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WP World Cup (W), Surgut, Day 5: USA and Russia to play the trophy

Game 17. NZL vs. CHN 6-15 (1-4, 1-4, 2-3, 2-4) 

Results & Teams 

Game 17. NZL  vs. CHN  6-15 (1-4, 1-4, 2-3, 2-4)

Referees: Drury (USA), Teixido (ESP)

Extra Man: NZL 2/11, CHN 4/6

Penalty: NZL 0/1, CHN 0/0

Best player of the match: Chen Xiao (CHN)

NEW ZEALAND: Jessica Ann Milicich, Isabella Frances Lattey Morrison, Bernadette Gabrielle Doyle (1),

Alexandra Rose Boyd, Emily Charlotte Nicholson (1), Emmerson Joy Houghton (2), Katie Mary McKenty, Grace Elizabeth Hume Tobin, Morgan Leigh McDowall (1), Kirsten Patricia Hudson, Kate Janelle Enoka (1).

CHINA: Lin Peng, Ying Zhai (1), Xiaohan Mei (1), Dunhan Xiong (2), Xinyan Wang (3), Nong Sanfeng,

Sanfeng Nong, Jiawen Lu (1), Wang Huan (1), Panyi Zhang (3), Xiao Chen (3), Jing Zhang.

Report



China downed New Zealand. The first consolation semi-final, playing out positions 5 – 8, saw a convincing win of the Asian side. They were better concentrated and looked better drilled, and their impeccable discipline turned out to be the 8th player on the field of play.

Huan Wang of China scored first completing a fast break. Then Dunhand Xiong and twice Panyi Zhang made it a 1-4 game. Opponent's only goal came on minute 3 by Kate Enoka in the man-up. It was pretty a slow start for the "kiwis" provided they wanted to come away strong out of consolation finals.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Going 3 down, Angela Winstanley-Smith side was meant to change something in their playing model. She looked for the means to improve, standing between the two: either to let her ladies shoot at the second offensive line or play them inside. She chose option 1 to avoid counter attacks, and could have been right if the team was more experienced. Young New Zealand ladies were not, and Chinese kept on their regular scoring and boosted lead up to 2-8.

Chen Xiao was always on fire, and her shots saw the net three times, 4-11.

Relying on counter attacks, Dali Gong's and C managed to perfect the difference, which by the game's close reached an impressive 6-15.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Jessica Ann Milicich, team New Zealand #1:

I do not think, that pressure is the right word, when characterizing my today's game. I am a part of the team, and as a team, we tried to go ahead and take every opportunity we could. I think, we started a little bit slowly, as opponents took the initiative in their hands, then we tried to recover and did not have neither energy nor time for that. We have had a couple of difficult games this week.

Chen Xiao, team China #10, best player of the match, 3 goals:

I feel happy about the win, which we needed badly. It was not easy to play such a well-balanced team as New Zealand. I am proud I have received the individual prize. I think, I have played well, but this is all about the teamwork, and my teammates have helped me a lot to be so privileged as to receive the award. Yesterday, we were upset about the result of the match-up, but we knew that we did pretty competitively against a strong team of the USA better than any other squad so far here. This gave us additional motivation to work on, improve on ourselves and win. We showed our defensive skills well, which was a key for the victory.

Game 18. ?AN vs. RSA 21-2 (2-2, 6-0, 6-0, 7-0)

Results & Teams

Game 18. ?AN  vs. RSA  21-2 (2-2, 6-0, 6-0, 7-0)

Referees: Florestano (BRA), Naumov (RUS)

Extra Man: CAN 2/4, RSA 0/5

Best player of the match: Emma Louise Wright (CAN)

CANADA: Krystina Alogbo (1), Axelle Crevier (2), Emma Louise Wright (5), Monika Catharina Eggens (1),

Kelly Blair McKee (2), Elyse Lemay Lavoie (2), Hayley Ann McKelvey (2), Gurpreet Kaur Sohi (2), Kindred Ayre Paul (1), Shae Chantal Fournier (3), Clara Ana Maria Vulpisi.

SOUTH AFRICA: Daniela Maria Passoni, Bianca Ann Prinsloo (1), Kieren-Ashleigh Paley, Emma Nicola

McLeod (1), Hallendorff Amica, Christine Elizabeth Abrahamse, Hanna Gail Muller, Zandre Smit, Chloe Meecham, Kelsey White.

