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Youth Artistic Swimming Worlds, Samorin, Day 5: Two more titles swept away by Russia

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The inaugural FINA Youth World Artistic Swimming Championships came to a close on Sunday evening at the X-bionic Arena of Samorin, Slovakia. With the remaining 2 sets of medals decided for Duets and Teams, celebrations continued at the Medal Ceremony and spectacular Gala party, seeing Slovak senior team and Russian star guest Varvara Subbotina. Yet again, the crowd was simply fantastic, supporting all competitors and showing their appreciation for their skills throughout the events.

DUET FREE – FINAL

Each of the top three in the 12-duets final experienced their next tour to the podium, including Anastasiia Soldatenkova of Ukraine collected her third silver and Alba Garcia of Spain on her third bronze. Everyone was in the best spirit, and the contest turned to shine even brighter than in the prelims, featuring impressive deckwork, bright characters, and smart solutions for the major expressive and technical artistic swimming skills.



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

As expected, Russia stormed to the gold medal with the accumulated overall of 167.9686. They first sent in a strong message to the opponents early in the prelims, when performing “Polovtsian dance” to the modern version of the Knyaz Igor Opera by a famous Russian composer Aleksandr Borodin. Repeating their successful swim in the final, assessed by 87.2000 points, with marvelous 34.8 compliment on the artistic impression, they simply sealed their next gold in rough 4 points ahead of the ever chasing Ukraine side. It was no way easy. Diana Mirgazizova of Russia could hardly walk, hardly breathing after the performance.

“The portion performed was very technical from the choreography view point, - says Russian coach **Daria**

Alexandrova. – There were numerous twists and so called blind work, and we accentuated good amplitude of

movements to match capabilities of our swimmers. We wanted to set a high standard, of junior level maybe, because the girls will enter the junior age group next year.”

In the final Ukrainian hopes Sofiia Sereda and Anastasiia Soldatenkova also improved on the artistic impression and synchronization side, performing complicated rising twists and endless links, and the audience was blown away by their dynamic and powerful performance. They ended up on 163.0325 points overall, 4 ahead of the bronze duo.

“I am happy on my third silver travel to the podium, and I still have a good prospect to earn the fourth by the end of the

day, - said **Anastasiia Soldatenkova.** – The program was rather difficult. At first, very difficult to perform, but open water

helped a lot. I liked competing in Samorin and will miss it badly”.



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

Spanish Mercedes Diaz and Alba Garcia came away on the 3rd, thanks to their harmonious movements during the “Snakefood” program. In the finals, they did their job exceedingly well and managed to improve their season’s best (acquired earlier this August in Geneva) by 0.1200 points. They had a really good Figure session, so the resulting sum left no questions or tensions arisen, 159.3244. It was the third “Italian – Spanish” rivalry here at the Youth Worlds, and again the podium spot escaped “Sette Rossa”.

“We hoped for this win and did our best to win bronze, - shared **Mercedes Diaz**. – We have improved the first part of our performance, especially in the part of synchronization, which brought good fruits. I thought, that Italian could come up to the podium as the girls are strong technically. It is the first medal for me at the Championships ever. The Russians have been great. I wish I will be able to reach that level one day”.

Italian Vittoria Meucci/Susanna Pedotti, winners of COMEN Cup-2019, posted third best at the prelims routine, and had every reason to hope on bronze. But for the Figure Session, which pushed them down to head the finals the fourth, which they unhappily preserved after the final showdown, 81.8332/157.9332.

Yutong An substituted Xiaoyou Zhang to pair Feixue Yan. The change proved to be successful and helped Chinese to move one up, comparing to preliminary’s overall. Receiving 80.0332 for the final’s swim and 154.9989 overall, they narrowly edged out Kazakh Anna Pavletsova and Yuliya Rogaleva, who did a very attractive “Italian Job” staged by Anastasiia Ermakova, 79.2668/154.6659. Another “castling” saw French beauties Maelys Callenne and Oriane Jaillardin exchanging seats with Yumika Inatomi and Kiyono Nakaita of Japan. The French were swimming an Olympic portion of 2012 of their national team role models Sara Labrousse and Chloe Willhelm.

Greek students performing “Tarzan”, 2 version of “Clocks” by German Klara Bleyer/ Nicole Daviovich and Canadian Tara Goettisheim/Charlotte Gray, and Raga’s dance by the USA’s Yujin Chang/Emily Ding fell a little short of themselves comparing to the day 2, however that did not have any crucial impact on their placement, as the finished within 3 points from 9 to 12.

TEAM FREE – FINAL



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

Once again, the Russian anthem has accompanied the end of the day, and the final was a pleasure to follow. A tight fight for the podium spots kept the audience on the edge of their seat till the last seconds of the last performance. The chase on gold was between Russian and Ukraine, whereas the bronze race saw at least 4 teams able and wishing to write down their name in the history book of the first Youth Worlds.

