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## Day 3 Women's Water Polo: Spain, Italy, USA and Russia into quarters

Match 17, 08:30, Group A, CUBA 6 SPAIN 19

Results & Teams

### Match 17, 08:30, Group A, CUBA 6 SPAIN 19

Quarters: 0-7, 1-6, 4-3, 1-3

Referees: German Moller (ARG), Jeremy Cheng (SGP)

Extra man: CUB: 2/2. ESP: 4/5.

Penalties: CUB: 1/1. ESP: 3/4.

Shot conversion: 6/33. ESP: 19/35

Teams:

**CUBA:** Mairelis Zunzunegui, Dalia Grau, Madonni Chavez (2), Thaimi Gonzalez, Dariuska Carrasco, Mayelin

Bernal (3), Jennifer Plasencia, Arisel Gonzalez (1), Cecilia Diaz, Dianela Frias, Lisbeth Santana, Aliannis Ramirez, Arisney Ramos. Head Coach: Jorge del Valle.

**SPAIN:** Laura Ester, Marta Bach, Anna Espar (2), Beatriz Ortiz (4), Roser Tarrago, Irene Gonzalez (1), Clara

Espar, Pilar Pena (1), Judith Forca (3), Paula Crespi (3), Maica Garcia (4), Paula Leiton (1), Elena Sanchez. Head Coach: Miguel Oca.

## Report

Spain won its group with 10, 12 and 13-goal margins and now gains four days of practice time before the quarterfinals. Head coach Miki Oca said the Greek match on day one was the hardest of the three, which makes it hard to get strong opposition ahead on what will now be crunch matches. While Spain was working through combinations and plays, Cuba was gaining in strength and positivity, even taking out the important third period 4-3. The tall Mayelin Bernal was impressive with three goals, opening Cuba's account with a penalty success, a cross-cage shot and a blinder from the top. Madonni Chavez twice slipped one under the right arm of the goalkeeper from the acute angle as Cuba lifted the score from 13-1 at halftime to 15-5 by 2:27 in the third period. On the other side of the ledger, Beatriz Ortiz led the scoring with four goals as Spain was untroubled.

## Quotes

### **Miki Oca (ESP) — Head Coach**

"We now have a 'holiday' to prepare for the quarterfinals. We will play either Holland or Canada. It will be a very difficult game. We have four days to prepare very well for that game. We had a very hard game against Greece and two not that hard. We couldn't prove ourselves. It will be a very difficult team on Monday — that will be the real test."

### **Jorge Del Valle (CUB) — Head Coach**

"The team worked much better today and gained experience with another game. They now have more confidence and I hope we are making more progress. The next match may be against Japan and we are looking forward to that."

### **Mayelin Bernal (CUB) — Three goals**

"It was not too much about the score, rather more about keeping Spain away from our goal. These championships give us the opportunity to prepare for the forthcoming Pan American Games in Lima (Peru, later this month)."

Match 18, 9.50, Group A, GREECE 13 KAZAKHSTAN 7

Results & Teams

### **Match 18, 9.50, Group A, GREECE 13 KAZAKHSTAN 7**

Quarters: 4-1, 4-1, 1-3, 4-2

Referees: Sebastien Dervieux (FRA), Adrian Alexandrescu (ROU).

Extra man: GRE: 3/10. KAZ 1/11.

Penalties: GRE: 1/1. KAZ: 0/1

Shot conversion: GRE: 13/34. KAZ: 7/29.

Teams:

**GREECE:** Ioanna Stamatopoulou, Christina Tsoukala, Alkistis Benekou, Nikoleta Eleftheridou (2), Maria Patra,

Alkisti Avramidou (1), Alexandra Asimaki (2), Ioanna Chydirioti (2), Christina Kotsia (1), Eirini Ninou (2), Eleftheria Plevritou, Eleni Xenaki (3), Marina Kotsioni. Head Coach: Georgios Morfesis.