Report



Canada outpowered South Africa. They had definitely stretched their ambitions much further than a race against this young players' squad, and surely, not in the 5 - 8th placement semi-finals. Although being exhausted by the previous Day 4 quarter-final's encounter, Theoharis Pavlidis coached side seemed to recover both physically and mentally well enough. Having a slow start, they got speed in action to finish atop of the consolation trial.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Canada did not resemble themselves early in the beginning. They were relaxed, careless and out of spirit. They shot 9 times on goals, and just two saw "a hole in the net". South Africa did that twice too, as Nicola Emma Macleod and Bianca Ann Prinsloo took up the challenge, but as the game showed, they remained lonely in a rather short list of scorers for their nation.

Canada did not play hedging, choosing to press full-court and mark opponents. Luckily, second frame brought more fire within. They gradually improved, as they saw it worked out, and they kept on scoring shining various shot's types. The go-in lady came in the face of Kelly Blair McKee. Hitting twice, she started her team's revival, inviting 4 more teammates to seal their offensive chances, 8-2. South Africa, on their part, remained scoreless. They created chances, but were in too much a hurry to get set basement as for the final shot, 14-2. Emma Louise Wright of Canada turned out to be the most persistent, hitting 4 times in the second half to come along with the opener of the game for her best player award, 21-2.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Krystine Alogbo, team Canada #2, goals:

We were not so good at the start, we just found ourselves back and have improved in the second half. We brought more emotions into the game, and this was very important for us. It's hard not to be in the top 4, but this is all about ourselves and how we fought and played here at the tournament. Team South Africa offered us a few challenges in the first quarter when we went for tie game, 2-2. Every team has its weaknesses, and our biggest issue is ourselves most of the time. We shall keep on working hard to gout and win tomorrow.

Emma Loise Wright, team Canada #4, best player of the match, 5 goals:

It was a good game. We have managed to come back, and the game has retaken the tune. I mean, after loosing those two games in a row, we needed a comeback and had a good win. South Africa played well indeed, especially in the first quarter. they always fight really hard. We had a slow start at the beginning, and we were able to come together in course of the game's flow, and our big efforts made the breakthrough. We have scored a lot, which was really important and came in the right time for us.

Nicola Emma McLeod, team RSA #4, 1 goal:

It was a tough game. We would need to be improved. We thought, that Canada might have been a kind of down after those the big loss, and we were a sort of complacence. We let them change our basement, our game's plan. We are realizing we miss experience badly. We are a very young team. There are 8 freshmen in the roster, which have never played senior international events. It is a completely different ball game, when you play at home. here, when someone is pressing you, you feel it very strong.



Game 19. ESP  vs. USA  5-11 (0-3, 3-4, 1-2, 1-2)

Referees: Savinovich (CRO), Zwart (NED)

Extra Man: ESP 1/9, USA 7/11

Penalty: ESP 0/0, USA 2/2

Best player of the match: Ashleigh Johnson (USA)

SPAIN: Laura Ester Ramos, Marta Bach Pascual, Anna Espar Llaquet, Beatriz Ortiz Munoz, Matilde Ortiz

Reyes, Helena Lloret Gomez (1), Clara Espar Llaquet, Pilar Pena Carrasco (2), Anna Gual Rovirosa, Paula Crespi Barriga, Paula Leiton Arrones (2).

USA: Ashleigh Johnson, Stephanie Halabridis, Rachel Fattal, Paige Hauschild (3), Margaret Steffens (1), Jamie

Neushul (2), Kiley Neushul (1), Aria Fischer (1), Kaleigh Gilchrist (1), Makenzie Fischer (2), Alys Williams.

Report

The third straight World Cup mission goes on for the overall champion USA, and ends for the world #2 and European #3 Spain. It was decided and fixed on Saturday night, in an engaging battle of the semi-final, which saw a lot of fine goals, fine fights and impressive saves. In spite of “the US predetermined” character, European’s share in the game was high. They did feel pressure, but did not look stumbled. They did play “hedging”, but the one of their opponent’s was more solidly done.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Following their task to keep up their flag high, the USA played with determination and strength, something that has booked them a 3-0 lead after the first quarter. Although Spanish managed to show itself for a few moments

in the second, they couldn't deal with the steadily growing advance of that "mighty machine". Miguel Angel Oca's side created chances (and extra chances), worked hard and stayed concentrated, but fruits did not come away. Americans were too clever and fast moving, and tolled the alarm bell for the Spanish, that they might need something changed in their game's plan. Anna Espar's gun was shut and silent, and "the Black Panther" Ashleigh Johnson seemed doing pretty well. It was but 3 times to upset her, which came as a man-up counter attack goal by Pilan Pena, and two as smart combinations finished by center Paula Leiton. She was in fact super-committed. Once receiving a ball in the 2m area, she faced 4 guards at once and stood them right to see a state of the art shot for center, immediately drawn applause of the crowd, 4-7.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

After the large break, Adam Krikorian and C slowly increased the margin.

