



FÉDÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE
DE NATATION

Published on *fina.org* - Official FINA website (<https://www.fina.org>)

Day 3: Hannah (CAN) enlarges collection; USA reinforces medal table lead

Pedro Adrega & Gergely Csurka

Seven countries got medals on Day 3 of the FINA World Junior Swimming Championships in Budapest (HUN), with USA reinforcing its lead in the competition, with two additional titles and a silver lining. Moreover, the US 4x100m free mixed relay established the only World Junior and Championships record of the session. Otherwise, Jade Hannah (CAN) proceeded with her successful campaign in the Magyar capital, Andrei Minakov (RUS) confirmed his world-level status in the men's 100m fly, and 15-year-old Franko Grgic won the gold for Croatia in the men's 800m free.

In the first final of the day, the women's 200m back, 17-year-old Jade Hannah (CAN) comfortably won in 2:09.28, leading the race from the first metres. The Canadian collected her third medal in Budapest, after being also the world junior champion in the 100m back, and earning bronze with her team in the 4x100m medley mixed relay. Hannah was also one of the athletes to beat at the 2017 edition of these Championships, when she collected four medals in Indianapolis (USA) – gold in the 50m back, 4x100m medley, and 4x100m medley mixed, and bronze in the 100m back. Two years ago, in the USA, she was only sixth in the 200m back. The minor medals in the Magyar capital went to Austria's Lena Grabowski, who tried to push hard in the end but finished almost one second behind Hannah (in 2:10.27 for silver), and Erika Gaetani, from Italy, third in 2:10.52.



Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

After two silver medals in relay action – 4x100m free and 4x100m medley mixed – Andrei Minakov, from Russia, got the first gold in Budapest, with a convincing win in the men’s 100m fly in a time of 51.25. The Russian junior ace is already a solid name at elite level, having won the silver at the recent FINA World Championships in Gwangju (KOR), also in the 100m fly. Moreover, he was part of the team that grabbed bronze in the 4x100m medley relay in Korea. Minakov was also one of the stars at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games, winning no less than six gold and one silver in Buenos Aires (ARG). Born on March 17, 2002 the Russian made his “appearance” two years ago, in the 2017 edition of these Championships in Indianapolis, leaving USA with four medals around the neck. Federico Burdisso, from Italy, fourth in this event in Gwangju, got the silver in the Magyar capital, touching in 51.83, while the second Russian of the field, Egor Pavlov took bronze in 51.90, his second podium presence in Hungary after the silver in the 4x100m free relay.

In the women’s 100m free, the two fastest of the semis, US Gretchen Walsh (swimming in lane 4), and Torri Huske (lane 5) confirmed their credentials, making the 1-2 for their country in the final. Already with one gold each, when they swam for the victory in the 4x100m medley mixed relay, Walsh was faster, touching in 53.74, while Huske had to content with silver in 54.54. At 16, they are both attending their first FINA competition. The bronze medal went to Australia’s Meg Harris, who arrived slightly behind Huske in 54.58. The 17-year-old is also making her première at FINA level and had been fourth with her team in the 4x100m medley mixed relay.



Gold and silver for USA in the 100m free - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

In the longest event of the day, the men’s 800m free, 15-year-old Franko Grgic, from Croatia, swimming in lane 3, took the control of the race from the first metres and was never in danger until the final touch for gold in 7:45.92. He was not far

from the Championships Record, dating from 2013 in Dubai (UAE), when Mack Horton (AUS) swam for the title in 7:45.67. Ilya Sibirtsev from Russia was second (7:48.05) in Budapest, while Thomas Neill (AUS) was third in 7:48.65. The Australian earned his second medal in Hungary, after the silver in the 400m free.



Franko Grgic (CRO) - Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

Closing the finals' session, USA earned medal number 16 so far in Budapest, winning the 4x100m free mixed relay in 3:25.92, a new World Junior and Championships record, improving the 3:26.65 reference set by Canada in 2017. Swimming with Luca Urlando, Adam Chaney, Amy Tang and closing the relay with 100m free champion Walsh, the US quartet was followed by Russia in 3:27.72 (Minakov swam the second leg, giving a provisional lead to his team then), and by Italy in 3:29.12.



Photo by Istvan Derencsenyi

Quotes

Jade Hannah (CAN), gold, 200m back

“I’m super happy about making the double (100m-200m). You can see the hard work I’ve put in this year, which finally paid off. I’ve come on a long way and just so happy to be on the top of podium twice. I don’t know if it was a safe win, finals are unpredictable, especially on the last 50m anything can happen.”

Andrei Minakov (RUS), gold, 100m fly

“It was quite a busy summer... Junior European title, medal at the World Championships, now this gold – I consider them equally important. All serve my development and bring me closer to my big dream, to swim at the Olympic Games in Tokyo.”

Gretchen Walsh (USA), gold, 100m free

“I was really happy with the job done tonight. I knew I could break 54, but I never thought I would do 53.7 so I’m very happy. It was a hard race, but I was like... just fed off everyone else’s energy.

(On the relay win) “Oh Gosh, I’m so honoured... I mean, it was really tiring to swim the two races almost back-to-back, the individuals are a lot of fun but winning a medal with the relays is the most awesome experience ever.”

Franko Grgic (CRO), gold, 800m free

“We are the best in football, water polo, handball – and now in swimming! I’ve been preparing for this, it’s our top competition of the year, and I really went for this gold. It went all good, the time is OK, the pace as well, so I’m absolutely overjoyed. On Sunday I want to win the 1500m free, too!”
