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DWS, Montreal, Day 1: Canada and Russia share the honours, with two gold each

Greg Eggert, FINA Media Committee Honorary Secretary

[Full Results and medals \[1\]](#)

Women's 10m Synchro Platform

Canada's Meaghan Benfeito and Caeli McKay took the lead in their fourth dive, a back 3 1/2 tuck, and nailed their fifth and final dive to claim the first gold medal of the competition. The veteran Canadian divers enjoyed a home field advantage at the kick-off of the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series in the venue that hosted the diving competition at 1976 Montreal Olympics. The Canadians were second after the first dive, as the Malaysia team of Mun Yee Leong, 35 and Pandelega Pamg, 26 were the only team to score over 100 points in their first two dives, and were leading the 7-team field after the first and second dives.

On the third dive the Canadians fell into 3rd place, while the Malaysian pair continued to lead the scoring. Benfeito and McKay delivered on their fourth and final dive to win, scoring 15.36 more points than the Malaysian silver medalist, and a hefty lead of 24.72 points of bronze medallist Russia.

Benfeito competed in the 10m synchronised event with Roseline Filion before she retired in January 2017 and the pair won bronze medals in the 10m platform synchro event at the 2012 and 2016 Summer Olympics. Individually, Benfeito won a bronze medal in the 10m platform event. Last summer in Korea, McKay and Benfeito secured two Tokyo 2020 spots for Canada in the women's 10m platform. McKay won a silver medal in the 10m platform and teamed with Benfeito they captured the gold medal at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru.

The Malaysian pair earned a silver medal in this event at the 2019 FINA World Championships in Gwangju and previously collected two bronze medals in the same event at the 2009 Rome and the 2013 Barcelona World Championships. In the 10m platform event, Pang won a bronze medal at the 2012 London Olympics and a bronze medal at the 2015 FINA World Championships in Kazan.

The Russian pair, Iuliia Timoshinina and Ekaterina Beliaeva were sixth after the first dive but their second dive brought their scores up to only 6.60 points behind the Malaysian and Canadian teams. They were in fourth position after their fourth dive but they finished strong, preventing the USA from a podium finish.



Photo by Antoine Saito

QUOTES

GOLD MEDALLIST - CANADA

Caeli McKay: "Being on the top is always awesome. The Malaysians have been one of our biggest rivals, along with China, for a really long time so being able to step on the top of the podium – even though the Chinese aren't here, it's still a really good day for us beating them. Just as I thought while standing on the podium, this is home home. This

isn't like, in Canada, in a different city. This is in front of all our friends and family, in our own pool so I mean, it's really sweet."

Meaghan Benfeito: "Well for me, I haven't competed since PanAms so it was a little stressful but we pulled it off. The only thing we need to work on is our individual dives so I think that's what we're going to go back to training and work on. So I think we're at the right place, at the right moment right now. We actually spend more time here than in our actual house!"

SILVER MEDALLIST - MALAYSIA

Mun Yee Leong: "It was a good performance but I felt we could have done better today."

Pandelela Pamg: "I felt that we can do better. We made a few mistakes and we are looking forward to improving on this result."

BRONZE MEDALLIST - RUSSIA

Iuliia Timoshinina: "We were third today, I would say it wasn't bad, but it wasn't really good. Our second and our fourth dives were strong."

Men's 3m Synchro Springboard

Russian divers Evgeny Kuznetsov, 29 and Nikita Shleikher, 21, stood at the top of the podium claiming the first men's medal at the FINA/CNSG Diving World Series in the Men's 3m Synchro Springboard event. The Russians score of 421.95 points was 6.21 points ahead of the team from Great Britain. The British duo of Daniel Goodfellow, 23 and Jack Laugher, 25 were in first position after their first dive and again after a strong fifth dive.

Both the Russian and British pairs were slightly behind the Mexican duo who scored highest in their fourth dive and were hoping to hold on to the top score through the next two rounds. Mexican divers Yahel Castillo Huerta and Juan Manuel

Celaya Hernandez finished Friday's competition in third place for the bronze step on the podium with a final score of 407.22, more than 14 points behind with winning Russian pair.

