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# The current champion has just started

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*The biggest favourite in water polo in the 17th FINA World Aquatics Championships is the title defender Serbian team. Although, in the first round they did not even sweat, this was the first step in the long way of the preparation.*

“This is a beginning of a new way” – said the Serbian Filip Filipovic after the game against Romania. The Serbian national team indeed stepped on a new way as they won everything in the last years: European Championships in 2014, Budapest and 2016 Belgrade. The last 4 World League Finals, the World Championships in Kazan and finally the Olympic Games in Rio were both won by the Serbian team.

Even the biggest rivals and their fans acknowledged, that the team of Dejan Savic after the great performances over the years deserved the gold in Rio.

The World Championships in Budapest will start at 16th of July until 30th of July. The teams are going to start their direct preparation in May, but the first round of the qualifying to the World League is a great opportunity to try out the new tactical elements and the new players. In three groups, 11 national squads (Hungary will not compete) will try to reach the final in June. To that, they need to win their group.

Group A: Romania, Germany, Slovakia, Serbia

Group B: Netherlands, Croatia, Greece, France

Group C: Georgia, Italy, Russia

This World League-season will not qualify any team for 17th World Championships. The American team reached the final and played against Serbia in last year’s tournament, so they are already in the schedule.

In water polo, everything is possible, so nobody can sit back and wait for the success. However, the current best team in the world won easily against Romania, in the city Kragujevac. In the halftime, the screen showed 11-1 for the home team. Milan Aleksic and Strahinja Rasovic scored 4-4 goals. In the other game of the group, Slovakia beat Germany, 10-7.

The first derby was played between Croatia and Greece, where the home team won by 5.

As in the 2014 European Championships in Budapest the match was exalted, the Georgian and the Russian teams played again a piquant game. Finally, the away team won only by one goal.

**Results of the first round:**

Serbia-Romania 19-8 (6-0, 5-1, 1-5, 7-2)

Slovakia-Germany 10-7 (2-1, 3-3, 2-2, 3-1)

Croatia-Greece 11-6 (1-1, 4-0, 2-2, 4-3)

Georgia-Russia 13-14 (3-4, 2-2, 5-5, 3-3)

Netherlands-France 11-10 (1-1, 2-2, 5-3, 3-4)

The next World League-round will be in 6th of December, where the teams can be one step closer to the Super-finals.