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# Unbroken enthusiasm and new challenges for Gergely Gyurta

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*An experienced, extremely hardworking member of the Hungarian swimming roster is the short course European champion and world champion bronze medallist Gergely Gyurta. He draws inspiration mostly from his coach and his Olympic champion brother. Currently his primary focus is 400m medley but he might race in some open water event in Lake Balaton.*

The career of Gergely Gyurta is most often associated with that of his Olympic, world and European champion brother, Dániel Gyurta. He has worked hard to break out of his brother's shadow and his achievements are quite honourable. He is always motivated when he can enter a tournament together with his brother as we could also witness in the course of the nationals in April, not to mention the brotherly love which characterises them when talking about each other.



His enthusiasm and diligence was obvious as early as 1998 when he, aged 7, started attending Komjádi swimming pool and he was all the time in the water for long hours, day by day. Needless to say, it was partly due to his brother's presence. While Dániel did a great job as a breaststroker, he was practicing different types of swimming and became quite

good at 400m and 1500m events, what is more, later on he took up long course swimming, too.

### **Gyurta medals here and there**

He achieved his first outstanding result the same year when his brother clinched his first World Championships gold in 200m breaststroke in Rome. He claimed gold in 2009 at the European Youth Championships in Prague in 1500m at the age of 18 and he became a silver medallist in 400m freestyle. It was a fairly successful season for him as a year later he won a bronze in 1500m in the Short Course World Championships in Dubai as an adult this time. This has been his only World Champs medal so far.

There is another parallel demonstrating that he was always aiming at keeping up with his brother: at the 2012 London Olympics Dániel won and Gergely could also gain a medal: he became bronze medallist at the European Championships in Debrecen in his favourite event at the time, 1500m freestyle.

*„Young, tireless and can bear virtually unlimited workload”* - described him Sándor Széles, while Ferenc Kovácshegyi kept advising him to be patient.

### **2013: accomplishments in open water as well as in the pool**

Speaking about workload, he first swam 25km at the 15th FINA World Championships in Barcelona where he finished 13th in a killer race. Top athletes took their hats off to his brilliant debut.

He is a versatile swimmer. After the open water race in Barcelona he achieved one of his greatest results so far: he clinched gold in 1500m at the European Championships in Herning. This was quite an achievement, his tactics proved to be efficient as he won by four body lengths.

### **The brother and inspiration**

Gergely Gyurta says he has always drawn great inspiration and strength from his brother who became an Olympic champion in London in front of his eyes and he also had first-hand experience of his brother gaining the world champion title. His brother's words impacted him greatly. Dániel kept encouraging him and was sure that once the opportunity presents itself when Gergely can take the chance and become a champion. It did happen in Herning, where all he believed in, worked for and pursued became reality.

*„I can hardly believe it now, we knew that I am capable of all this but it never came true before”* - he said after winning his first senior European Championships gold adding that: *„I have three great coaches, Sándor Széles is a genius and so are Feri Kovácshegyi and Balázs Virth. ... And of course I owe a lot to my brother... Dani is an icon, no one can give greater inspiration to a swimmer than he does.”*



For the record, in this tournament Dániel became European champion both in 100m and 200m breaststroke and he talked about his brother as the following:

*„I believe we are both idols for each other. My brother always says he looks up to me and I look up to him, as well. We both respect different values in each other.”*

They are hand and glove with each other.

Our protagonist, nicknamed „Gege”, expressed a similar opinion: *„It is always inspiring when we enter the same tournament. Seeing him racing motivates me a lot. It is great to be together, to train together, we understand each other without words.”*

Their father, Tamás Gyurta said about his kids in an interview: *„They have been together since childhood, they went to trainings and training camps together, they never made trouble, they are persivere and committed and they know they are on the right track.”*

### **The big decision concerning the World Championships**

The fellow swimmers of Gergely Gyurta agree that he is characterised by enormous force of spirit and he can mobilise incredible reserves. This was demonstrated by the nationals in April, too, when he did an excellent job in 400m medley. Although he had achieved level A previously (similarly to Dávid Verrasztó), Péter Bernek „posed a danger” to him and his prospects. They both excelled and swam their personal best but the duel saw the incredible victory of Gergely.

This fantastic result give his self-confidence back after he had to stay away from training for weeks due to an illness. As he put it, he was escaping from Péter Bernek and he could only get back on track the night before the final when he started to feel calm and confident again. After the final stroke both swimmers were praising each other and said that they mutually motivated each other to swim their personal best times. Hats off to them both. Gergely, member of Újpest, had to make an important decision after this victory. He reached level A for World Champs qualification in 1500m (as well as 800m).

*„It is obvious that I won't be able to enter both events on the last day of the World Championships. In short course it could be possible to have such a busy schedule but in the long one it is not possible. I must enter 400m medley and let go of the 1500m event this time” - he said after the nationals.*

Therefore, Gergely Gyurta will not enter the event in which he achieved his greatest result ever (short course European Championships rank), instead he will represent Hungary in an event of extensive history in the country.

### **Ahead of another significant decision**

One of his coaches Ferenc Kovácshegyi thinks it is possible that we will see Gergely Gyurta not only on the closing day of the World Champs in the Danube Arena but the swimmer - stretching his limits all the time- might be interested in the programme in Balatonfüred also:

*„We might enter the 25 km event to give it a try. It seems there will be enough time between the open water and pool events so Gergő could relax and recover. Obviously the goal in pool events is to make it to the finals as swimming in the finals in front of a home crowd is a one-of-a-kind experience and memory. It could be determining in one's career and we hope it will be in Gege's life, too”.*

In conclusion, Gergely Gyurta will enter 400m medley and 800m freestyle in the Danube Arena. His work ethics, diligence and modesty might bring him success. On top of that, another source of motivation will be the presence of his brother, his icon, Dániel who summarised Gergely's chances as the following: *„I believe Gege is on the right track”.*

### **Personal data:**

#### **Gergely Gyurta**

Born on 12 September 1991 in Budapest.

Events he enters at the 17th FINA World Championships: 400m medley, 800m freestyle

Top results: short course European champion (2013 Herning, 1500m freestyle), short course World Championships bronze medallist (2010 Dubai, 1500m freestyle), European Championships bronze medallist (2010 Debrecen, 1500m freestyle).