

Day 8 Junior Men's Water Polo: Greece-Croatia final

59. SOUTH AFRICA 9 PUERTO RICO 14

Results & Teams

Match 59. 08:00, SOUTH AFRICA 9 PUERTO RICO 14

Classification 19-20

Quarters: 1-2, 5-4, 2-4, 1-4

Referees: Ammar Saleh (EGY), Kazuzo Moribayashi (JPN)

Penalties: RSA: 0/1.

Extra Man: RSA: 0/3. PUR: 5/8.

Teams:

SOUTH AFRICA: Keegan Clark, Michael Stewart, Miguel Morais, Cameron Laurenson, David Rom (2), Sven Van Zyl (1), Jason Evazard (1), Mika?eel Essa, Ethan Coryndon, Michael Brakspear (1), Liam Neil (4), Isma?eel Essa, Themba Mthembu. Head Coach: Jason Selino.

PUERTO RICO: Jorge Torres, Alec Martir (2), Angel Andino (1), Guillermo Ocasio (2), Misael Andino (1), Raymond Rodriguez, Diego Zayas (3), Gabriel Robles (2), Angel Rosado (1), Fabio Mujica, Jose Loubriel (1), Jafet Hernandez (2), Roberto Gordills. Head Coach: Jean Pierre Mujica.

Report

Converting extra-man attack is everything in water polo and Puerto Rico proved the master in the play-off for 19th. The five goals converted was the difference in the match, which started at a great rate with goals coming on many of the attacks. Neither side had the advantage and the score was level at every number until eight at 5:31 in the third period. Jose Loubriel and Angel Rosado made it 10-8 by the end of the period. The 4-1 final quarter showed that Puerto Rico was there until the end. South Africa was without the services of Themba Mthembu, the star goalkeeper who had to withdraw from the match inside the final two minutes on Friday and seek medical attention, which included a visit to hospital for a pre-existing ailment. He took his place on the bench but did not enter the water. South Africa retains its last ranking from two years ago, but then there were only 18 teams. Puerto Rico was 13th in 2011, its last visit to these championships. Jason Evazard was South Africa?s top scorer with 12 goals. Puerto Rico?s best was Diego Zayas with three goals today and 12 for the championships.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

60. NEW ZEALAND 3 ARGENTINA 7

Results & Teams

Match 60, 09:20, NEW ZEALAND 3 ARGENTINA 7

Classification 17-18

Quarters: 1-0, 2-3, 0-2, 0-2

Referees: Sinisa Matijasevic (MNE), Tamas Kovacs-Csatlos (HUN).

Penalties: ARG: 4/4.

Extra Man: NZL: 1/11. ARG: 2/12.

Teams:

NEW ZEALAND: Joshua De Reeper, Billy Simpson, Matija Jancic. Daniel Cameron, Hamish Booker (1), Liam Paterson, James Catlin (1), Rowan Brown, Adam Milne, Mark Morris (1), Brandon Matthews, Michael Slessor-White, Eric Munro. Head Coach: Goran Sablic.

ARGENTINA: Facundo Camps, Facundo Gonzalez, Tomas Pannitto, Tomas Alfonso Pozo, Felipe Alfonso, Franco Chinellato, Guido Martino, Guido Poggi (2), Carlos Camnasio (4), Nicolas Provenzano (1), Augusto Antunes Balbi, Tadeo Petrocelli, Octavio Salas. Head Coach: Gabriel Ramirez.

Report

Argentina had to come back from a scoreless first quarter and then win the next three periods to secure 17th position. New Zealand looked the stronger team in the opening stanza and then seemed to self destruct, giving up four penalty goals and being unable to convert 10 chances on extra-man attack. Argentina played out the full match and pressured New Zealand into too many mistakes, especially when presented with scoring opportunities. Carlos Camnasio top-scored with four goals to take his Belgrade total to a team-high 17 and has been one of the standout players. New Zealand's best was Matt Morris with nine goals and 18th position is one behind its last appearance at this level, in Long Beach, USA in 2007. Argentina was 15th at the same event and also its last visit to these championships.

61. IRAN 8 EGYPT 16

Results & Teams

Match 61, 10:40, IRAN 8 EGYPT 16

Classification 15-16

Quarters: 1-5, 2-4, 2-4, 3-3

Referees: Mihail Balanescu (ROU), Josko Pranic (CRO).