Russia's Kuznetsov owns a silver medal from the 2012 Summer Olympics, in the 3m synchronised springboard with former partner Ilya Zakharov. At the 2016 Summer Olympics, Kuznetsov competed in the 3m springboard and the 3m synchronised springboard diving events but did not earn a medal in either event. His partner, Shleikher competed at the inaugural 2015 European Games, winning gold in 1m springboard and second place in 10m platform. He finished fifth in mixed 10m platform and seventh in men's 10m platform at the 2015 World Championships in Kazan, qualifying him for both events at the 2016 Summer Olympics. He has not won an Olympic medal in his career.



Photo by Antoine Saito

Great Britain's Laugher partnered with Chris Mears and became Britain's first diving Olympic champions by winning a gold medal in the men's synchronised 3m springboard event at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio. Laugher won a silver in the men's individual 3m springboard also at the 2016 Olympic Games, becoming the first British diver to win multiple Olympic diving medals at the same Games.

QUOTES

GOLD MEDALLIST - RUSSIA

Evgenii Kuznetsov: "We have been training together for one year, and we feel this is time to continue working on our programme of our dives. There is plenty of time before the Olympics for us to get better. Today, our strongest dives were the fifth (Reverse 3 1/2 Somersault) and the sixth dives (Forward 4 1/2 Somersaults). For me, my family

is the most important thing.”

SILVER MEDALLIST - GREAT BRITAIN

Jack Laugher: “Overall, we’re very happy. This was our first competition back since the World Championships last year. We hadn’t been able to dive at Nationals since I had a bad back. I felt I could have done better on my last dive but our final score of 415.74 was a strong start for us.”

Daniel Goodfellow: “This was an excellent score to start. We’re very happy with that. We’re looking forward to the next two World Series events in this Olympic year.”

BRONZE MEDALLIST - MEXICO

Juan Manuel Celaya Hernandez: “We’re happy about today’s performance. We have been training together for just over three years now and we know we have the potential for a gold medal. Our best dive was our fourth, the inward 3 1/2 tuck; even though it’s our most difficult, it’s usually our best one.”

Women's 3m Synchro Springboard

The Canadians earned their second gold medal on the first day of competition with impressive execution of their five dives. Jennifer Abel and Melissa Citrini Beaulieu scored 48.0 points on their first dive, to match the Mexican pair of Paola Espinosa Sanchez and Melany Hernandez Torres. The Mexicans faltered in their next dive, but the Canadians earned the highest marks in all four of their remaining dives to earn their top of the podium placement (298.83). Mexico earned the silver medal (286.20) while the Russian team of Kristina Ilinykh and Maria Poliakova arrived at the podium for the bronze medal (285.60).

Abel, 28 earned a bronze medal at the 2012 London Olympics in the 3m synchro diving event paired with Emilie Heymans. Abel owns ten medals (six silver and four bronze) from competing at five different FINA World Championships; a record for most medals won by a Canadian at the FINA showcase. She is a four-time Commonwealth Games champion in the 1m and 3m synchronised springboard events and a three-time Pan American Games champion in the 3m springboard and 3m synchronised springboard events.

Citrini Beaulieu, 24 won two consecutive silver medals paired with Abel, competing in the 3m synchro springboard at the 2017 Budapest and 2019 Gwangju FINA World Championships.



Photo by Antoine Saito

QUOTES

GOLD MEDALLIST - CANADA

Melissa Citrini-Beaulieu: "I got chills hearing our anthem play. It was a first World Series gold medal for me. That's an exceptional result for me to achieve that. I really took in the moment and I am really proud of our team. We do all of this together, for the right reasons so it's even sweeter to find ourselves here and to have this result."

Jennifer Abel: "It was our family who congratulated us first. The first person I saw was my boyfriend. He knows the stakes, he knows that I was here to work on certain specific things. He congratulated me and told me: 'now you've done it, you know you can do it. Now, you just go out there and do it in your individual event.'"

