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## PR 4 - WPWL 2019: Hungary and Italy lead after thrilling victories

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The Game Day 4 of the European preliminaries of the 2019 FINA Men's Water Polo World League took place on January 29 in several cities and comprised six matches, with the home teams only winning two games.

In Group A, the Russian squad successfully received Malta and comfortably won by 23-4, the third win of the season. The Russians were always in control of the match (6-1, 5-2, 6-0, 6-1) and had in Ivan Nagaev their most prolific scorer, with seven goals.

In Dresden, Germany and Hungary played a thrilling match that had to be solved in the penalty shootout. After a 12-12 in the regular time (1-2, 5-5, 4-4, 2-1), all remained balanced in the penalties' session until Ben Reibel (GER) missed his shot, for a final result of 17-16 in favour of the Magyar side. Hungary leads the Group, with four victories in four matches played.

In the two games from Group B, Greece received Spain in Piraeus, but could not avoid being defeated by 4-7. The Hellenic squad started better (2-1 in the first period), but could not sustain the Iberians' strength in the remaining quarters (0-2, 1-2, 1-2). The Spanish team had in Alvaro Granados its best scorer, with five goals. The two teams now share the lead of the Group, with three triumphs and one defeat each.

Also unsuccessful at home, Ukraine was clearly beaten (5-15) by the Netherlands. The locals only managed to play a balanced third period (1-1), losing all the other quarters (1-3, 1-5, and 2-6 in the last partial). Robin Lindhout was the best Dutch scorer, with five shots reaching the net.

In Group C, Italy had to sweat in the match against Montenegro, played in Palermo. With 1m29s to go, the match was tied at 10-10, but a successful shot by Francesco Di Fulvio (who scored five goals in total) allowed the Italian team to get its second win of the season. The results of the quarters were: 4-2, 0-3, 3-2, 4-3.

Finally, in Bucharest, Romania and Croatia played the only match of Group D, with the visitors also being stronger. In the end, Croatia won by 11-7 (2-2, 2-0, 3-3, 4-2), with Loren Fatovic scoring four goals.

**Rankings after Day 4:**

**GROUP A:** 1. Hungary, 11 pts (4 wins); 2. Russia, 9 pts (3W/1 loss); 3. Germany, 4 pts (1W/3L); 4. Malta, 0 pts (4L)

**GROUP B:** 1. Spain, 9 pts (3W/1L); 2. Greece, 9 pts (3W/1L); 3. Netherlands, 6 pts (2W/2L); 4. Ukraine, 0 pts (4L)

**GROUP C:** 1. Italy, 7 pts (2W/1L); 2. Montenegro, 5 pts (2W/1L); 3. France, 0 pts (2L)

**GROUP D:** 1. Serbia, 6 pts (2W); 2. Croatia, 6 pts (2W/1L); 3. Romania, 0 pts (3L)

The Day 5 of the European preliminaries will take place on February 19, 2019 with the following matches: Hungary-Russia, Malta-Germany; Spain-Ukraine, Netherlands-Greece; France-Italy; Serbia-Romania.

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