Penalties: IRI: 1/1. EGY: 4/4.

Extra Man: IRI: 2/11. EGY: 3/15.

Teams:

IRAN: Shayan Ghasemi, Amir Parhoon (2), Alireza Pourang, Arshia Almasi, Mehdi Yazdankhan (3), Hosein Khaledi, Amir Rahbar (1), Sajad Saviz, Amir Heidari, Amin Ghavidel (1), Bardia Peiravani (1), Mehdi Barzegari, Arash Pourzargar. Head Coach: Vahid Rezaei.

EGYPT: Marwan Reda Hafez, Abdallah Abdelgawad, Marwan Hafez Yehia, Ahmed Elsapagh (1), Ezzeldin

Sayed Sheweta, Karim Nabil (2), Seifeldeen Hesham (9), Mohamed Abubakr Eliwa (1), Ayman Badr, Youssef Saadeldin (1), Moustafa Essmat (2), Mohamed Hosny, Marwan Yehia. Head Coach: Ashraf Mahmoud.

Report

Seifeldeen Hesham must have written himself into the record books with a magnificent nine goals, including three penalty strikes, as Egypt topped Iran everywhere in the pool. It gave Egypt 15th place, three positions below its effort in Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2015. Hesham (pictured scoring one of his earlier goals) was smart in taking shots and flamboyant when needed. He took 16 shots and probably his best was his eighth where he sucked in a defender twice by turning him and then shooting while low in the water. He also passed off when necessary and did his share defending the back line, so he was an excellent team man. The effort sent him to the top of the current table for scorers, two clear of Hungary's Krisztian Manhercz, who has two more matches to play. To Iran's credit, it worked until the end and was rewarded with a tied period. The shots came from the top, one taking the right post. Egyptian centre forward Moustafa Essmat left the water in the third period to seek medical help for a cut under his left eye. A scorer of two goals, he sat on the bench nursing a huge lump under the eye with an ice pack. Both defences worked solidly and shut down most of the extra-man chances. Iran improved one position from the last championships. Mehdi Yazdankhan, scorer of three goals today, topped his team with 16.

Nine-goal hero Seifeldeen Hesham ? Picture: Russell McKinnon

62. NETHERLANDS JAPAN Results & Teams

Match 62. 12:00, NETHERLANDS 6 JAPAN 15

Classification 13-14

Quarters: 3-2, 1-1, 2-7, 0-5

Referees: Daniel Bartels (AUS), Martin Murray (CAN).

Penalties: NED: 1/1. JPN: 1/1.

Extra Man: NED: 2/9. JPN: 4/9

Teams:

NETHERLANDS: Frank Aarts, Bilal Gbadamassi (2), Mika Smelt, Sam van den Burg, Tarik Scherrenburg, Niels Hofmeijer, Tim De Mey, Tom Geestman (1), Bram van den Bersselaar (2), Tom de Weerd, Guus Wolswinkel (1), Stan van Ruiten, Thijs Stroomberg. Head Coach: Jacob Spijker.

JAPAN: Yusuke Ogura, Kenta Kobayashi (1), Tomoya Ichimura (1), Haruki Koppu (2), Kiyomu Date (4), Toi Suzuki (1), Ryosuke Aizawa (1), Shogo Kageta, Koki Maita, Takanori Maeno, Takeru Ogawa, Yusuke Inaba (5), Towa Mishimura. Head Coach: Makihiro Motomiya.

Report

Japan took out 13th place, as it did two years ago, in a match marred by the injury of top scorer Toi Suzuki. He had one goal against his name for 22 championship scores when a suspected accidental knee struck him when on transition. With blood streaming from his possibly broken nose, he left the pool to seek medical help three minutes before halftime and was sent to hospital. This sparked mayhem in the pool with the Japanese coach visibly upset and accusations being made. Suzuki had scored in all seven matches, three times achieving four goals and was a sad loss to the team. However, at that stage Japan was trailing 3-2 and

the injury seemed to spur the team to greater heights as the third period was won 7-2 and Japan shut out Netherlands in the fourth. Head coach Makihiro Motomiya left the coaching duties to his deputy and tended to the stricken player in the medical station. Netherlands dropped to 14th place from ninth in Almaty two years ago. Suzuki was joined by team-mate Kiyomu Date, who gained four goals today, on 22 goals. They combined to score 47 percent of the team's goals. Yusuke Inaba threw in 17 goals meaning the three top players netted almost two thirds of the total of 107. Sam van den Burg was Netherlands' leading scorer with 12 goals.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

