

RUSSIAN WIN CLINCHES TEAM TROPHY VALLI WINS SECOND GOLD

In what was the hottest of days in Fukuoka yesterday. Not just the temperature (32 c) but for the open water swimmers competing in their most difficult event—25 km.

Since 1991, when open water was included in the program of the World championships, the winner's time was about 5 hours. But during the coaches inspection of the race the most experienced observers predicted that the race will be harder and will take more time than ever. They were right.

Right from the start Christopher Wandratsch (GER) and Yuri Kudinov (RUS) tried to take the lead, but it wasn't easy. The other swimmers didn't let them get ahead. There is a particularity of long races: if you swim alone, far from the others, you feel more confidence and the swim itself is not too hard. But if the group is just behind, you feel like you are carrying the whole race on your own shoulders. Eventually Wandratsch and Kudinov fell back to swim in the middle of the pack.

At first buoy (after 2.5 km Hiroki Hikida (JPN), lead the race. At 7.2 km Kudinov went temporary into the lead, but then fell back again, leaving Mark Leonard (USA) and Stefan Lecat (FRA) in the lead. With 2 hour and 40 minutes elapsed 20 athletes reached the mid point of the race all together. It was still impossible to say who had the best chance to win a medal.

Experienced long-distance swimmers say that the marathon starts after the 22nd kilometer.

Kudinov picked up the pace after 23 km. He looked very confident. His time at the finish was 28 seconds ahead of Stephan Gomez (FRA) and 1.04 ahead Stefan Lecat (FRA).

"I'm very happy that I won," Koudinov said after the end of the race. "But that was the most difficult competition I ever had in my life. First of all it's the distance itself. There is a strong underwater flow and the water was sometimes cold, sometimes warm, sometimes very hot. And the waves—I made a big mistake at the beginning, trying to lead. My coach was mad at me. He was yelling, you're stupid, but it took much time for me to realize, that I really was. I lost a lot of energy, trying to pick up speed. But finally I won and can say, that this city is lucky for me

and for the rest of Russian swimmers."

Lecat and Gomez were happy too because their silver and bronze brought many points to France in the team competition.

"I wasn't expecting to win a medal in this race," Lecat said. "I'm really happy with the result. I was in 8th place last year at the Worlds in Honolulu and Gomez was 5th—it is our first time on the victory podium together and it feels great!"

Russians intended to win easily the team gold. They expected Olga Gusseva to be at least among the first five in the women's 25 km and Natalia Pankina among the first ten. But all of a sudden Gusseva left the race after reaching 18 km. Leaving only Pankina in the race who managed a fifth. Just enough for the team trophy.

Viola Valli (ITA) winner of the 5 km and Edith van Dijk (NED) were both favourites. They both looked more confident from the very first buoy.

Valli was 2 min behind at 8 km, but she was determined to catch-up. Van Dijk was in the lead for half a distance, but after rounding the buoy at 12.5 km, Valli spurred ahead and the Dutch swimmer was not able to keep up with her.

"I won! It's wonderful to win two golds here," Valli said. "Even though I was behind at 8 km, I was confident I would catch-up."

"I felt good," Van Dijk said. "I was working hard to win, I was well ahead of the others for a while, but Valli was really fast. I kept up with her on the return leg but she moved ahead in the last 6.5 km. Anyway I'm happy with the silver."

Bronze medal winner Angela Maurer (GER) was happy because she didn't expect any medal at all. "I almost gave up during the race, it was very hard. I needed to drink water all the time. I must have drunk six litres during the race. The current and the big waves made the race really tough. It was the hardest race ever swam. I tried to stay in and concentrate to do my best."

Team gold went to Russia by only a 2 point advantage over Italy. The Italians had bad luck with the disqualification of Pampana in the 10 km.