After the prelims Russia ranked first, and then strengthened their preliminary scored through the impressive Figure session as all of the team - Violetta Evenko, Daria Kirsanova, Polina Lartseva, Diana Mirgazizova, Daria Ogorodnikova, Aleksandra Prudius, Anna Sokolova and Eva Zelenko - finished in the top 10. They were again very convincing on their well-drilled dance. Their task and idea was bringing fire and life to dolls, who had been initially breathless, and they again set a high mark for their chasing crowd - 87.9332 points (with awesome 26.4000 points for execution, 26.2000 for difficulty and incredible 35.3332 for the artistic impression) as their winning overall reached 168.9158.

Ukraine's "Black panther" deservedly got silver on 162.2653. Like the day before, they swam after Russia, theoretically preserving a chance to post a score which could have beat them. It was too a challenging task and Ukraine assumed 2 points less than their opponents on a fine swim without visible faults on the execution side.

"We neither watch opponents nor tracking their scores to get better concentrated on our own performances, but

according to reaction of the grand stands we could understand that their swim was well done, - says **Kseniya**

Titorenko, coach of Ukraine. - We appreciated this close competition, which definitely adds to the value of our

medals. It was the fourth silver in our pocket, which is pretty impressive! It stood as a sort of challenge to swim after their solid performance, but our girls coped with the nerves and kept emotions under control".

"We are very happy about the 4th win to go, - confessed **Diana Mirgazizova** of Russia just after the Awarding

Ceremony. - We did a good job, and our coaches are pleased with our performance. There is no secret for our success. We just trained hard and we will be looking forward to reach such good results in the future. It was very difficult to perform in the final, because we felt responsibility, we could not showcase it worse than in the prelims”.

“I think, we showed what we wanted to with our routine today, - adds Violetta Evenko. - We are so happy because it was our best performance so far. It is our pleasure to swim here in Slovakia, where the crowd is very very friendly and knows artistic swimming, and we are very grateful to them for their support. The rhythms of our song gave us energy”.



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

Reigning COMEN cup champions dressed in multi-colored swimsuits and ardently supported by Torsida swam a tropical portion of their senior team (which they showed at the FINA 2017 World Championships in Budapest and Olympic Qualification tournament in Rio de Janeiro in 2016). They totaled 84.4668, bettering themselves by over a point.

“We have done it!, - Spaniards were again dancing on the pool-deck in a circle, enjoying a good portion of castanets styled clapping from their fans.

“The bronze is not bad at all for us, - said **Alba Cabello of Spain**. - We competed against such strong nations as

Russia, Ukraine and Italy, which was not an easy task as all they are pretty high-rated. Today we performed with a lot of energy, tried to avoid those little mistakes we had in the previous swim 2 days ago. Our target was a perfect swim, and I think, we succeeded”.

Their ever chasers “Sette Rossa” swam their “Martial arts” program for the season’s best of 82.9000 points. They tried hard and even managed to improve their prelims score by 2 points, however it was again not enough to catch Spaniards, 82.9000/158.22755.

The fifth place was attributed to China, 155.7830. Kazakhstan, which tried to mimic movements of skeletons, moved one up, bettered their sum of the prelims to 79.7668 and overall to 154.9406. Consequently, Japanese “Avatar” went one down to finish on the 7th position as they have amassed 81.0032 on the routine’s part and 154.7930 points overall. USA, France and Greece accumulating over 151 finished on places from 8 to 10. Belarus managed to slightly improve their performance in the final, but that famous daunting Figure session did not allow them to rank high, and they were 11th in the ranking, followed by Canadian girls presenting their Universe-theme program to Tron soundtrack, 76.1332/148.9116.



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

SUMMARY OF SAMORIN-2019

5 competition days of the inaugural FINA World Youth Artistic Swimming Championships set up a high bar for the next editions. The Perennial favorite Russia added four more to its numerous titles. Ukraine collected 4 silver pieces, followed by the most often travelling to the podium nation in Samorin – Spain, sitting on 3 bronze and 1 silver medal. Besides that, Japan finished on podium appearance as Kazakhstan grabbed the first mixed duet champion’s title in the youth world’s history.

Individually, Daria Kirsanova of Russia turned out to be the most successful contestant as she earned titles in solo, Free combo and Team routines. Anastasiia Soldatenkova of Ukraine landed on 4 silver medals, swimming Solo and Duet, and both group portions. Iberian Alba Garcia came away with 4 bronze medals.

“The 1st FINA Youth World Artistic Swimming Championships came to a close, and it was definitely a success, -

commented **Lisa Schott, FINA Artistic Swimming Technical Committee Chairwoman**, - We were happy to

register impressive number of participant countries – 32, and record number of participants – 322, and figures better than any words are illustrating the scale and the significance of the competitions. I would like to heartily thank the

Local Organising Committee and authorities of Slovakia for the big job they have done. The venue was simply amazing! We had all the necessary facilities to proceed testing innovative synchronization scoring program. What is also very important, in the framework of these Youth Worlds we have conducted a number of seminars for coaches and judges, where they shared feedback and follow-up on site. We have also done that in Korea at the recent FINA World Championships-2019, which proved very effective. For the athletes a cherry on the cake was the Inspiration talk with Ona Carbonell. The social program will finish tomorrow, which will be an “all-lectures day”, and a number of very useful talks will be done by prominent coaches, experienced judges and FINA officials.