63. CHINA 3 AUSTRALIA 14

Results & Teams

Match 63, 13:20, CHINA 3 AUSTRALIA 14

Classification 11-12

Quarters: 0-3, 1-5, 2-1, 0-5

Referees: Michael Baty (RSA), Daniel Vazquez (MEX).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: CHN: 1/4. AUS: 3/3.

Teams:

CHINA: JunJing Wang, BeiYu Wang (2), JinPeng Zhang, YuTian Wang, XingMeng He, RongKun Lie, Yi Lu (1), YingYi Gao, XuLiang Zhang, DingSong Shen, Chi Liao, Boren Shi, LinFeng Li. Head Coach: Jie Shen.

AUSTRALIA: Nicholas Porter, Samuel Nangle, Adam Hall, Nicholas Elphick (2), Timothy Putt, Nicholas Hallam (2), Hugh Anstey (1), Rhys Holden, Christian Kyriakou, Lachlan Vos (2), Charles Negus (3), Conor Wolohan (4), Damian Williams. Head Coach: Andrei Kovalenko.

Report

Australia turned an 8-1halftime lead into an excellent finale after some up-and-down results in Belgrade. The victory was built on a clean-sheet first quarter and a 5-1 burst in the second. Australia controlled the back pool and found the space for open shots. China's first goal came through BeiYi Wang with a five-metre score when left unattended. That goal started China's scoring 51 seconds from halftime. Conor Wolohan's 8-0 score came off a long swim down the right late in the second quarter. He scored Australia's next goal a whopping seven minutes later, such was the Chinese pressure being exerted. China closed the third with successive goals, BeiYi Wang claiming his second. Lachlan Vos, Wolohan with his third, Nicholas Elphick on counter and then Wolohan from outside ? for his fourth and sixth for the tournament made it 13-3. Nicholas Hallam scored a second goal from in front in the last half-minute to give Australia a 5-0 quarter and ultimate victory. Australia's leading scorer was centre forward Tim Putt with 10 goals and China's best was BeiYi Wang, also a two-metre man, with 16. It was a big drop for Australia, having finished in the top eight last time, albeit it eighth. For China, it was a rise of three placings.

64. CANADA 7 RUSSIA 14

Results & Teams

Match 64. 14:40, CANADA 7 RUSSIA 14

Classification 9-10

Quarters: 1-5, 2-3, 0-5, 4-1

Referees: German Moller (ARG), Amir Sakabakhsh (IRI).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: CAN: 1/3. RUS: 5/8.

Teams:

CANADA: Samuel Reiher, Gareth Jones, Alexis Reiher (2), Felix Polisenio (1), Aleksa Gardijan, Benjamin Lemay-Lavoie, Bogdan Djerkovic (1), Mark Spooner, Jeremie Blanchard, Aria Soleimanipak, Jeremie Cote (1), Reuel D'Souza (1), Aleksa Stanic. Head Coach: Nikola Maric.

RUSSIA: Vladislav Chuvilev, Daniil Pronin, Ilya Shein, Roman Usov (1), Nikita Krug, Daniil Merkulov (4), Daniil Andreev, Oleg Kucherenko (2), Arslan Zakirov (3), Ivan Gusarov (2), Timur Shaikhutdinov, Konstantin Kharkov (2), Igor Chirkov. Head Coach: Dmitry Apanasenko.

Report

Russia returned to the 20 & Under World Championship after being absent in 2015, finishing ninth, which was one place better than in Szombathely, Hungary in 2013.

Canada moved up from 14th two years ago and could not get into the game against a team that showed so much promise from that second-day, indoor match-up with USA on Sunday.

