



German world champion in the women's 100m free Britta Steffen confirms Olympic title

Olympic champion in 2008 and world record holder over the distance - after her 52.22 effort in the first leg of the German 4x100m free relay on Day 1 - Britta Steffen did not disappoint in the final of the women's 100m free, which was the highlight of the sixth day of the swimming competitions of the 13th FINA World Championships. Despite a bad turn at the 50m-mark, Steffen was always in control of the race and touched the wall in 52.07, a new WR for this event. With this title, Steffen (25 years old) conquers her first world title (in the relay, Germany had been second), after being third two years ago in the 100m and second in the 4x200m free relay.

After qualifying first for the final, Lisbeth Trickett (AUS, second in Beijing behind Steffen), the hero of the championships in Melbourne, was only third, in 52.93 (in 2007 she had conquered five medals, including four gold), but has now accumulated a total of 14 awards at FINA World Championships - only Americans Natalie Coughlin (15) and Jenny Thompson (retired, 14) have a better roll of honour. The silver went to Fran Halsall (GBR), who conquered her first medal at this level.

Steffen said the key to her success in this race was her frame of mind going in: "For the first time I had great mental preparation", she said. "I visualised this race; every metre, beforehand. Then, when I was swimming I focused only on myself; every metre. The only exception was in the last 25m, when I looked at Libby. I am so happy," she concluded. This is a great atmosphere here in Rome."

In the men's 200m backstroke, Aaron Peirsol (USA), surprisingly not qualified for the final in the 100m, did not miss his race this time. The American, first in 2001, 2003, 2005 and second in 2007 (victory for his compatriot Ryan Lochte) "recovered" his title and finished first in 1:51.92, a new WR. Peirsol had clocked 1:43.08 on July 9, 2009 in Indianapolis (USA), a performance still pending FINA homologation as World Record, but his time in Rome leaves no doubt about who is the world "boss" in this event. In Beijing, Peirsol had lost for his main challenger

Lochte, who was third this time at the Foro Italico (1:53.82) - after being gold medalist in the 200m individual medley on Day 5. The silver was conquered by Japan's Ryosuke Irie, in a time of 1:52.51. For Peirsol, this was his 11th medal at World Championships (starting at the 2001 edition in Fukuoka).

In one of the most "weird" finals of the championships - the women's 200m breaststroke - Olympic champion Rebecca Soni (USA) did the race alone until the 175m-mark (and seemed quite comfortable to finish first), but then "sunk" and allowed her main challengers to take the leading places. The victory went to Serbia's Nadja Higl (22 years old), who conquered the second gold (and award) ever for her country at the World Championships, after the victory on Day 2 of Milorad Cavic in the men's 50m butterfly.

Higl's effort of 2:21.62 was followed by the silver medal of Annamay Pierse (CAN, 2:21.84). The Canadian had established a new WR already in Rome, with a time of 2:20.12, but was definitively slower in the final. The bronze went to Mirna Jukic from Austria in 2:21.97, with Soni concluding in fourth in a disappointing 2:22.15.

Higl was truly overwhelmed with her victory, and clearly still in shock when he addressed journalists after the race: "This victory came as a surprise to me. I did not have a win in mind, but just to give my best. I expected the semi-final, then it was the final and now I can't believe it; it's just a dream." When asked if she knew she was in a position to win during the race, she said: "I never saw the other competitors at all. I only saw in front of me and I concentrated on racing really fast."

Serbia's success at these championships was still evident in the following event of the programme, the semi-finals of the men's 100m butterfly, in which Cavic was the fastest qualifier for the final, with a new WR of 50.01 - faster than the best mark (pending FINA approval) of Michael Phelps (50.22) on July 9, 2009. The American will swim in lane 5 of the decisive

Medals Table After day 14

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	TOTAL
CHN	10	6	10	26
USA	8	9	6	23
RUS	7	7	4	18
GER	6	3	0	9
ITA	4	1	4	9
AUS	3	4	6	13
GBR	3	2	2	7
SRB	2	0	0	2
ESP	1	6	2	9
HUN	1	1	2	4
BRA	1	1	1	3
JPN	1	1	1	3
RSA	1	0	2	3
MEX	1	0	0	1
NED	1	0	0	1
SWE	1	0	0	1
CAN	0	3	5	8
FRA	0	2	2	4
TUN	0	2	0	2
DEN	0	1	0	1
GRE	0	1	0	1
POL	0	1	0	1
AUT	0	0	1	1
CUB	0	0	1	1
LTU	0	0	1	1
MAS	0	0	1	1
ROU	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	51	51	52*	154

*TWO BRONZE MEDALS IN THE MENS 200M BREASTSTROKE

race, after touching in 50.48.

