

Jr.Artistic Swimming Worlds, Budapest, Day 5: two remaining titles swept away by Russia

Olga Kamardina, FINA correspondent in Hungary

Finishing atop of the Mixed Duet Free and Team Free Combination, European powerhouse completed their victorious mission in the Hungarian capital.

For the 8th in the history there was just one nation landing all gold. Apart from Russia, the other medal winning countries at the 16th World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships were Japan, China and Ukraine, which distributed between themselves 9 silver and 9 bronze medals left on offer.



TEAM FREE COMBINATION PRELIMINARY

Competition Day 5 licked off Preliminaries in Team Free Combination. Favorites kept on rocking. Defending champion Russia first headed the finals, which was not a surprise at all, 93.7667 points. The other two in the prestigious 90+ points club were Ukraine and Japan. Trio of chasers included China, Spain and Italy, whose scores ranged from 89.6000 to 86.7000 points. And consequently, the main take of the morning session was to sort out the 3 unlucky squads to miss finals. The competition turned out to be tough, and, in the end, saw artistic swimmers of Greece, USA, Great Britain, Hungary, Croatia and Slovakia qualifying. However, the gap to the next challengers was not overwhelming. Provided some more luck followed, for instance, Serbia and even Hong King, could have been finalists too, whereas Mexico was disqualified for breaking quantitative composition rule of the competitions.



Slovakia, the last 12 to earn the final's spot, seemed not that disappointed with how it all ended. According to coach Monika Thuringerova, her team's swim was nice and dynamic, and she congratulated girls on completing "the mission possible".

"We were expected to be a part of the 12-teams final, and we have succeeded, - she said. – We demonstrated a program to the soundtrack from the "Guardians of the Galaxy", and all swimmers enjoyed it a lot, and gave their all to the swim. As my head coach says, competition is the best practice, and 16th FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships was a great competition, which gave us much experience and was very helpful for the athletes to grow up in their skills. We will proceed working on hard in the good hope of some fruits in the future".

MIXED DUET FREE

Like in the Technical portion on Competition day 4, the Mixed Duet Free Final brought grills to the mill of Russia.

It was the last international swim for Mantulenko/Vasiliev as juniors, and they presented an old school classical "Spartak" program. It was a hurdle from the technical viewpoint. 3-times Olympic champion Olga Brusnikina took special care of the routine, choosing all – music, concept, swimsuits, choreography. Regarded as compliments for her could be the high marks of the judges posted on difficulty and execution, 26.0000 and 25.4000 points a piece. Russian prodigies also coped with the artistic side of the story, evoking a long ago era of 75 – 50 years AD. Alina Mantulenko and Mikhail Vasiliev were a pleasure to watch and were happy to seal their second gold at the 16th FINA World Junior Championships, on 85.1333 points.



“Such an honor to win both first gold medals in the history of Mixed Duet events at the Junior Worlds, - commented on Olga Brusnikina, choreographer of the program and Vice-President of the Russian Synchronised Swimming Federation. - We are shaken and touched. We had a lot of concerns regarding the duo, as they started to train together less than one year ago. Our main idea was to show that the new event of the artistic swimming program is very attractive and spectacular. We meant to stage two program of the different nature, which are best showcasing various advantages of our sport”.

The 2nd place was again between China and Japan, very similar and very different at the same time.

Chinese strategically had a favor, as they swam first. Their “Mermaid” narrated a love-story of the main character to the Prince. The program, staged by Tu Jun, was very fresh to match the duo, which is but 5 months together. Their routine received 81.4667 points, with 24.2 on elements, 24.6 – on difficulty and 32.6662 – on the artistic impression.

Jimma Iwasaki/Kana Miyauchi of Japan presented a “Dracula-themed” portion, accompanied by a modern mix of 3 classical pieces – Omen by Goldsmith, Moonlight by Chopin and Messa da Requiem by Verdi. They were very emotional expressing the program’s strong nature, obtained good height and amplitude of movements. Although their total registered a little less than that of their Chinese challengers, 80.7667, they were congratulated on their personal best of this junior season.



