USA reigns supreme at the Super Final for the 13th time

Day 6 9 June, 2019

Match #24. Rank 1 – 2 USA 🇺🇸 vs. ITA 🇮🇹 10-9 (2-2, 1-2, 4-2, 3-3)

Referees: Mr.Moller, Mr.Ohme
Goal/shot: USA 10/29 ITA 9/29

Action goal/action shots: USA 3/116 ITA 2/16

Extra Man: USA 4/10 ITA 5/7

Penalty: USA 1/1 ITA 1/2

ITALY: Gorlero Giulia – Tabani Chiara (2), Garibotti Arianna (2), Avegno Silvia, Querolo Elisa, Aiello Rosaria, Picozzi Domitilla, Bianconi Roberta (1), Emmolo Giulia Enrica (1), Palmieri Valeria (1), Chiappini Isabella (2), Viacava Giulia, Lavi Frederica.

USA: Longan Amanda – Musselman Madeline (2), Seidemann Melissa, Fattal Rachel (1), Hauschild Paige,
A spectacular thriller

"The gold-medal game was hard, but we knew how to play it", - confessed victorious Adam Krikorjan coach, recording his another historical win in the FINA Women’s World League. His own 6th straight win came along with the Olympic ticket, first and foremost, and a very prestigious one. There was no surprise, the winner coach was very emotional and happy, and awarded his opponents a pair of encouraging compliments. In fact, the match between the two lived up to all expectations. Spectators at the iconic Duna Arena of Budapest were treated to a breathless encounter with numerous chances at both ends.
Makenzie Fischer hit 3 goals to go, two of which came in a span of one minute, and Roberta Bianconi did not convert her 5m shot, 7-6.

The things got especially tricky for Italians in the midst of the last term. Makenzie Fischer did not miss her point, entering the last quarter and hit 5m bird for 8-6. Fabio Conti’s side proceeded trailing, chasing and fighting hard. Coming close to one down, they could not expand it, and after a beautiful man-up goal of hope by Isabella Chiappini, were doomed to stand the track, 10-9 for USA.

Quotes

**Maddie Musselman, forward of the team USA, MVP of the tournament:**

The final was a really though game. I am really happy, that we could win it. That was super exciting. I even more satisfied with the fact we have managed to get our ticket for the Olympics. The next Sunday I am celebrating my birthday, and this will definitely be a good present for me.

**Makenzie Fischer, center back of the team USA, 4 goals, MVP of the Gold medal match:**
The game was very exciting until the very end. Maybe the last penalty was the one to win us the game. The main thing I can highlight is our good teamwork.

I usually play quite well against Italy, their style is pretty good for me. We played against them so much, and we know each other well. We were watching their game and analyzing their style yesterday evening, which paid off very much indeed.

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**Fabio Conti, head coach of the team Italy:**

Since we lost the final in Rio in 2016 against the USA - every day I dream about playing another final and to win it. So if we want to win the Olympics, we need to win all these tournaments. Before we arrived to Budapest, I asked the girls to play every single match like it was a final and they did an excellent job. My absolute favorite moment during the whole week was the last 3 seconds of the game, because I looked at Adam and saw he was nervous... which is very good, because he is always too calm on the bench. This moment meant we were really close to them.

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**Adam Krikorian, head coach of the team USA:**

As I mentioned yesterday, I expected a tough final against Italy and I was right. Even Italy was leading in some parts of the game, we could recover because my players have a lot of faith in them no matter if we play good or bad. Italy was fantastic, they were really prepared and they played very well. They were great in extra man. I can not say much good about our own game. In fact, that was one of the worst coached game I have ever done. The nice thing is that we have got plenty of things to work on now. We can focus on this in the next one and a half month before starting the world championships.