The other semi-final with World Records was the women's 50m butterfly. In the first race, Marleen Veldhuis (NED) clocked 25.28 (better than her own best in April 2009 with 25.33), but in the second race, Sweden's Therese Alshammar did better, qualifying first for the final in 25.07.

In a session that definitely did not bring much luck to the USA, Eric Shanteau badly missed the gold in the men's 200m breaststroke. Leading for most of the race, the American



certainly did not correctly count his strokes and arrived gliding to the wall. More energetic, Hungary's Daniel Gyurta took his chance to conquer his country's first gold medal at these championships in 2:07.64 (and his first award ever in this competition), 0.01 faster than Shanteau. Gyurta had been fifth in this event at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing (CHN). The bronze was shared by Australia's Christian Sprenger and Lithuania's Giedrius Titenis in 2:07.80. It was the second medal ever for the Baltic country at the FINA World Championships, after the 1994 bronze of Raimundas Majolis in the men's 50m free also... in Rome!

Speaking afterwards, Gyurta called the race "really tough; one of the toughest ever". His coach, he said, had told him to focus his energy on the last 50m, and it was only after the last turn that he realized he could win, but always while keeping an eye on Shanteau. He fully employed his tactics, technique and power in the last stage of the race. "I tried to put all my power into it (the last 5-10m); at that point I didn't see anything anymore and I thought, just go."

The last final of the day established the sixth WR of the session, with the team of the USA getting the gold in the men's 4x200m free relay - a title they conquered for the sixth time in the history of the World Championships (and for the third consecutive time, after 2005 and 2007 victories in Montreal and Melbourne respectively). The first element of interest of this final was the new duel between Michael Phelps (USA) and Paul Biedermann (GER) as the two men leading off their teams in this race. And like in Day 3, Phelps was again behind Biedermann, who clocked first in 1:42.81 against Phelps' 1:44.49. Despite this early success for Germany, the United States managed to control the operations and won in a new WR of 6:58.55, 0.01 faster than their own best mark, which was established at the Beijing Games in 2008. It was Phelps' third gold (and fourth medal) in these championships. In second, Russia also did a very solid race, stopping the watch at 6:59.15, while Australia was third in 7:01.65.

"All these guys swam unbelievably," Phelps said later about his team, explaining that most of them knew each other and each other's capabilities from various national teams and camps. Therefore they could work together to "tweak and adjust things", but could already combine their skills quite nicely because of the familiarity. Dave Walters - the youngest and most inexperienced of the team, said the race

was very nerve-wracking for him and joked: "I swam like my age: young and out of control." Lochte - the anchor - said: "going into the last 50m I saw the Russian and I thought, 'Oh God this is gonna be hard', so I just put my head down and went for it." Phelps also commented on the performance of Biedermann, saying he was aware that the German had independently clocked "the second best time ever" in the relay and that he "looked forward to racing him again leading up to London (the 2012 Olympics).

WATER POLO

USA wins gold medal but Canada protests result of water polo final

Canada has protested the result of the FINA World Championships women's water polo gold-medal final, which was won by the United States of America at the Foro Italoico tonight.

The protest centres around an alleged brutality by the USA's Elsie WINDES on Canadian captain Krystina ALOGBO late in the second quarter and the expulsion of ALOGBO midway through the fourth quarter.

ALOGBO moved quickly on a penalty shot to cover any rebound and was excluded. Kelly RULON's shot was blocked by the tournament's sharpest goalkeeper, Rachel RIDDELL. The referees ruled that ALOGBO had interfered and was rolled, giving RULON a second shot, which went in and gave the USA what was the winning goal.

Canada was naked without ALOGBO.

In the second quarter WINDES scored and in the process was fouled by ALOGBO. WINDES reared up and appeared to hit ALOGBO in the face and was sent for violence and not the more aggressive brutality call that could have given Canada four minutes with an extra player.

The USA was expected to retain the title and be the first country to gain three gold medals and this it did with an accomplished tournament.

Head coach Adam KRIKORIAN was elated with a gold medal at his first major event as a head coach.

On the WINDES incident he said: "She's one of the nicest girls in the world. I guess she was celebrating her goal and just caught the girl while coming up."

Canadian coach Pat OATEN was livid and moved to make the protest, saying: "It was clear brutality and the whole world could see it on the screen. The game would have changed considerably if we had a man up for four minutes. It changed the whole game.

"What was that call on the penalty?" he said of ALOGBO's exclusion late in the game. "It

handed them the game."

"She didn't touch the girl or interfere with the shot. She just went to cover the rebound."

