



## KAZAN 2015 HIGHLIGHTS: A LOOK BACK AT THE BEST FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS EVER

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CULTURE



The 16th FINA World Championships have come to an end and have already gone down in global sports history. There are many things that happened at this international aquatics tournament for the first time.

It is the first FINA World Championships that are held in Russia.

For the first time in the FINA history, competitions in aquatic sports were held at the football stadium, Kazan Arena Stadium, which is by the way, the first stadium built for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Mixed duets in diving and synchronised swimming are introduced in the competition programme for the first time.

For the first time in the history of the FINA World Championships athletes were accommodated in the Athletes' Village.

It is the first time that an international news agency from Russia got a status of the host news agency and host photo agency. It was MIA Rossiya Segodnya.

For the first time in the FINA World Championships history, the Opening Ceremony was held not in a swimming pool, as usually, but at a separate venue and was staged as an independent show. Moreover, it was re-run seven times.

And finally for the first time, the FINA World Masters Championships are held concurrently with the main Championships.

The editorial office of the official Kazan 2015 website offers you to have a look at the fact and figures that made the past competitions an unforgettable experience for everyone: fans, athletes, visitors and all those who made this epic project happen.

- New disciplines

The spectators could see the inaugural events in two disciplines: technical and free routines of mixed duets in synchronised swimming and mixed duets in diving.

- The US duet of Bill May and Christina Jones, Russia's duet of Aleksandr Maltsev and Darina Valitova and the British duet of Thomas Daley and Rebecca Gallantree wrote their names in all-time history as the inaugural winners in these disciplines.



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- World Championships Records

Twelve world records were set at the World Championships in Kazan:

- Swedish swimmer Sarah Sjöström managed to break the world record (55.74) in the women's 100 butterfly final event. The next day she stamped her name once again upon the women's 100m butterfly heat, finishing in 55.64.

- Distinguished Russian synchronised swimmer Natalia Ishchenko set a Championships record in the solo free routine, picking up 97.23 points.

- US swimmer Katie Ledecky is a breakthrough of the Championships, the experts say. She broke a world record in the women's 1,500m freestyle preliminary heat, touching home in 15:27.71. The next day Ledecky set a new world record in the final (15:25.48).

- Hungarian swimmer Katinka Hosszu set a new world mark in the 200m medley with a time of 2:06.12.

- South African swimmer Cameron van der Burgh finished the 50m breaststroke preliminary heat with a record time of 26.62. It did not take British Adam Peaty too long to break it later that evening in the semifinal, his world record time being 26.42. Implacably for both of them, none won the world title in the final.

- Team Great Britain took gold in the mixed 4x100 medley final (3:41.71), breaking a world record which belonged to the Russian team in the morning and to the US team in the afternoon.

- Triumphant comebacks

- Synchronised swimmer Natalia Ishchenko came back to professional sport after maternity leave. The Russian won three gold medals at the 2015 FINA World Championships.



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- Athletes aged 10 years and older

- Ten-year-old swimmer from Bahrain Alzain Tareq became the youngest female participant of the 2015 FINA World Championships in Kazan. She finished last in her 50m butterfly preliminary round. However, despite her result, she was one of the most popular athletes with the mass media representatives who wanted to sit for an interview with her.

- Chinese Ren Qian who turned fourteen this year was the youngest medallist of the World Championships. She won silver in the women's 10m platform event.

- Open water swimmer Angela Maurer of Germany was the maturest medallist of the FINA World Championships, who turned forty exactly the day when she managed to win the bronze medal in the women's 25km marathon.

- Victory in the name of love

- Italian open water swimmer Simone Ruffini will remember these Championships for long, emerging victorious both in the men's 25km marathon and on the dating front. Right after the finish, the swimmer made a proposal to his fiancée Aurora Ponselè, who also competed in the Championships in Kazan, and she accepted the proposal.



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- Fans and spectators

- The Championships also owe their success to fans and spectators that attended the competitions. Athletes representing different countries of the world mentioned more than once the amazing atmosphere of hospitality and friendliness, a warm support from the spectators and packed stands. An average of 25,000 spectators attended competition venues every day.

- Ticket sales broke all the records. More than 316,259 out of 404,702 tickets (78% of the total amount) were sold for sporting events. The ticket price for competitions ranged from 50 to 3,000 rubles.

- The Championships' viewership reached 4.5 bln spectators worldwide. The TV coverage was provided in 107 countries by 81 broadcasting companies.

- Athletes' Village

- The Athletes Village is a city within a city. It has everything for a comfortable stay: post office, bank, library, beauty salon, medical centre, pharmacy, supermarket, security service, restaurants, cafe and its own environmentally sensitive electrical transport. Several types of menus were offered to athletes: European, Mediterranean, Russian, Tatar, Asian, halal, kosher and vegetarian.

- Catering services, as well as the Athletes' Village in general, received plenty of positive feedbacks from athletes. All of them dubbed the atmosphere reigning in the Village as similar to the Olympic one.

- 2,638 athletes from 166 countries were accommodated in the Village during the Championships.



