

## 17<sup>th</sup> FINA World Championships – Budapest 2017

The 17<sup>th</sup> FINA World Championships was staged in the City of Budapest (Hungary) across multiple venues, with the exception of the Open Water Swimming (Balatonfüred – Lake Balaton). Budapest is a vibrant city, with a population of approximately two million people. It's not just the powerhouse of the Hungarian economy, it's also an important cultural centre and the focus of the country's political life. Hungary is considered the land of waters. Lake Balaton, the biggest freshwater lake of Central Europe, the Danube, Europe's second longest river, plus the largest thermal water system in the world – with an abundance of thermal springs and spas.

This small country was among the founding states of FINA and has enjoyed great success in both the Swimming and Water Polo disciplines.

6 FINA disciplines were included in the FINA World Championships which was held over 2 weeks, from July 14-30. Swimming and Diving events were held in the Duna Arena. This permanent venue complex features two Olympic-size pools. The competition pool is 3 meters deep, while the depth of the warm-up pool can be adjusted according to the need. By involving temporary, indoor stands, the seating capacity increased and the total capacity for swimming was 12'500, 3'500 for diving.

Artistic Swimming was held at City Park, Városliget Lake by Heroes Square (Hősök tere), the iconic UNESCO World Heritage site. Városliget Lake has been used by children and adults for ice skating during the winters since the 1830s.

The temporary pools were set in a fantastic location – with the giant sculpture-pantheon, the two classical museum-buildings and the Vajdahunyad Castle located in or close by to the square. The stunning location, combined with the amazing routines of the world's best athletes, made this a once in a lifetime experience for both athletes and fans. There were one 50-metre pool and one 35-metre pools, which athletes used to warm up and compete. The venue capacity was approximately 5'000 spectators.

Alfréd Hajós complex in Margaret Island was the venue for Water Polo. It's considered the "Central Park" of Budapest and is the focal point of domestic aquatic sports. The overall capacity of the venue was of 7'000 seats.

Balatonfüred – Lake Balaton is located 130 kilometers southwest from Budapest and has 13,500 inhabitants. The course was located by the main promenade, which offered a brilliant view of the races and the Tihany Peninsula.

The temporary pool for the High Diving discipline was set up by Batthyány Square, alongside the River Danube. It was a breathtaking location, situated by the Buda embankment and just across from the Parliament building. It sat between two of the most beautiful bridges in Budapest – the Chain Bridge and the Margit Hid (Margaret Island Bridge). As with Artistic Swimming, this daring discipline offered truly unique and picturesque views of the city of Budapest while showcasing the world's best High Divers. The High Diving venue was award winner of the ISA International Sports Award, for Sports Venue of the Year 2017.

## **FACTS & FIGURES**

473'950 Fans in the stands  
21 New Championships records  
8 World Junior records  
2'303 Athletes  
172 Broadcast countries  
3'500 Volunteers  
29 Different nations represented on the podium  
11 New World Records  
USD 5'820'100 Combined Prize Money Total

The 17th FINA Masters Championships was held immediately after the World Championships, from August 7-20. This is the second time that the Masters are organized within the same venues of the Championships, straight after and not as a stand-alone event.

There was huge interest and record participation in the Masters World Championships (5 disciplines only), with 9,823 athletes competing from 96 different countries. Taking part in the Masters were 120 Water Polo teams, 1,190 Open Water Swimmers, 325 Divers and 538 Artistic Swimmers across four venues and eight competition pools.

The competition also brought out the best in the athletes with 37 Masters World Records, the highest achieved in the last five World Championships.

Maurine Emille Kornfeld, from the USA, was the oldest female Swimmer at 96 years of age. However, she was just edged out as the oldest competitor by 97-year-old Bánki Horváth Béla of Hungary. He was the oldest athlete but showed age was not slowing him down by winning four gold medals.