FINA WPWL Super Final (women), Budapest, Day 5: USA and Italy will clash for highest honours. 5 years after.

HUNGARY 15 CHINA 14

Results & Teams

Day 5 8 June, 2019

Match#17 HUN 🇭🇺 vs. CHN 🇨🇳 15-14 (3-1, 5-3, 4-5, 3-5)

Referees: Ms. Dreval, Ms. Dimas-Dutilh
Goal/shot: HUN 15/25 CHN 14/42

Action goal/action shots: HUN 5/8 CHN 3/20

Extra Man: HUN 5/10 CHN 9/17

Penalty: HUN 2/2 CHN 1/2


CHINA: Peng Lin – Wang Xinyuan (2), Wang Huan (2), Xiong Dunhan (1), Nin Guannan (1), Guo Ning, Lu
Hungary needed to stay focused

In front of the enthusiastic crowd at Duna Arena host Hungary demolished industrious China to advance to the consolation final for the 5th place.

It all did not start very well for the Asian team, as their first attack was saved as well as their second one, seeing Hungarian side in a fast breakthrough. A very nice goal after a good steal were neatly accomplished by Anna Illes teaming Dorottya Szilagyi, eventual MVP of the evening for Magyars. Vanda Valyi in a moment doubled the margin to make it a 2-0 game. The first goal by China came through a penalty shot, converted by Danyi Zhang as in the next attack, Rita Keszthelyi dished to Rebecca Parks in the man-up settling the score for the first term, 3-1.

Early in the second period, the very Rita Keszthelyi repeated her center assist for Anyko Gyongyossy, 4-1, launching a shooting carousel of the close-range shots. Opponents traded points, but could not set up either a long distance hit or a positional play’s goal. Zone defence worked well for the both sides, and the only “souvenir” was saved for the last. Rita Keszthelyi launched it at approximately 5 meters, which came unexpectedly for the Chinese, and boosted her team’s lead to 4, 8-4.

Dorottya Szilagyi netted her fourth and Wan Xinyuan her second to mark the first minutes of the second half, 10-5. It accidentally seemed as if the Hungarian girls were never in danger. Chinese cut it to 3, 12-9 later in the third, and stood at a hand to tie, 13-12, at 3 minutes to go.

Amazing denouement highlighted the last seconds of this consolation semi-final. Lu Yiwen left the battle-field, drawing the third exclusion, which brought grist to the mill of the hosts. Rita Keszthelyi did not miss it, converting a penalty in a minute, immediately responded by extra-man pair of Wang Hao and Zhao Zihan, 15-14.
Disappointed China landing on 42 shots and missing just 1 goal is knocked down to the clash on 7th, as Attila Biro’s girls, boasting a good 25 number on the scoring chances, will look all encouraged to try their luck check-in the fifth.

Quotes

**Gong Dali, head coach of the team China:**

Today we played a very tough game against the Hungarian team. And we are extremely satisfied with the way how we did at the end of the match, even though we missed some of our good opportunities. In the last quarter, we were less nervous, than during the whole game, and also changed out tactics, thus we could come up to the Hungarians at a one goal distance. It was a pity, we did not have much time to make it a tied game. Hungary has a lot of strong players in their roster, which proved their good skills in decisive moments.

Tomorrow is the last competition day of the World League Super Final-2019. We will play Canada, and we know, that the match for the 7th place will not be an easy stroll.

**Dorottya Szilagyi, forward of the team Hungary, 5 goals, MVP of the Match:**

We played a very difficult game against China. We could not show our best, especially on the defensive side. The 5-goal lead went down to nothing. I never watch the scoreboard playing, but we could feel we are wasting the difference, and we needed to be more concentrated. Chinese never gave up, unfortunately for us, and proceeded fighting till the final buzzer. We are happy that we have secured the win, and that we will advance to the final for the 5th place.