Aria Fischer showcased her version of the "fast mode center shot." Kiley Neushul converted her penalty offer. Helena Gomez succeeded with her hardly worked out "cross", which came after a combat, in the further goal's bay, which did not break any flow of the game, 4-9 at one quarter left in the semi-final.

In the fourth, Spain was standing still, trying to resist the pressure of the US power ladies, intensified their movements, but were still too far to succeed. American's outstanding defense became the key factor for their victory, which they sealed at 5-11 .

Quotes

Ashleigh Johnson, team USA #1:

Spain is a very challenging opponent, they are very smart women, and it is always a challenge when we

have to play them. I am very happy about the win today. We were not at all perfect though, as we have made a number of mistakes in the last period. You can see them all now as they have got reflected on the scoreboard. I am happy about the award I have received after the match. I just wanted to try be helpful for my team as much as I could.

Helena Lloret Gomez, team Spain #6, 1 goal:

The beginning of the match was really hard. I think, we have been very close to our goal and kept on to our system, and then we let them many chances. I mean we let our opponents think too much time before the passes, and shots on goals, and everything else. It cost us almost 6 goals. We are sad about the defeat we have suffered, but tomorrow there will be a new day and a new game. We will be concentrated on the 3rd place final. We want to win very much. The MVP of the USA showed today a great job, she was maybe the key player of this game for her team. She really deserved the prize and was very difficult to make concede.

Game 20. AUS vs. RUS 3-5 (2-1, 0-2, 0-1, 1-1) 

Results & Teams 

Game 20. AUS  vs. RUS  3-5 (2-1, 0-2, 0-1, 1-1)

Referees: Severo (ITA), Willis (RSA)

Extra Man: AUS 0/3 RUS 2/8

Penalty: AUS 0/1 RUS 0/1

Best player of the match: Anna Karnaukh (RUS)

AUSTRALIA: Lilian Hedges, Keesja Gofers, Hannah Buckling (1), Bronte Halligan, Isobel Bishop, Bronnen Knox, Rowie Webster (2), Amy Ridge, Zoe Arancini, Morgan Baxter, Gabriella Palm.

RUSSIA: Maria Bersneva, Ekaterina Prokofyeva (1), Elvina Karimova (1), Olga Gorbunova (1), Alena Serzhantova, Anastasia Simanovich, Evgeniya Soboleva (1), Evgeniia Ivanova (1), Daria Ryzhkova, Anna Karnaukh.

Report



Host Russia defeated Australia in the second semi-final of the FINA Women's Water Polo World Cup in Surgut, and will play in the title match against America. This big achievement came after 21 years of draught for the locals, as the nation won bronze in 2006. Alexander Gaidukov and Andrey Belofastov's coached side can make history now, breaking down a "bronze curse" of the recent years.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Russia started in its semi-final game, which turned out to be low scoring. Scenario was very different from Competition Day 2, where they confirmed supremacy by an impressive gap, 14-8. Like 3 days before, it was the “Aussie stingers” to kick off scoring, but the Red Machine had no doubts as to regrip control. All in all, it was about much swimming, and much pressure, and there were a lot of unprepared shots and spared extra-man chances in the game. Australia killed 0/3 and Russia 2/5 moments.

Hannah Buckling was the first-scorer of the evening once completing her counter attacking task, at 4.21 left in the frame. Evgeniya Ivanova got it right to respond, launching a tomahawk at 8 meters. Rowena Webster hit a textbook goal for 2-1 to leave Russians upset, going for a small break. And so they got, they missed fire badly to revive the hazard.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

It all changed in the second quarter as Evgeniya Soboleva, which had been kept out of the international practice for long, levelled the score. She converted a man-up story, followed by Elvina Karimova, both improving the game's flow, 2-3. It was even perfected by Olga Gorbunova to 2-4, at one period left in the semi-final. In the frouth, two captains exchanged "doughouts" , but to no great effect for the either side, 3-5 for Russia. Most impressive and effective were the both goalkeepers, which saved a lot, and were deservingly praised.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Quotes

Anna Karnaukh, team Russia #1, best player of the match:

It was a difficult and very important semi-final game against Australia, but the decisive encounter lies ahead of us. We love the way public has been supporting our team, and believe, that their ardent shouting is like the 8th player on the court. They are a drive which makes us run forward all the time. We are happy that all our games are sold out, and the admission is free, this is really for the benefit of water polo and aquatics sport in this new location. Women's water polo is such an unpredictable game, really, so we tried to stay in the match up to the last seconds, otherwise our mighty opponent would definitely have punished us for it.