With the likes of Konstantin Kharkov having a lean day in the scoring department by his high standards and Daniil Merkulov in fine form, Russia had the game to defeat Canada easily. Merkulov relished the final day with a handful of goals, although he did take 11 shots, and was kept busy in centre defence, wrapping up his counterpart. Russia was much more confident on attack while Canada had the opportunities, then baulked at shooting and passed off instead. Canada was slow to pick up loose Russians in the early part yet improved as the match progressed.

Reul D'Souza, who made a big impact for the senior team in Budapest, scored the one goal to lift his tally to 13 for team best. Kharkov topped Russia's scoring with 21 while Merkulov netted 19 and Arslan Zakirov 16.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

67. GREECE 9 SERBIA 8

Results & Teams

Match 67. 20:40, GREECE 9 SERBIA 8

Classification 1-4 Semifinal

Quarters: 3-3, 4-3, 2-1, 0-1

Referees: Vladimir Golikov (RUS), Jaume Teixido (ESP).

Penalties: GRE: 0/1.

Extra Man: GRE: 3/9. SRB: 1/8.

Teams:

GREECE: Emmanouil Zerdevas, Dimitrios Skoumpakis (3), Nikolaos Gardikas, Konstantinos Gkiouvetsis (1), Dimitrios Nikolaidis, Alexandros Papanastasiou (1), Grigorios Giannopoulos, Pavlos Mouratidis, Nikolaos Delagrammatikas, Charalampos Troulos (1), Iordais Masmanidis (2), Grigorios Kapetanakis (1), Polymeris Siordilis. Head Coach: Theodoros Lorantos.

SERBIA: Radoslav Filipovic, Velji Tanksovic, Petar Tomic, Nikola Lukic (1), Dorde Vucinic (1), Ivan Gvozdanovic, Radomir Drasovic (1), Nebojsa Toholj, Marko Jankovic, Filip Radojevic (4), Nikola Radonjic, Petar Velkic (1), Milutin Belopavlovic. Head Coach: Vladimir Vujasinovic.

Report

In the face of a hostile crowd, Greece beat Serbia 9-8 in an amazing semifinal that had as much drama as the previous match. There was action aplenty and, more precisely, goals. Both teams played brilliant water polo for such young stars of the future. The match was level at every number to five and that was 3:32 in the second quarter. Greece went to a two-goal advantage and Serbia pulled one back after the buzzer of halftime. What a thriller! Was there a red card? Of course there was. The Greek assistant coach was sent for dissent after Filip Radojevic snapped up a rebound from the bar and backhanded the ball into goal from seven metres as he had no time to turn and shoot. This made it 7-6 and set up the capacity crowd for a stunning finale, ahead of whatever tomorrow throws at us. There were fantastic goals, there were smart goals, there were goals where the person on the spot sorted the mess. Greek centre forward Iordais Masmanidis scored a classic turn and then for the go-ahead 6-5 goal he flicked in a loose ball from a goal-face melee. There was Radojevic, who scored Serbia's first of the first quarter, the first of the second and the last. More incredible scenes were to come. Grigorios Kapetanakis scored in the first minute and Radojevic responded for 8-7 ? his fourth goal. Nebojsa Toholj appeared ?at odds? after the goal and slowly made his way to the side of the pool. The referee thought about it for a while and then went for the quick-draw red card and gave it to Greece's sensational attacker and playmaker Alexandros Papanastasiou, for obviously striking the Serbian. Mayhem ensued and finally Greece went on attack, gained an exclusion foul and spiked the goal, thanks to Dimitrios Skoumpakis, his second of the match, and 9-7 at 6:01. Both teams took a timeout with no success for Greece and then Serbia took the shot, hit the crossbar and Greece regained and took a long shot as the buzzer sounded for the final break in an amazing day of 10 matches. Serbia opened the final quarter with Nikola Lukic missing a point-blank drag down on extra, hitting the crossbar. Greece also missed sitter at the three-minute mark in the same manner. The 12-minute mark with no goal came and went and as 13 minutes loomed, Serbia broke the drought as Drasovic sent the ball across and down to Petar Vekic on the right post to drag in for 9-8. Greece had the ball stolen, Serbia went on attack and it was left to Radojevic to try and thread the needle, which he couldn't. Greece went to a timeout at 0:18 and played the ball upfield for victory. What a sensational match, with fewer red cards than the previous semifinal.

