



Swimming, Day 3: In the men's 200m Free

Phelps loses duel with Biedermann

In the most awaited final (men's 200m free) of the third day of the swimming competitions of the 13th FINA World Championships, Michael Phelps (USA) lost his duel with Germany's Paul Biedermann, who had the race of his life and touched first in 1:42.00, smashing the World Record (WR) established by Phelps at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing (1:42.96). Biedermann (23 years old on August 7 and the fastest of the semi-finals, in 1:43.65) controlled the pace from the initial dive and arrived about two metres ahead of the American champion (who clocked 1:43.22). It was Phelps' first defeat in this event at the highest level since the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, where he had been third behind Ian Thorpe (AUS, gold) and Pieter van den Hoogenband (NED, second); from then, he was first in Montreal 2005, Melbourne 2007 and Beijing 2008.

At the "Water Cube" of the Chinese capital, Phelps made history by winning an unprecedented record of eight gold medals in a single edition of the Games, and the 200m free had been one of the "easiest" victories of that long week for the "Kid of Baltimore" – in Beijing, Biedermann was fifth in 1:46.00. In Rome, the German appeared very strong, prevailing on Day 1 in the 400m free, also in a new World Record time of 3:40.07. With his teammates, Phelps had also triumphed in the inaugural session in the 4x100m free relay.

Biedermann said afterwards that he had talked to his coach and discovered that Phelps had been bettered him on the start and the turns. "The only thing I actually beat him in was the swimming," Biedermann said, "and I think I handled it really well. I was there when he (Phelps) won his eighth gold in Beijing and it was really great just to live that moment...and now I am faster than him." Biedermann said Phelps congratulated him after his win and that he felt very honoured by the gesture. He also noted that Britta Steffen had come to him before the race and said that she believed in him; that she really believed he could beat Phelps and that he actually thanks her for his win. He conceded, however, that, "maybe Michael Phelps was not in the best shape like

he was in Beijing and maybe if he was in better shape he could beat me, but I'm looking forward to the next race."

Phelps himself admitted that he knew his physical condition wasn't prime coming into the meet, and that "now he knows where to start" when it comes to getting back into shape. Regarding his loss, he said "deep down inside I can't be disappointed and mad, I just can't. Paul swam a great race, and this result shows that to swim long course you have to be in shape. I can't dream it," he continued, "I wish I could, but I have to get back into physical shape." Phelps specified that the one meet he is looking forward to the most is the London 2012 Olympics; this is the meet he will keep in mind as he strives to get back into form. On losing, he said that he had tried to pull away when it counted, and focus on his underwater – his strength – to take the win, but that "it just wasn't working; nothing I was trying to do was working."

After these strong moments, Gemma Spofforth (GBR, 21 years old) got the second individual gold medal in the history of the championships for her country's female swimmers by touching first in the 100m backstroke. Spofforth (fourth at the 2008 Olympics) clocked 58.12, a new WR, and an improvement over the best mark achieved by Anastasia Zueva (RUS) in the semi-final (58.48). Before this victory, only her compatriot Katy Sexton had won an individual gold at the FINA World Championships, at the 2003 edition in Barcelona (ESP) in the 200m backstroke. Zueva was second in 58.18 (also faster than her previous best), and the bronze went to Emily Seebohm (AUS, 58.88). The 2005 World champion Kirsty Coventry (ZIM), who also took silver in this distance at the 2008 Olympics, finished just a surprising eighth.

Spofforth later explained that her fourth place finish in Beijing had been a motivational factor for her, and to come out and win with the WR is amazing. She recalled the personal difficulties she has overcome in order to continue her career. Namely, in 2006, she was forced out of swimming and competing for a year due to