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**NETHERLANDS 7 RUSSIA 10**
Day 6 9 June, 2019

Match#23 Rank 3 – 4 NED vs. RUS 7 – 10 (2-3, 2-1, 2-4, 1-2)

Referees: Mr. Willis, Mr. Severo

Goal/shot: NED 7/34 RUS 10/30

Action goal/action shots: NED 2/23 RUS 7/17

Extra Man: NED 2/5 RUS 1/6
Penalty: NED 2/3 RUS 0/0

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

RUSSIA: Verkhogliadova Anastasiia - Bersneva Maria (1), Prokofieva Ekaterina (3), Karimova Elvina (1), Tolkunova Tatiana (1), Gorbunova Olga (1), Serzhantova Alena (1), Simanovich Anastasiia (1), Timofeeva Anna (1), Soboleva Evgeniia, Ivanova Evgeniiia, Gerzanich Daria, Karnaukh Anna.

Russia took bronze by storm

Russia abandoned the Netherlands to earn the bronze medal of the 2019 FINA Women’s Water Polo World League Super Final in Budapest and secured the podium presence for the third year to go. It was no way the best Russian finish in the competition, but a repeat of the bronze awards of 2017 and 2018. At the same time, the story registered a disappointing finish for the Netherlands, which were silver last year and could not cope with a number of challenges of 2019.

Things could have been a bit easier for Russia, if not too many unforced errors in the first half, however, mighty opponents, reigning European and Europa Cup champions, trailed them all the way to the final buzzer and stayed competitive till the last shooting chance.
Olga Gorbunova kicked off the glass and Maud Megens responded through a 5m penalty shot converted. Ekaterina Prokofieva and Alena Serzhantova went 2 up, but the Netherlands did not let them run. Maartje Keuning dished to the center already awaited here by Iris Wolves to set it a 3-2 after the first term.

In the second, the game turned to be hot and very exciting, fast, dynamic and with a lot of spared shots. Sabrina van der Sloot scored in another power play. Russian Elvina Kariomva got a fine dish by Ekaterina Prokofieva. At 9 seconds left, Iris Wolves punished Alena Serzhantova for the fault play, 4-4.

The best of Russia was the third period, where they succeeded to make a breakthrough, setting effectively M-Zone defence and scoring a bunch of goals. The merry-go-round started by Bersneva, proceeded by Simanovich and Timofeeva and Prokofieva hit her second goal. A very beautiful cupcake was cooked in response through Brigitte Sleeking sending a long dish right to the center of the crease for Ilse Koolhause to have it done, 6-8 at one quarter left to go.

Maud Megens did not convert her penalty chance, and 3 minutes later Sabrina van der Sloot did. Prokofieva netted the third, supplied by Alena Serzhantova, and supported by Tatiana Tolkunova on the right edge. Russia went 3 up for the first time ever, and did not miss the point to seal the bronze at 10-7.
Maud Megens, forward of the team Netherlands, 2 goals in the bronze medals game, best scorer of the tournament, 17 goals:

It's a great honour to reach the top scorer’s award of the World League Super Final in Budapest, however, I'm a bit disappointed. We came as a team for a medal, and unfortunately we didn't succeed. I really hope that I can maintain this performance during the World championships-2019, as well. I wouldn't win this prestigious award, without my teammates, our teamwork was a key to a good number of goals.

Laura Aarts, goalkeeper of the team Netherlands, Best Goalkeeper of the tournament:

This prize means a lot to me, because it shows that I have been keeping high mark playing on top level, not occasionally. I always focus only on my own performance and never track the opponent’s goalkeeper job. For me the most important thing is to prove myself every day, I mean some little things I plan to improve in every single game. The whole week in Budapest was fantastic, we enjoyed every moment in Duna Arena very much indeed.

Anna Karnaukh, goalkeeper of the team Russia, MVP of the Match:
We are very tired now and can not show a wide range of emotions. It's not easy to play six matches in six days. And also, we had to play against the Dutch, who are physically one of the strongest team in the world. Of course, we would be fully satisfied with the first place, which means qualification for Tokyo Olympic Games, but third is also a good result. We are on the podium for the third year to go.

Ekaterina Prokofieva, captain of the team Russia, 3 goals:

Yesterday we were really disappointed to lose the match against Italy. We could not play the game we wanted. This tournament was really tough, playing six matches six days to go was very exhausting. Thanks to the reckless work of the coaching staff, the medical team and each girl in our team, we ended on the win. We managed to put ourselves together and won. Defeating the Europa Cup holders, the Dutch, is never easy. We won on a comfortable 13-10 score. I happy, and congratulate of our fans on our new achievement.