**KAZAKHSTAN:** Alexandra Zhazkimbaeva, Tomiris Kenenbayeva, Aizhan Akilbayeva, Anna Turova (1),

Kamila Zakirova (3), Darya Roga (1), Anna Novikova, Darya Muzareva, Anastassiya Yeremina, Zamira Myrzabekova (2), Anastassiya Mirshina, Viktoriya Khritankova, Azhar Alibayeva. Head Coach: Marat Naurazbekov.

## Report

Greece secured second place in the group and can now look forward to a clash in the second round to advance to the quarterfinals. Greece had the better of the first half with a six-goal margin and stretched it to seven at the top of the third. Kazakhstan then woke up and started penetrating the Greek defence, scoring three straight in five minutes, which Greece on notice. The torture continued in the fourth as Kamila Zakirova sent in a rifle shot from left-hand catch for 9-6. In the second period she scored a terrific lob from the left-hand side of the pool. The rot was arrested when Nikoleta Eleftheridou scored from deep left and restored a safe four-goal advantage. In the second quarter, 16-year-old Eirini Ninou (GRE) impressed with two goals, the first a penalty strike and the second into the top left of the goal from outside. Three swift goals by Greece put the match beyond question, eventually progressing to 13-7. Eleni Xenaki was a handful at centre forward, scoring three goals. Extra-man goals were hard to come by, probably more about the defence than the shot choices.

## Quotes

### **Georgios Morfesis (GRE) — Head Coach**

“Our mind is now on the quarterfinal and we are awaiting our opponent from Group D. We hope to play better. Today, we made a lot of wrong offensive choices. In two days we will see if it will be a different game with more quality from my team.”

### **Marat Naurazbekov (KAZ) — Head Coach**

“We had to concentrate very hard against Greece. It was a good game as Greece is one of the top teams in the

world. The best part about our game today was our defence. The attacking was not as good.”

### **Tomiris Kenenbayeva (KAZ)**

“To be honest with you, the game was really good because Greece is a top team like Spain and any European team. I think we played good because defending was difficult for them and because they couldn’t have good results as they did with Cuba or other teams. I’m happy with the third position in my group, but I was hoping for the second position. Several years ago, it was difficult for us to play with Greece. Now it’s not so difficult. I think we have improved.”

Match 19, 11:10, Group B, JAPAN 7 AUSTRALIA 9



Results & Teams



### **Match 19, 11:10, Group B, JAPAN 7 AUSTRALIA 9**

Quarters: 2-3, 2-1, 1-2, 2-3

Referees: Gabriella Varkonyi (HUN), Stanko Ivanovski (MNE).

Extra man: JPN: 2/5. AUS:1/3.

Penalties: JPN: 1/1. AUS: 1/1.

Shot conversion: JPN: 7/19. AUS: 9/24.

**JAPAN:** Rikako Miura, Yumi Arima (2), Akari Inaba (2), Shino Magariyama, Chiaki Sakanoue, Miku Koide,

Maiko Hashida, Yuki Niizawa, Minori Yamamoto, Misaki Noro, Marina Tokumoto, Kotori Suzuki, Minami

Shioya. Head Coach: Makihiro Motomiya.

**AUSTRALIA:** Gabriella Palm, Keesja Gofers (1), Hannah Buckling (3), Bronte Halligan, Isobel Bishop (2),

Bronwen Knox, Rowie Webster (1), Amy Ridge, Zoe Arancini (2), Lena Mihailovic, Elle Armit, Madeleine Steere, Lea Yanitsis. Head Coach: Predrag Mihailovic.

## Report

Australian captain Rowie Webster impressed in her 300<sup>th</sup> international, but she would have wanted her team to rise to the occasion much earlier than a three-goal burst in the middle of the fourth period. It was a tough match for both teams. They were chasing second spot in the group and for Japan it was life or death. Australia would be going to the top 12 anyway, but Japan had to win to qualify and probably consign China to the bottom. It looked possible with Japan 2-1 up early. Then the match swung toward the Aussie Stingers who grabbed the quarter-time lead. Japan levelled twice in the second period and Australia went 6-4 up in the third. That lead evaporated in the top of the fourth as Yumi Arima scored her second goal in a row for 6-6. It was Hannah Buckling, Isobel Bishop and Buckling again who helped secure the win with a three-goal advantage with two minutes remaining. Akari Inaba netted her second on extra with 35 seconds left in the match. For Japan it was a sad exit, having lost to all three teams in its group by only two goals.