Medals Table
After day 11

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	TOTAL
RUS	7	6	3	16
CHN	7	5	9	21
GER	5	2	0	7
USA	3	6	2	11
ITA	3	1	4	8
GBR	3	1	1	5
AUS	2	4	3	9
ESP	1	6	2	9
JPN	1	0	0	1
MEX	1	0	0	1
NED	1	0	0	1
SRB	1	0	0	1
SVKE	1	0	0	1
CAN	0	1	4	5
FRA	0	1	1	2
DEN	0	1	0	1
GRE	0	1	0	1
TUN	0	1	0	1
RSA	0	0	2	2
BRA	0	0	1	1
CUB	0	0	1	1
HUN	0	0	1	1
MAS	0	0	1	1
ROU	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	36	36	36	108

pancreatitis. "I almost decided to stop completely, but I am pretty happy tonight that I didn't," she said. She also touched on her experience with personal tragedy, recalling the death of her mother in 2007. "I have been thinking about her ever since, and it's nice that I can give something to her." Spofforth said she talks to the spirit of her mom before every race, and that she had talked to her on the podium tonight. "Her dedication to swimming was greater than my own," she said with conviction.

In the longest duel of the day - the women's 1500m free - Alessia Filippi got the second gold of the championships for the Italian female team, winning in 15:44.93 (a new

championships record). Before these championships in Rome, Italy had only one champion among women in the history of the competition: Novella Calligaris, who won the 800m free at the first edition of the championships in Belgrade. At the Foro Italico, Federica Pellegrini was best in the 200m free (on Day 1, in a WR time of 3:59.15), and now Filippi (second in this event at the 2008 Olympics) enlarged the gold collection for her country. The remaining medals went to Lotte Friis (DEN, the main challenger of the Italian), second in 15:46.30, and Camelia Potec (ROU), third in 15:55.63.

Filippi was thrilled to win in Rome, her home city, saying she had worked very hard to arrive at this result. "I was very determined; I wanted to have a medal here, at this venue." Regarding her win, she felt she was better technically in the second half of the race, and that she had wanted to start strong, but not lead, although she didn't want her opponents to be too far ahead either. She had felt "a lot of adrenaline, but very calm," on the eve of the race, and that she had dreamed about the race exactly as it had turned out. She was questioned on her relationship with Pellegrini, to which she said: "Just like any other strong athlete, she is a competitor. We are mutually supportive of each other even though we have a fair rivalry," adding that before thinking about the 800m, she and Pellegrini will focus on taking a medal for Italy in the 4x200m freestyle.

With Aaron Peirsol (USA) not qualified, the men's 100m backstroke was quite an open race and the attention was certainly focused in Ryosuke Irie (JPN) and Aschwin Wildeboer (ESP), two of the best performers of the season before the start of the championships. But neither got one of the two most precious medals: Irie was fourth and the Spaniard was third (52.64). Instead, the gold went to the other Japanese in this final, Junya Koga, in a championships record of 52.26 – it was the first medal at this level for this 22-year-old swimmer, as well as the first award for Japan in Rome. In second, Helge Meeuw (GER, 52.54) gave one more medal to the German team, after a modest 19th place in this event at the 2008 Olympics.

The Americans took revenge in the last final of the session, with a conclusive victory of Rebecca Soni in the women's 100m breaststroke. Second in Beijing in this event, Soni had broken the WR in the semi-final (1:04.84), but did not need to swim so fast in the decisive race: touching the wall in 1:04.93, she left her main challengers Yulia Efimova

(RUS) in second (1:05.41) and Kasey Carlson (USA) in third (1:05.75). It was the second time US swimmers won this distance at the World Championships, after the gold in 1998 for Kristy Kowal – before the "era" of Xuejuan Luo (CHN, victories in 2001 and 2003) and Leisel Jones (AUS, 2005 and 2007).

In the men's 50m breaststroke semi-final, Cameron van der Burgh (RSA) was the fastest qualifier with a new WR of 26.74, improving the mark set by Brazil's Felipe Silva on May 9 (26.89). The South American clocked the third best time, very close to his personal best (26.92). Van der Burgh had been third in the 100m breaststroke on Day 2.

In the first semi-final of the women's 200m free, Federica Pellegrini (ITA) bettered her own WR by touching first in 1:53.67 – bettering the 1:54.47 she had established last March in Riccione (ITA). Noteworthy was the 16th and last placement of Stephanie Rice (AUS) in the semi-finals of this event.

