke the Championships Record, as a kind of must for such a great competitor.



Ruta Meilutyte (LTU) - credit: Rita Pannunzi/Deepbluemedi

Before her third appearance, the spectators applauded an Aussie double in the girls 400m free: Remy Fairweather was simply overwhelming as she expanded the gap between her and the rest of field headed by compatriot Alanna Bowles (who won the 800m event two days earlier). She reached the wall by almost 3sec ahead of Bowles.

Another Aussie win came, this time among the fastest boys. Luke Percy (AUS) bettered the 50m free CR in the semis – the record which had been set by Evgeny Sedov (RUS) in the heats. US relay hero Caeleb Dressler joined the party in the final and these three produced an amazing race. Dressler and Sedov were in front with 15m to go but Percy switched to fifth or perhaps sixth gear and with an unbelievable finish he managed to out-touch both of his rivals. They hit the wall within a span of 0.08 sec with the Aussie arriving first, 0.05sec ahead of Sedov, and Dressler came a further 0.03sec 'later'.



Boys 50m free podium: Evgeny Sedov (RUS), Luke Percy (AUS) and Caeleb Dressler (USA) - *credit: Giorgio*

Scala/Deepbluemia

And just 40 minutes after her first victory of the day, Ruta Meilutyte collected her second gold medal on Thursday as she powered her way through the field of the 200m IM. The Lithuanian star left the decision to the breaststroke leg: at the halfway mark she turned together with her rivals but in the third 50m she simply swam away, gaining almost full 3 seconds on the others and came home smoothly, setting the 7th Championship Record of the day.

And the 8th one was also on its way: the 4x200m free relay produced another thrilling race and the final outcome couldn't be anything else than another CR. The US team led by almost a body-length after three legs but it quickly disappeared as the British and the Australians had the top finishers of the 200m free swimming the anchor leg. Mackenzie Horton (AUS), winner of the solo gold, produced another heroic effort, the best leg of the race but he couldn't catch James Guy (GBR) who had a full second advantage at 600m. Guy splashed the water in joy, as he could feel a kind of revenge for his two defeats by Horton (in the 200m and 400m free) and celebrate the Brits' first gold medal in Dubai.



James Guy, Caleb Hughes, Max Litchfield & Matthew Johnson - credit: Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

Medallists, Day 4

Boys 50m free

1. Luke Percy AUS	22.14
2. Evgeny Sedov RUS	22.19
3. Caeleb Dressel USA	22.22

Boys 50m back

1. Grigory Tarasevich RUS	25.44 CR
2. Carl Louis Schwarz GER	25.76
3. Michail Kontizas GRE	25.90

1. Aleksander Palatov RUS 2:10.75 CR
2. David Horvath HUN 2:11.95
3. Mikhail Dorinov RUS 2:12.11

Boys 4x200m free relay

1. Great Britain 7:15.36 CR
(Matthew Johnson, Max Litchfield, Caleb Hughes, James Guy)
2. Australia 7:15.82
(Isaac Jones, Regan Leong, Jack McLoughlin, Mackenzie Horton)
3. United States 7:17.67
(Blake Pieroni, Joseph Bentz, Caeleb Dressel, Alexander Katz)

Girls 400m free

1. Remy Fairweather AUS 4:07.77
2. Alanna Bowles AUS 4:10.32
3. Quinn Carrozza USA 4:11.14

Girls 100m breast

1. Ruta Meilutyte LTU 1:06.61 CR
2. Sophie Taylor GBR 1:07.36
3. Viktoriya Solnceva UKR 1:07.53

Girls 50m fly

1. Svetlana Chimrova, RUS 26.32 CR
2. Stephanie Whan AUS 26.71
3. Lucie Svecena CZE 26.97

1. Ruta Meilutyte LTU 2:12.32 CR
2. Ella Eastin USA 2:13.76
3. Sydney Pickrem CAN 2:14.36

Championship Records in the heats and semis

Girls 50m back

Gabrielle Fa'Amausili (NZL) – heats: 28.14

Boys 4x200m free relay

Great Britain – heats: 7:19.93