For now Canada accepted the silver medals but will await what happens with the protest.

Russia put together a strong team performance to clinch the bronze medal with a 10-9 victory over a gallant Greece.

Russia was impressive with six goals on extra but with a handful of field goals that excited the crowd.

Greece led twice in the match - in the third and fourth periods as the game reach an exciting climax.

Russia levelled the game at 3:35 remaining and took the game in spectacular circumstances, taking a timeout with 16 seconds remaining and scoring through Evgenia IVANOVA with just two seconds left on the clock when on extra.

It was a magnificent game played in excellent spirit with superb team play from both sides and strong centr-forward work by the Greeks and especially Alexandra ASIMAKI.

Russia captain Sofya KONUKH said it was a tough match. "We did expect it. Greece did absolutely all it could in these world championships. The exclusions were too many on both parts. I think the referees wanted this match to be more exciting. In the last two seconds we perfectly followed the suggestions of our coach."

Greek coach George MORFESIS said he did not agree with some of the decisions. "When we were leading by one goal, there were two penalties for us and they whistled two exclusions instead. Apart from our defeat I am glad we were at the same level with the other teams."

In the minor play-offs, Olympic champion Netherlands outshot Olympic bronze medalist Australia 12-11 for fifth place and Hungary went to town on Spain, winning 13-8.

Game 89, 09:00, women, HUN 11 ESP 6

Classification 7th-8th

Referees: Daniel FLAHIVE (AUS), NI Shi Wei (CHN).

Quarters: 4-3, 3-1, 3-1, 1-1

Extra Man: HUN 1/35; ESP2/10

Hungary applied all its power and shooting prowess to bow out with seventh place, well down on the victory in Montreal four years ago and fourth in Melbourne. Spain dropped a position from Melbourne. Spain opened the scoring to lead 2-0 but Hungary scored nine of the next 11 goals, leading 4-3 and 7-4 at the breaks. The game advanced to 9-4 before GIL arrested the slide. However, PELLE and DRAVUCZ scored either side of the last break and PENA closed the scoring at 4:35 with both teams playing pressure defence. Hungary

promised much in this tournament but could not produce at the right time.

Game 90, 10:40, women, NED 12 AUS 11

Classification 5th-6th

Referees: Ulrich SPIEGEL (GER), CIRIC

Quarters: 3-3, 3-3, 2-3, 4-2

Extra man: NED4/10; AUS 2/8

It was billed as the clash between the No 1 and No 3 teams in the world from 2008 and it proved to be a cracker of a match. The Olympic champion Dutch team came through for fifth place to finish four places better than Melbourne two years ago. Australia slipped from second to sixth. Both teams had vast changes from Beijing last year but the quality of play was still there, despite some small handling errors by Australia. The game turned in the final quarter when WEBSTER had her penalty shot blocked and CABOUT scored on the counter for 10-9. GYNTHYER lobbed for 10-10 but CABOUT and VERMEER had the game at 12-10 by 2:18. DESSAUVAGIE scored on extra to narrow the margin and VERMEER had the game sewn up on counter but had her one-on-one with BROWN saved. Australia took a timeout with six seconds left but dropped the ball on the set move and the Dutch were fifth. The game was levelled nine times.

Game 91, 16:00, men, RUS 10 GRE 9

Bronze Medal

Referees: Ursula WENGEROTH (SUI), Steven ROTSART (USA).

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

Extra man: RUS 6/11; GRE 5/14

Russia won the bronze through the ability to score on action while Greece needed to gain kickouts to score most of its goals on extra or at the penalty line. The difference was miniscule but telling. Russia's extra-man statistics are probably one of the best of the tournament, as well. Russia had the fast start at 2-0 but when ASIMAKI scored off the post on extra at 1:43, the game was 3-3 in Russia's favour. The second quarter was even with three of the four goals coming on extra. The only action shot came from Russia's GAUFLER with a rocket fired from Siberia. Greece finished the third period ahead thanks to ASIMAKI and GEROLYMOU, who were having spectacular games. So tight was the game that that GEROLYMOU'S goals came from a penalty and extra and ASIMAKI were both off extra-man. BELYAEVA drew the game level after the restart with an excellent backhand shot from centre forward. Greek captain LIOSI gave her team the lead at 6:12 on extra, Both teams could not capitalise on extra-man plays until Russia called time at 0:16. The resulting play saw IVANOVA shoot from the deep right to

convert extra man with just two seconds on the clock for the bronze medal.

Game 92, 21:00, women, CAN 6 USA 7

Gold Medal

Referees: Alan BALFANBAYEV (KAZ), Erhan TULGA (TUR).