Pictures: Russell McKinnon

68. CROATIA 6 HUNGARY 4
Results & Teams

Match 68. 19:20, CROATIA 6 HUNGARY 4

Classification 1-4 Semifinal

Quarters: 3-2, 1-0, 0-2, 2-0

Referees: Axel Bender (GER), Luca Bianco (ITA).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: CRO: 5/14. HUN: 2/14.

Teams:

CROATIA: Fran Cubranic, Antonio Duzzevic (2), Ivan Domagoj Zovic, Jacob Mercep, Zvonimir Butic, Marin Dasic, Duje Pejkovic, Nikola Pavlicevic, Franko Lazic (1), Rino Buric (2), Matias Biljaka, Lovro Peparic (1), Luka Podrug. Head Coach: Nikica Gulin.

HUNGARY: Soma Vogel, Lorand Zerinyar, Denes Lukacs, Viktor Vadovics (1), Adam Nagy, Domonkos Selley-Rauscher (1), Kristof Szatmari (1), Erik Csacsovszky, Kristian Manhercz, Gergely Burian (1), Henrik Simon, Andras Teleki, Boldizsar Csiszar. Head Coach: Gyorgy Horkai.

Report

Croatia won an incredible semifinal against Hungary, where drama was the norm and power blocking the key. Smart play by both teams produced some dynamic play, sharp shooting and excellent goalkeeping. This match was all about trying to win a medal. For the loser it would be uncertain. The first quarter was tight. The second was even tighter. Unlike the previous match where tensions mounted, the first half was relatively sedate. This was not the case in the second half as the Croatian assistant coach was red-carded for dissent after Croatia assumed an excluded player from the previous half was not allowed to come in but the referees had waved him in. After the outcry died down, Hungary's Adam Nagy was ejected and then collected a penalty foul to send him from the match on three majors. Nearly two minutes later Hungary's Erik Csacsovszky caught the eye of the referee and he dipped into his pocket for the red card again. Italian referee must have had grease in his pocket to slip out a third red card of the period when he sent the other Croatian assistant coach. Now Nikica Gulin had no support. He protested the ball going over the back line after being flicked to supposed safety by the referee. Then something other than dissent, red cards, irate coaches, upset spectators and feuding players occurred ? a goal. Yes, there had not been one for 13 long minutes. Like the television announcer says: ?Don't switch channel.? Gergely Burian drove down the right and whipped in a goal for 4-3. If that wasn't enough, Hungary gained another with five seconds left on the clock when Croatia turned the ball over. It went deep left and Kristof Szatmari smashed it into goal from deep. It was 4-4 and the final quarter promised to be a beauty. It was full of drama and plenty of blocks and saves by both teams. They were playing for keeps, if not a sheep station or two. And yes, a red-card incident (without the red card) happened when Hungary's Kristof Szatmari was rolled. Croatia gained an ejection and when the exclusion time had expire the ball searched out Rino Buric on the far post and he steered it into goal for 5-4. By this time head coach Gyorgy Horkai was slapping his pockets for a mobile phone to call home for more players as he had four players benched. Croatia said ?why not try that Buric move again?? Croatia did and the score was 6-4 at 0:48. Hungary had a shot miss and Croatia swam up the pool to waste time and savour the feeling on making a world final, just like its seniors enjoyed in Budapest two weeks ago. Croatia beat Hungary in that match, as well.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

66. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 10 MONTENEGRO 12
Results & Teams

Match 66. 18:00, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 10 MONTENEGRO 12

Classification 5-8 Semifinal

Quarters: 3-3, 3-6, 2-2, 2-1

Referees: Konstantinos Kyranis (GRE), Erwin Schapers (NED).

Penalties: USA: 1/1. MNE: 1/1.

Extra Man: USA: 3/11. MNE: 4/10.

Teams:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Alexander Wolf, Hannes Daube (2), Tyler Abramson (2), Ethan Wojciechowski, Quinten Osborne (3), Dylan Woodhead, Nicholas Bisconti, Jacob Ehrhardt, Jacob Cavano, Ashworth Molthen, Beck Jurasius, Johnathan Hooper (1), Samuel Murphy. Head Coach: Gavin Arroyo.