Arno Havenga, head coach of the team Netherlands:

We are extremely tired after this tournament, during 6 days we had only hard game, which is very exhausting not just physically but mentally as well. The result reflects that our energy level is low at the moment. We fought really hard, but there have been some things that didn't work today, like the blocking and the defense. The Russian team is very clever, their main weapon is their counter-attack and we gave them the opportunity to do that. However, if I look back to the whole tournament I can say, that I am quite satisfied with our performance, although we could have played better and better every day.

HUNGARY 7 AUSTRALIA 12
Day 6 9 June, 2019

Match#22 Rank 5 – 6 HUN 🇭🇺 vs. AUS 🇦🇺 7 – 12 (3-2, 2-3, 0-3, 2-4)

Referees: Ms. Deslieres, Ms.Dreval

Goal/shot: HUN 7/24 AUS 12/27

Action goal/action shots: HUN 2/14 AUS 9/21

Extra Man: HUN 4/6 AUS 2/5
Penalty: HUN 1/2 AUS 0/0

HUNGARY: Gangl Edina – Szilagyi Dorottya, Rybanska Natasa, Gurisatti Greta (1), Szucs Gabriella, Horvath Brigitta, Illes Anna (1), Kesthelyi Rita (3), Vally Vanda, Gyöngyössy Anikó, Toth-Csabai Dora (2), Garda Krisztina, Kaso Orsolya.


Report

Breathtaking close of the home-staged Super Final for Hungary

In front of the agitated home crowd, Hungary tried hard, but did not take it. Attila Biro’s girls could not defeat Australia on Sunday afternoon to capture the fifth position and finish the 2019 FINA Women’s World League Super Final on the 6th. Irrelevant of the spot gained, the hosts shall be congratulated on the good play and significant raise in chart as last year they could hardly enter the best eight round of the competition. For Australia, as well, finishing fifth means all positive features. They are two stairs higher, compared to their 2017 and 2018 positions.
Australian side netted first, after the first 3 minutes of a scoring draught, as Rowena Webster launched her racket at 3 meters. The best Hungarian gun Rita Kexthelyi converted her 5m penalty and Greta Gurisatti did not miss her point, presenting a home-set positional play combination, 2-1. Gurisatti worked out a fault by Keesja Gofers, later cashed by Dora Thoth-Csabai in extra, to move her team 2 up, 3-1, the absolute high of the first quarter. As the second launched at 3-2 for Hungary as Halligan Bronter produced a fine diagonal cross to let her team trail.

Both teams struggled to take control of the game, as both failed to keep to their game’s plan. Teams hit 2 goals apiece to see a fantastic long diagonal dish by Australian captain which reached Isabel Bishop swimming counter-attack, right in time to make it a tied game, 5-5. The shooting stats did not give special preference to any of the parties: shots on goals 5/16 for Hungary, 5/14 for Australia, action goals 2/10 – 4/12.

Early third saw dominance of Australia. Predrag Mihailovic coached side produced a 2-0 run in a span of 2 minutes. Rita Keszthelyi could not convert her penalty to respond, 5-7. Isabel Bishop netted her second, 5-8 at one quarter left in the competition. By the curtain fell, the gap reached a marvelous 6 to illustrate the 2 time lead of the guest team. Rita Keszthelyi pulled back 1 for the hosts, 57 seconds on the clock remaining, to settle the result of the game for the 5th place, at 7-12 for Australia.

Hungary ranked 6th and Australia landed on the 5th position, and their places in the chart reflect a number of good trends. #5 for "Aussie stinger’s is the best rank to occupy since 2016. #6 for the Magyars is one the one hand, a step down comparing to seasons of 2017 and 2013, where they have been a part of the semi-final games, and on the other, definitely, one big step up after the last season, where they did not pass through qualification
hurdles to the Super Final.

Quotes

Bronte Halligan, forward of the team Australia, 2 goals, MVP of the Match:

I am really satisfied with my personal performance, however this great win is all about the team. At the beginning it seemed as if the match would be a tough one, but in the second half we had a very good rhythm with excellent solutions and shots, so we have won on a good margin, and I’m really proud of the whole team.