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

Extra man: CAN USA

The USA won a controversial gold-medal final 7-6 over Canada who had to play the last 3:43 without star captain ALOGBO for an apparent misconduct in a game where she sustained a injury after being struck in the face just before halftime. The first controversy occurred late in the second quarter when WINDES scored and was heavily guarded by ALOGBO, After she scored the goal, she sat up and allegedly struck ALOGBO with her right fist into the face. She was lucky to escape a brutality foul but instead was sent for misconduct. She was booed from the pool after the action replay on the big screen confirmed the indiscretion. The referees missed the fact that the USA needed to play one down for 20 seconds. Canada led at the first break after ALOGBO performed a magical trick at centre forward to score at will and prove she was one of the most decisive players at the tournament But the USA struck back with a vengeance in the second quarter with WENGER and VILLA taking the lead, the latter with a magnificent lob. The advantage swiftly returned Canada's way with PERREAULT on extra and CSIKOS from the penalty line. CRAIG confirmed her growing reputation as a two-metre player of note to level while WINDES etched her name into the game to see the USA at 5-4 ahead as she was sent to the stands. CSIKOS opened the second-half scoring on extra after a timeout ploy, It was the only score of the period. Controversy hit fever pitch in the final quarter after Rulon took the USA ahead and CSIKOS converted a second penalty goal after a great draw by ALOGBO. The USA gained a penalty at 3:43 and RULON had the shot blocked by RIDDELL. In the process ALOGBO charged across to block RULON from gaining any rebound and was excluded for misconduct and a penalty re-awarded. The game's best player was out of the water. RULON netted the second time for 7-6. Canada called a timeout but had the resulting shot blocked and the USA was champion again.

each of the technical committees of the five FINA aquatic disciplines, the number of members was increased from 12 to 15. This new composition is aimed at supporting the development of FINA sports in the five continents and is due to the improvement of the number of affiliated FINA National Federations worldwide, which is actually of 201.

These new technical committees will meet before the end of the year to establish their four- year plan of activities, to be presented at the next FINA Bureau meeting on January 15-16, 2010 in Bangkok (THA).

Moreover, the Bureau reconfirmed its position in relation with the requirements for swimwear approval, reinforcing the decision of the Congress on July 24, 2009. These rules include the following conditions for swimwear approval:

Surface covered: Men swimsuit shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee and for women shall not cover the neck or extend past the shoulders nor shall extend below the knee.

Type of material: The material used for swimsuits can be only "Textile Fabric(s)" defined for the purpose of these rules as material consisting of, natural and/or synthetic, individual and non consolidated yarns used to constitute a fabric by weaving, knitting, and/or braiding.

Surface treatment of the textile fabric: Any material added on to the surface of the textile fabric (e.g. coating, printing, impregnation) shall not close the original open mesh structure of the base textile fabric. The treated material shall further comply with all requirements in particular in regard to thickness, permeability and flexibility. This part of the rule does not apply to logos and labels. This applies to both the manufacturing level and the actual use of the swimsuit.

Flexibility: the material shall be flexible and soft-folding.

Regular flat material: The material shall be regular and flat. The material shall not form outstanding shapes or structures, such as scales.

Outside application: No outside application shall be added on the material.

Variety of materials: Different materials may be used in one swimsuit provided they are textile fabrics as defined above and they comply with all other criteria including notably thickness and

FINA BUREAU MEETING

The FINA Bureau met today in Rome (ITA) and approved the final list of FINA Commissions and Committees for the period 2009-2013. For

permeability (measures to apply to total layers). Combination of materials shall further not create outstanding shape(s) or structure(s). Layered materials must be completely attached/bound/stuck together except where required to protect sensitive parts ("privacy layers").

Thickness: The material used shall have a maximum thickness of 0.8mm. It is clarified that this maximum thickness does not apply to seams as far as they are functional and their thickness and width result from their natural function.

Buoyancy: The swimsuit shall not have a buoyancy effect above 0.5 Newton measured after application of vacuum.

Permeability: Material(s) used must have at any point a permeability value of more than 80 l/m²/second. Permeability values are measured on material with a standard multidirectional stretch of 25 %. However, measure on material which cannot be significantly stretched will be effected on unstretched flattened material.

Construction: No zippers or other fastening system is allowed. Seams shall be limited to functional systems and shall not create outside shapes.

External stimulation or influence: Swimsuits which include any system providing external stimulation or influence of any type, including pain reduction, chemical/medical substance release, electro-stimulation etc. are prohibited.

Consistency: Swimsuits effectively manufactured and used shall correspond to and be fully consistent with submitted samples. Any modification before use (including impregnation) is prohibited.