Photo credit to Peter Sukenik

1st FINA Youth World Artistic Swimming Championships. Competition results.

Duet Free Routine - Final/Total Result

1. Violetta Evenko/Diana Mirgazitova (RUS) 87.2000/167.9686, 2. Sofiiia Sereda/Anastasiia Soldatenkova (UKR) 84.0668/163.0325, 3. Mercedes Diaz/Alba Garcia (ESP) 82.2332/159.3244, 4. Vittoria Meucci/Susanna Pedotti (ITA) 81.8332/157.9332, 5. Feixue Yan/Yutong An (CHN) 80.0332/154.9989, 6. Anna Pavletsova/Yuliya Rogaleva (KAZ) 79.2668/154.6659 7. Maelys Callennec/Oriane Jaillardon (FRA) 77.4000/153.4226, 8. Yumika Inatomi/Kiyono Nakaita (JPN) 78.4668/152.2600, 9. Eleni Fragkaki/Krystalenia Gialama (GRE) 75.8668/151.4511, 10. Klara Bleyer/Nicole Davidovich (GER) 76.8668/150.4825, 11. Tara Goettinsheim/Charlotte Gray (CAN) 74.7000, 12. Yujin Chang/Emily Ding (USA) 75.0000/148.6588

Team Free Routine - Final/Total Result

1. RUS (Violetta Evenko, Daria Kirsanova, Polina Lartseva, Diana Mirgazizova, Daria Ogorodnikova, Aleksandra Prudius, Anna Sokolova, Eva Zelenko, Allia Akhmetzianova – R, Alena Bakai – R, Lyaysyan Mustafina – R, Viktoriia Rodionycheva - R) 87.9332/168.9158
 2. UKR (Valeriia Hryhorova, Sofiia Sereda, Anastasiia Shmonina, Anastasiia Soldatenkova, Alisa Sopelnyak, Valeriya Tyschenko, Inha Valkova, Anna Yefimova, Sofiia Matsiievska – R, Arina Shtepliuk – R) 85.9332/162.2653
 3. ESP (Claudia C.Ballero, Regina Casino, Aitana Crespo, Mercedes Diaz, Alba Garcia, Marina Garcia, Carolina Lassaletta, Valeria Parra, Carmen Beato – R, Clara Lamagrande – R) 84.4668/160.8445
 4. ITA (Arianna di Lecce, Benedetta Gianazza, Alessia Machhi, Vittoria Meucci, Matilde Neri, Susanna Pedotti, Beatrice Petta, Aurora Puccianti, Alessia Austranti – R, Georgia Caprasecca – R, Benedetta Dori – R, Giorgia Macino – R) 82.9000/158.2755
 5. CHN (Yutong An, Siyuan Chen, Siyi Chen, Yuxin He, Wangxuanjing Qiao, Huiyan Xu, Feixue Yan, Xuaoyou Zhang, Yuxing Wang, Nike Yang) 81.8332/155.7830
 6. KAZ (Yelizaveta Lepikhova, Arina Myasnikova, Emma Pashkovskaya, Anna Pavletsova, Arina Pushkina, Yuliya Rogaleva, Yasmin Tuyakova, Darina Valiullina, Karolina Ivanova - R, Yana Shevchenko – R) 79.7668/154.9406
 7. JPN (Moka Fujii, Yumika Inatomi, Kokoro Mikami, Kiyono Nakaita, Hiyori Okano, Ayano Shimada, Natsuha Taneda, Sakurako Uchida, Reona Shigeyama, Wakaba Nishimura – R, Umi Awhihara – R) 81.0332/154.7930
 8. USA (Yujin Chang, Ivy Davis, Emily Ding, Keana Hunter, Claire Kim, Riley Morgan, Atira Oneil, Ashlyn Wang, Megan Kerner – R, Alexis Mccracken – R) 77.2668/151.8472
 9. FRA (Maelys Callennec, Lalie Chassaigne, Juliette Dapoigny, Louisiane Derenne, Shirine Guermoud, Emma Haloiija, Oriane Jallardon, Romane Lunel, nayla Amara – R, Ambre Lesurtel – R) 77.7668/151.7359
 10. GRE (Konstantina Angelopoulou, Georgia Zotali, Konstantina Filenta, Eleni Fragkaki, Krystalenia Gialama, Zoi Karangelou, Maria Karapanagiotou, Ifigeneia Krommydaki, Aikaterini Bekou – R, Vagia Stavroula Eleni – R) 79.0000/151.6927
 11. BLR (Neli Kaburneyeva, Lizaveta Kasouskaya, Ksenia Lebedzeva, Anastasia Liplianina, valeryia Puz, Valeryia Shymanskaya, Khrystsina Zhyhalka, Aliaksandra Petrachenka – R, Palina Zmiyeuskaya – R) 75.7668/149.5036
 12. CAN (Elizabeth Battista, Jeanne Boilard, Leonie Corbeil, Mya Fortin, Tara Goettisheim, Charlotte Gray, Lauren Irvine, Jonnie Newman, Meaghan Lapierre – R, Yijia Liu – R) 76.1332/148.9116
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