“It is a pleasure for us to see we are on the right way, that we are constantly improving, - said Japanese coach Adachi Uchiyama. – Mixed duet is a new and very promising event for the artistic swimming. Our young swimmers like it a lot, and we all hope to see it in the Olympic program”.

Greece with their melodious and lyric “Je t’aime” performance, like the day before, rested on fourth on 75.1000 points.

“We are pleased with our performance in mixed duets, which earned us 2 silver and 1 bronze medals, and it is a wonderful thing to be able to compete and win podium appearances at the FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships, - said Zhang Yuyao of China. – We loved Budapest very much, it is a lovely city. We also liked the people here, who are very very friendly”.

“Mixed duets have brought a new dimension to the sport, allowing swimmers to be partners and create a male& female connection, rather than simply swim alongside each other, - said Lisa Schott, FINA Technical Delegate and FINA Technical Artistic Swimming Committee Chairwoman. - Mixed duets have been around for quite some time in small local and international competitions, but have finally appeared on the big international stage at the 2015 World Championships in Kazan, Russia. Now was the right time for the juniors to commence competing. In Budapest we saw 5 mixed duets in the technical and 4 pairs in the free portions. For the next editions of the Junior Worlds we shall hope to see a higher participation of male-athletes, because now they can realize, that our sport offers good opportunities for them not just to compete, but to win medals”.

TEAM FREE COMBINATION

Russians completed their gold files starring in the Team Free combination.

After the prelims, they ranked first, outplaying Ukraine with their funny “Adams family” program by some 2

points. The final swim of their aquatic story, which showcased different states of water, including tsunami and even the aquatic birds, procured them even higher marks on the execution and artistic impression. As a result, Russia improved on themselves finishing impressive 94.2333 points overall.



“We are very happy about the 9th win to go and the overall prize we have received. It is a big honor, - confessed Russian senior coach Natalia Mendygalieva. - We did a good job, and I am very proud of all the junior swimmers and all the team staff which had been a part of our gold winning select team of Russia, including young coaches Daria Aleksandrova, Yulia Grevtseva and Larisa Vasilieva. Famous Olga Brusnikina, Svetlana Romashina and Natalia Ischenko fueled us with their energy and knowledge of the artistic swimming. There is no other secret for our success. We just trained hard and we will be striving to repeat such a success-story in the future”.

Ukraine ended on second with 92.1000, whereas China’s “Nutcracker” staged vigorously was left to vie on the ultimate bronze of the competition against Japan’s William Tell story. The Asian rivalry registered 90.5333 - 89.0000 in favor of the Japanese, which gave them the 8th bronze piece of the Junior Worlds-2018.



“Team Free Combination silver is our 7th medal, earned in Hungary. Two weeks ago, in Helsinki we had the same impressive total, which confirms us as one of the most successful nation in the modern artistic swimming. We had a lot of very young swimmers in our roster, who took their debut at the international arena. It is a pleasure to register a number of new countries came to exhibit at the FINA world Junior Artistic Swimming Championships, which is a good sign. One of the surprises of this competition for us was North Korean solos and duets, which were done very professionally and very elegantly”, - commented Ukrainian coach Oksana Pismennaya.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

5 competition days of the 16th FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships updated the junior's world ranking which will be valid for the next two years. The Perennial favorite Russia added 9 more to its numerous titles. Ukraine collected 7 silvers, followed by the Japanese on 8 bronze medals. China concludes the chart of the winning nations with 2 silver and 1 bronze pieces in their pocket.