MEN OPEN WATER SWIMMING 25KM RESULTS

			12.5km	25km
1	KOUDINOV Yuri	79 RUS	2:40:04	5:25:32
2	GOMEZ Stephane	76 FRA	2:40:01	5:26:00
3	LECAT Stephane	71 FRA	2:39:53	5:26:36
4	FUSI Fabio	69 ITA	2:40:00	5:28:16
5	SALIBA Mark	79 AUS	2:40:05	5:29:17
6	LEONARD Mark	77 USA	2:39:48	5:31:53
7	WANDRATSCH Christof	66 GER	2:39:56	5:33:36
8	PEREZ G.Andres	80 CUB	2:40:26	5:34:37
9	VASIC Miodrag	75 YUG	2:40:07	5:35:22
10	SANATCHEV Anton	78 RUS	2:40:06	5:36:21
11	WESELOH Liam	75 CAN	2:40:23	5:37:53
12	KENNY John	80 USA	2:40:03	5:39:26
13	MAJCEN Nace	68 SLO	2:40:40	5:40:24
14	SRB Pavel	80 CZE	2:41:16	5:42:49
15	HIKIDA Hiroki	72 JPN	2:42:27	5:44:15
16	VITEK Rostislav	76 CZE	2:40:37	5:48:16
17	MENONI Simone	74 ITA	2:40:24	5:56:19
18	MASRI Hisham	73 SYR	2:40:22	5:56:19
19	NAGY-PAL Levente	80 HUN	2:54:26	6:00:03
20	SUGISAWA Takashi	67 JPN	2:54:20	6:04:28
21	HANSMANN Christian	77 GER	3:00:13	6:05:57
22	ABDEL H. Mohamed	82 EGY	2:58:34	6:13:02
23	FUENTES Gregory	70 ECU	2:54:34	6:16:45
24	CSELENYI Balazs	79 HUN	2:57:55	6:37:51
	SCANAVINO Carlos	64 URU	2:46:57	DNF

WOMEN OPEN WATER SWIMMING 25KM RESULTS

			12.5km	25km
1	VALLI Viola	72 ITA	2:58:47	5:56:51
2	VAN DIJK Edith	73 NED	2:58:45	6:00:36
3	MAURER Angela	75 GER	2:58:46	6:06:19
4	KAMRAU Britta	79 GER	2:58:49	6:08:46
5	PANKINA Natalia	83 RUS	3:02:21	6:14:26
6	BERGEN Briley	83 USA	3:03:24	6:20:07
7	ROMITI Alessandra	82 ITA	3:04:23	6:35:14
8	HLAVACOVA Yvetta	75 CZE	3:13:45	6:36:22
9	CLARK Shelley	81 AUS	3:09:00	6:41:16
10	SAWIN Tiffany	77 USA	3:14:22	6:44:12
11	FUKUDA Yuki	83 JPN	3:15:56	7:07:22
	GOUSSEVA Olga	76 RUS	3:01:13	DNF
	BALAZS Eszter	80 HUN	3:27:15	DNF

OPEN WATER TEAM TROPHY OVERALL POINTS SCORE

		5km	5km	10km	10km	25km	25km	Total
		M	W	M	W	M	W	
1	RUS	24	6	34	20	21	10	115
2	ITA	32	28	14	3	12	24	113
3	GER	-	28	-	26	6	26	86
4	FRA	11	3	9	-	30	-	53
	USA	15	6	12	-	9	11	53
6	AUS	-	14	6	16	10	4	50
7	NED	-	8	-	14	-	15	38
8	NZL	11	-	8	5	-	-	24
9	BUL	4	-	10	-	-	-	14
	CAN	-	-	-	12	2	-	14
10	YUG	-	-	4	-	4	-	8
11	CUB	-	-	-	-	5	0	5
	CZE	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
	SUI	-	4	-	1	-	-	5
14	BRA	2	-	2	-	-	-	4
	GBR	-	2	-	2	-	-	4
16	JPN	-	-	-	-	-	2	2

OPEN WATER MEDAL TOTALS

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
ITA	3	-	2	5
RUS	2	3	-	5
GER	1	1	1	3
NED	-	1	1	2
FRA	-	1	1	2
AUS	-	-	1	1
Total	6	6	6	18

AND THE WINNER IS MONTREAL!