Almost ending the day, Phelps was once again not the best in the semi-finals of the men's 200m butterfly. The world and Olympic champion of the distance, was second in his race (1:53.48, losing to Japan's Takeshi Matsuda with 1:53.35), qualifying in lane 5 for the final.

WATER POLO

Hungary to miss men's water polo semifinals

Hungary, the dominant Olympic team of this century, will not be battling out Thursday's semifinals, having lost a titanic extra-time encounter with Serbia in quarter-final men's play at the Foro Italico today.

Head coach Denes KEMENY laid the blame at his team's feet, saying "the scoreboard never lies". He said: "We made a few mistakes in crucial moments of the match."

Kemeny was expelled from the game early in the fourth quarter as the game headed to an 8-8 draw, forcing extra time. Serbia went ahead through ALEKSIC and Gabor KIS responded on extra.

KIS joined KEMENY in the stands soon after and Filippo FILIPOVIC broke the deadlock and gained the victory for Serbia.

KEMENY explained his ejection from the pool deck, saying: "I was pointing at the 30-seconds board. Instead of making sure what I was doing, the Neopolitan referee (Filippo GOMEZ)

showed me the red card. This disappointed me because I thought he was an impartial referee." Serbian head coach Dejan UDOVICIC was ecstatic after the match. "What a match! There were so many exciting moments that I am still holding my breath. We won by one goal but I think that we deserved this victory. We proved to be a good team. We do not under-estimate anyone and we do not fear anyone."

Serbia will play Croatia, who were troubled by Romania before winning 7-5.

Ratko RUDIC, Croatia's legendary coach, said the match was full of "psychological tension".

"We didn't take advantage of the six-on-five, otherwise we would have scored more. Now we will play Serbia and we will do it to get to the final."

The United States of America used a third-quarter, five-goal burst to dominate and eventually beat Germany 8-5 and will play Spain, who beat Canada 11-4.

Spain had to come back from 4-1 down in the second quarter to slaughter Canada with a 10-goal burst.

In the semifinal series for the 9-12 group, European champion Montenegro struggled with China's goalkeepers but still romped home 14-5.

Australia swatted aside Italy 8-6 and afterwards, coach Alessandro CAMPAGNA, who was red-carded in the dying moments of the game and will miss the 11th-12th play-off, said his team needed to be "more respectful of wearing the Italian national cap".

Four teams made their mark and left the competition with South Africa managing to stay ahead of Kazakhstan for 15th place despite losing two players and the head coach to red cards in the final quarter before finishing 6-5 up. Brazil, like the women's 13th & 14th place game the day before, went to a penalty shootout with Brazil emerging after the first two shots of sudden death — 16-15.

The women's semifinals will be played on Wednesday with Canada playing Russia at 16:50 and Greece facing the USA at 21:00.

Game 69, 08:40, men, RSA 6 KAZ 5

Classification 15th-16th

Referees: Ursula WENGEROTH (SUI), Mark KOGANOV (AZE).

Quarters: 1-2, 3-1, 2-1, 0-1

Extra man: RSA 2/7; KAZ 3/11

South Africa finished 15th, one place lower than its best effort of 14th in 1998. For Kazakhstan, 16th place is its worst effort in four appearances and down from 12th, its last appearance at this level in 2001. South Africa won despite the loss of two players and the head coach in a last-quarter confrontation. Big centre forward BELL was red-carded from the exclusion box as

Kazakhstan scored on extra. Head coach TRNINIC advanced on the referee and refused to go back so was also red-carded. The referee called for the ball and the low pass was not appreciated and Etienne LE ROUX was excluded for misconduct. With three team personnel in the stands, South Africa pushed on and gained a penalty shot, which captain WOODS had blocked at 2:13. At 6-5 the remainder of the game was tense but South Africa emerged with the victory.

Game 70, 10:00, men, BRA 16 MKD 15

in sudden death penalty shootout (FT:11-11. ET:12-12. Pens: 4-3).

Classification 13th-14th

Referees: Farid MONER (EGY), Guy PINKER (RSA).