**Attila Bíró, head coach of the team Hungary:**

We have been dominating for three and a half quarters of the game, and let China almost catch us by the close. We should have played much better defensively, this is the thing we are going to work on getting
ready for the next major competitions of the year. We are happy about the win in the consolation semi-final, not about the resulting score, because the advantage turned out to be very tiny.

AUSTRALIA 15 CANADA 9

Results & Teams

Day 5  8 June, 2019

Match#18  AUS vs. CAN 15-9 (2-3, 4-0, 3-2, 6-4)

Referees: Mr.Willis, Mr.Severo

Goal/shot: AUS 15/28  CAN 9/31

Action goal/action shots: AUS 5/17 CAN 5/23
Extra Man: AUS 7/8 CAN 2/4

Penalty: AUS 1/1 CAN 0/0

AUSTRALIA: Hedges Lilian – Gofers Keesja (2), Buckling Hannah, Armit Elle (1), Knox Bronwen (1), Webster Rowie (6), Ridge Amy, Arancini Zoe (4), Mihailovic Lena, Baxter Morgan, Kearns Matilda (1), Longman Geneieve.

CANADA: Vulpisi Clara – Krystine Alogbo (1), Axelle Crevier, Wright Emma Louise (1), Eggens Monika, McKee Kelly Blair (1), Bekhazi Joelle (3), Lemay-Lavoie Elyse (2), McKelvey Hayley Ann, Christmas Kyra (1), Paul Kindred Ayre, Chantal Fournier Shae, Wright Claire.

Australia brushes Canada to play for the fifth
Rowena Webster devastating kills were one of the means to push Canada out of the consolation 5th place final. In a re-play of the quarter-final match of the 2018 World Cup Final in Surgut, Australia found the right strategy to confirm their strength. For the first time at the Super Final in Budapest at one day left in the competition, they could see themselves 5 goals up, as their opponents tried hard and could not come back.

Canada opened the score first through an action goal by Kyra Christmas and looked determined to go raising. However “stingers” proved they were not easy beats at all. Captain had her word first, converting a man-up, as Keesja Gofers deceived Cara Vulpisi, performing a beautiful cross. Joelle Behkazi was hot ready blistering for 2-1, responded by Elise Lavoie Lemay, which sent home a power “doughnut” in the center, very unexpected for Australian Lilian Hedges, 2-3.

The trail turned into a lead in the second quarter. Zoe Arancini dished to Bronnen Knox and Hannah Buckling assisted for Rowena Webster. The cap collected her third point on the shooting part of the protocol sheet, leaving no chance to resist her power 5m penalty shooting. Keesja Gofers locked down the home-set case for the extra-man to go 3 up at 6-3.

There was a lot of fighting in the next two periods. Both teams showed excellent defensive work with their goalkeepers suffering multiple loads. Rowena Webster nailed her 4th and Elle Armit hit her opener expanding the lead of their team to 5, 8-3.

As the game went on, Canada needed to score, but could only trade points to see their opponents on guard. Captain Krystina Alogbo rolled back one the center, followed by Matilda Kearns and Joelle Behkazi exchanging in the crease one-on-ones, 9-5.

A couple of cross court attacks were launched by Canadian rockets: Elyse Lemay-Lavoie, Emma Wright and Joelle Behkazi, and there was again 3 goals separating the teams. Predrag Mihailovic side were not at all nervous. Keeping their head cool was a good argument for their eventual win. Zoe Arancini engineered a hat-trick as Rowena Webster registered her 6th goal to end the consolation semi-final at 15-9.
Due to the loss to Australia, Canada goes down to accompany China on the clash for the 7th, as their lucky opponents will conclude their Hungarian campaign against Hungary partaking in the consolation 5th place final.

Quotes

Rowena Webster, captain of the team Australia, 6 goals, MVP of the Match:

It's always a great feeling to be a winner of the match. Canada is a good team, but I think today we had a better teamwork. It's especially good, because we were very disappointed yesterday about the sensitive loss to Russia. We have one game left in the competition in Budapest, and it won't be easy to play against Hungary at their home.

