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Spain leads Opening Day of Synchro Olympic Qualification Tournament

Eliana Alves, FINA Media Committee Member in Brazil

The first day of the FINA Synchronised Swimming Olympic Games Qualification Tournament – also a test event for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games - saw the Spanish duet formed by two Olympic medallists leading the group of 27 duos that entered in the competition, scoring 89.1816 points in the technical routine.

With music by Toni Mir and the theme "Aqua", Ona Carbonell and Gemma Mengual shone in Maria Lenk, the dedicated venue for synchronised swimming in Rio de Janeiro (BRA). The duet event will be completed on Thursday with the

“We still have much to do with six months to go till the Games. Some details need to be modified” said Spanish veteran Gemma Mengual.

Partner Ona Carbonell added: "We know what the Olympics is. We have won silver at the Games in the past, and we have to work harder to change the colour of the medal. Our routine is new and we made something based on the water (drops, rain, waves, sea)".



Spanish duet (Mengual and Carbonell) ©Giorgio Scala / Deepbluemia

Carbonell was the Spanish favourite at the World Championships in 2013 in Barcelona. She grabbed the bronze back then in solo and duet, and a silver medal with the team and combined routine.

Having visited Brazil before, Carbonell loves "to spend some time in the city and see the normal people living here and breathing the Olympic spirit that reigns here."

After Spain, Italy (Linda Cerruti and Constanza Ferro) was the best team in duet technical classification with 85.9000 points. The Italians were followed by France (Laura Auge and Margaux Chretien), 84.5298 points. Despite the good position, the Italians didn't like their scores.

"I did not like our notes and hope to do better with our routine tomorrow" said Constanza Ferro.



Italian duet ©Giorgio Scala / Deepbluemia

Qualified countries for the team and duet events in the Olympic Games are: Brazil, Russia, China, Australia and Egypt, while Ukraine, Japan and Canada are qualified for the duet event. This makes a total of five teams and eight duets already guaranteed. The Olympics will have a total of eight teams and 24 duets.

The Synchronised Swimming Olympic Qualification Tournament has 27 duets and seven teams battling for a spot to come back in Rio in August.

The duet free routine (to take place on Thursday March 3 and Sunday March 6) will perform in the following order: Bulgaria / Czech Republic / Aruba / Slovakia / Switzerland / Israel / Austria / Peru / Italy / Mexico / Costa Rica / France / Colombia / Venezuela / Argentina / Belarus / Spain / USA / Turkey / Uzbekistan / Britain / Kazakhstan / Korea / Hungary / Greece / Singapore / Chile.