Quarters: 0-2, 6-2, 3-4, 2-3, 1-0, 0-1. Pens: 4-3
Extra man: BRA 3/7; MKD 4/11

Brazil won through in sudden-death penalty shootout after controlling much of the middle part of the game. The 13th-place win maintains the country's consistency with its third successive 13th place but first appearance since 2003. Its best results were two 12th placings in 1986 and 1998. For Macedonia it was a tough initiation to this level and poor finishing has been the major cause. The team possesses much in experience and shooting firepower but not when it counts. Macedonia dominated the first quarter but could not capitalise and allowed Brazil to rattle in four unanswered goals and six from seven in the second quarter. Macedonia levelled at six and again at eight. The fourth quarter saw Macedonia go to 10-9 early in the fourth. MAMERI scored two quick goals for 11-10 Brazil's way with four minutes left. MICIC levelled at 0:23 to force extra time. Brazil led after the first period and MICIC levelled again in the second. In the penalty shootout both teams scored three times to go to sudden death. Felipe FRANCO did what he didn't in the first round of penalties, and scored, but KRECKOVIC, who scored his first, had his last attempt blocked to give Brazil the game.

Game 71, 11:20, men, CHN 5 MNE 14

Semifinals 9th-12th

Referees: Nader GHAFOURI (IRI), Risto DAMCEVSKI (MKD).

Quarters: 1-2, 0-2, 1-5, 3-4

Montenegro was never going to lose but it struggled at times with the excellent Chinese goalkeepers GE and WU who made 13 saves between them.

China proved a worthy adversary and YU was a handful with his four goals.

Montenegro was excellent on counter but the goalkeepers ruined its statistics at times.

Game 72, 12:40, men, ITA 6 AUS 8

Semifinals 9th-12th

Referees: Mihaljo CIRIC (SRB), Ulrich SPIEGEL (GER).

Quarters: 2-2, 1-1, 2-3, 1-2

Extra man: ITA 1/11; AUS 3/11

Italian coach CAMPAGNA might not have liked the scoreline or the way Australia slowed down the taking of the penalty shot inside the last minute, but he must be unhappy with losing the crossover encounter and having to play for 11th place against China. The game was lost earlier with Italy not performing at these championships. The start looked promising at 2-0 but the Aussie Sharks had levelled at 3-3 by halftime. Australia, thanks to two CAMPBELL goals, had the lead at 6-5 by the last break. The ultra-reliable CALCATERRA scored his third on extra for 6-6 early in the fourth but MILLER from seven metres and CAMPBELL from the same distance sent his shot off the bar into the back of the head of NEGRI and into the goal for the victory.

CAMPAGNA berated the referee for allowing the Aussies to 'mismanage' the penalty attempt, which resulted in FELUGO having his shot blocked by STANTON. He received a red card but failed to leave the pool deck as his team could only watch Australia squander the time to secure the victory.

Game 73, 14:00, men, HUN 9 SRB 10

in extra time (FT: 8-8) Quarter-final 1st-8th

Referees: Filippo GOMEZ (ITA), Sergio BORRELL (ESP).

Quarters: 2-4, 1-1, 4-2, 1-1, 1-1, 0-1

Extra man: HUN 5/13 ; SRB 3/20

The red cards kept coming as Serbia rolled Hungary < the team with a handful of triple Olympic champions < in extra time. This match had everything but what it missed, and Hungary in particular, was heroic head coach KEMENY, who had to sit and swelter with the crowd in the middle tier of the stands. He gained his red card three minutes into the fourth period and spent the rest of the game relaying his messages via the third bench official to the assistant coach. A Serbian assistant coach also gained a red card but only in the dying minutes of the second period of extra time. Big centre forward Gabo KIS was suspended for a heavy foul at 9-9 and FILIPOVIC scored the extra-man goal that sealed the match. Hungary had a chance to level on extra with the final seconds ticking down the clock but MADARAS unexpectedly received deep and knew he had to shoot only to see it blocked by PRLAINOVIC whose grin spread from one side of the pool to the other. Serbia's biggest advantage was 5-2 in the second period but Hungary went 7-5 ahead. The 8-8 goal came at 4:42 in the fourth period.

