Multiple Olympic and World champion but also last year's Series overall winner Sarah Sjostrom of Sweden who just completed an impressive European championships is gearing up to the highly anticipated FINA Swimming World Cup to start in just 22 days.

Sjostrom, 24, doesn't need to be introduced anymore. She counts 1 Olympic gold medal, 10 World titles and holds another 6 World Records. She will - with no doubt - be one of the biggest stars to highlight the pool action over the next few months throughout the circuit of the World Cup (calendar 2018).

Despite anticipating the new Series with so much success and prowess in her bag, Sjostrom admits that equalling 2017 is going to be tough:

"I was in the best shape of my life during 2017."

"My main goal is obviously to always get better every year. This year was all about improving my training again, to build a good base for next year (2019) and 2020."

A big fan of both the 25 and 50m pool format and understandably the Eindhoven (NED) venue*, Sjostrom says:

"I like the short and long course mix. I really liked the World Cup in Eindhoven last year. The Dutch people just know how to organise swimming meets."

*Sjostrom bagged her first European championships title in Eindhoven 10 years ago when she was 14, so Eindhoven holds a special place in her heart.
"Eindhoven Organising Committee provided a good hotel, lovely food, easy access to the pool, a lots of space for warm up / warm down etc."

Sjostrom, who once received the precious advice to "Remember that winning and failure is a part of being an athlete. You have to learn to handle them both", shared detailed about her current training regime.

"At the moment I share my training time between two locations: I am training 50% in Stockholm with the national elite centre with my coach Johan Wallberg and 50 % in Belek, Turkey."

"My training includes 10 swim sessions and 2 gym + 2 core /circuit / Pilates per week. I sometimes swim 14km (2x7km sessions) and the next day it can be just 5 km and gym in the afternoon. But I would say an average of 10km a day (two 5km sessions)."

Being an elite athlete isn't always easy and training can be particularly challenging.

"The most difficult part for me is to get in the freezing water in the morning, I hate it! I dislike hot water too! Also, when I feel low in the water, it doesn't even matter if I try to use my legs or arms more, I just sink more. These are the worst kind of sessions."

With 22 days to go to the start of the FINA Swimming World Cup, Kazan, Russia is finalising preparations to host the inaugural leg from September 7-9. Live Streaming available on FINAtv. A press conference during which the Trophies will be revealed will take place on September 6.

The Series will be held in 50m format pool at the Kazan Aquatics Palace, a five-year old state-of-the-art facility on the banks of the Kazanka River built in 2013 on the occasion of the Summer Universiade and then used for the diving and water polo competitions of the FINA World Championships in 2015.

There will be a total of 32 individual events and 2 relays as below:

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* 100 IM M/W: Only available in the 2nd and 3rd Cluster

More on fina.org

SZOMBATHELY: GREECE, SERBIA FINISH ATOP, JOIN CROATIA AND MONTENEGRO IN THE QUARTERS

Greece and Serbia already made their way to the quarters by finishing atop in their respective groups.

The Greeks staged a brilliant third period against the Russians to clinch their third win in as many matches.

The Serbs had an easier task and they delivered - depsite of having a game in hand they also secured their spot in the best eight and joined Croatia and Montenegro.

The big game of the day featuring Greece and Russia was quite balanced till halftime but in the third the Greeks caught a wave, rode it and decided the game with a 5-1 rush. This great win sent them to the quarter-finals directly as they maintained their clean sheet and finished atop in Group B as they could beat both their big rivals Russia and Hungary.
Earlier the Serbs also completed their mission by beating Canada in the opening match of Day 4. Though they have a game in hand but their first position has already been secured too.

The third qualifying spot was at stake in Group A when Brazil clashed with Egypt and despite some hard resistance from the Africans the favourite side could build a gap after 4-5, big enough to last till the end of the match.

The United States bounced back from their painful loss to Italy, then to Croatia and earned their first win here - it was an easy one as they netted 26 goals and set up a decisive match for the third qualifying spot against New Zealand on Day 5.

The Italians beat New Zealand with ease, they geared up after a relatively slow start to book the second place in the group - they will play either with Hungary or Russia, a guaranteed highlight in the eight-final round.

In the closing match Hungary offered prime time entertainment for the locals who flooded the stands once again and enjoyed the show the hosts put up on the field while setting a new single-game scoring record by netting 30 against Argentina.

**Standings after Day 4**

**Group A:** 1. Montenegro 9, 2. Australia 6, 3. Brazil 6, 4. Egypt 1, 5. South Africa 1 (4 matches)

**Group B:** 1. Greece 9, 1. Russia 6, 3. Hungary 6, 4. China 1, 5. Argentina 1 (4)

**Group C:** 1. Croatia 9, 2. Italy 9 (4), 3. New Zealand 3, 4. United States 3, 5. Uzbekistan 0


Detailed and daily games reports available [here](#)

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**FINA RENEWS AYMAN KLZIE'S SCHOLARSHIP FOR 6 MORE MONTHS**

FINA scholarship holder Ayman Klzie of Syria has seen his training support extended for another six months, allowing him to fine tune his preparations to the 14th FINA World Swimming Championships (25m) 2018 to take place in Hangzhou (CHN) from December 11 - 16, 2018.

Ayman grew up in Syria and developed a passion for swimming at a very young age. Put forward by his National Federation, Ayman has been benefitting from a FINA scholarship since 2017 and is currently training at Thanyapura Centre in Phuket, Thailand.

Thanyapura Aquatics Director and Ayman's coach Miguel Lopez speaks highly of the young swimmer:

"Ayman has become a very smart trainer, working harder and better than ever. I believe he has matured to his best level as a swimmer and as a teammate. He keeps working as an instructor in Thanyapura, which seems to help him remain more focused and alert."

Praising his leadership and emotional capacity among the 12-athlete group currently training at the Centre, Lopez praises:

"Ayman's leadership as an emotional captain for this group provides more benefit than his own performance. This is an aspect to be valued and rewarded. He surprises us every day with unexpected results, even better respect to the aerobic capacity."

Ayman broke his country's national record at the Budapest 2017 World Championships last summer and is strongly believed to be just as successful at the upcoming World Swimming Championships (25m) in December.

"It is my deepest conviction that in October, as soon as we have a short course FINA approved meet - the Thailand Open meet - Ayman will break the national record again and accomplish the "B" cut for the Short Course World Championships."
The Fédération Internationale de Natation, FINA (founded in 1908) is the governing body for aquatics worldwide. Its five disciplines - Swimming, Open Water Swimming, Diving, Water Polo and Synchronised Swimming - are all included in the Olympic programme. High Diving is on the World Championships programme since 2013. FINA organises World Championships, World Swimming Championships in 25m-pool and World Masters Championships every two years. FINA counts 209 affiliated National Federations on the five continents and has its headquarters in Lausanne (SUI).