## Quotes

### **Rebecca Rippon (AUS) — Assistant Coach**

“At three-quarter time we told the players to play better and press the pass and let the defence do their job. We spoke about being more mobile in attack and we changed that later. We have been training a fair bit with the Japanese lately so we know they are strong and have a great shooter in No 2 (Yumi Arima). We had to shut her down and play to our strengths and take away their strengths. We know we can score and we know they can just as well.”

### **Makihiro Motomiya (JPN) — Head Coach**

“We haven’t achieved our main goal, but we did achieve keeping Australia to less than 10 goals. Our offence

needs to improve. In the critical moments we made silly turnovers.” On not making the top 12: “First of all it was an unfortunate draw and the results were the results. We could have won matches, but we need to improve.” On how he would like to leave Gwangju: “We want to give the impression to the world in the round of 13-16 that we could be in the top 12. We will show that.”

### **Yumi Arima (JPN) — two goals**

“We were very determined to try to win the game, but now the result came out like this. So for the final 13 to 16 round, we’ll try our best to be the best team in the group. Of course, Australia is one of the very highest-ranking teams in the world, but the score was 9 to 7. As you know, we are the better team at outside shooting and also if we played more riskily on the defence, we could’ve won this game.”

### **Akari Inaba (JPN) — two goals**

“We definitely tried to win this game. But now in reflection, with a very quick attack at the moment, we were not able to take a shot or missed a lot. This is the area we need to fix and improve.”

Match 20, 12:30, Group B, ITALY 14 CHINA 6

Results & Teams

### **Match 20, 12:30, Group B, ITALY 14 CHINA 6**

Quarters: 5-1, 3-1, 4-2, 2-2

Referees: Marie-Claude Deslieres (CAN), Nenad Peris (CRO).

Extra man: ITA: 4/9. CHN: 1/5.

Penalties: ITA: 2/2.

Shot conversion: ITA: 14/31. CHN: 6/32

Teams:

**ITALY:** Giulia Gorlero, Chiara Tabani (3), Arianna Garibotti, (3) Silvia Avegno, Elisa Queirolo, Rosaria Aiello

(1), Domitilla Picozzi, Roberta Bianconi (2), Giulia Emmolo (2), Valeria Palmieri, Isabella Chiappini (1), Giulia Viacava (2), Frederica Lavi. Head Coach: Fabio Conti.

**CHINA:** Lin Peng, Xinyan Wang (1), Xiaohan Mei, Dunhan Xiong (2), Guannan Niu, Ning Guo, Huan Wang

(1), Cong Zhang, Zihan Zhao, Danyi Zhang, Xiao Chen (1), Jing Zhang (1), Wenxin Dong. Head Coach: Dali Gong.

## Report



Italy collected the group victory and now has four days to reflect, refine and savour the success. By racing to a 5-1 lead at quarter time, Italy showed why it is a front-runner for a medal. With two Giulia Emmolo goals in the second quarter the margin had increased to six. China lifted in the second half and matched Italy on defence and attack. That late start did not help, but at least gave impetus to future matches in the round of 12. Italy's play was always good, but head coach Fabio Conti believes there is better to come. Chiara Tabani and Arianna Garibotti scored three each with the latter's goals all coming in the first-quarter onslaught. Dunhan Xiong was a dual scorer for China. Italy had the better of the extra-man count, which was frugal.

## Quotes



### **Fabio Conti (ITA) — Head Coach**

“Top of the group was our target. It was not easy with Australia, China and Japan. All came to play very hard. Our defence was very good. Congratulations to Japan who stepped up in time for next year (Tokyo 2020). China is very strong and good quality. There was good defence from my team. There is quality in all my team and all different players can score. I think we can still do better. The best part is that now we have arrived at the main

tournament.”