In the best Hollywood style, FINA President Mustapha Larfaoui announced on Saturday at a Press Conference at 16.00 that Montreal (CAN) will host the 11th FINA World Swimming Championships in 2005. After Barcelona in 2003, the Canadian city won the race against Long Beach (USA), Melbourne (AUS) and Rio de Janeiro (BRA), but the suspense in the decision of the FINA Bureau kept everyone's nerves on edge until the last moment.

Only when FINA President opened the "magic" envelope with the result of the ballot, it was possible to confirm the closeness of the vote. Melbourne went out first, than Rio, that left Long Beach and Montreal contesting the last meters of this race. With 11 votes to 10, the second biggest city in Canada earned its place in history, by staging the first FINA World Championships in North America.

"All cities presented excellent and attractive bids. Moreover, the co-operation with FINA in all the process was very good," explained Mustapha Larfaoui. The high standard set in each bid should be a legacy for future FINA bidding groups. "The new strategy to promote our sport seems to be the correct one. With the guarantees we've received, I am sure that the winner will deliver the competition in the best possible conditions, like it is happening here in Fukuoka," added the FINA President.

Before unveiling the "secret," Mustapha Larfaoui had some words for the losers of the race. "Unfortunately, only one can win. Some disappointment will emerge in the others, but that is also one characteristic of sport. Like Pierre de Coubertin I say 'you've all fought well'".

Once the winner was known, an explosion of joy by the Canadian delegation gave a special atmosphere to the Press Conference. Between greetings from all the other contenders, Gordon Peterson, president of Aquatic Federation of Canada, signed the contract of the competition together with the FINA President.

The complete results of each round of voting by the FINA Bureau (composed of 21 members, plus the President who did not vote) for the 11th FINA World Swimming Championships were:

1st round:	
Long Beach	8
Montreal	5
Rio de Janeiro	5
Melbourne	3
2nd round:	
Montreal	9
Long Beach	8
Rio de Janeiro	4
3rd and last round:	
Montreal	11
Long Beach	10

WOMEN'S WATER POLO July 21

Match 13, 10:00, USA 12, BRA 2

1-0, 3-1, 4-1, 4-0

USA 12 (Villa 5, Lorenz 3, Stachowski, Von Schwarz, Moody, Sheehy)

BRA 2 (Bertolucci, Lissoni).

The USA team capitalized on the inexperience of the Brazilian team and easily scored on two of the three powerplays while Brazil was only able to score in two of the seven USA exclusions.

USA goalie Nicole Payne (USA) had five saves on seven shots. Brenda Villa (USA) lead the Americans with five goals and was backed up by Ericka Lorenz who found the goal three times. Villa and Lorenz were both members of the squad that captured the silver medal in Sydney. Villa was a member of the World Championship team in 1998 and scored the winning goal in the Olympic Qualification Tournament against Hungary in 2000.

Match 14, 11:15, CAN 7, GRE 4

1-2, 2-2, 2-0, 2-0

CAN 7 (Arpin 2, Gardiner, Collins, Dow, Dionne, Horn Miller)

GRE 4 (Kozomboli, Oikonomopoulou).

With two goals in each of the first two quarters, including the go-ahead goal at 5.4 second before the half, the Greek team looked like they could power their way past the Canadians.

Unfortunately they never hit the goalposts again in the second half while four different Canadians contributed a goal each.

Aikater Oikonomopoulou (GRE) and Aikater Kozomboli (GRE) alternated scoring for the Greeks, each with two goals for the campaign. Marie Luc Arpin (CAN) hit for two goals, one in the first and again in the final period. Canada scored three times in extraman situations while the Greeks were unable to take advantage from any of the four man-up opportunities.

The Canadians are now 2 and 1 in Group B competition having beaten the Netherlands and lost to Hungary. The

team from Greece has beaten only Australia in a major upset on the first day of competition, having also lost to Hungary and now Canada.

Match 15, 12:30, HUN 9, JPN 3

3-1, 1-1, 3-1, 2-0

HUN 9 (Dravucz 3, Stiber 2, Primasz 2, Pelle, Valkay)

JPN 3 (Hagiwara 2, Kakoshi)

Although there is not a significant following of the sport in Japan, the stands were at their greatest capacity today for the game between host nation Japan and the reigning European champion, Hungary.

