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Published on *fina.org* - Official FINA website (<https://www.fina.org>)

YOG Nanjing 2014: Watanabe clinches first medal for Japan in men's 200m breast

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Plenty of notable swims and new world junior records went up on the scoreboard tonight on Day 4 of the swimming competition at Nanjing's Olympic sports complex, witnessed by IOC President Thomas Bach and South African swimming star Chad Le Clos in the stands. Swimmers from five new countries - Greece, Japan, Slovenia, Switzerland and Trinidad and Tobago - climbed the podium, bringing to 25 the total of nations to have medalled in swimming so far at this second summer Youth Olympic Games edition.

Chinese prospects continue to amaze

With the home crowd on his side, Chinese Yu Hexin cleared his previous record in the men's 50m freestyle (set in yesterday's semi-final), shaving 0.01 off to post 22.00 in tonight's final. Up-and-coming sprinter Brazilian Matheus de Santana claimed his country's first individual swimming medal in Nanjing (after taking a mixed 4x100m freestyle relay silver on Day 1), clocking 22.43.

The Rio de Janeiro-native was in upbeat mood after his race: "It's amazing to win this Youth Olympic medal. I was going for the gold but I'm still happy with the result, I did a good race."

"I cannot describe the feeling of competing here, the atmosphere is incredible," Santana said.

On the road to his home Olympics in 2016, Santana added: "My goal is to go 47 seconds in the 100m freestyle, my pet event, and improve my speed in the 50m freestyle."

Dylan Carter of Trinidad and Tobago rounded out the top-three in 22.53.



Men's 50m free podium: Yu Hexin (CHN) (C), Matheus de Santana (BRA) (L) and Dylan Carter (TRI) - credit: Xinhua/Fei

Maohua

The Chinese women's team celebrated a 1-2 podium finish tonight in the 200m freestyle with rising talent Shen Duo sweeping the event in 1:56.12 while team-mate Qiu Yuhan took second in 1:56.82. Australian Brianna Throssell claimed the bronze in 1:58.57.

Post-event, Shen, who claimed her third gold in Nanjing (4x100m medley relay, 100m and 200m freestyle), said: "I'm really satisfied with my performance. Yet, I know I can achieve more."

The happy newcomers

In another exciting final, Ippei Watanabe blazed the men's 200m breaststroke in 2:11.31, clinching the first medal for Japan tonight.

"The race was tough, I'm not so happy about the time but the medal is rewarding."

"I'm looking towards the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and this is the first step."

Carlos Claverie of Venezuela upgraded his bronze medal-finish in the 100m breaststroke from Day 2 to pick up silver in 2:11.74, sharing the podium again with Russian Anton Chupkov (2:11.87), who added a bronze (2:11.87) to Monday's win

in the 100m breaststroke.

In the women's 50m butterfly, Rozaliya Nasretdinova won the first title among girls for Russia, setting a new world junior record in 26.26. Swiss Svenja Stoffel (26.62) took second overall in 26.62 with Slovenia's Nastja Govejssek winding up third in 26.70. Both claimed their country's first award in swimming.



Rozaliya Nasertdinova (RUS), winner of the Women's 50m fly - *credit: Xinhua/Ding Xu*

In the men's 50m backstroke, Russian Evgeny Rylov stepped up again, winning another gold (after his 100m backstroke win on day 2) in a world junior record time of 25.09. Greek Apostolos Christou clocked 25.44 to bag the first medal for his country. Placing third today was Italy's Simone Sabbioni in 25.47, already winner of the men's 100m backstroke.

In relay action, Russia's boys (Evgeny Rylov, Anton Chupkov, Filipp Shopin and Aleksandr Sadovnikov) set a new world junior record in the 4x100m medley, touching first in 3:38.02 to beat the teams of Germany (Alexander Kunert, Maximilian Pilger, Marek Ulrich and Damian Wierling), second in 3:39.30 and Australia (Grayson Bell, Nicholas Brown, Kyle Chalmers and Nic Groenewald), third in 3:40.68.

Ruta Meilutyte waves goodbye

2012 Olympic champion Ruta Meilutyte of Lithuania controlled the race from the blocks in the women's 100m breaststroke final, posting a 1:05.39. Local hope He Yun was a distant second with 1:07.49. The bronze that day went to Ukrainian Anastasiya Malyavina in 1:08.16.

Capping off a fruitful meet with two gold medals (the first was in the 50m breaststroke), Meilutyte said on her overall performance: "I'm very happy with my two Youth Olympic golds. I wish I could have gone a bit faster maybe but it's been a long season so I'm happy."

"The YOG was a good and fun experience, I've enjoyed being here. The educational programmes are very informative for the athletes, it's been an amazing experience for everyone," Meilutyte said.

Meilutyte will leave tomorrow for the European championships in Berlin where she'll compete in the women's 50m breaststroke.



Women's 100m breast: Ruta Meilutyte (LTU) accepting congratulations from Anastasiya Malyavina (UKR),

who finished 3rd - credit: Xinhua/Zhao Peng
