



FIRST FINALIST DETERMINED IN MEN'S WATER POLO TOURNAMENT AT FINA WORLDS

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SPORT



The first semifinal of the men's water polo tournament in the 16th FINA World Championships has just ended. In a stubborn pursuit of goal-scoring, Croatia only managed to beat the Greek national team in a penalty shoot-out.

The current Olympic champions, the Croatian national team, consistently took third place at the last three World Championships, but in Kazan, Ivica Tucak's team was clearly not averse to freeing themselves from the bronze plaque and aspired to medals of more precious metals. This can in fact be judged by the results of the national team, which departed the group with a clean first place, and left no stone unturned from the defensive redoubts of Montenegro in the quarterfinal (10-4).

But the Greeks at the current World Championships have already managed to gain the sympathy of professionals and the local audience. The fact of the matter is that without having the most physically strong athletes, the training staff of the Greeks has placed its bet on mobility and quick transition from defence to attack. Due to this, the Greek team's game scheme looks like a spring, which could release at the most inopportune moment for the opponent.

That was what happened in the second period of the match, when the Greeks surprised many by being able to get back in the game with a score of 1-3, imposing desperate resistance against the Croatian national team, which eventually allowed the trailing side to make up ground and keep the margin to a minimum. The score was 4-5 at half time. It no longer looked like a death sentence, and allowed the Greeks to look to the future with optimism.

And there were still chances before the final quarter. Immediately after the interval, the rivals exchanged two goals, but never provided full clarity about the vacant place in the final. The rivals provided spectators with the famous intrigue and speedy end to the breathtaking final. 27 seconds before the siren, Greece managed to tie the score with an effective attack made clear by the coach during time-out. The right for an unplanned break was immediately seized by the Croatian side, but a penalty shoot-out in this match was not avoided.

The Croatian team turned out to be more precise, scoring with all five attempts and not allowing the opponents to bring the series to the end. Only one unrealised attempt put a barrier to the Greek national team on the way to the final. They will compete in the match for the third place.

FINA Worlds 2015. Water polo.

Men. Semifinal.

Croatia vs Greece – 10-10 (3-1, 2-3, 2-2, 3-4) (5-3 – on penalties)

Water Polo Arena. August 6.

Press Office of Organising Committee for 16th FINA World Championships



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