

Hosszu and Le Clos, the best in Canada – Windsor, Day 6

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Katinka Hosszu (HUN) and Chad Le Clos (RSA) were respectively the best female and male athletes of the 13th FINA World Swimming Championships (25m), held from December 6-11, 2016 in Windsor (CAN). The Magyar star finished the competition with 42 points, while the South African champion totalled 20. For Hosszu, this was the Championships of all superlatives, with an unprecedented seven gold – 100m and 200m back, 100m and 200m fly, 100m, 200m and 400m IM – and two silver medals, in the 200m free and 50m back. Concerning Le Clos, the Windsor rendezvous was also a successful one, with world titles in the 50m, 100m and 200m fly, and a silver in the 200m free. Moreover, he established the only individual World Record in the WFCU pool, 48.08 in the 100m butterfly.

USA won the Trophy for the Best Team of the Championships. The North Americans were the first ranked in the medal's table, with a total of 30 podium presences (8 gold, 15 silver and 7 bronze). They were also responsible for the second WR of the competition, in the women's 4x50m medley, in a time of 1:43.27. Hungary (7+2+2) and Russia (6+5+3) completed the medal's table top-3, while Japan with a total of 15 awards (2+2+11) was eighth.

The final day of the Championships couldn't start better, with the second Canada's gold of the competition, in the women's 4x50m free relay. Anchored by the incredible Penny Oleksiak (the first three swimmers were Michelle Williams, Sandrine Mainville and Taylor Ruck), the local quartet completed the race in 1:35.00, leaving the defending champions, the Netherlands, with the silver in 1:35.37. Italy got the bronze in 1:35.61, with final swimmer Federica Pellegrini adding another medal to her rich roll of honour. In Doha 2014, USA (fourth this time) had been second, while Denmark (only fifth in Windsor) had earned bronze.



The Canadian team - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

In the longest final of the programme, the men's 1500m free, Taehwan Park (KOR) did a very intelligent race, perfectly controlling the pace of his main opponent, Italy's Gregorio Paltrinieri. The European star was the clear favourite after his 2016 Olympic title, 2015 world crown and 2014 gold medal in Doha. Moreover, Paltrinieri was the fastest qualifier of the heats and holds the WR in this event, in 14:08.06. But in the decisive race in Windsor, Park definitively proved that he came back to his old glory days, touching home in a new Championships record of 14:15.51. It was the third gold of the week for the Korean great, after his victories in the 200m and 400m free (this is an unprecedented winning strike in a single edition of the championships). Park has four Olympic medals (2008 and 2012 Games), and his 400m free win at the Beijing "Water Cube" was the first swimming medal ever for a swimmer from Korea. Paltrinieri had to content with the silver in Windsor (14:21.94), while Poland's Wojciech Wojdak earned the bronze in 14:25.37.



Taehwan Park (KOR) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

Some minutes (!) after his world title, Taehwan Park returned to the pool, for the men's 100m free final. The effort in the 1500m free obviously left its marks, and the Korean could not do better than the seventh position in 47.09. The victory went to Lithuania's Simonas Bilis in 46.58, the first triumph ever for a Lithuanian male swimmer in the history of the Championships – Bilis had been already bronze medallist in the 50m here in Windsor. In a thrilling final, the silver (46.59) was earned by Shinri Shioura, confirming the excellent condition of Japan here in Windsor. Australia's Tommaso D'Orsogna (silver in 2012) completed the podium in 46.70.



Simonas Bilis (LTU) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

In the women's 200m breaststroke, we had another final decided by the minimal difference of 0.01! Heavily supported by her fans, Canada's Kelsey Wog could not sustain Molly Renshaw's (GBR) final effort, and finished second in 2:18.52. For Renshaw (20 years old), it was the first title at this level, in 2:18.51. Also for the bronze medal, the fight was close, with the second Brit of the field, Chloe Tutton, earning bronze in 2:18.83. This was the first triumph for Great Britain in this event in the history of the Championships.