The Japanese scored a single goal in each of the first three quarters and took advantage of three man up situations. Ako Hagiwara (JPN) scored twice for the host nation and Akiko Inagaki (JPN) had four saves in the goal.

Rita Dravucz (HUN) lead the Hungarian team effort with three goals, two in the final period of play. Goalkeeper Ildiko Sos (HUN) had 5 saves on 8 shots on the goal.

The Hungarian team is now a perfect three for three in Group B competition having also defeated

Canada and Greece. The Hungarians, under new coaching leadership are anxious to erase from memory the fact that they watched the Olympics on their television sets at home instead of competing in Sydney.

Match 16, 13:45, RUS 13, ITA 6

4-0, 2-3, 4-2, 3-1

RUS 13 (Konoukh 4, Shepelina 2, Salimova 2, Kusina 2, Petrova 2, Vassilieva)

ITA 6 (Malato 2, Miceli, Bosurgi, Di Mario, Musumeci)

The Russian team took a four goal advantage in the first quarter and was powered by four goals from Sofia Konoukh (RUS) in their 13 to 6 assault of an agile Italian team. Both team scored four goals each in extraman situations.

The Russian team shocked the Netherlands and the world of water polo when it earned the Olympic bronze medal in Sydney. The Russian squad is young and is mostly intact from the successful campaign in the Olympic Games.

The Italians have on their ledger a loss to Russia, a victory over New Zealand and a tie with the USA. Today the USA defeated Brazil and yesterday Kazakhstan so they have moved ahead of the Italian team in Group A play.

The Russians are undefeated in Group A competition having previously defeated New Zealand and Brazil.

Match 17, 15:00 AUS 7, NED 3

1-1, 2-0, 3-1, 1-1

AUS 7 (Higgins 3, Castle, Hooper, Fox, Mills)

NED 3 (Rodenhuis, Van Den Ham, Peerenboom)

Australia improved its record by a 7 to 3 victory over the former powerhouse of women's water polo. The reigning Olympic Gold Medalists handily defeated their Dutch rivals powered by three goals from Yvette Higgins (AUS). Naomi Castle (AUS) scored a penatly shot against opposing goalkeeper Mascha Guerts (NED).

Australia defeated their Japanese hosts yesterday but were shocked by an upstart team from Greece who beat them 9 to 7 on the first day of the competition. The Dutch also beat the Japanese but lost to Canada and now Australia.

Match 18, 16:15, KAZ 14, NZL 4

6-1, 5-0, 2-0, 1-3

KAZ 14 (Zubkova 3, Koroleva 3, Galkina 3, Ignatyeva 2, Olkhina, Shishova, Mikhailova)

NZL 4 (Roberts, Macpherson, Stewart, Hillhouse)

Khazakstan improved its record to two wins against one loss by soundly defeating the New Zealand squad by a score of 14 to 4. Three Khazakstan players scored three goals each, Anna Zubkova (KAZ), Svetlana Koroleva (KAZ), and Natalya Galkina (KAZ) while four different Kiwi's scored one goal each for the island nation from Oceania. Khazakstan capitalized on seven powerplays while the Kiwi's were only able to score twice in extraman situations.

The New Zealand team has lost all three of its matches in Group A competition, Italy, Russia and Khazakstan have combined to score 51 points again them while New Zealand was only able to move the ball into the net nine times over the first three days of this competition. The Khazakstan squad posted a victory against Brazil but was swamped by the USA in play yesterday.

MEN'S WATER POLO, July 21

Match 9, 09:00, USA 6 CAN 3

MEN'S WATER POLO July 21

2-1, 0-1, 4-0, 0-1

USA 6 (L Beaubien 2, R Bailey, A Azevedo, J Powers, J Pope) CAN 3 (D Lazavevic, M Sabo, Noah Miller).

