Rain, wind and the cold did not discourage the Italian swimmers last weekend in Patagones-Viedma, Argentina, as the country achieved brilliant results at the inaugural leg of the 2017 FINA/HOSA 10km Marathon Swimming World Cup.

Italy was the dominant force over the weekend, clinching the men and women’s gold medals at stake as well as both silver medals.

Federico Vanelli was the best among the men, winning in 1h57m02s42, while Arianna Bridi was the fastest in the women’s field, touching home in 2h11m30s42.

Last year overall winners of the Series, Simone Ruffini and Rachele Bruni (ITA) pocketed silver in 1h57m32s30 and 2h12m13s54 respectively.

Medallists in Patagones-Viedma (ARG)

Men
1. Federico Vanelli (ITA), 1h57m02s42; 2. Simone Ruffini (ITA), 1h57m32s30; 3. David Aubry (FRA), 1h58m25s36

Women
1. Arianna Bridi (ITA), 2h11m30s42; 2. Rachele Bruni (ITA), 2h12m13s54; 2. Poliana Okimoto (BRA), 2h12m13s54
38 swimmers took part in this inaugural leg in Argentina. The FINA/HOSA 10km Marathon Swimming World Cup 2017 will next stop in Abu Dhabi (UAE), on March 11.

In parallel, the Argentinian host city run the ‘LAPATAGONESVIEDMA’, a true festival of open water swimming gravitating around the main 10km race. A number of Mass Participation open water swimming events formed part of the FINA Open Water Mass Swimming World Series.

With four days of open water swimming, there was something for everyone to either take part in or spectate, with a thrilling atmosphere at each swim.

The festival started off in style with the elites ‘warming up’ two days before the big race with a 1.6km sprint. This was a unique opportunity for the athletes to perform to the crowds on the Patagones side of the river. This swimming festival bridges the two towns on opposite sides of the Rio Negro, Patagones and Viedma.

Three extra races were organised:

El Cruce Del Rio - The event, open to all, was a 600m race from one side of the river to the other. With music playing, a large crowd supported around 200 swimmers as they got out of the water to cross the finish line.

Iron Kids - For younger swimmers, the ‘Iron kids’ event took place at the same venue, with swims from 20m through to 50m with 5 to 10-year-olds taking part. These swims took place along the shoreline with lifeguards watching over the young swimmers and many proud parents cheering on the swimmers in their open water challenge.

La Puente a Puente - The swimming festival concluded with a down river swim ‘bridge to bridge’ starting on one side of the river and finishing some 3.8km on the other. This was open to swimmers over 13-year-old and prizes awarded to age groups. With the current in the swimmers’ favour, this was a fast swim downstream and a great way to finish off this amazing swimming festival showcasing how the Mass events and elite events work so well together.

FINA SCHOLARSHIP REPORT 2014-2016 NOW AVAILABLE!

FINA is pleased to release the FINA Scholarship report, highlighting actions and activities undertaken between the years 2014-2016.

The FINA Scholarship Programme, introduced in June 2013, offers the opportunity to obtain financial and technical assistance for one potential elite athlete selected and proposed by their respective National Federation.

The scholarship supported athletes preparing for the 2015 FINA World Championships in Kazan (RUS) and the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (BRA), and will continue assisting swimmers for the 2017 FINA World Championships in Budapest (HUN), with a particular focus on athletes and National Federations with the greatest needs.

Over the years and right from its launch, the aim of the programme was to identify, qualify and prepare a limited number of athletes aspiring to achieve the requested times to participate in major international competitions and the Olympic Games.

Each National Federation receives the application form where they can select one of the possible training options (Training Centre or National Federation option) and present the credentials of the athlete (e.g. best results, age, training plan that has been followed, feedbacks from the coach and motivation letter written by the athlete).

An athlete can benefit from the Scholarship programme for a maximum 12 months for each application.

54 athletes from 38 countries have been selected by their NF to be FINA Scholarship holders since 2013, 33 of which have qualified for either the FINA World Championships or the Olympic Games or both.

Full report and individual stories are available here
MORE THAN 3000 REGISTER FOR BP2017 MASTERS!

While registration to the FINA World Masters Championships 2017 in Budapest, Hungary, officially opened on January 31, already more than 3,000 aquatic sports enthusiasts have completed registration for the event scheduled from August 7-20.

FINA President Julio C. Maglione said: "FINA is delighted to see this unprecedented and significant interest from the sports amateur from all over the world and is looking forward to witnessing outstanding performances in FINA’s five disciplines available at the Masters."

All details relating to the Masters Championships can be found on the official Budapest 2017 website.

Masters athletes are encouraged to register as soon as possible to guarantee their best possible participation conditions.

Don't miss out, register now!

Deadline to register is June 29, 2017. However FINA reserves the right to close registration before this date if numbers become excessive in order to ensure a safe and high quality competition.

We look forward to welcoming you all in Budapest!