At the beginning of this tournament we hoped for a better result, although we have a new head coach this year, we have to get used to the new system he is keeping to. Our main goal is to earn the best place we can at the coming FINA World championships in Korea, of course, with an eye on 2020 Olympics. We see this tournament as the first step in the long process of qualification for Tokyo.

Krystina Alogbo, captain of the team Canada, 1 goal:
After a very good start there came the second period with no goal scored.

The defense was not bad in the first, but in the second we draw faults and “collected” exclusions, assisting Australians to come back in the game and improve on the score. I am very disappointed about the result of the consolation “semi-final”. The girls played well, they deserved a better result. We shall try to improve and be more competitive in the last game of the competition against China, which will not be easy at all.

**Predrag Mihailovic, head coach of the team Australia:**

We controlled 80-90% of the game which was good. It is also positive that my team made better decisions in the critical moments today compared to the previous matches. Before it was our weaker part but today we demonstrated that we could take better solutions. Generally, our attack improved but we have to analyse the mistakes we had on the defensive side, and we need to ameliorate that.

I am satisfied with today’s performance. Mentally we were also strong.

**NETHERLANDS 6 USA 8**

**Referees:** Mr.Ohme, Ms.Deslieres
Goal/shot: NED 6/26 USA 8/27

Action goal/action shots: NED 1/16 USA 5/22

Extra Man: NED 2/6 USA 1/2

Penalty: NED 2/2 USA 1/1

NETHERLANDS: Aarts Laura - Megens Maud (2), Genee Dagmar (1), Van der Sloot Sabrina (1), Wolves Iris, Stomphorst Nomi, Rogge Bente, Sevenich Vivian, Keuning Maartje (1), Koolhaas Ilse, Van der Kraats Simone (1), Sleeking Brigitte, Koenders Joanne.

USA: Longan Amanda– Musselman Madeline (2), Seidemann Melissa, Fattal Rachel, Hauschild Paige, Steffens
The USA replayed in the semi-final of 2019 the previous year’s gold-match against the Netherlands

In a re-play of the 2018 World League Super Final story of Kunshan, Adam Krikorian coached side did the expected. Like one year ago, on the same score, world No. 1 defeated headstrong Netherlands, which were unlucky enough to meet them in Budapest at this early stage of the competition. USA dictated the tempo, dominated the ball and at times were booking the game’s flow. However, their win was not overwhelming. They needed be a hard slog to come away victorious in this uneasy battle.

The Netherlands scored first as Maud Megens converted her first penalty. However, it turned out to be the solo hit in the opening quarter. The USA were all confidence and power. Standing clear a man-down, Kiley Neushul swam counter-attack to make a dummy of Laura Aarts at the other end. In a minute, Alyse Williams netted the same hole and Rachel Fattal dished to Makenzie Fischer to make it a 3-1 game.

In the second, the Dutch revived to stay alive and competitive. They swam fast and created obstacles in the mid-zone to go through. Genee Dagmar set her team on the scoreboard after one minute and got responded by a pair as Margaret Steffens cashed powerplay and Kiley Neushul collected her second through a 5m penalty shot, 5-2. Simone van der Kraats and Maddie Musselman exchanged compliments to register the halfway record at 6-3 for the USA.
After the break, the close character of the game remained unchanged. The USA could not jump out for a quick lead and was all the way pushed by their brave opponents. Sabrina van der Sloot in extra and Maartjie Keuning at the center position netted one apiece to get a response ready for Maddie Musselman, which sunk home a power rocket. At two minutes left in the fourth, the “orange swimsuits” came up closely to a tiny 1 goal distance as Maud Megens converted her another penalty, 6-7. It was a good time for Margaret Steffens to interfere and convert the very next attack for 8-6, which emerged as a final score.