### **Elisa Queirolo (ITA) – Captain**

“We expected to finish top, but we also hoped to do so because it is very important to be the first in the “little tournament”. And now we don’t have to play any match, so this is very important. And I think we played in a very good way. I didn’t expect to win so easily. Not so easily because China is a very good team. For example, the game with Australia, they did a very good match. So I think we played very, very, very good.”

### **Dali Gong (CHN) — Head coach**

“We had a bad first quarter. When we didn’t play well we were a little flustered. In the fourth quarter we were able to relax. Our next opponent is Greece who is also very strong. We will take the game very seriously. I think the most important thing is ourselves and our strength.”

Match 21, 16:30, Group C, SOUTH AFRICA 1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 26



Results & Teams



**Match 21, 16:30, Group C, SOUTH AFRICA 1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 26**

Quarters: 0-7, 1-8, 0-6, 0-5

Referees: Alessandro Severo (ITA), Jinyong An (KOR)

Extra man: RSA: 0/0. USA: 5/8.

Penalties: RSA: 0/1. USA: 3/3.

Shot conversion: RSA: 1/12. USA: 26/41.

Teams:

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Lauren Nixon, Yanah Gerber, Nthatsi Mota, Emma Joubert, Georgia Moir, Amica

Hallendorff, Lucy Miszewski, Kate Hinrichs, Jordan Wedderburn, Nicola MacLeod, Chloe Meecham (1), Christine Abrahamse, Zanne Smit. Head Coach: Pierre Le Roux.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:** Amanda Longan, Maddeline Musselman (5), Melissa Seidemann (3),

Rachel Fattal, Paige Hauschild (3), Margaret Steffens (1), Stephania Haralabidis (3), Kiley Neushul (3), Aria Fischer (4), Kaleigh Gilchrist (2), Makenzie Fischer (2), Alys Williams, Ashleigh Johnson. Head Coach: Adam Krikorian.

## Report

United States of America breezed into the quarterfinals with a third consecutive victory. USA beat New Zealand 22-3, the Netherlands 12-9 and now South Africa by a handsome margin. USA knows only one style of water polo — winning water polo and it produced its 50<sup>th</sup> straight win at international level, stretching back to April 2, 2018 when Australia won the Intercontinental Cup in Auckland, New Zealand by 9-8. This is thought to be a record for women's water polo. Head coach Adam Krikorian interchanged everyone, all the time. There is no way USA could play at half pace and every minute in the water is preparation for the second half of the tournament. South Africa had its moment in the sun when Chloe Meecham fired in a missile from nine metres at 9-1 in the second period.

## Quotes

**Adam Krikorian (USA) — Head Coach**

On how USA will prepare for the quarterfinals: “Training. We will get in as much training as possible. In many ways we prefer to keep playing. In 2017 three of the group winners failed to progress from the quarters. We were the only one. It’s easier to stay in the play. We will combine good training with rest and focus and stay engaged as much as possible.”

### **Pierre Le Roux (RSA) — Head Coach**

On what he told the players before the match: “The message was to have fun as you are playing the world and Olympic champion. Play the best you have ever played. We started nervously and showed too much respect. We gained a penalty foul so that wasn’t bad. They are smart on transition from defence to attack. My young team is proud to play a world-class team they have been watching on television for so long. The standard is wonderful.”

### **Emma Joubert (RSA)**

“Well, coming from a country that’s still developing water polo, I was real honoured and privileged to play with some of the Olympic gold medallists. I mean I was playing against the best girls in the world, so we took a big account from that and gained a lot of experience from it. From this game, I learned that kind of just never give up. We gave up a little bit and it’s an aspect that we learn to come back. We were so far down there and things had to keep going as we keep pushing ourselves and keep moving forward.”

Match 22, 17:50, Group C, NEW ZEALAND 6 NETHERLANDS 15



Results & Teams



**Match 22, 17:50, Group C, NEW ZEALAND 6 NETHERLANDS 15**

Quarters: 0-2, 3-4, 1-4, 2-5

Referees: Jaume Teixido (ESP), Viktor Salnichenko (KAZ).

