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Panorama: achiving record times, debut of Afganistan

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International panorama a couple of days prior to the opening ceremony for the 17th FINA World Championships.

Swimming: Italians put their trust in the triumvirate of Detti, Paltrinieri and Pellegrini

The Italian swimming roster for the World Championships in Budapest has been finalised. Four new members have been added to the previously determined list, **Matteo Milli, Margherita Panziera, Giorgia Biondani and Erika Ferraioli** will join the team thanks to their performance at the classic Sette Colli Cup hosted by Rome.

Other members of the Italian roster include: Ilaria Bianchi, Giacomo Carini, Martina Carraro, Arianna Castiglioni, Piero Codia, Gabriele Detti, Silvia Di Pietro, Luca Dotto, Filippo Magnini, Nicolò Martinenghi, Filippo Megli, Alessandro Miressi, Alice Mizzau, Gregorio Paltrinieri, Federica Pellegrini, Stefania Pirozzi, Luca Pizzini, Simona Quadarella, Matteo Restivo, Fabio Scozzoli, Federico Turrini, Ivano Vendrame.

The composition of the team is not much different from that of previous years, the primary focus is now the so to speak „holy trinity” of Gabriele Detti, Gregorio Paltrinieri and Federica Pellegrini.

Although Gregorio Paltrinieri, Olympic champion in 1500m freestyle devoted somewhat more time to his civilian life after the Games in Rio, since January he has been busy preparing again. Hence in Italy they believe their favourite swimmer will be unbeatable in the longest course in pool. Experts consider his best time of this year (14:37.08) quite promising in contrast with Rio bronze medallist, Detti's time of 14:48.21, which was not enough to qualify for this event at the World Championships, thus Paltrinieri will be on his own in Budapest. In shorter freestyle courses, however, Gabriele Detti did a great job. In 400m his time was the second best in the world this year (3:43.36) while in 800m he proved to be the fastest this year (7:41.64).

Concerning the trio, it is Federica Pellegrini will have the most difficult starting position since her best time this year (1:55.94) is not even close to that of last year (1:54.55),

therefore she and her coach, Matteo Giunta decided to take a bold step and stayed longer in the upland training camp. Whether it was a good decision or not, the World Championships will tell. Nicolo Martinenghi is considered a rising star in swimming in Italy, he will enter 50 and 100m breaststroke. Noone expects the young swimmer preparing for his first major international tournament to beat title defender and record holder British swimmer, Adam Peaty, yet swimming in the final would definitely be quite an achievement of his.

Diving: Pacheco preparing to beat the Chinese

The most experienced member of Mexico's diving team, Rommel Pacheco is aiming for the gold in Budapest. When asked about chances the eldest member of the 11- member team emphasized that the number one rival in 3m is China. As the most experienced member he takes great care of the young members in the team and believes they would outdo him soon.



Fotó: Facebook/Rommel Pacheco

„The youngest generation of Mexican divers have a good basis and since they are quite many, they have to fight for qualification. This is why I anticipate they would soon surpass us. I help them whenever I can, I am happy to share my experience with them and day by day they motivate me to do better. We are going to participate in the World Championships with a cheerful, coherent team. It features younger and older members from the age of 15 to 31, we are like a family really.” –Rommel Pacheco told the radio channel Marca Claro.

Swimming: the Dutch swimming team consists of 16 members finally

The list of Dutch swimmers is fix now, the following swimmers will represent the Netherlands in Budapest in solo events: Femke Heemskerk, Kim Busch, Kira Toussaint, Maaïke de Waard, Marjolein Delno, Maud van der Meer, Ranomi Kromowidjojo, Robin Neumann, Tamara van Vliet, Arno Kamminga, Ben Schwiertert, Ferry Weertman, Jesse Puts, Kyle Stolk, Maarten Brzokowski and Mathys Goosen.

In addition, the team features relay members A Esmee Vermeulen and Stan Pijnenburg.

Water polo: Spanish team will lack Sánchez due to injury

The final roster has been announced by the Spanish water polo federation. According to plans ladies' team will consist of 13 while men's team will feature 15 members in Budapest.

Women's team had to face a serious challenge in the very last moment. At the last preparatory tournament against Italy, goalkeeper María Elen Sánchez was seriously hit on the right eye. In the beginning it did not seemed to be a serious one, however, returning to Barcelona she had a series of examinations. Opticians told her that in order to avoid more severe conditions she had no choice but to undergo laser eye surgery. The goalkeeper of CN Sabadell shall stay away from water for minimum 2 weeks hence she will be absent from Budapest. The team's other goalkeeper, 17-year-old Sandra Domene will travel to Budapest instead.

Swimming: World Championships premier, Swimmers from Afghanistan debut in Budapest

The World Championships in Budapest will mark a historic event for Afghan sport. The National Federation of Afghanistan represented by Mohammad Ebrahim Rajabi and Hamid Rahimi will delegate swimmers to the World Championships for the first time in history. Athletes consider the opportunity a privilege and hope sport will play a key role in creating peace in their country.

Secretary General Sayed Sajad Aghazad pointed out that all Afghan swimmers had been dreaming about participating in the World Championships. Entering such a great and high standard international event is a brilliant opportunity for the federation and an excellent chance for their athletes to enter the stage of international swimming. Afghanistan is ready to delegate its top athletes to all major tournaments in the future.

Participation in the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo is a top priority for Afghanistan National Swimming Federation, they plan to delegate three swimmers (two men and a woman) to the

next Games.

Swimming: top swimmers to achieve record times

Men's 100m butterfly champion of Rio Joseph Schooling swam the second best time of this year (50.96) in Austin last weekend. This year it was only Caeleb Dressel (US) who could beat him touching in 50.87. The message the performance of 22-year old swimmer from Singapore conveys to his rivals is clear: he will go for gold in Budapest. The third best time (51.29) was achieved by South African Chad Le Clos.

Although no one was surprised at the excellent result of Schooling, the new personal record (21.58) in men's 50m freestyle set by Finnish Ari-Pekka Liukkonen last weekend was quite unexpected. The bronze medallist freestyler of the 2014 European Championships had a rather weak form in the past two years, his performance last Sunday is the 5th best time of this year though. Based on his form demonstrated in Tampere it seems that he could be an important actor in Budapest.