Thanks to the hard-worked victory over the Netherlands, the USA tomorrow will play Italy for the main trophy of the Super Final-2019 in Budapest, which goes along with the Olympic trip-2020. The Dutch, on their part, are to revive to come out against Russia, which lost to Italy their semi-final story in the shoot-off stressful mode.

Quotes

Ashleigh Johnson, goalkeeper of the team USA, MVP of the Match:

It feels great to be named as the MVP of the semi-final, but basically it is just the reflection of the work of the whole team. Our defense is really hard to beat, so I’m very proud of the girls. I don’t know how it seemed from outside of the swimming-pool, but inside, we felt like we were fighting a real battle. It was a good preparation for the gold medals final, and hopefully tomorrow we can show even a better game.

Genee Dagmar, captain of the team Netherlands, 1 goal:

I think we did a very good job. It is always very difficult to beat USA. However, we were close to them, and it is a big point for us. Of course, we wanted to win and we are unhappy about the result, but the most important thing for us is to recover and get prepared to the bronze match.

Today we stayed in the game till the very last moments. My team did a great job and I am proud of them a lot.
Adam Krikorian, head coach of the team USA:

That was a tough win for us but it was exactly what we could expect from the Netherlands. They have a very good team. We knew that they would never give up. That is what happened today. I was not too happy with the way we played in the third quarter. We did not handle certain situations very well in the fourth as well. Now we have a lot of food for analyses, which is very exciting for the coaching side.

RUSSIA 12 ITALY 13

Results & Teams

Day 5 8 June, 2019

Match #16. RUS vs. ITA 12-13 (2-6, 2-1, 1-1, 4-1, shoot-out 3-4)

Referees: Mr.Moller, Ms.Varkovnyi

Goal/shot: RUS 12/31 ITA 13/36
Action goal/action shots: RUS 4/16 ITA 4/21

Extra Man: RUS 5/10 ITA 5/7

Penalty: RUS 3/4 ITA 4/6

RUSSIA: Verkhogliadova Anastasiia - Bersneva Maria, Prokofieva Ekaterina (2), Karimova Elvina (2), Tolkunova Tatiana, Gorbunova Olga (1), Serzhantova Alena (1), Simanovich Anastasiia (5), Timofeeva Anna, Soboleva Evgeniiia, Ivanova Evgeniiia, Gerzanich Daria (1), Karnaukh Anna.

“SetteRossa” overtakes “Red machine”

It was a thrilling finish to the semi-final’s night of 2019 FINA Water Polo Women's World League at the Duna Arena. Both teams were fast, and active, and had something in common from the tactical view. 4 quarters of the regular time were not enough for them to decide the winner, and a shoot-out, staged in Budapest for the second time, gave win to Italy on a tiny one goal.

Elisa Queirolo kicked off scoring on extra, before Italians ran 6-2, hitting their birds through mid-distance shots. Elisa Queirolo netted her second in the man-up, swinging as power center Daria Gerzanich and light driver Elvina Karimova returned their team back on the scoreboard in a span on 1 minute. The second term was full of incredible rallies and defenses, which slightly reduced the gap to 3, 4-7.

Even though Russia got more into the contest after the large break, resulting in a tense third period with a nice extra-man center post from Ekaterina Prokofieva, it didn’t mean that a comeback was very possible. Italian zone defence was not that easily broken as they did not put their foot off the gas. Following exclusion of the Russian captain, Silvia Avegno locked down the long diagonal pass by Giulia Emmolo, 5-8.

Things got more agitated as Russian zone switched off to the personal marking and Anastasiia SImanovich was back on fire in the fourth. The gap cut back to one, 7-8. Fabio Conti’s side spared action and standard chances as well. At over 3 minutes left Ariana Garibotti failed to convert 5m penalty throw. Two extra-man killed by Elvina Karimova and Anastasiia SImanovich to move their team one up, 9-8, for the first time during the game. At 1.22 on the clock, Italian’s best gun played back for her mistake and levelled the chances, booking a shoot-out with the pass to the gold match at stake.

