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## Ona Carbonell shines again, uses Nelson Mandela's speech with music

Gergely Csurka, FINA Media Committee

**Spain's Ona Carbonell offered another glimpse of her outstanding talent to win the solo technical on the opening day of the**

**FINA Artistic Swimming World Series Super Final in Budapest. Ukraine grabbed the gold in the duet technical and later in**

**the team technical as well, while in the mixed duet Russia's only representatives in the meet came first.**

The duet technical event kicked off the action in the magnificent Duna Arena on the first day of the Super Final here in Budapest. Ukraine's pair of Marta Fiedina and Anastasiya Savchuk was no match for the others as they earned a clean win with a margin of 2.98 points. All but two of their marks were above 9.



*The Ukrainian duo in action*

*“Before the routine we decided, that everything should go well and during the programme everything worked perfect. Each*

*of our elements was perfectly timed both by moves and synchronisation and we did not have any errors” Savchuk said and*

*added that they managed to set a personal best in terms of scores. “We worked really hard, tried our best in the programme*

*and do it with the maximum concentration. When we saw the result, we were very happy as it was the highest score we have*

*ever been given.”*

Italy Linda Cerruti and Constanza Ferro came second, ahead of Canada’s Claudia Holzner and Jacqueline Simoneau.

Fiedina was back for more in the solo event and she almost claimed another gold but Spain’s top swimmer Ona Carbonell edged her out by a tiny margin of 0.1888 – Canada’s Simoneau made the podium here as well for a second bronze in a span of half an hour.

Carbonell later admitted that a mistake almost cost her the title. *“I could not execute perfectly the last element this is why I*

*perform it in competition before the Worlds.”*

The Spanish world champion offered a detailed description of the very special music she used during her routine. *“I really wanted to create something special, something different. Swimming to Nelson Mandela's speech is also part of that artistic level which I try to achieve and add to my routine. Mandela is one of the most inspiring persons in my life, it is simply amazing to swim for his speech which is about the power of sports in uniting people and changing the world. My main aim is to prove and show more in the artistic and human meaning of this programme and I need to do the last element perfectly in order to achieve this. My goal is to practice my two new routines, the solo technical and the solo free to be as perfect as possible for Gwangju.”*



*Alexandr Maltsev in action in the mixed duet - Credit: Krisztian Porszasz*

The evening session saw world Aleksandr Maltsev and his new partner Mayya Gurbanberdieva clinching the title in the mixed duet technical routine – with a performance worthy to Russia’s only representatives in this meet. The winning gap was the largest of the opening day here, they gained 3.4456 points on Japan’s Atsushi Abe and Yumi Adachi, while Spain’s Emma Garcia and Pau Ribes got the bronze.

*“During the preparations our goal was to improve each part of the programme. We worked a lot to show a really artistic*

*performance”* Maltsev said then he explained why they competed a lot this season. *“This year we had a lot of meets one*

*after the other, this one is the fifth in this series. We performed in many countries as we didn’t have to create a new*

*programme. On the other hand it was a great preparation time for the forthcoming World Championships in Korea, where*



*Gurbanberdieva and Maltsev with their gold medals*

Maltsev's determination is understandable: since the mixed duet made its debut at the World Championships, the young Russian great claimed back-to-back golds in the free routine but he is yet to win the title in the technical event where he was bested by the US duet in 2015, then by the Italians in 2017.

In the team event Ukraine landed another title, ahead of Spain – another convincing victory it was – and the Canadians had to be happy with their third bronze in the Super Final.



*The Ukrainian routine was a beauty to watch*

The victors were full of praises – and happiness. *“This competition was one of the selection meets for the World*

*Championships, two more will follow”* Yelizaveta Yakhno said. *“The conditions are outstanding, great organisation,*

*brehtaking swimming pool with warm water. Maybe it is the best swimming pool we have ever competed in. Some of us*

*have already been here and we return to this place with pleasure. We are already in the final stage of our preparations for*

*the World Championships and we hope we will achieve the same good result as here.”*

## **Medallists, Day 1**

### **Duet technical**

1. Marta Fiedina, Anastasiya Savchuk (UKR) 92.0205
2. Linda Cerruti, Constanza Ferro (ITA) 89.0333
3. Claudia Holzner, Jacqueline Simoneau (CAN) 87.6666

### **Solo technical**

1. Ona Carbonell (ESP) 90.8142
2. Marta Fiedina (UKR) 90.6254
3. Jacqueline Simoneau (CAN) 83.5809

### **Mixed duet technical**

1. Alexander Maltsev, Mayya Gurbanberdieva (RUS) 90.7902
2. Atsushi Abe and Yumi Adachi (JPN) 87.3446
3. Emma Garcia, Pau Ribes (ESP) 84.6330

**Team technical**

1. Ukraine 92.8734

2. Spain 89.7990

3. Canada 87.8845

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