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## Hangzhou, Day 4: Titmus (AUS) excels and Russia collects gold

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After winning the women's 400m free in a new WR time, 18-year-old Ariarne Titmus (AUS) definitively became one of the revelations of the 14<sup>th</sup> FINA World Swimming Championships (25m), being held in Hangzhou (CHN). In the fourth day of competition, the young Australian was the sole individual swimmer establishing a new global mark, but two more WR were set in relay events (by USA and Brazil). Other highlights included the third gold for Hosszu, the second individual win for Kromowidjojo, and the brilliant Russian performances by Kolesnikov, Morozov and Rylov. Finally, thanks to Shane Ryan (men's 50m back, bronze), Ireland managed to have its first swimming medallist in the 25-year history of this competition.



Ranomi Kromowidjojo (NED) - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

In the first individual final of the day, Ranomi Kromowidjojo (NED) proved her excellent shape in Hangzhou, clearly dominating operations in the women's 50m butterfly. The Dutch star touched home in 24.47, a new Championships Record (improving the mark of Sarah Sjöström, 24.58, from Doha 2014). The minor medals went to Holly Barratt (AUS, 24.80, silver) and to Kelsi Dahlia (USA, 24.97, bronze). It was the second win for Kromowidjojo in China, after being also the fastest in the 100m free.

Another best mark of the event was improved in the men's 100m individual medley, a thrilling duel between Kliment Kolesnikov (RUS) and Marco Orsi (ITA). In the end, the Russian was faster, touching the wall in 50.63 (0.03 better than the time of Markus Deibler, GER, in Doha 2014). It was also a new Junior WR for Kolesnikov (third in the 100m back), the star of the recent Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires (ARG), who improved his own best performance of 50.90. Orsi had to content with silver in 51.03, while Japan's Hiromasa Fujimori earned bronze in 51.53. Michael Andrew (USA), winner in 2016, was only fourth this time, clocking 51.58.



The men

Hosszu earned her third gold (after the 200m fly and 400m IM) in Hangzhou, by convincingly winning the women's 100m IM in 57.26, thus getting her fourth consecutive crown in this event. Her main challengers were far behind, with Runa Imai, from Japan, getting silver in 57.85 and Alia Atkinson (JAM) finishing third (the same result than in 2016) in 58.11. The two US representatives in the final, Melanie Margalis and Kathleen Baker could not reach the podium, touching in fourth and fifth respectively. Emily Seebohm (AUS), third in 2014 and second in 2016, also finished in a disappointing sixth place.

In the most interesting race of the day, the women's 400m free, Australia's Ariarne Titmus (already winner of the 200m free) was brilliant and did the perfect race against the recent World Record holder (3:53.97, since last October) in the distance, China's Wang Jianjiahe. Taking an early lead in the race, Titmus (18 years old) never lost control of operations, touching home in a new global mark of 3:53.92. Wang, winner of the 800m free in Hangzhou and strongly "pushed" by the home crowd, could never seriously threaten the Australian prodigy, earning silver in 3:54.56. Her teammate Li Bingjie completed the podium in 3:57.99. Leah Smith, winner in 2016, had to content this time with the fourth position, in 3:58.58. It was the first female individual WR at these Championships, after successful efforts from Daiya Seto and Kirill Prigoda in the men's field. Before Hangzhou, Titmus had been third in 4x200m free relay at the Budapest 2017 FINA World Championships and fourth in the 400m free of the same competition. At the 2016 edition of the FINA World Swimming Championships (25m) she swam three finals: 400m free (sixth), 800m free (fourth) and 4x200m free relay (fourth).



Vladimir Morozov (RUS) - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

In the fastest event of the programme, the men's 50m free, Vladimir Morozov (RUS) earned his first individual gold in the competition, touching home in 20.33, very close to the WR (20.26) of Florent Manaudou (FRA), dating back to 2014. It was the third medal for the Russian star in this event, after being champion in 2012 and second in 2016. The fastest (20.51) of the semis, US Caeleb Dressel, could not improve his performance and earned silver in 20.54. Disqualified after arriving

third, the fate of Ben Proud (GBR) served the interest of Bradley Tandy, from South Africa, bronze medallist in 20.94. Cesar Cielo (BRA), champion in 2010 and third in 2014, was this time seventh in 21.20, a couple of weeks before completing his 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday.

Shortly after, Evgeny Rylov (2017 50m world champion in the 200m back) gave another gold medal for Russia, imposing his supremacy in the men's 50m back, where he had already been the fastest of the semis. The European star touched in 22.58, slightly better than Ryan Murphy (USA, 22.63) and Shane Ryan (IRL, 22.76). It was the first medal-ever for Ireland in the history these Championships! In fourth (22.77), Kolesnikov set a new Junior World Record.

In relay action, USA did it again, with both gold and a new World Record, this time in the men's 4x50m free, clocking 1:21.80. The team composed by Caeleb Dressel (very fast start, in 20.43), Ryan Held, Jack Conger and Michael Chadwick improved the best global mark of 1:22.60, established by Russia in Doha 2014. The European quartet (led by Vladimir Morozov, 20.39) earned silver, still under the former WR, in 1:22.22. The bronze went to Italy, 1:22.90.

Finally, in the men's 4x200m free, the stands almost came down with the participation of local hero Sun Yang in the Chinese team. The support wasn't however enough to win the race, with the locals finishing in third. The gold went to Brazil in a new World Record of 6:46.81, much faster than the previous global mark of 6:49.04 set by Russia in Dubai 2010. The South American heroes were Luiz Melo, Fernando Scheffer, Nicholas Santos and Breno Correia. The minor medals were also won with a time under the former WR – Russia got silver in 6:46.84, while China earned bronze in 6:47.53. The US team – winners in 2000, 2004, 2012 and 2014 – was fourth in 6:49.84.



The team from Brazil - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

## QUOTES

### **Ariarne Titmus (AUS) – Gold, women's 400m free**

"I am a little bit in shock. I knew the Chinese girl would go out fast and I was worried she would have a little left in the tank at the end, but I held her off. I put in a lot of hard work since our trials five weeks ago and the turnaround I have had in that

time is unbelievable. I dropped six seconds off my 400 and that shows what training hard can do. I can't believe it, and for it to be a short course world record is something. I am someone who does not pride themselves on speed, but I will take it".



Ariarne Titmus (AUS) - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

#### **Vladimir Morozov (RUS) – Gold, men's 50m free**

"I understood in the relay that I have finally 'warmed up' in my swimming. I took this result and went to the final [tonight] with more confidence. I watched Dressel; he usually leads by half a body at the start, but here he even seemed to be behind. I understood then that everything would turn out well".

"I swam the 100m individual medley a lot at the World Cups. Here I decided to swim fewer individual races. I could have swam the 50m butterfly here as well, but I've done enough for myself at the World Cups and here I am working for the team in the relays".



Katinka Hosszu (HUN) - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

**Katinka Hosszu (HUN) – Gold, women’s 100m IM**

"I do feel a bit sore, and I am glad I did not swim the 50m backstroke in the morning. I felt a lot readier this afternoon after having a slept in this morning. For me, (medley) it is a fun event. It is all the four strokes together and a sprint, so for me it is just a lot of fun".

**Kliment Kolesnikov (RUS) – Gold, men’s 100m IM**

"It's another step on the path forward. The 100m individual medley is a peculiar distance, it's not at the Olympics, so I don't put my focus on it. But I'm happy that I got first place in it at the world championships. It is our gold".

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