Trieste Day 4: Italy wins and reaches the Netherlands on top of Group B
Camillo Cametti, FINA Media Committee Chairman

France claimed its third victory over Slovakia. Tie between Kazakhstan-Germany and Canada-Romania. Easy wins for Spain and Hungary.

Day 4 was characterised by two very tight games: Kazakhstan-Germany and Canada-Romania. Both matches had a similar outcome, a tie on a relatively high score, respectively at 11-11 and 10-10.

Spain had an easy stroll against South Africa, 15 goals for, 1 against.

Hungary brought home a comfortable win over Russia (18-8) to make sure it finishes on top of Group A.

France got its third victory, 10-8 over Slovakia, displaying skill, determination and character; for Slovakia it was the fourth loss. With Canada, that rank second together with France in Group A (both 6 points), and the Netherlands, today a dignified loser to Italy (8-12), the team of coach Florian Bruzzo is the revelation of the tournament.

In Group B the leadership will be resolved tomorrow: at the end of today three teams share the first place with 6 points: Italy, who has the best goal difference, Spain and the Netherlands.

Rankings after Day 4
Group A: Hungary 7, Canada and France 6, Romania 3, Russia 2, Slovakia 0.

Group B: Italy, Netherlands and Spain 6, Germany and Kazakhstan 3, South Africa 0.

Preliminary Round/Wednesday 6th April – Day 4

Schedule and Results

19. 13:50 B4-B5 KAZ-GER 11-11
21. 15:10 B2-B3 RSA-SPAIN 1-15
22. 16:30 A4-A CAN-ROU 10-10
23. 17:50 A1-A RUS-HUN 8-18
24. 19:10 A2-A3 SVK-FRA 8-10
20. 20:30 B1-B6 ITA-NED 11-5

Game by Game
Game 19 (B) - 13:50 Kazakhstan-Germany 11-11 (2-2, 3-3; 4-2, 2-4)


Referees: Joseph Peila (USA), Balasz Szekely (HUN).

Fina Delegate: Khosrow Amini.

Notes – Exclusion with substitution Shmiderin the 3rd period. Extra man goals: Kazakhstan 3/5+1 penalty, Germany 4/5.

Kazakhstan and Germany started this game with the same ranking: 1 win, 2 losses and 2 points each. The match could be decisive for the admission to the quarter finals as in the last preliminary match, tomorrow, both teams will have to face respectively the opposition of Spain and Italy, two teams that on paper are of a higher level, and therefore favourite to clinch victory.

The dramatic plot according which this game developed is told by the progressive score: 5-5 at half time; 6-6, 7-7 in the 3rd quarter - a continuous tie, “you catch me, I catch you” – until the Kazakhstanis managed to make a leap ahead scoring two unanswered consecutive goals and managing to go into the last period on 9-7, with an advantage of 2 goals.

Last period: at 6:14 Stamm narrowed the gap scoring on extra man but soon after Rechencheskiy restored the 2-goal gap on
action. In chase of a new tie Germany scored again twice on extra man, 10-10.

At 1:20 to the end Ushakov scored from outside but 16 seconds later Cuk gained new tie for Germany for a new tie at 11-11. Game over. A honest verdict, and a prize for both teams. Cook for Germany and Ushakov for Kazakhstan were the best scores respectively with 4 and 3 goals. The qualification to the quarters will be probably decided by the goal difference.

Quotes

Sergey Drozdov, coach of Kazakhstan: "It was a very good, strong, game. Germany played good and we made some big mistakes. Today, Germany shoot three goals from center forward. I hope tomorrow we will play a little bit better.”

Vladimir Ushakov, Kazakhstan’s player: "It was a very tough game, we aren't a young team, we have six players than are more than thirty years old, and is difficult to play every day. We were close to the win but unfortunately we were unlucky. Tomorrow we'll play against Spain and it will be even more difficult, but it will be a great experience”.

Patrick Weissinger, coach of Germany: "We absolutely didn't aspect this difficulty against Kazakhstan. I'm really disappointed by my team. We have to try everything against Italy, we know that's very difficult but there's no other possibility for us”.

Mateo Cuk, Germany’s player: "We already knew it would have been difficult because we didn't started well this tournament, and now our self-confidence is low, we really wanted to win but unfortunately it went differently. Tomorrow we'll play against Italy and we have to do our best”.