Extra man: NZL: 2/6. NED: 3/7.

Penalties: NED: 3/3.

Shot conversion: NZL: 6/25. NED: 15/37.

Teams:

**NEW ZEALAND:** Jessica Milicich, Emily Nicholson, Bernadette Doyle (2), Shinae Carrington, Elizabeth

Alsemgeest, Morgan McDowall (3), Emmerson Houghton, Katie McKenty (1), Grace Tobin, Kaitlin Howarth, Amanda Lemon, Kate Enoka, Bridget Layburn. Head Coach: Angie Winstanley-Smith.

**NETHERLANDS:** Joanne Koenders, Maud Megens (5), Dagmar Genee, Catharina Van der Sloot (3), Iris

Wolves (1), Nomi Stomphorst (1), Bente Rogge (1), Vivian Sevenich, Maartje Keuning, Ilse Koolhaas (1), Simone Van der Kraats (1), Brigitte Sleeking (2), Rozanne Voorvelt, Sarah Buis. Head Coach: Arno Havenga.

## Report

Netherlands secured second spot in the group and New Zealand took third place. The Dutch did not expect the resistance thrown up by New Zealand, especially the shooting power of Morgan McDowall who was born in 2002. Bernadette Doyle gave the Kiwis hope at 4-1 with a score on extra and then McDowall smashed in a big centre-forward backhand for 4-2 and followed up with a conversion of extra-man attack at 5-3 just before halftime. Her third came on counter at 10-4 late in the third period. The fifth goal for New Zealand came from Katie McKenty with a well-aimed six-metre lob at 14-5 and Doyle struck her second at 2:01 for 14-6. The Dutch, far more experienced, weathered that early storm and started piling in the goals as the Kiwis started to tire and the Dutch switched into a winning rhythm. Maud Megens led from the front while the rest of the bench threw up their arms to score goals. It was a fine effort from the girls in black while the Europeans will use that match as a stepping stone to higher things next week.

## Quotes

**Arno Havenga (NED) — Head Coach**

“It was not the best game. We need to play better. Now it is the championship. This match doesn’t say anything. Our cross game is with Canada. We need to prepare for that.”

**Dagmar Genee (NED) — Captain**

“I think it was pretty hard for us. We really had to fight for it. We had some troubles like setting our counter-attacks, but we definitely won the game. I learned from this game that we really have to focus and everybody has to do well. Everybody should be a lot better, specially for the next few games because in those games, it’s like the final. If you play bad, probably you are out, so we really have to be very careful. For now, I’m not nervous. We have to focus on Canada.”

**Angie Winstanley-Smith (NZL) — Head Coach**

“We can match it with the best. A few of those missed goals and the performance should have been 12-6. You make one mistake and they punish you. They are a classy team, quite clean. My group of young warriors is doing well. The next couple of days will be important. Results are results. We want to go away saying New Zealand’s youngsters are coming along nicely. They gave me everything.”

**Morgan McDowall (NZL) — Three goals**

“I’m 17. It was such a good experience here. Final top 12 gets really good. I think the first two quarters were really good. It was a tie (6-3). We were competitive, but I learned that we need to be more disciplined in our defence.”

**Match 23, 19:10, Group D, CANADA 22 KOREA 2**

Quarters: 5-0, 6-0, 6-0, 5-2

Referees: Michiel Zwart (NED), Michael Goldenberg (USA).

Extra man: CAN: 3/3. KOR: 1/1.

Penalties: CAN: 1/1.

Shot conversion: CAN: 22/31. KOR: 2/24.

Teams:

**CANADA:** Jessica Gaudreault (1), Krystina Alogbo (1), Axelle Crevier (1), Emma Wright (3), Monika Eggens (2), Kelly McKee (2), Joelle Bekhazi (2), Elyse Lemay-Lavoie (2), Hayley McKelvey (2), Kyra Christmas (3), Kindred Paul (1), Shae Fournier (1), Claire Wright (1). Head Coach: David Paradelo.