MONTENEGRO: Peta Tesanovic, Dusan Matkovic, Branco Franeta, Nicolas Saveljic (1), Blazo Mitrovic (3), Bogdan Vujasevic (1), Aleksa Ukropina, Duro Radovic (2), Filip Gardasevic (1), Nikola Moskov (3), Vladan Spaic (1), Goran Grgurevic, Milija Mandic. Head Coach: Veljko Uskokovic.

Report

Montenegro held on to win against a United States team wrought on gaining an important win after a one-goal defeat and missing the medal semifinals. The second quarter was to be its downfall and Montenegro's highlight. It was the USA who started first and went 2-1 and 3-2 ahead before settling at 3-3 by the first break. Montenegro then took 4-3, 6-4, 8-5 and 9-6 leads in the second quarter, showing why it is such a tough team. USA showed just as much spunk and had the incredible life-saving support of goalkeeper Alexander Wolf. Without him the deficit would have been greater than three. Both teams played in each other's face, although it must be said that Montenegro's mistakes were less and the power and placement of the goals had to be good to beat Wolf. In comparison, USA's shots were not as good or as often. The best for USA was Quinten Osborne whose two centre-forward goals were dynamic. The first defied time and space, it was so quick. Penalties opened the second half with Hannes Daube for USA and Nikola Moskov converting for Montenegro. Johnathan Hooper tried to suck in a major foul while on counter and it did not work. He made sure of the next attack, swimming the length of the pool to score and narrow the match to 10-8 at 2:06. Both goalkeepers stopped close-in shots. Montenegro went to 11-8 when the ball was fed to Vladan Spaic at centre forward. He took the heat and flipped the ball left to Filip Gardasevic, who was free and took his time to score cross cage at 0:33. The pace of the match seemed to step up in the final quarter with USA chipping at the deficit. Osborne thundered in his third and Hooper scored on counter before the first minute had expired. It was nearly five minutes later that Blazo Mitrovic took a five-metre free throw shot to lift Montenegro to 12-10. Montenegro head coach Veljko Uskokovic was yellow carded because of his bench. On the next attack Osborne was red-carded. Montenegro went to a timeout at 1:15 to no effect. And at 0:49 USA called timeout as a fight erupted in front of the Montenegro goal. The upshot was that Nicholas Bisconti was red-carded as well. What happened next was a do-or-die first-pass shot from Hooper to try and narrow to one, but it hit the bar and Montenegro controlled before USA regained, whipped the ball to Jacob Ehrhardt, who scored, but was called for a push-off. The match was over, Montenegro had won and USA was sent to lick its wounds after a torrid match in which a little luck could have made a huge difference to the result. Both red cards were for low-level violence.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

65. SPAIN 12 ITALY 8

Results & Teams

Match 65. 16:40, SPAIN 12 ITALY 8

Classification 5-8 Semifinal

Quarters: 2-2, 5-1, 3-2, 2-3

Referees: Ivan Rakovic (SRB), John Waldow (NZL).

Penalties: Nil.

Extra Man: ESP: 7/12. ITA: 4/9.

Teams:

SPAIN: Miguel Linares, Pablo Gomez, Alvaro Granados (2), Nikolas Paul (1), David Carrasco, Fran Valera (4), Borja Fenoy, Oriol Rodriguez (1), Roger Tahull (3), Alejandro Bustos, Guillem Garcia (1), Alex De La Fuente, Alfonso Lopez-Saez. Head Coach: Svilen Piraklov.

ITALY: Gianmarco Nicosia, Mario Del Basso, Giacomo Cannella, Michele Mezzarobba (2), Mario Guidi, Duilio Puccio, Stefano Guerrato (1), Edoardo Campopiano, Antonia Maccioni (1), Eduardo Manzi (4), Federico Piombo, Ettore Novara, Francesco De Michelis. Assistant Coach: Giuseppe Dato.