Molly Renshaw (GBR) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

Radoslaw Kawecki (POL) was one of the heroes of the day, after winning the men's 200m backstroke, his third consecutive victory in this event. In Windsor, the Polish star touched in 1:47.63, slightly worse than his 2014 triumph (1:47.38), but faster than his 2012 gold (1:48.48). Kawecki was also the silver medallist in this event in the past two editions of the FINA World Championships – Barcelona 2013 and Kazan 2015. The silver in Canada went to Jacob Pebley (USA, 1:48.98), while Japan's Masaki Kaneko, the fastest going into the decisive race, earned bronze in 1:49.18. Mitch Larkin, from Australia, silver medallist in Rio 2016, and long course world champion in Kazan 2015, could not reach the podium, finishing fourth in 1:49.25.



Radoslaw Kawecki (POL) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

Katinka Hosszu (HUN) continued to make history in these Championships. In the women's 100m fly, the Hungarian star collected her seventh individual gold medal in Windsor, touching home in 55.12. This is an unprecedented feat in the history of the Championships, certainly reinforcing her status of FINA Best Female Swimmer of the Year in 2016. The main opponent of the Magyar was US Kelsi Worrell, who had to

content for silver in 55.22. Rikako Ikee won another medal for Japan, the bronze, in a time of 55.64.



Katinka Hosszu (HUN) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

After one bronze (2008) and two silver medals (2010 and 2014), Cameron van der Burgh (RSA) finally earned gold in the men's 50m breaststroke. Swimming in lane 1 in Windsor, the South African star departed fast and could maintain the pace until touching first in 25.64 (Van der Burgh is the WR holder in this distance since 2009, in a time of 25.25). Curiously, in the other end of the pool, in lane 8, Pieter Stevens, from Slovenia, was also swimming for a medal and finally got the silver in 25.85. Felipe Lima, from Brazil, earned bronze in 25.98, while his teammate Felipe França Silva, winner in 2010 and 2014 was not so successful this time, concluding in fifth (26.13).



Cameron van der Burgh (RSA) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

In the women's 50m free, it was a clear victory for Ranomi Kromowidjojo, from the Netherlands, in 23.60. The Dutch star, WR holder in 23.24, had already been crowned world champion in this event in 2010 (Dubai, UAE) and 2014 (Doha, QAT) and was the 2012 Olympic champion in the 50m and 100m free. In Windsor, she also did a great competition, getting the silver in the 100m free and the 4x50 free relay, and the bronze in the 4x100m free. The minor medals went to Italy's Silvia Di Pietro (23.90) and US Madison Kennedy (23.93). Jeanette Ottesen (DEN), third in 2012, could not reach the podium, touching in fourth (24.00).



Ranomi Kromowidjojo (NED) - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia

Russia and the United States fought hard for the victory in the men's 4x100m medley relay, with the Europeans – anchored by Vladimir Morozov (in an incredible time of 45.58) – finally getting the gold in 3:21.17. The North Americans initially touched for silver, but a subsequent disqualification – two butterfly kicks in the breaststroke leg by Cody Miller - allowed Australia to be on the second march of the podium, in 3:23.56. The bronze went to Japan in 3:24.71, while France (winner in 2010 and 2014) concluded in sixth (3:26.33). USA is the most prolific winner of this event in the history of the Championships, with four victories in 2002, 2004, 2008 and 2012.



The team of Russia - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemedi

The consolation for the North Americans came a few minutes later, in the women's 4x100m medley relay. Under a lot of pressure from Canada, the US quartet swam for gold in 3:47.89, a new Championships record, improving the 3:48.29 clocked by China in 2010. Despite a very fast anchor leg by Penny Oleksiak (51.07), the Canadians could not take the lead following a bad 75m turn in the butterfly swim from Katerine Savard. The hosts had to content with silver in 3:48.87, while Australia earned bronze in 3:49.66.



The US winning team - Photo by Giorgio Scala/Deepbluemia