Ekaterina Prokofyeva, team Russia #3, captain, 1 goal:

We have qualified to the FINA Women's Water Polo World Cup final, for the first time within 21 years. It was a long pause, and we definitely feel proud to achieve this result. We understand, the thing is not done yet, and we may give a fight for the Trophy itself. Be sure, we shall be fighting hard and give our all to the game, but fans should also realize, that this won't be easy. American ladies have been on top for long, and are unlikely to hand us the Cup that easy.

Athanasios Kechagias, team Australia head coach:

First of all, congratulations to the team Russia, they have deserved the win! Both teams could have won today, but like in the group stage the hosts proved to be stronger. We would be more competitive provided a number of changes were introduced in our game. There were a few moments in the game, where we could not follow our game's plan, and this is why we have lost.

Olga Kamardina, FINA correspondent in Russia

The finals are set! With 20 matches behind us and over 200 goals scored this week it was the only appropriate climax. United States brushed Spain in front of the electric crowd to book their gold performance against Russia, which in its turn drained much energy defeating Australia. If the US final's presence never looked in doubt, - defending champions wherever they go have been possessing FINA World Cup for the two terms, the locals can be congratulated on the breakthrough as never before they brought home the win. For the first time in recent 21 years Russians will come out to play in the gold game, last seen in Nancy, France, lost to Netherlands.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

The bronze will be a good clash between world's #2, European #3 Spain and Australia, coming as a replay of the group A game in Surgut. Sharing points 3 days ago, they could have guessed the outcome, and evidently saved up their best for the last. Previous edition of the FINA Women's Water Polo World Cup saw Red Fury and "5th continent" landing podium - on bronze and silver at once, which is hardly possible now, as there is just one medal left on offer for them in Surgut.

Placement matches will not be an easy road though. Teams, which have just lost, are sad, and angry, and thirsty for wins. At least for a one, to seal the World Cup on a high, and come back home hot ready to work. New Zealand will meet South Africa for the 7th, and China is going to give a fight for the Maple Leaves. All 1500 tickets for the finals are sold out as they were for free, and are in the red as demand many times exceeds offer. There is a few hours left for the final kicks-off, which are doomed to open up the new era of FINA Women's Water Polo World Cup history.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

FINA Women's Water Polo World Cup 2018

Competition results

Day 5, 8 September, 2018 / Semi-finals

Match #17. 15:00 L13–L16 NZL  vs. CHN  6-15 (1-4, 1-4, 2-3, 2-4)

Match #18. 16:30 L14–L15 CAN  vs. RSA  21-2 (2-2, 6-0, 6-0, 7-0)

Match #19. 18:00 W13–W16 ESP  vs. USA  5-11 (0-3, 3-4, 1-2, 1-2)

Match #20. 19:30 W14–W15 AUS  vs. RUS  3-5 (2-1, 0-2, 0-1, 1-1)

Best scorers after 5 days: 1. Anna Espar Llaquet (ESP) - 15, 2. Paige Hauschild (USA) - 15, 3. Maria Bersneva (RUS) -

14, 4. Olga Gorbunova (RUS) - 14, 5. Ekaterina Prokofyeva (RUS) - 13, 6. Emma Louis Wright (CAN) - 12, 7. Rowie Webster (AUS) - 11, 8. Killee Neushul (USA) - 11, 9. Beatriz Ortiz Munos (ESP) - 10.



Photo: Credit to UgraMegaSport

Competition schedule

Day 6, 9 September, 2018 / Finals

Match #21. 15:00 L17–L18 NZL  vs.RSA 

Match #22. 16:30 W17–W18 CHN  vs.CAN 

Match #23. 18:00 L19–L20 ESP  vs.AUS 

Match #24. 19:30 W19–W20 USA  vs.RUS 