Report

Spain moved into the play-off for fifth with a clinical display of water polo that had the Italians mesmerised at times. It was more electrifying as lightning spun its web across the sky outside. Earlier it was rightfully decided to take the semifinals indoors to avoid the pending storm. The internet connection was knocked out, as well. Spain caned Italy on extra man as it came back from 2-0 down to tie the first period and surge to 7-3 at halftime. The sole joy for Italy was Michele Mezzarobba's acceptance of a cross pass to deep left on extra for 4-3. Meanwhile, Spain was looking for more blood in the third as it replied to an Italian goal and lifted the match to 10-4. Italy was not finished, grabbing one back by the final break, the first of the fourth period and then traded goals for 11-7 at 5:55. There was a slim chance before both sides decided to close shop, making some excellent blocks and saves. The Italian timeout at 3:08 produced only a corner throw and a turnover upon which the two coaches remonstrated ? Piraklov to Ferdinando Pesci in the stands ? Pesci was sitting in the grandstand sitting out a red card he received the day before. He looked dispassionately as his side was being dissected but revved up when Piraklov attacked him over his player's supposed indiscretion. It was Eduardo Manzi who decided that Italy had a chance with his missiles from the side. He scored three goals in the final quarter to lift his team from 10-5 to 11-8. He gave a lifeline, which his teammates did not take. Spain went to a timeout at 1:36 when victory was assured, moved the ball around until after the exclusion period and Fran Valera scored his fourth from deep right for 12-8 at 1:11. Game over, Spain was through.

Picture: Russell McKinnon

Russell McKinnon, FINA Media Committee

Belgrade, Serbia, August 12. ? Greece will play Croatia in the gold-medal final of the FINA Junior Men's Water Polo World Championships at the Sports Centre Milan Gale Muskatirovic here on Sunday night.

Croatia was first past the post in a drama-ridden clash with Hungary, winning 6-4 in the final few minutes in the inside pool. The night session was shifted because of the raging storm predicted earlier, arriving during the first of the four encounters. The match was interrupted by frequent red cards and multiple fouls with the four red cards challenging the number of goals for the highest total.

Greece triumphed over host nation Serbia 9-8, even though Greece playmaker Alexandros Papanastasiou was ousted for violence in a match that saw just the two red cards.

It makes for enticing view on Sunday night with two complete teams, looking to eye off the gold medal and Croatia looking for the senior-junior double after the men's team was victorious in Budapest two weeks ago.

In the classification 5-8 semifinals, Spain took Italy apart 12-8 after leading 10-4 midway through the third period. Eduardo Manzi scored three of his four goals in the final period to try and get Italy back into the match, to no avail. Fran Valera scored the final goal, his fourth. In the second semifinal, Montenegro broke away in the second quarter to go 9-6 ahead into the second half and on to a 12-10 victory.

In classification matches, Russia took ninth place thanks to a 14-7 result with Canada. Daniil Merkulov top-scored with four goals.

For positions 11-12, Australia ripped to an 8-1 halftime lead and finished 14-3 over China.

In earlier matches, Puerto Rico beat South Africa 14-9 for 19th; Argentina downed New Zealand 7-3 for 17th; Seifeldien Hesham hammered in nine goals as Egypt beat Iran 16-8 to claim 15th position and Japan gained 13th place by beating Netherlands 15-6 after leading scorer Toi Suzuki was hospitalised with a suspected broken nose following a second-quarter incident.

Match schedule:

Match 59. 08:00, SOUTH AFRICA 9 PUERTO RICO 14

Classification 19-20

Match 60, 09:20, NEW ZEALAND 3 ARGENTINA 7

Classification 17-18

Match 61, 10:40, IRAN 8 EGYPT 16

Classification 15-16

Match 62. 12:00, NETHERLANDS 6 JAPAN 15

Classification 13-14

Match 63, 13:20, CHINA 3 AUSTRALIA 14

Classification 11-12

Match 64. 14:40, CANADA 7 RUSSIA 14

Classification 9-10

Match 65. 16:40, SPAIN 12 ITALY 8

Classification 5-8 Semifinal

Match 66. 18:00, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 10 MONTENEGRO 12

Classification 5-8 Semifinal

Match 68. 20:40, CROATIA 6 HUNGARY 4

Classification 1-4 Semifinal

Match 67. 19:20, GREECE 9 SERBIA 8

Classification 1-4 Semifinal

Day 9 programme:

Match 69. 16:00, ITA-USA

Classification 7-8

Match 70. 17:20, ESP-MNE

Classification 5-6

Match 71. 18:40, SRB-HUN

Classification 3-4

Match 72. 20:00, GRE-CRO

Classification 1-2