The third quarter proved a killer for Canada after an entertaining and very tight first half. Canada had difficulty with the power play, scoring only one from five, while unguarded shots from the top found their mark. Layne Beaubien, a newcomer to the USA team, nailed two goals on extra while two-metre player Jeffrey Powers showed tremendous strength. Ryan Bailey was strong in two metres for the USA and Canadian goalkeeper Alex Thibeault was like a brick wall in the fourth.

Match 10, 10:30, CRO 8 AUS 6

0-2, 2-3, 3-0, 3-1

CRO 8 (M Oreb, T Dogas 2, V Kobescak, S Letica, I Hinic, V Saric) AUS 6 (N Thomas 2, T Whalan, A Kovalenko, G Woods, S Boyd).

Australian goalkeeper made a name for himself with two penalty saves in the loss to Croatia. Australia made all the running in the first half, leading 2-0 and 5-2 at the quarter-time breaks but a third-period blitz by Croatia levelled the game and regained Croatian confidence. Croatia did not take the lead until 2:09 left in the game through Teo Dogas, his second. Then Viseslav Saric scored on extra at :32 and the game was over.

Match 11, 12:00, YUG 3 ITA 3

0-0, 1-1, 1-1, 1-1

YUG 3 (B Pekovic, P Trbojevic, D Ikodinovic) ITA 3 (C Silipo 2P, A Calcaterra).

In a re-enactment of last month's European final, Yugoslavia and Italy fought out a very even match. While it was 8-5 in Yugoslavia's favour in Budapest, it was a draw today.

The opening quarter was scoreless with both teams cautious but then the action heated up in the second with Branko Pekovic scoring the first goal 10:44 into the game, flicking in a rebound from a Danilo Ikodinovic shot. Carlo Silipo scored a penalty after Aleksandar Ciric was sent on two consecutive exclusion fouls for a 1-all halftime score. Petar Trbojevic scored from outside but Predrag Zimonjic didn't hear his exclusion and re-offended to send Silipo to the line to score his second penalty goal and to end the quarter 2-all. Ikodinovic made it 3-2 for Yugoslavia with an outside shot at 6:32 but the man they call Tyson in Italy for the resemblance he has with Mike Tyson in the neck region, Alessandro Calcaterra, scored from the two metres just inside the last minute.

Match 12, 13:30, ESP 12 JPN 1

2-0, 4-1, 3-0, 3-0

ESP 12 (I Perez 5, S Pedrerol, G Marcos 2, S Gomez, D Moro, G Hernandez) JPN 1 (K Sato).

There are no easy games as these championships as was shown by the Spaniards' win over host nation Japan. Spanish coach Juan Jane said he paid his respect to the Japanese players and supporters by playing his best team and best tactics for the whole game. While the score increased, so did Ivan Perez's reputation as the biggest crowd so far witnessed a great player in action, scoring five goals, two on extra-man but the others from his regular centre forward spot. He was ably backed by Gustavo Marcos and Sergi Pedrerol with two each. The defence by both sides on extra man was strong but Spain scored four from seven while Japan gained just the

one from eight. The telling factor was the number of shots taken with Spain firing off 29 to Japan's 11.

Match 13, 15:00, HUN 11 GRE 10

3-1, 3-2, 3-2, 2-5

HUN 11 (T Kasas, R Fodor, T Molnar 2, T Varga, Z Varga, A Vari, G Kiss, T Benedek) GRE 10 (T Chatzitheodorou 3, K Loudis, T Kalakonas 2, A Schizas, K Dandalos, G Afroudakis).

Five goals in just over five minutes in the last quarter nearly reaped rewards for the Greeks against the World Cup and Olympic champion Hungarians. At 5-10 down early in the period, Greece stepped up to a higher level with Theodoros Kalakonas scoring twice in 23 seconds to spark the resurgence of Greece. Skipper

Konstantinos Loudis and three-goal hero Theodoros Chatzitheodorou brought the score to 9-10 but Gergely Kiss ensured the champion team of the win 47 seconds from time. Georgios Afroudakis scored a long-range shot with five seconds to go for the close loss. But the game, while exciting at the

HIGH NOON AT HAKATA NO-MORI

It was a very intense game not only because of the temperature (32 c) but because two of the best teams in the world—Yugoslavia and Italy—gold and silver medallist at last month's European Championships in Budapest were meeting again.