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- Kazan 2015 volunteers
  - 2,212 out of 2,500 volunteers selected by the Organising Committee in the build-up to the Championships lent their help at the FINA World Championships 2015. The rest were included in the reserve team and were ready to take shifts whenever needed. 540 local and international volunteers from 20 partner regions of the Russian Federation and 11 countries of the world worked at the event.
  - 11 city volunteer booths were opened for the duration of the tournament in close proximity to sports venues and key tourist routes of the city. 4-8 hours was the average duration of a volunteer shift.
  - 9.5 candidates per one position was an average competition for the Kazan Volunteers team. 18-19 years old is an average age of volunteers working at the FINA Worlds 2015. The maturest volunteers are 76 and 77 years old.
  - The youngest members of the Kazan 2015 volunteer team are 14-year-old city and sports volunteers (their participation in the World Championships is envisioned by special programmes and agreements with educational establishments and sports schools of Kazan).
  - The longest distances covered by volunteers on the way to Kazan were 8 308.4 kilometres (25 volunteers from Vladivostok) and 9 133 kilometres (a volunteers from the United States).
- FINA Water World Park
  - Over 303,150 people (August 9 – 36,400 people) visited the 5-hectare Park from the day of its opening (The Park is open through August 16).
  - 3,992 artists performed on the main stage of the Park.
  - About 1 tonne of water falls down daily on artists during the Dancing Under the Water show staged by the Iskushenie (Temptation) St. Petersburg Dance Theatre at the FINA Water World Park.
  - Over 25,000 souvenirs were given away in the Championships partners' pavilions, including one LADA Kalina Cross car.
  - 10,000 rubles were spent by one of the tourists on souvenir postcards in one of the FINA Water World Park's gift shops. Such souvenirs as official magnets with Ilil and Alsu mascots on, keychains, mugs, toys are sale hits.
  - 48,000 people attended the national farmstead (catering zone) in the Park. Russian and Tatar cuisines were the most popular. Two tonnes of kebab and six tonnes of vegetables were sold out at the national farmstead.
  - 300 best volunteers were awarded on the main stage of the FINA Water World Park. Awards were presented by such Kazan 2015 Ambassadors and famous artists as Dmitry Sautin, Maria Kiseleva, Gleb Galperin, Maksim Sharafutdinov, Timur Batrutdinov, Nyusha, Timur Rodriguez, Elmira Kalimullina, Anton Salakaev, Yana Churikova, Alexander Samokutyaev, Orlando Duque, representatives of the Detektivnoye Agentstvo Lunny Svet ('Moonlight Detective Agency') KVN team, Bolshoy Kush ('King's Ransom') and other celebrities and outstanding athletes.
- FINA Worlds 2015 in quotes
  - FINA President Dr. Julio C. Maglione: "We all felt at home in Kazan, the quality of the venues, the excellent TV production, the enthusiastic spectators, the outstanding organisation and the unforgettable hospitality made this Championships the best ever in the FINA history."

FINA Executive Director: "Volunteers here are simply fantastic. We've never had such World Championships before. We've never had such a Village and the venues are absolutely fantastic."

Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban: "According to the medal table, Russia earned nine gold medals but in fact there must be ten of them because the Republic of Tatarstan and Kazan deserve one more medal for the organisation of the 16th FINA World Championships."

Russia's Minister of Sport Vitaly Mutko: "The fact that Mr. Minnikhanov and I were awarded the FINA Orders is a very important for us. It's not an acknowledgement of some personal contributions, it's an evaluation of the efforts undertaken by the host nation in terms of developing aquatic sports, it's a commendation of the high-standard delivery of the World Championships in Russia. Words are words while this Order is a legal confirmation of the fact that we've staged the best World Championships ever!"

Olympic champion, repeat world champion Chad le Clos: "I'm glad to be in Russia, to swim in this wonderful swimming pool. I am a former footballer, so it is fantastic to swim in a pool constructed on a football pitch. I'd like to thank the Championships organisers for this opportunity."

Olympic champion, three-time world champion Cameron van der Burgh: "My impressions are quite positive! I am pleasantly surprised with the Russian audience that greeted and supported absolutely every athlete, not only Russian ones. The event management is to the highest standard, the stadium is amazing and the pool is just wonderful."

Three-time Olympic champion, repeat world champion Svetlana Romashina: "These are my 6th or 7th World Championships, and I can feel the difference. It felt strange in the beginning with those huge stands, we did not even understand where we were. But you get used to it very quickly and now it seems a huge advantage to be able to attract so many people here. I like everything about it."

World high diving champion (2015) Gary Hunt: "Everything is great here! They have created every condition for us to show the best results."

World high diving champion (2013), Kazan 2015 Ambassador Orlando Duque: "It is just a city on its own, it's been built for sports and it doesn't exist in many cities. And I guess it's very nice to be able to enjoy that."

Two-time Olympic bronze medallist, two-time world champion, Kazan 2015 Ambassador Gleb Galperin: "The city and the whole country are permeated with these Championships, and in terms of their spirit and atmosphere I would equate them to the Olympic Games."

Three-time Olympic champion, three-time world champion Maria Kiseleva: "Everything is to the highest standard, and it was clear as early as during the Summer Universiade. I am sure that these Championships will go down in history as one of the best ones. This is not only my opinion, but the opinion of the people working here, the opinion of the FINA President. I have been to many tournaments, so I have something to compare with. I am very proud of Russia!"

Press Office of Organising Committee for 16th FINA World Championships



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