"The gold medal gives me a ton of confidence but I think it's important to mention that we're working on a lot of stuff, particularly our elegance in the air and today, we delivered! It's hard to get back into competition and not fall back into your old patterns, we didn't do that today and that was a highlight."

SILVER MEDALLIST - MEXICO

Paola Espinosa: "We are obviously very happy and we are satisfied with our performance. We are looking to confirm our position for the Olympic Games at the World Cup, since Mexico has already earned the spot. We want to be the ones to represent Mexico at the Olympics."

BRONZE MEDALLIST - RUSSIA

Maria Poliakova: "We're happy to start the season on the podium and to finish off with a good fifth dive. We have a few things to work on before the London World Series, but that's normal. There are always things to improve."

Men's 10m Synchro Platform

Aleksandr Bondar and Viktor Minibaev of Russia edged out the Mexican team of Kevin Berlin Reyes and Ivan Garcia Navarro for their nations second gold medal of the day. The Mexican federation earned a silver medal in this event following the bronze medal earned by their teammates in the men's 3m synchro springboard event.

Bondar, 26 and Minibaev, 28 were awarded back to back silver medals at the 2017 and the 2019 FINA World Championships in Budapest and Gwangju in this event. Last summer in Korea, Bondar earned a bronze medal in the 10m platform event.

Ivan Garcia Navarro, 26, was awarded a silver medal in the 10m Synchronised Platform with partner German Sanchez at the 2012 London Olympic Games. Together they earned a silver medal in the same event at the 2015 FINA World

Championships. At the 2019 Pan American Games, Berlin Reyes won the 10m platform and Garcia Navarro earned the silver medal and together they won the gold medal in the 10m synchro platform.

The Canadian pair of Vincent Riendeau, 23 and Nathan Zsombor - Murray had strong dives in the first half of their programme. They were in the second position after their first and second dives, and took the lead after their third dive. They dropped back into second position after their fourth and fifth dives, but dropped again in their final dive to claim the bronze medal on the podium. Riendeau and Meaghan Benfeito worked together to claim a silver medal at the 2015 World Championships in the mixed synchronised 10m platform event.



Photo by Antoine Saito

QUOTES

SILVER MEDALLIST - MEXICO

Kevin Berlin Reyes: "A great result today, coming from behind and capitalising on the higher degree of difficulty dives and really nailing them."

Ivan Garcia Navarro: We are very happy with our performance today, especially given how tight the competition was. It's always more fun when all the teams are fighting for the spots. This result gives us a lot of confidence going into our team selection for the World Cup in fifteen days and earning the right to represent Mexico and hopefully to earn an Olympic spot."

BRONZE MEDALLIST - CANADA

Vincent Riendeau: "I think a result like this gives us confidence for the World Cup because we'll be competing against these guys and all of them are vying for an Olympic berth for their country: Mexico, the US and Australia still haven't earned their spot yet. Those are our biggest competitors and it's great to see that we're in the mix, and that we can perform well. The Mexicans beat us today but it was so close, it was close from beginning to end. We know we can be there and we are going to try and qualify for the Games by beating these guys."

Nathan Zsombor – Murray: "We don't know if we've got a spot yet but if we perform this way at the World Cup, we have a chance to qualify for the Olympics."

The FINA/CNSG Diving World Series in Montreal resumes on Saturday, February 29th and concludes on Sunday, March 1st at the "Centre Sportif au Parc Olympique". After its full renovation, it is considered to be one of the premiere diving facilities in the world. Built for the 1976 Summer Games, the venue regularly hosted the FINA Diving Grand Prix from 2007 to 2012 and the FINA Diving World Series since 2018.

Day 2 – February 29

Women's 10m platform
Men's 3m springboard
Mixed 10m platform synchro

Day 3 – March 1

Women's 3m springboard
Men's 10m platform
Mixed 3m springboard synchro