Both teams were prepared to fight fiercely to gain victory. The long standing rivalry between Yugoslavia and Italy is not eased by the location. This match was not a replay of the final in Budapest, where Yugoslavia beat Italy 8-5, thanks to an overwhelming superiority in the mid periods (they scored 6 goals in the second and the third period, the Italians none). The Italians have not beaten Yugoslavia since 1997.

Today the Italians were determined to change this state of affairs. They could not count on their second centre forward, Roberto Calcaterra, whose disqualification ended after this game, the Italians deliberately choose a defensive strategy. So did the Yugoslavs, although for different reasons: they admitted being nervous and not in same shape as in Budapest.

This explains the tie and the unusual low score at the end of each period, and of the match.

Italy's #8 Alberto Angelini said: "It was a battle. We deserved the tie. This was the perfect outcome. Yugoslavia would not have deserved defeat. It was a true match, may be not so spectacular."

Coach Sandro Campagna added: "We have prepared this match carefully. Players from both teams suffered from the heat, nevertheless they played at their best. Tomorrow we will have Roberto Calcaterra back in the team. We can improve physically and mentally."

Yugoslav coach Nenad Manojlovic admitted: "It is difficult to stay on top just one month after the European championships. Here we are not yet in top form. Both teams played well defensively. Italy (whose goals came from two penalties and an action goal with only 57 seconds remaining) missed all extramane opportunities; nevertheless they proved their strength beating Hungary in Budapest. Both goalies have played very well." Yugoslavia's goalkeeper, captain Aleksandar Sostar, added: "We were not focused properly, this is why we were nervous. We need to work hard to get back to form. All games in this tournament will be difficult".

end, was won in the first three periods by a much-improved Hungarian line-up. Tamas Kasas, also a deft tennis player, enjoyed the Hakata-no-Mori Centre Court, scoring three goals. Zsolt Varga and centre Tamas Molnar added two each. The Greeks gained the better of the major foul count, scoring seven from 12 and Hungary sent in four from seven. If two more extra-man opportunities in the last few minutes had succeeded, it could well have been a draw or better.

Match 14, 16:30, RUS 9 NED 7

3-1, 2-2, 2-3, 3-1

RUS 9 (D Gorshkov 3, I Zinnourov 2, N Kozlov, R Tchomakhidze, S Garbouzov, A Reketchinski) NED 7 (H van der Meer 3, A Havenga 2, E Uri, G Silvis).

Russia proved its superiority with a 9-7 victory over the Dutch but at three-quarter point, the game was 6-6. But then the Russians struck better form and ran in three goals to one for the two-goal victory. Those first three goals hurt the Dutch but the Russians almost went to sleep, allowing the Dutch to score three of the next four goals to get back into the game. Harry van der Meer used his lethal arm to good effect and added three goals to the two he scored yesterday. Russian captain Dmitri Gorshkov showed he is world class with three goals, including the one which sealed the game 57 seconds from time. The Russians made the most of extra man with four from six with the Dutch shooting four from eight.

Match 15, 18:00, SVK 8 BRA 5

3-0, 2-4, 2-1, 1-0

SVK 8 (K Baco 4, R Polacik 3, P Nizny) BRA 5 (R Perrone 3, D Mameri 2).

This was a game for stars to emerge and four players scored all but one of the goals as Slovakia bounced back from its one-goal loss to Yugoslavia yesterday to down Brazil 8-5. Karol Baco scored three yesterday and tonight he equalled that by quarter time and scoring another in the third period for seven personal goals for the tournament. Brazilian captain Ricardo Perrone repeated the feat in the second period, scoring a penalty and two action goals. The good news for Brazil that Daniel Mameri also scored to win the quarter 4-2. Veteran Roman Polacik scored the first of his three goals in the second, using his power at centre forward and lashing out with his long left arm. There were plenty of breaks in the game and both teams gained plenty of exercise on extra man. Slovakia, however, managed to convert five from eight while Brazil could score only three from 12. Brazil had twice as many shots as Slovakia but it proved fruitless.

