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The 11th FINA World Championship: Canada proved to be a brilliant host

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The only North American FINA World Championships were hosted by Montreal in 2005. The tournament seeing the triumph of the US (17 gold, 15 silver and 7 bronze) several world records, 15 American and 13 Australian gold medals were claimed in swimming, the diving team of the host country clinched 3 gold medals while in women's open water swimming we could witness an excellent Dutch performance. The Hungarian delegation could win 3 medals thanks to László Cseh and 2 more thanks to the water polo team. Two out of the five medals were gold which took Hungary to the 8th place of the medal table.

As opposed to the 2015 athletes in Barcelona this time there were „only” 1784 participants indicating a minor drop supposedly due to the North American location, a less accessible destination. Still there were 144 nations present in the capital city of Quebec.

The World Championships took place in the charming Jean Drapeau Park on Saint Helen Island in an area bordered by the Saint Lawrence river.



Thanks to their swimmers the dominance of the US in Montreal was undeniable. Gaining 17 gold, 15 silver and 7 bronze medals they topped the medal table. Australia succeeded in keeping up with them clinching 13 gold medals in swimming events. China was ranked 3rd in the medal table by 5-5-7 medals. Altogether there were 26 nations gaining at least one medal.

The Hungarian delegation of 36 members claimed 2 gold 2 silver and 1 bronze. The Hungarian women's water polo team finished first, László Cseh became a champion in 400m medley, the men's water polo team finished second, László Cseh won a silver in 200m medley and the single bronze medal was claimed by him, also, in 100m backstroke.

Swimming - triple by Hackett

There were some swimmers who could double in individual swimming events but it was only the Australian swimmer, Grant Hackett who managed to gain three individual world champion titles in Montreal. He finished first in 400, 800 and 1500m as well, in 800m he set a new world record. In addition, in 200m freestyle he was the runner up to Michael Phelps and he won a bronze, too, in the 4X200m freestyle relay.

Grant Hackett broke the world record in the 800m final:

The American icon, Michael Phelps became world champion in 200m medley in addition to 200m freestyle, he was a member of the 4X100m and 4X200m freestyle relay clinching gold and he finished second in 100m butterfly behind fellow swimmer, Ian Crocker. American Aaron Piersol (100 and 200m backstroke) and Brendan Hansen (100 and 200m breaststroke) could also double beside South African Roland Schoeman (50m freestyle and 50m butterfly) breaking world record in butterfly and becoming the runner up to Italian

Filippo Magnini in 100m freestyle by the way.

The gold medal by the Greek Aristeidis Grigoriadis in 500m backstroke shall also be highlighted, swimming tournaments rarely see Greek world champions.

Greek gold in 50m backstroke:

As for women, Australia triumphed. Leisel Jones doubled (100 and 200m breaststroke, breaking the world record in the final of the longer one), individual world champion title was claimed by Libby Lenton (50m freestyle), Jodie Henry (100m freestyle), Giaan Rooney (50m backstroke), Jade Edmiston (50m breaststroke, new world record), Danni Miatke (50m butterfly) and Jessica Schipper (100m butterfly). On top of that, Australia clinched 2 gold in relay events, as well.

World record by Leisel Jones in the 200m breaststroke final:

Beside American swimmer Katie Hoff (200 and 400m medley) and Katie Ziegler (800 and 1500m freestyle) Kirsty Coventry from Zimbabwe gained two individual world champion titles, too (100 and 200m backstroke) in Canada.

Synchronised swimming - Russian dominance except for the solo

Russian dominance in Montreal was broken in solo by the iconic synchro swimmer, Virgine Dedieu from France (ahead of Natalia Ischenko). All other events in the discipline were topped by the Russians.

Solo synchro swimming won by the French Virginie Dedieu:

Water polo - Hungarian gold, Hungarian silver

The World Championships in Montreal was the only tournament where both the men and women's water polo teams of Hungary played in the finals. The men's team came to Montreal to defend their world champion title and they could make it to the final. They played a quite demanding match against the Greek led by Alessandro Campagna in the semi-final (7-6) and the final saw a similarly hard fight with Petar Porobic's team of Serbia Montenegro gaining victory (8-7).

As for women, the Hungarian team won the World Championships for the second time after 1994 led by Tamás Faragó (becoming European champion in 2001). Hungarian defeated the US in the extra time (in the group match they managed to do so before, winning 9-8). An iconic figure of the discipline, Mercédesz Stieber was a member of the 1994 as well as of the 2005 world champion team.

Men's water polo final, Serbia Montenegro - Hungary 8-7:

Open water swimming- Edith van Dijk excelling

The Dutch Edith van Dijk made an excellent performance in the open water swimming event as she clinched medals in all 3 courses. She claimed bronze in 5 km and became world champion in 10 and 25 km alike.

Concerning men, German Thomas Lurz (1 gold, 1 silver) and Bulgarian Petar Stojchev (2 bronze) doubled.

Diving - Canadian achievements

For the first time in the history of world championships Canada could claim gold in both men and women's events. Alexandre Despatie became world champion in 1 and 3 m, while Blythe Hartley clinched gold in the 1m women's event. Beside, 5 Chinese, 1 American and 1 Russian gold were claimed in Canada.