KAZ-GER ©Giorgio Scala / Deepbluemedia
Game 21 (B) 15.10 – South Africa- Spain 1-15 (1-3, 0-6; 0-4, 0-2)


Referees: Dorel Terpenka (CA), Sergey Naumov (RUS).

Fina Delegate: John Whitehouse.

Notes – Extra man goals: South Africa 0/4, Spain 2/5 + 1 penalty.

This game was like an easy stroll for Spain, a warm up game in preparation for Friday’s quarter finals, after last night’s energy consuming but victorious battle against Italy. Today the Spanish side played in a relaxed mood, a way to keep active and at the same time recover from fatigue. Nevertheless Molina scored 5 goals, bringing his total to 13 so far.
Quotes

Paul Martin, coach of South Africa: "Playing against Spain is an amazing experience because it is one of the top national team in the world. We had a lot of proud and determination in defense. I think that we played well".

Guillermo Molina, Spain’s player: "It was the simplest match in the tournament. It was very important to play well, no injuries, and stay concentrate for the matches coming up. What I really want is to go to Olympic Games. I'm not interested in becoming the top scorer".

Gabriel Hernandez, coach of Spain: "It was a good match, we knew that South Africa is on another level. Tomorrow we expect a tough adversary (Kazakhstan), mostly on the physical side. It'll be the last game of the group and we'll try to do our game and use our speed".

Game 22 (A) 16.30 – Canada-Romania 10-10 (2-2, 5-3; 3-4, 0-1)


Referees: Georgios Stavridis (GRE), Sergio Galindo (ESP).

Fina Delegate: Alan Balfanbayev.

Notes - Extra man goals: Canada 0/1 and Romania 1/1.

The first quarter was a tie, Canada won the second quarter and Romania both the 3rd and the 4th quarters, eventually to tie 10-10.

Here are the developments. In less than a minute – at 0:23 and 1:07 -two straight action goals from Kudaba, almost identical in the making, seemed to put Canada on a downhill path . It was not so. Romania answered with to 2 action goals from Teohari and Gheorghe and the 1st quarter ended on 2-2. The second quarter was equally balanced, with Romania up three times and Canada catching up every time.

Boyd scored 4 action goals for Canada, while Romania scored with Negrean on action and Goanta on extra player. At one second from the siren Bicari shoot from beyond mid field and netted a spectacular goal: 7-5 for Canada at half time.

In the 3rd fraction Kudaba scored his 3rd goal, another fast opener after just 29 seconds, 8-5 for Canada.

Soon after Romania narrowed the gap with Radu on extra man and Negrean on action, 8-7. Boyd scored his 5th goal to give Canada a new 2-goal edge, 9-7. Negrean did the same on extra man, 9-8. Torakis, also on extra man, restored the 2-goal gap in favour of Canada. Oanta’s goal in superiority kept Romania sticked to Canada again: 10-9 the score before the last period, 4-3 for Romania the third fraction.

In the closing fraction Romania managed a good defense and also to score with Tehoari the only goal of the period, at 1:53 to the end of the match. Final score 10-10, a tie both teams deserved.

Quotes
Giuseppe Porzio, coach of Canada: "We played for long periods pretty well. We had the possibility to close the match, but we did a couple of mistakes. They had the last chance to win the match but didn't take advantage of the situation. We met a very strong team, like us, but may be some players were better than us in experience and quality. It's a right result and the match was intense”.

Justin Boyd, Canada's player (5 goals in the match): "We knew they would fight really hard. They have a really strong centre and took a lot of exclusions. They had a lot of opportunities than us; we didn't take advantage of that but they did it”.

Dejan Stanojevic, coach of Romania: "Tomorrow against Romania it will be an open game, and the fact that the Russian team is a little bit better shouldn't be decisive. The most important fact will be the number of technical mistakes. We started today’s game with a lot of mistakes, but thanks to our discipline and fighting spirit we were into the match again and managed a draw”.

Cosmin Radu, Romania’s captain: "We lost concentration in the second period and they took advantage of it, we had the last opportunity but unfortunately we didn't use it. Tomorrow we have to win to be fourth in the group. It will be a tough game because the Russians and us have the same goal difference”.

