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Hungarian capital takes center stage

Olga Kamardina, FINA correspondent in Hungary

Some 300 competitors of 40 nations and their coaches have come to Budapest to vie for the 9 titles of the 16th FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships.

The event action starts tomorrow, as media opportunity was staged today to mark the opening. Iconic Duna Arena played host for the press-conference, which draw a good share of the public attention. A number of local journalists and TV crews covered the event showing some increasing anticipation for the upcoming stories.



Photo credit to Jozsef Szaka

In the opening speech FINA Artistic Swimming Technical Committee Chairwoman Lisa Schott praised the accomplishments of the organisers, and said that the Duna Arena of Budapest is one of the most attractive aquatics world's venues.

“There is no doubts, we will stage a very successful FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships-2018 here, - she commented. - We have in place everything might be needed: great facilities at the host arena, traditional hospitality of the Hungarian capital and excellent job done by the well-trained Organising Committee. Hungarian Synchronized Swimming Federation and Municipality of Budapest are very reliable partners of FINA, and we are grateful to them for fruitful collaboration. It is always a big pleasure personally for me to come back to the city, which has been at our map for many many years now. We are delighted to confirm, that everything is well ready for the kick-off and, hopefully, 300 competitors will appreciate the preparations done”.



“We are grateful to FINA for being entrusted to host such high-level competitions for the second year to go, - responded LOC Chairman, Hungarian Synchronised Swimming Federation President Sandor Balogh. - In 2017 we staged FINA World Championships and it was a hit with the public. Hungarians love aquatics, and artistic swimming is one of the most fascinating and beautiful sports. I believe, that junior championships is always interesting to watch as they show the future trends of the sport, the future stars and we hope to see some drafts for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic rosters”.

According to Eva Szanto, LOC Executive Director, a lot of spectators are going to come and shout for junior competitors, and the Gala will be at the centre stage on Day #5, on Sunday.

“A number of celebrities are expected in Duna Arena, - she announced. – Among them we shall see some famous athletes, representing other sports, as well as senior artistic swimming team members. Everyone is very enthusiastic about the upcoming championships. Before the Junior Worlds, Budapest city gave floor for the 5th Leg of the FINA Artistic Swimming World Series. We love our job very much, we know it well, and hope for further interesting competitions in the future!”



Russian specialist Natalia Tarasova has been working with the Hungarian junior team for 3 years, and she confessed, that on the home soil her swimmers will be able to showcase their progress achieved and some technical improvements.

“The level of junior performance has been raising high, the contest has become more fierce, and that is why the struggle for medals is expected to be thrilling and close, - stated Hungarian head coach. - It isn't going to be a smooth ride even for acknowledged leaders. First and foremost, the atmosphere has been great leading up to the championships and my team is truly going to enjoy this experience. Having such a tournament hosted at your own country gives athletes additional motivation that you cannot bring from within; it comes from outside, from the audience.”

“There are no easy tournaments, - emphasized Varvara Subbotina, who was also attending the press-conference together with her legendary coach Tatiana Danchko. One of the main stars of the Junior Worlds-2018 will compete in both solo routines, where she has been exceedingly successful since 2016. However Varvara seemed to be far from underestimating opponents. In fact, she praised them a lot.

“There are a lot of good artistic swimmers around the globe, and my opponents are skilled and strong, and top-motivated on winning. It is always about a good challenge for them. I prefer to get concentrated on myself and my own performance. I know what I can do and how well I can swim, and I have been working hard for 10 years to reach such a high level. This would never be possible without collaboration with my brilliant coach Tatiana Danchenko. She always strives to motivate me to show my best and surprise everyone with my performance.”



Photo credit to Jozsef Szaka

16th FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships kicks off on 18 July, 2018, in Budapest, Hungary, to come to a close after 5 busy competition days. The medals will be played in 9 events - Free Combination, Technical and Free Routines for solo, duets and teams events. For the first time ever, the world champions in the mixed duet (both free and technical routines) will be crowned. As usual, a big cherry on the cake will come by the close of the competitions at the Athletes' Gala, which will showcase the most spectacular programs of the event.

Competition schedule

Day 1 - July 18, 2018

10:00 Solo Free Preliminary

15:00 Solo Technical Final

19:00 Opening Ceremony

19:30 Solo Free Final (12)

Day 2 - July 19, 2018

10:00 Duet Free Preliminary

15:00 Duet Technical Final

19:30 Duet Free Final

Day 3 - July 20, 2018

18:00 Team Technical Final

Day 4 - July 21, 2018

11:00 Team Free Preliminary

17:00 Mixed Duet Technical Final

18:00 Team Free Final (12)

Day 5 - July 22, 2018

11:00 Free Combination Preliminary

16:00 Mixed Duet Free Final

17:00 Free Combination Final
