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Artistic Swimming, Day 5: Gold number four for Russia

Maureen Croes, FINA Media Committee Member & Anna Kozina, FINA Media Committee Chairwoman

Russia, the heavy favourite for the Technical Team event, has won the gold medal in this event for 10 consecutive World Championships, starting at the 1998 FINA World Championships in Perth, Australia.

Tonight, at the 18th FINA World Championships taking place in the Yeomju Gymnasium in Gwangju, Korea, Russia continued its dominance and proved once again that they are the best.

The Russian swimmers performed a Technical Team routine that came close to perfection, scoring 96.9426 points. The routine, portraying a traditional Russian dance, was fast paced, exciting, and fun to watch. Filled with expressive hand and leg movements, as well as daring but cleanly executed acrobatics, the Russian Team gave the audience the feeling as if they were witnessing an actual Russian dance. With this routine, Russia earned their fourth gold medal at the 2019 Gwangju World Championships.



In the 2015 Kazan and 2017 Budapest World Championships, the second and third spots on the podium were occupied by China and Japan. Today in Gwangju, the teams in the running for the silver and bronze medals, included China, Ukraine and

Japan. Would there be a repeat of the 2015 and 2017 results, or would Ukraine continue its strong showing at these 2019 World Championships? Only once before were the Ukrainian Artistic swimmers able to reach the podium, at the 2013 Barcelona World Championships when they won a bronze medal in the Technical Team event.



In their Technical Team routine, the Chinese athletes are chasing dreams with returning superstars Sun Wenyan and Huang Xuechen. The significance of the routine for the Chinese swimmers is to show the Artistic Swimming world their bravery and confidence while they are in pursuit of their dream of success. The acrobatics in the routine were exceptional and worth the risk, as the score they received was an impressive 95.1543 to win the silver medal.



After winning their first ever World Championship gold medal yesterday in the Highlight event, Ukraine's routine themed "Advance with Power" seemed appropriate. The Ukrainian athletes performing their difficult routine showed that human abilities have no limits. The choreography used the music very smartly for the required technical elements, and even though their acrobatics were risky, the Ukrainians were in control the entire swim. The score received was 93.4514, enough to edge out Japan for the bronze medal.



The Japanese team received 92.7207 points for their routine Spanky Bindflutter, a story about a fictional bird that shoots fireballs and is taking off for a flight through the red sky on its way to victory. Their suits beautifully decorated like the feathers of the bird and the red sky. The routine filled with several acrobatic throws that resembled birds flying nicely executed for the extra touch.

QUOTES

Team technical

Maria Shurochkina (RUS), gold:

“I don’t think it was an ideal version of our routine. But our head coach Tatiana Pokrovskaya was smiling. This is the main criteria of success for us. It means she was pleased and we did well.”

Marina Goliadkina (RUS), gold:

“We have prepared this program for a year. The music is dynamic, the tempo is crazy.”

Alla Shishkina (RUS), gold: On her motivation to come back to competition after taking a break:

“I love this sport. I missed this atmosphere, this team spirit, our tight-knit team. I have already competed at two World Cup stages and at European Cup where we’ve got an Olympic license. So this is not actually my comeback. But I’m really excited to be here.”

Xuechen Huang (CHN), silver:

“We are satisfied with our performance today. We improved the execution and the scores in comparison with the last time we took part in competitions. That was our main goal. And we are very happy to achieve it.”

Marta Fiedina (UKR), bronze:

“I like to compete in group routine. When you are ready and perform without mistakes, when you work as a real team you feel that energy and tension under the water.”

On her intense schedule:

“I have 12 performances at this World championships. But I try not to think about my tough schedule. It’s not a right thing to feel pity for yourself. Of course you have to be prepared physically and mentally. We had so many training and rehearsals that I’m confident.”

Maryna Aleksiiwa (UKR), bronze:

“We didn’t manage to take a medal in team technical routine two years ago in Budapest. We were anxious about increasing our level. We worked hard and moved forward.”

“Our program is very complicated. We spend a lot of time under the water doing elements. You know, we just come on the surface, take a breath and continue our underwater part.”