**Game 23 (A) 17.50 – Russia-Hungary 8-18 (2-6, 3-5; 1-4, 2-3)**


Referees: Vojin Putnikovic (SRB), Dion Willis (RSA).

Fina Delegate: Manuel Ibern.


Hungary seems to be gaining its best form match after match. Today the Magyars played effectively and harmoniously and they brought home a comfortable win against Russia, who is certainly a good team, however a level down. The final score 8-18 and 10-goal difference tell everything. Russia’s n. 4 Kharkov with 4 goals was the game top scorer.

Quotes

Tibor Benedek, coach of Hungary: "We have only one target: the qualification for Rio de Janeiro. So we must always win. Against Canada we made a lot of mistakes, but in the days after we have improved our power. Playing every day is the greatest difficulty in this tournament".

Daniel Varga, Hungary’s captain: "It was an easy game, much easier than I expected. I guess russian team give up after the second period. Tomorrow, we have to win against Slovakia. We have to be the first at the group".

Mikhail Kharkov, Russia’s player: "It was a very hard game. Tomorrow we will fight for the fourth place against Romania. The loser is out of the Olympic games".
Game 24 (A) 19.10 – Slovakia-France 8-10 (2-0, 2-4; 3-4,1-2)


Referees: Filippo Gomez (ITA), Viktor Salnichenko (KAZ).
Fina Delegate: Takeshi Inoue.


France went into this game with 4 points (2 wins), Slovakia with 0 points. Nevertheless, on the field both sides have displayed a similar strength. Slovakia was out fast and between the first quarter and the beginning of the second its players netted 3 straight goals.

France reacted strongly and came back managing to tie 3-3, and then going one goal up, 4-3. Soon after Slovakia tied on its turn thanks a lethal shot from its n. 9, left hander Uradnik. Score at half time 4-4.

In the first minute of the 3rd quarter Slovakia went ahead thanks a goal scored by Durik, 5-4. The immediate reaction of France originated a new tie, 5-5, and soon after a new leap in the lead with two consecutive goals from Blary, 5-7. Kovacevic added up for a 3-goal lead, 5-8. Durik and Seman narrowed the gap to just one goal: 7-8 at the end of the third period.

4th quarter. 1:20 inside the period France n.5 Blary scored on action his 4th goal, giving France a temporary, short lived 2-goal lead. A minute later Kolarik pushed Slovakia just one goal under France: 8-9. Then Slovakia missed to tie on an extra man opportunity.

Instead, with 1 minute and a second to the end, Crousillat declared game over when he scored his 3rd goal to seal up the game on the 8-10 final score.

Quotes

Roman Blary, France’s player (top scorer of the game with 4 goals): "It was important to win this game to guarantee our qualification for the quarter finals. We are glad that we succeed it. Tomorrow we are going to confront Canada. It will be a difficult game like the previous ones. We’ll try to win and get the second place".

Alexandre Camarasa, France’s captain: "It was a difficult match. We began very bad, going down 3-0. Then we got twice important breaks. Despite victory we could not play our water polo. Tomorrow the match will be tough because we are against a team that is technically and physically strong, but we want to win!"
Game 20 (B) – Italy–Netherlands 11-5 (3-1, 5-3; 2-0, 1-1)


**Referees:** Radaslow Koryzna (POL), Adrian Alexandrescu (ROU).
Fina Delegate: Manuel Ibern.

Notes – Simultaneous ejection with substitution for Velotto (I) and Van der Horst (N) in the 4th period. Extra man goals: Italy 3/6 and Netherlands 4/9 + 1 penalty.

Italy looked more tonic than yesterday against Spain. The Italian players kept firmly in their hands the reins of the match, managing to win the first three periods by the identical margin of 2 goals. The last quarter was tied 1-1. Figlioli (I) top scored the game with 4 goals, followed by Giorgetti (I) and Lindhout (N) with 3.

Schedule of Day 5, Thursday 7 April (last day of the Preliminary Round)

13:50 (A) FRA-CAN
15:10 (A) HUN-SVK
16:30 (A) RUS-R0U
17:50 (B) ESP-KAZ
19:10 (B) NED-RSA
20:30 (B) ITA-GER