The lottery saw luck on the side of the “SetteRossa” as Isabella Chiappini, Silvia Avegno, Roberta Bianconi and Elisa Queirolo were a hit, and only 3 on the side of their opponents – Anastasiia Simanovich, Alena Serzhantova and Ekaterina Prokofieva did not miss.
Fabio Conti & team will be back in the pool on Sunday evening to face a good challenge of the defending champion, the USA, whereas Russia comes down to the 3rd place match-up to meet increasingly strong and hungry for wins, the Netherlands.

Quotes

Fabio Conti, head coach of the team Italy:

We had a very strong start with lots of goals, however we couldn’t keep up this intensity. Not just because we are getting tired (footnote: we had 5 matches in 5 days), but also because Russia changed tactics, and hence added to the pressure. This is waterpolo, everything can change so quickly, however I like these kind of matches. After the game I told the girls how proud I am, because this win was absolutely neither about the physical strength nor about tactics, but about the mentality they have. Tomorrow we are facing the best team in the world in the gold medals final. The task ahead of us is ambitious and challenging, and very difficult to realize.

Andrey Belofastov, assistant coach of the team Russia:

The semifinal against Italy could not be easy. We expected this match to be very hard indeed. The first
quarter was 6-2 for Italy, after that, we played quite well, at the end we also had a slight chance to win. When it comes to penalties, it's always a double-edged sword: you can win, but you can also lose at the same time.

Silvia Avegno, forward of the team Italy, 3 goals:

We are happy about the win. It was a hard match, but we knew the strong points of the Russians. We really worked hard and deserved the ticket to the gold match. It is difficult to stay concentrated during the whole 4 periods of the match-up, especially at the end of such an exhausting tournaments like Super Final of the World League, where we play every day.

Olga Kamardina, FINA Correspondent in Budapest

Budapest 2019 race has reached its peak, as 8 teams have been reduced to two, who will fight for the Super Final’s Trophy.

This year’s prize is complimented by the first Tokyo 2020 Olympic ticket, and there is a new name on the contender’s name. In the main clash of the women's World League season, the USA will be challenged by Italy, reaching such a high stage of the competition for the first time during 5 recent years. In 2014, Fabio Conti’s side landed on silver, loosing to the same very mighty Adam Krikorian coached side.

The runners-up ways to the gold match have not been easy as the dominant forces met a good opposition on their semi-final clash against the 2018 World League silver medalists Netherlands. Italy was up to pass through an exhausting battle by Russia and a shoot-out, narrowly ended in their favor. The unlucky semi-finalists, the Dutch and Russians, shall play out the bronze medals. The consolation finals will see China vs. Australia for in the clash for the 7th and host Hungary vs. Canada for the 5th.

Semi-finals / Day 5 / 8 June, 2019

Match #17. 15:00 L13 – L16 HUN – CHN 15-14 (3-1, 5-3, 4-5, 3-5)
Match #18. 16:45 L14 – L15 AUS – CAN 15-9 (2-3, 4-0, 3-2, 6-4)
Match #19. 18:30 W13 – W16 NED – USA 6-8 (1-3, 2-3, 2-1, 1-1)
Match #20. 20:15 W14 – W15 RUS – ITA 12-13 (2-6, 2-1, 1-1, 4-1, shoot-out 3-4)
Finals schedule / Day 6 / 9 June, 2019

Match #21. 15:00 L17 – L18 (7 – 8 places) CHN 🇨🇳 – CAN 🇨🇦
Match #22. 16:45 W17 – W18 (5 – 6 places) HUN 🇭🇺 – AUS 🇦🇺
Match #23. 18:30 L19 – L20 (3 – 4 places) NED 🇳🇱 – RUS 🇷🇺
Match #24. 20:15 W19 – W20 (1 – 2 places) USA 🇺🇸 – ITA 🇮🇹