Match 16, 19:30, KAZ 6 GER 4

2-1, 1-0, 2-1, 1-2

KAZ 6 (I Zaitsev 2, Y Smolovyy, A Sevostyanov, S Drozdov, I Zagoruiko) GER 4 (J Pohlmann 2, T Wollthian, T Kreuzmann)

Germany looked nothing like the team which beat Greece 9-8 yesterday. The Kazakhstan team came out with a grim determination and went 2-0 up before Germany scored through Jens Pohlmann two seconds from the hooter. Ivan Zaitsev scored the only goal of the second period and then two more Kazakhstan goals had them 5-1 up. Tim Wollthian salvaged some pride to be 5-2 down going into the last. Igor Zagoruiko made it 6-2 and then Germany came back into the game with two more goals, the second to Pohlmann 2:08 from time. Germany thrust forward at every opportunity but Kazakhstan held on for the vital win leaving it in with a chance for the next round. Germany did itself no favours in the extra-man count, converting only one from eight. Kazakhstan, on the other hand scored two from five. Germany also had eight more shots than the Asians with 25.

SYNCHRO TEAM FINALS

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE RUSSIAN APPROACH

A year ago Russia won the Olympic gold in the team synchronized with a near perfect routine and an experienced team including Maria Kisseleva (now retired) and solo winner Olga Brusnikina.

Now in daring move, fielding a team of juniors, Russia won the gold here using the same music and routine. It really shows the superiority of the Russian approach to the sport.

The music for the Russian routine was by Modest Mussorgsky "Night on a Bald Mountain," a classic 19th century composition. The judges rewarded the performance with three 9.9s a 10 and a 9.7 for a total 59.400 for technical merit, while the scores were even better for artistic impression with three 10s and two 9.9s. The final total was 98.917. Pretty close to the Olympic winning score of 99.333.

Russian head coach Tatiana Pokrovskaya said "I was a little bit concerned with our presentation because it was exactly the same as we performed in the Olympics. As this is a new team, I was curious to see how they would interpret the same program. But in the end, everything was perfect. I trained the

two teams, and I can say that they are quite different. The new team is formed by young athletes so what we lost in experience, we gained in vitality and sharpness. I think the routine is now brighter."

Team member Anastassia Ermakova, "We trained so hard to achieve this success. I am satisfied with the performance but have to see the video recording. Even if we were not perfect as long as we satisfy our coach we are happy."

Japan was second performing to traditional composition based on national theme titled "Samurai" by Mizuho Osawa and used the koto (Japanese classic stringed instrument).

The marks for technical merit ranged from 9.9, two 9.8s and 9.7s for a total of



58.600. For artistic impression it was a 9.8, three 9.9s and a 10. Their final total was 98.083.

Juri Tatsumi one the team members admitted, "The first lift wasn't high enough, so I can't say it was perfect. I was a little nervous, but once in the water I was calm. Last night's duet victory really motivated me. I wanted to feel the momentum. I am filled with gratitude and appreciation for so many people including our coach. The applause was amazing."

Canada claimed the bronze with a what Claire Carver-Dias said "It felt like a great performance, we saw all our lifts in slow motion and they were solid. It just felt great really energetic. It felt like what we do every day and that is what was so great. It was like practice. I feel that we have a routine that is really crowd pleasing. Our routine is very artistic and we are happy with the judge who gave us a 10."

The Canadian received three 9.7s and two 9.8 for technical merit and a 10, a 9.9, two 9.8s and a 9.6 for artistic impression. Their total points were 97.453. Their music was from the film "Chariots of Fire" by the Greek composer Vangelis.

The once dominant Americans were fourth without a single medal here.