Predrag Mihailovic, head coach of the team Australia:

It was a tied game until 5-5, and then the problems started. We missed a number of good opportunities to score, and defensively we were not very synchronized. In other words, we gave some good chances for our opponents, which they converted well to stay competitive. We won the game to finish on the 5th, which is not a bad position. I am satisfied with my team’s performance but it is also good to know where we are now. We have a lot of food for analyses now and we will work a lot. I really like my team’s character that they are really strong mentally. I am happy that we finished the tournament with win after six complicated games. It is really hard to find the energy for the last game.

Attila Biro, head coach of the team Hungary:

After a balanced first half there came the third quarter. A lot of fighting and no goals on our side. Our team is very young. We are not that ready to play such an exhausting tournament like this, picturing 6 competition days to go.

We were not in the same boat with Australians, who had enough power and energy to play until the end.
We shall work hard to be a better team later. Super Final in Budapest was a great help for us to get better prepared for the FINA World Championships in Korea.

Rita Keszthelyi, captain of the team Hungary, 3 goals, best scorer of the tournament, 17 goals:

I scored 3 goals in the match for 5th place, but it doesn’t make me feel any better. I am disappointed with the way how I played. I did not show any confidence during the game. Loosing is never easy, so we shall work hard to be more competitive in the next games.

Results & Teams

CHINA 10 CANADA 13

Day 6 9 June, 2019

Match#21 Rank 7 – 8 CHN 🇨🇳 vs. CAN 🇨🇦 10 – 13 (4-2, 2-4, 1-2, 3-5)

Referees: Ms. Varkonyii, Ms. Dumas-Butilh
**Goal/shot:** CHN 10/27 CAN 13/34

**Action goal/action shots:** CHN 6/20 CAN 5/16

**Extra Man:** CHN 3/6 CAN 6/9

**Penalty:** CHN 1/1 CAN 1/3

**CHINA:** Peng Lin – Wang Xinyuan (2), Wang Huan (2), Xiong Dunhan (1), Nin Guannan, Nong Sanfeng, Lu Yiwen, Zhang Cong (1), Zhao Zihan (1), Zhang Danyi (1), Chen Xiao, Zhang Jing, Dong Wenxin.

**CANADA:** Gaudreault Jessica – Krystina Alogbo, Sohi Gurpreet (1), Wright Emma Louise (3), Eggens Monika
China did not produce a sensation

Canada captured the seventh position at the 2019 FINA Women’s Water Polo World League Super Final in Budapest, Hungary, following their 13-10 victory over China on Sunday afternoon. Monika Eggens came out as top match scorer with 4 points followed by her teammates Elysa Lavoie Lemay and Emma Wright on 3 goals. In fact, Chinese showed good will to win and stayed competitive all the match long, but ran out of gas in the fourth quarter as their opponents, on the contrary, went one period down and managed to recover after a lazy start.

It all started as Wang Xinyuan earned a penalty chance for China, inducing Elysa Lavoie Lemay to draw a penalty foul, which have been successfully scored by Wang Huan. Wang Xinyuan dished by Nin Guannan made it a 2-points difference, which kept unchanged till the end of the first term. Chinese were interrupted by Kyra Christmas and Emma Wright, hitting a fine pair of goals. Zhang Jing scored another bunch and dished to Huan Wang to make it a 4-2 game.

Canadian response came right in the second quarter as they succeeded to make the game tied, 6-6. Monika Eggens and Elysa Lavoie-Lemay netted 2 in a span of a minute. Zhang Jing and Zhang Danyi were hot ready on fire to swing and think and find a hole at the upper post.