**KOREA:** Heeji Oh, Chaeyoung Lim, Jungeun Lee (1), Yeseo Song, Daseul Kyung (1), Hanna Yoon Ryan,

Gaeun Lee, Jimin Choi, Yearin Yun, Ye Jin Kim, Nayoung Kwon, Yelim Cho, Minju Kim. Head Coach: Man Keun Jin.

No one was disappointed with Korea's third appearance at World Championship level. It may have been beaten on the scoreboard, but at one stage, Korea was winning the fourth period 2-0. Pandemonium surrounded the venue as the heroine from the Russia encounter, Daseul Kyung, did the unthinkable and repeated her effort, scoring into an open goal after the goalkeeper was ejected. There was more screaming and thunder in the tribunes

when Jungeun Lee crashed the party straight after with an excellent extra-man goal from top right into the right side of the goal. It was 17-2 and the air was electric. Canada played its part and enjoyed the romp, moving on to 22-2. The enthusiasm for the team continued into the mixed zone where the Korean media was all over the team. The Korean men's team lined the edge of the warm-up pool to give each player a high five. It was like a victory march, and so it should be, playing in such a cauldron against some of the best players on the planet. And then the woman of the moment, Kyung, caused a sensation when she signed the match ball. It was selfie heaven. Canada constantly left its cage unattended as head coach David Paradelo tried to get every player on the scoreboard, including the goalkeepers — captain Jessica Gaudreault and Claire Wright. Tick that one off, as it was a task achieved, something that might not yet have happened anywhere in the world since the new rules came into play, allowing the goalkeepers into enemy territory. It was fun to be a witness to such history — three matches and now three goals for the fledgling water polo country. Make sure that the ball is earmarked for a national museum.

## Quotes



### **David Paradelo (CAN) — Head Coach**

“Our offence is producing well. That’s good. We prepared well for this tournament and we hope to showcase that in the next game (Netherlands on Saturday). Having the home city’s crowd roar at some actions and we gave them something to roar about is pretty special.

### **Krystina Alogbo (CAN) — Centre forward**

“It’s great that Korea got together and trained for a month and a half where they can now hold the ball. I hope they invest more time in them to carry on. We are staying focused on our game plan. It’s a long summer, starting with the World League and including Pan Ams next month. We will watch our progression and we are picking up on the new rules.”

### **Daseul Kyung (KOR) — goal scorer**

“As one of the first water polo players of the Korean national team, I’m very grateful that I made it to the very first goal. I thank my coach, my team-mates and supporters for that success. I’m a competitive swimmer for the 50 and 100 metres breaststroke, and just for now I am a water polo player. Now that I get so much attention and love, I think I made a good choice even if it can last only for a short time. I really enjoy participating in this world championship and appreciate all the love that fans showed me.”

### **Jungeun Lee (KOR) — goal scorer**

“Now I have only two matches left. We are all competitive swimmers, so after two more matches, we have to say goodbye to each other. The very thought of our parting makes us cry. I hope we can continue seeing each other and if there’s a chance in the future, I want to participate in water polo games. We were just starting to know what water polo was because we were trained for only a month for this championship, so if we train for one or two years, I’m sure we will make more goals.”

Match 24, 20:30, Group D, HUNGARY 12 RUSSIA 17



Results & Teams



### **Match 24, 20:30, Group D, HUNGARY 12 RUSSIA 17**

Quarters: 4-6, 3-5, 1-2, 4-4

Referees: Vojin Putnikovic (SRB), Georgios Stavridis (GRE).

Extra man: HUN:4/8. RUS: 7/9.

Penalties: HUN: 4/4. RUS: 1/1

Shot conversion: HUN: 12/34. RUS: 17/36

Teams:

**HUNGARY:** Edina Gangl, Dorottya Szilagyi (1), Rebecca Parkes, Greta Gurisatti (2), Natasa Rybanska, Brigitta

Horvath, Anna Illes (1), Rita Keszthelyi (3), Dora Leimeter, Aniko Gyongyossy (1), Dora Toth-Csabai, Vanda Valyi (4), Alda Magyari. Head Coach: Attila Biro.