“This was the largest FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships, ever held, - says Lisa Schott, FINA Technical Delegate and FINA Technical Artistic Swimming Committee Chairwoman. – Huge congratulations to the Artistic Swimming Federations worldwide. We had here a very good representation, registering 39 countries and some 300 participants. The level of skills demonstrated was outstanding, and everyone was very much inspired by what they have been doing. In this amazing venue, Duna Arena of Budapest, you have very likely seen some of the future Olympic stars, future of our sport. And this future looks very attractive, as a lot of brilliant performances have been staged and performed and deservedly got high marks. As a matter of fact, we took this good assembly to test something new from the organizational viewpoint. We have significantly changed the program, entering Technical and Free programs for each discipline, and including the first ever junior contest for the Mixed duets. We also used technical devices a lot, thus simplifying a very difficult job for the judges, and new format of judging system was introduced, including an everyday draw, and a neutral panel for the final sessions”.

Competition results. 16th FINA World Junior Artistic Swimming Championships. Day 5

Mixed Duet Free Final

1.RUS (Mantulenko Alina/Vasilev Mikhail) 85.1333, 2. CHN (Shi Haoyo/Zhang Yiyao) 81.4667, 3. JPN (Iwasaki Jimma/Miyauchi Kana) 80.7667, 4. GRE (Gkortsilas Vasileios/Papageorgiou) 75.1000

Team Free Combination Final

1. RUS (Bazlova Antonina, Gayday Tatiana, Ladnaia Kseniia, Maretich Milena, Minaeva Elizaveta, Nesterova Valeriya, Snisarenko Kira, Soloveva Polina, Tagankina Kristina, Zhavoronkova Arina) 94.2333

2. UKR (Burdova Oleksandra, Derevianchenko O., Fiedina Marta, Kornieieva Daria, Kulyk Anastasiia, Lykhman Yevheniia, Nosova Anna, Shylo Valeriia, Stulienkova K., Stulienkova Sofiia) 92.1000

3. JPN (Hosokawa Asaka, Miyauchi Kana, Sato Tomoka, Suzuki Hikari, Takai Haruhi, Takano Sakura, Tatsuno Moe, Ueda Rena, Watanabe Yumeno, Yoshida Rie) 90.5333
4. CHN (Li Xiuchen, Liu Jinhan, Liu Jintong, Meng Xinyue, Wu Qianxuan, Lyu Rong, Lin Yanjun, Wu Jingyan, Xiang Binxuan) 89.0000
5. ESP (Arboix Clara, Bellver Teresa, Carreras Oriana, Garcia Paula, Gomez Selena, Hernandez Mireia, Jimeno Irene, Macias Maria, Nuno Ana, Tio Iris) 88.2000
6. ITA (Brogioli Costanza, Murru Marta, Ruggiero Lucrezia, Sportelli Isotta, Iocoacci Marta, Rocchino Carmen, Savi Aurora, Zunino Francesca) 86.7667
7. USA (Alwan Grace, Goot Nicole, Neely Cassandra, Elian Yara, Remmers Abbygayle, Heffernan Hannah, Ramirez Daniella, Tchakmakjian Emmanuella) 83.7000
8. GRE (Dipla Ifigeneia, Kofidi Vasiliki, Papageorgiou Nikoleta, Vasilopolou Georgia, Gkagianni Nefeli Aikaterina, Kourgiantaki Olga, Taxopoulou Anna Maria, Zouzouni Violeta) 83.5667
9. GBR (Costello Millicent, Larsen Cerys, Rushton Daisy, Taylor Abigail, Hampson Greta, Lloyd Daniela, Smith Harriette, Usher Victoria) 80.3333
10. HUN (Apathy Anna, David Janka, Gacs Boglarka, Gerstenkorn Mira, Hungler Szabina, Kassai Dora, Kassai Kamilla, Pentek Lili, Szabo A.V., Szabo Veronka) 78.2000
11. CRO (Butorac Matea, Cibenecki Lara, Garbajs Anja, Kadic Lorena, Manojlovic Hana, Palijan Lana, Pernek Ema, Radetic Ivana, Radovcic Magdalena, Turkovic Katja) 75.2333
12. SVK (Bacharova Julia, Bodikova Zuzana, Iakovlev Anastasia, Kvasnovska K., Lengyelova Dina, Lisa Laura, Novotna Barbora, Slezakova Rebecca, Solymosyova Silvia, Suranova Sophia) 74.4333