There came a lot of easy shots, fighting and swimming, and zone defence, and pressing. Opponents registered one hit each early in the third, saw Canada up by the close of the term, 7-8. The key moment of the match came in the fourth period with David Paradello’s side producing a 3-0 run for 8-11. A very beautiful goal was engineered by Elisa Lavoie Lemay in the man-up locking down a fine pass from her captain Krystina Alogbo. The difference rolled back down to a couple minutes left in the competition, when Zhao Zihan converted extra and Xiong Dunhan deceived Clara Vulpisi goaltending through the center shot. A beautiful dot was staged by Monika Eggens, collecting the match-high 4th goal and setting the final score, 13-10.
As a result, China finished lowly 8th, and Canada secured one step higher, the 7th in the 2019 edition of the FINA Women’s World League Super Final, which does not reflect neither strive nor background and potential of both teams. Asian side resides on such a poor position for the first time ever, since 2007, when they first qualified to the Super Final, while Canada repeated its dip of 2016.

Quotes

Krystina Alogbo, captain of the team Canada:

It was a pretty good match. The score says sometimes less than the story of the game. We had a good start, the girls kept on pushing. I was not about suggesting them anything, I just let them play. Unfortunately, they missed a pair of penalties, hitting the post, the same held true for the good number of the opportunities of scoring. Later the girls kept their head up, returned composure, which resulted in the lead. We kept the pace of the game under control and that was important.

The Super Final is now over, and we will fly back to Montreal, spend a week there, and then will go to Japan to get accustomed to the jet leg of the South Korea, where the FINA World Championships this year will be staged. It was the best preparation week for us so far as we have spent together 10 days, playing each day with on high concentration.

Monika Eggens, forward of the team Canada, 4 goals, MVP of the Match:

This match was good. We have structured our game’s plan and we have pushed it really hard. It is always difficult to play the last game of the tournament, but I think that it is really important that we ended up with a win. Our team’s performance has been good. We were getting stronger throughout the week. I am always proud of the team. Everyone was working really hard. Alongside playing games, we have been getting ready for the FINA World Championship in Korea. Overall, it was a great tournament. The organisers have made a really good job. I really enjoyed the time in Budapest both now and in 2017. I am always happy to come back. This atmosphere in Duna Arena is really fantastic.”
Gong Dali, head coach of the team China:

Before the tournament we expected to finish at least in the top 6, so we are very disappointed with the result now. We could have won the game against Canada, because we had a strong start, but later spared our advantage. My team seems a little tired, to put it mildly, after six days of the competition, which had a certain impact on the way we lost today.

Olga Kamardina, FINA Correspondent in Budapest

The ultimate day of the 2019 FINA Women’s World League Super Final in Budapest saw the overall and defending champion USA collecting their next gold. In a spectacular end to the busy water polo week, American powerhouse won a historic sixth straight and 13th overall gold, on a narrow margin defeating Italy in a re-play of 2014 Kunshan’s gold medal match and Olympic Game’s final of 2016, 10-9. Italians scored their 4th runner-up finish, as Russia ended on the bronze, 10-7.

No sensations were registered in the lower part of the chart in the consolation finals, where Australia edged out home girls Hungary for the 5th place, 7-12, and Canada showed strength against China to land on the 7th, 13-10.

4 individual trophies were handed out during the awarding ceremony to see two American water polo legends atop of the MVP’s chart – Makenzie Fischer received the prize for the Gold medals match, and her teammate Maddeline Musselman – for the 2019 Super Final, as the scorers ranking saw Hungarian captain Rita Keszthelyi and Maud Megens of the Netherlands atop finishing on 17 goals apiece. One more Dutch Laura Aarts awarded the Best goalkeeper’s prize of the tournament to go along with the ones she received at the European championships-2018.

Final placings:

1. USA
2. Italy
3. Russia
4. Netherlands
5. Australia
6. Hungary
7. Canada
8. China
Finals / Day 6 / 9 June, 2019

Match#21 Rank 7 – 8 CHN 🇨🇳 vs. CAN 🇨🇦 10 – 13 (4-2, 2-4, 1-2, 3-5)

Match#22 Rank 5 – 6 HUN 🇭🇺 vs. AUS 🇦🇺 7 – 12 (3-2, 2-3, 0-3, 2-4)

Match#23 Rank 3 – 4 NED 🇳🇱 vs. RUS 🇷🇺 7 – 10 (2-3, 2-1, 2-4, 1-2)

Match #24. Rank 1 – 2 USA 🇺🇸 vs. ITA 🇮🇹 10-9 (2-2, 1-2, 4-2, 3-3)