Customisation: There shall be no variation/modification for individual swimmers from the models corresponding to the samples submitted for approval.

The new requirements for swimwear approval will be enforced from January 1, 2010. The list of approved swimsuits by FINA Executive on June 19, 2009 and published on the FINA website, is valid until December 31, 2009.

Approval of swimwear in the future will be done at least 12 months before the next FINA World Championships (50m) or Olympic Games. Moreover, the manufacturers will have the responsibility of making those models available on the market (available on sale to Federations

and competitors) at least six months prior to the next coming FINA World Championships or Olympic Games.

As announced by FINA President Dr Julio Maglione, the Bureau appointed a Commission led by Prof. Jan-Anders Manson (from EPFL in Lausanne, SUI) and formed by scientific experts and an athlete's representative to control the swimwear approval process and to monitor the development of the swimsuit industry based on the rules established by the FINA Bureau and the measurable scientific tests on buoyancy and permeability.

4. WEIR Amanda USA 53.12
5. VOLLMER Dana USA 53.30
6. KROMOWIDJOJO Ranomi NED 53.37
7. OTTESEN Jeanette DEN 53.70
8. VERRASZTO Evelyn HUN 53.92

200m BREASTSTROKE

1. HIGL Nadja SRB 2:21.62
2. PIERSE Annamay CAN 2:21.84
3. JUKIC Mirna AUT 2:21.97
4. SONI Rebecca USA 2:22.15
5. KANETO Rie JPN 2:23.03
6. TAMURA Nanaka JPN 2:23.12
7. MCCABE Martha CAN 2:23.36
8. HOSTMAN Joline SWE 2:23.62

RESULTS



MEN

200m BACKSTROKE

1. PEIRSOL Aaron USA 1:51.92 WR
2. IRIE Ryosuke JPN 1:52.51
3. LOCHTE Ryan USA 1:53.82
4. VYATCHANIN Arkady RUS 1:54.75
5. WILDEBOER Aschwin ESP 1:54.92
6. DONETS Stanislav RUS 1:55.36
7. KAWECKI Radoslaw POL 1:55.60
8. DU RAND George RSA 1:56.63

200m BREASTSTROKE

1. GYURTA Daniel HUN 2:07.64
2. SHANTEAU Eric USA 2:07.65
3. TITENIS Giedrius LTU 2:07.80
3. SPRENGER Christian AUS 2:07.80
5. RICKARD Brenton AUS 2:08.23
6. GIORGETTI Edoardo ITA 2:08.86
7. BARBOSA Henrique BRA 2:09.35
8. FACCI Loris ITA 2:10.26

4x200m FREE RELAY

1. USA United States of America 6:58.55 WR
2. RUS Russia 6:59.15
3. AUS Australia 7:01.65
4. JPN Japan 7:02.26
5. GER Germany 7:03.19
6. ITA Italy 7:03.48
7. GBR Great Britain 7:05.67
8. RSA South Africa 7:08.51

WOMEN

100m FREESTYLE

1. STEFFEN Britta GER 52.07 WR
2. HALSALL Fran GBR 52.87
3. TRICKETT Lisbeth AUS 52.93

RECORDS (DAY 6)

6 WORLD RECORDS

- 100 Free Women 52.07 Britta Steffen GER
 200 Back Men 1:51.92 Aaron Peirsol USA
 50 Fly Women 25.07sf Therese Alshammar SWE
 50 Fly Women 25.28sf Marlene Veldhuis NED
 100 Fly Men 50.01sf Milorad Cavic SRB
 4x200 Free Men 6:58.55 United States USA

15 CHAMPIONSHIPS RECORDS

- 100 Free Women 52.07 Britta Steffen GER
 200 Back Men 1:51.92 Aaron Peirsol USA
 50 Fly Women 25.07sf Therese Alshammar SWE
 50 Fly Women 25.28sf Marlene Veldhuis NED
 50 Fly Women 25.44h Therese Alshammar SWE
 50 Fly Women 25.74h Sarah Sjostrom SWE
 100 Fly Men 50.01sf Milorad Cavic SRB
 4x200 Free Men 6:58.55 United States USA
 50Fr Men 21.20so George Bovell TRI
 50Fr Men 21.21sf Frederick Bousquet FRA
 50Fr Men 21.29sf Duje Draganja CRO
 50 Fr Men 21.37h Cesar Cielo Filho BRA
 50Fr Men 21.64h George Bovell TRI
 200 Back Women 2:05.86sf Kirsty Coventry ZIM
 200 Back Women 2:06.72h Kirsty Coventry ZIM