Game 74, 15:20, men, USA 8 GER 5

Quarter-final 1st-8th

Referees: Boris MARGETA (SLO), Nenad PERIS (CRO).

Quarters: 1-2, 1-0, 5-1, 1-2

Extra Man: USA 1/11; GER 3/7

The USA eased into the semifinals, based on a five-goal, third-quarter spurt and a team in which eight different players scored. The power of the USA at the centre-forward position was evident with POWERS, KRUMPHOLZ and HUTTEN scoring excellent goals from two metres. AZEVEDO missed a penalty attempt midway through the second quarter, which could have made it 2-2 but the USA levelled at two and three before heading clear of Germany en route to the semifinals.

Game 75, 16:40, men, CRO 7 ROU 5

Quarter-final 1st-8th

Referees: Gaetan TURCOTTE (CAN), Irfan SADEKOV (RUS).

Quarters: 2-0, 1-1, 2-1, 2-3

Extra Man: CRO 3/9; ROU 1/6

World champion Croatia had to work to rightfully claim its place in the semifinals. Croatia was slow but steady and by 5:37 of the third quarter had a 5-1 lead. The goals then dried up as Romania started to gain momentum but it was RADU who was left to score the goals, claiming his second and third either side of the final break. When BUSILJA scored from the top at 3:32, Croatia was looking a little shaky, especially as it hadn't scored for more than 10 minutes. It was only a penalty attempt that staved off Romania with KARAC giving Croatia a 7-4 advantage with just over two minutes remaining.

GEORGESCU'S counter-attack goal six seconds from time was too late.

Game 76, 21:00, men, ESP 11 CAN 4

Quarter-final 1st-8th

Referees: Mario BRGULJAN (MNE), Daniel FLAHOVE (AUS).

Quarters: 1-2, 1-3, 6-0, 3-0

Canada dared to think it could do the impossible and beat a nation as good as Spain, with its history of high achievement at Olympic and World Championship level. What then when the score favoured the North Americans 4-1 five minutes into the second quarter? There was despair in the vast Spanish armada of spectators. But then the Spaniards listened to the poolside music "Yellow Submarine" and sunk Canada with a withering burst of seven unanswered goals by the final break. The heroes of Spain had proven yet again why they deserved to be in the semifinals. Two of those goals came on counter and three from extra. Another came from the penalty line. The

onslaught continued in the final quarter with three more goals for Spain while Canada's attack had become blunt

FINA BUREAU MEETING

On its first meeting held today in Rome (ITA), the 2009-2013 FINA Bureau fully complied with the decision of the FINA Congress, held on July 24, 2009 related with the procedure concerning swimwear approval. As it was also decided by the Congress, these rules are now By-Laws rules, which allow the Bureau to further control, update and correct any deviation to the process or to proceed with any necessary adjustment related to the development of the swimsuit technology.

The FINA Bureau decisions on swimsuits include:

MATERIAL – The material of the swimsuits will definitively be constituted only by textile fabric(s). The definition of "textile" will be made by a group of scientific experts chosen by FINA and led by Prof. Jan-Anders Manson, from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in Lausanne (SUI). This definition will be available to manufacturers by no later than September 30, 2009. The first definition of "textile" to be further confirmed by this group is: "Material consisting of, natural and/or synthetic, individual and non consolidated yarns used to constitute a fabric by weaving, knitting, and/or braiding."

SHAPE – For men, the swimsuit shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor extend below knee. Furthermore, no zippers or other fastening system is allowed.

USE – In the regulation approved by the Congress, the swimmer can only wear one swimsuit and no taping is allowed.

TESTS – Only measurable scientific tests will be performed within the frame of the swimwear approval procedure. For thickness, the 1mm limit will be adjusted to 0.8mm, for buoyancy the present value of 1 Newton will be reduced to 0.5 (FINA will even consider the limit of 0 Newton), and for permeability the material(s) used must have at any point a value of more than 80l/m²/second. Permeability values are measured on material with a standard multidirectional stretch of 25%. These parameters will be further considered by the above mentioned scientific group.