**RUSSIA:** Evgeniia Golovina, Maria Bersneva (4), Ekaterina Prokofyeva (1), Elvina Karimova (2), Tatiana

Tolkunova (1), Olga Gorbunova (2), Alena Serzhantova (2), Anastasiia Simanovich, Anna Timofeeva (1), Evgeniia Soboleva, (1) Evgeniia Ivanova, Daria Ryzhkova (3), Anna Karnaukh. Head Coach: Alexandr Gaidukov.

## Report

A rapid-fire 4-0 was the start that propelled Russia into the quarterfinals. Three of those goals came from counter-attack and the rest of the match was all about trying to catch up. That was an order too tall for Hungary to accept, even though it scored four goals to one to bring the match to 5-4. This became 7-5 and 10-6 before 11-7 at halftime. At 13-8 by the final break, Russia was destined to take the four-day breather. It was 4-4 in the final period and if the match was to be another two quarters, it would still be Russia's match and both teams would still be speeding around the pool in top gear. Russia's long-standing second goalkeeper kept the cage all night and produced 13 saves. It was the extra-man that really counted with seven from nine one of the best statistics of the championships. Russia looked the goods and Hungary will need the extra match to get up to speed for the quarterfinals.

## Quotes

### **Andrei Belofastov (RUS) — Assistant Coach**

“It was a very important game for first place in the group. Hungary is very strong, but I think we did a very good preparation, going four goals up with three on counter-attack. Our extra-man was good and our goalkeeper (Anna Karnaukh) was excellent. It will be a new experience for us finishing top and the whole must prepare to play the finals.”

### **Attila Biro (HUN) — Head Coach**

“I think it is better to play (on Saturday, instead of having a four-day break as the group winner) as I have a young team and need more games to prepare for the quarterfinals. I was not satisfied ,as we started pretty

disorganised, so we had to change that. We were always chasing Russia, who were very fast. They played better than us. Russia is a better team.”

### **Dorottya Szilagyi (HUN) — Penalty scorer**

“In 2017, we finished top and had a four-day-rest, but that didn’t go well afterwards. I think we lost to the team that we were better than; because we got a little bit out of shape and too much rest. Of course, we didn’t want to lose it, we put everything in it, but it didn’t go as we planned. We didn’t play as well as we could have. Yes, of course, we wanted to win. But I think we will get over this very fast. Whatever the outcome is, we can deal with it. I think it’s better to have a game.”

Russell McKinnon, FINA Media Committee

Gwangju, South Korea, July 18.— Spain, Italy, United States of America and Russia have advanced to the quarterfinals of the FINA World Championship women’s water polo tournament at the Nambu University Grounds in Gwangju.

Spain was the first qualifier, winning its third consecutive match in Group C, downing Cuba 19-6. Beatriz Ortiz top-scored with four goals and Cuba’s Mayelin Bernal netted three against the "mother country". Greece cemented second position with a 13-7 margin over Kazakhstan with centre forward Eleni Xenaki scoring three goals.

In Group D, Australia had to work hard to repulse Japan’s challenge 9-7. It took a three-goal burst in the middle of the final quarter to break free. Sadly, for Japan, after three two-goal losses in one of the toughest groups, it has been exiled to the rough 13-16 while Australia takes second spot. Italy took control of the group with a 14-6 win over China, who finished third.

Group A began with United States of America defeating South Africa 26-1 and booking a quarterfinal berth, as expected. Then Netherlands was leading only 6-3 at halftime over New Zealand before swimming away to a 15-6 scoreline, clinching second spot from New Zealand.

In Group B, Korea again attracted a huge crowd with everyone waiting for the elusive second goal. Not one, but two goals came for the host nation as Canada enjoyed the festival style and secured third spot and its first win with a 22-2 margin. In a world first, probably, all 13 Canadian players scored, including the two goalkeepers. Russia stunned Hungary with a 4-0 start and continued to hold the reins in a high-scoring match that looked much like beach water polo. Russia led 11-7 at halftime, 13-8 at the final break and 17-12 at the final whistle