TEAM COMBINED FINAL RESULTS

1	RUS	99.267	4	USA	96.267	7	CHN	93.600	10	GRE	91.133
	DAVYDOVA Anastasia	83		KOZLOVA Anna	72		XIA Ye	80		FTOULI Eleftheria	81
	TOLKATCHEVA Irina	82		McFALL Lauren	80		MA Yi	80		CHRISTODOULOU Maria	80
	SHORINA Anna	82		JASONTEK Rebecca	75		GU Beibei	80		KOUTSOUDI Evgenia	84
	PETRATCHINA Svetlana	82		CROW Tamara	77		ZHOU Jing	77		STASINOPOULOU Venetia	84
	ERMAKOVA Anastassia	83		NORRIS Katherine	82		ZHANG Xiaohuan	80		IOANNOU Apostolia	79
	OVTCHINNIKOVA Elena	82		BARTOSIK Alison	83		CHEN Meng	80		PELEKANOU Olga	81
	KHASSIANOVA Elvira	81		WIGGINTON Lindsey	80		DONG Yinan	80		VOUTIRAKI Zoi	83
	CHESTAKOVITCH Joulia	82		ZANOTTO Kendra	81		DENG Yu	80		THALASSINIDOU Christina	70
	GROMOVA Maria (R)	84		PIETRAS Gina (R)	75		LIU Chen (R)	81		MORAITI Maria (R)	84
2	JPN	98.200		MARTIN Rebecca (R)	81	8	FRA	92.467		SAVVIDOU Pantelitsa (R)	81
	YONEDA Yoko	79	5	ESP	95.267		DANIEL Eve	78	11	BRA	90.000
	FUJIMARU Michiyo	79		MONTERO Ana	80		PARENT Psylvia	80		LEITE Beatriz	83
	WATANABE Chiaki	76		RODRIGUEZ Irina	77		PONTOIZEAU Fabienne	79		LOPES Ticiana	80
	SUZUKI Emiko	81		SERRANO Ione	79		THIBAUD Laure	78		DE OLIVEIRA Camile	82
	TATSUMI Juri	79		MENGUAL Gemma	77		LIPPERT Lea	79		DE MORAES Isabela	80
	HOKODA Satoe	82		MORON Gisela	76		PIEDNOIR Annabelle	78		LEITE Juliana	83
	KAWASHIMA Naoko	81		SANZ Alicia	81		ROURE Fanny	80		PAZIKAS Marina	80
	HARADA Saho	82		FUENTES Andrea	83		GLEZ Myriam	80		DE MORAES Carolina	80
	TAKEDA Miho (R)	76		TIRADOS Paola	80		PIERRET Marjorie (R)	79		MONTEIRO Fernanda	77
3	CAN	97.733		RABANAL Anna (R)	79	9	UKR	91.267		CASTRO Clarisse (R)	80
	CARVER-DIAS Claire	77		CORRAL Raquel (R)	80		KRYKUNOVA Maryna	85		OTTAIANO Mariana (R)	83
	GARCEAU Catherine	78	6	ITA	94.533		MORO Ulyana	82	12	SUI	88.267
	CHASE Jessica	78		BALLAN Giada	73		HNATYUK Lyudmyla	83		SCHMID Belinda	81
	CASKEY Amy	78		CIRULLI Monica	81		KOLTOCHYKHINA Darya	83		EGGENBERGER Katrin	82
	LETOURNEAU Fanny	79		PLAISANT Elisa	81		KHOLOD Maryna	80		BLASIMANN Claudia	80
	CHAN Erin	79		VERCELLI Virna	79		RUDNYTSKA Iryna	79		FUCHS Sandra	80
	JOHNSON Lynn	79		BALZAROTTI Eva	81		GAYVORONSKA Iryna	83		RUEGG Corinne	75
	PETROV Sara	82		PACCAGNELLA Joey	81		YUSHKO Darya	85		EGLI Martiana	80
	NACKONEY Shayna (R)	82		PORCHETTO Clara	78					CRAUSAZ Jennifer	81
	ALEXANDER Sarah (R)	78		ZAFFALON Lorena	81					BRUNNER Magdalena	83
				ZANAZZA Laura (R)	82					TORRE Daniela (R)	82
				AZZALI Chiara (R)	80					RUEFENACHT Regina (R)	80