CONSISTENCY – Swimsuits effectively manufactured and used shall correspond to and be fully consistent with submitted samples. Any modification before use (including impregnation) is prohibited. Moreover, there shall be no variation/modification for individual swimmers.

APPLICATION – Considering the time needed for manufacturers to produce their swimsuits, the submission dates and the implementation of the rules are applicable from 2010 only in Swimming competitions.

In addition to these decisions, the FINA Bureau also approved the new FINA Committees and Commissions for the period 2009-2013.

Finally, it was also established that the Diving Qualification event for the 1st Youth Olympic Games (August 2010 in Singapore) will be held in Mexico City (MEX), in April 2010.

RESULTS



MEN

200M FREESTYLE

1. BIEDERMANN Paul GER 1:42.00 WR
2. PHELPS Michael USA 1:43.22
3. IZOTOV Danila RUS 1:43.90
4. UCHIDA Sho JPN 1:45.24
5. MONK Kenrick AUS 1:45.46
6. BASSON Jean RSA 1:45.67
7. VERSCHUREN Sebastiaan NED 1:46.05
8. LOBINTSEV Nikita RUS 1:46.33

100M BACKSTROKE

1. KOGA Junya JPN 52.26
2. MEEUW Helge GER 52.54
3. WILDEBOER Aschwin ESP 52.64
4. IRIE Ryosuke JPN 52.73
4. TANCOCK Liam GBR 52.73
6. VYATCHANIN Arkady RUS 52.87
7. GREVERS Matthew USA 53.14
8. GRIGORIADIS Aristeidis GRE 53.43

WOMEN

100M BACKSTROKE

1. SPOFFORTH Gemma GBR 58.12 WR
2. ZUEVA Anastasia RUS 58.18
3. SEEBOHM Emily AUS 58.88
4. SAKAI Shiho JPN 59.14
5. ZHAO Jing CHN 59.28

6. MCGREGORY Hayley USA 59.42
7. SIMMONDS Elizabeth GBR 59.71
8. COVENTRY Kirsty ZIM 59.74

1500M FREESTYLE

1. FILIPPI Alessia ITA 15:44.93
2. FRIIS Lotte DEN 15:46.30
3. POTEK Camelia Alina ROU 15:55.63
4. KOBRICH SCHIMPL Kristel CHI 15:57.57
5. VILLAECIJA Erika ESP 16:00.25
6. TROTT Wendy RSA 16:09.22
7. GORMAN Melissa AUS 16:09.66
8. SUTTON Chloe USA 16:16.10

100M BREASTSTROKE

1. SONI Rebecca USA 1:04.93
2. EFIMOVA Yuliya RUS 1:05.41
3. CARLSON Kasey USA 1:05.75
4. KATSOLIS Sarah AUS 1:05.86
5. PIERSE Annamay CAN 1:06.37
6. MOLLERPEDERSEN Rikke DEN 1:06.38
7. JUKIC Mirna AUT 1:06.75
8. POEWE Sarah GER 1:07.01

RECORDS (DAY 3)

4 WORLD RECORDS

- 100 Back Men 58.12 Gemma Spofforth GBR
 200 Fr Men 1:42.00 Paul Biedermann GER
 50 Breast Men 26.74sf Cameron Van Der Burgh RSA
 200 Free Women 1:53.67sf Federica Pellegrini ITA

10 CHAMPIONSHIPS RECORDS

- 200 Free Women 1:53.67sf Federica Pellegrini ITA
 50 Breast Men 26.74sf Cameron Van Der Burgh RSA
 50 Breast Men 26.92sf Eq Felipe Franca Silva BRA
 50 Breast Men 26.92 h Cameron Van Der Burgh RSA
 50 Breast Men 27.15 h Brenton Rickard AUS
 50 Breast Men 27.35 h Caba Siladji SRB
 100 Back Men 58.12 Gemma Spofforth GBR
 200 Fr Men 1:42.00 Paul Biedermann GER
 100 Back Men 52.26 Junya Koga JPN
 1500 Free Women 15:44.93 Alessia Filippi ITA