



## RUSSIAN SHORT COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS: VOLGOGRAD OBLAST SWIMMERS TRIUMPH ON DAY 4

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SPORT



With the Russian Short Course Swimming Championships approaching the finish line, only six finals were contested on the fourth competition day.

However, some preliminary results can already be summed up. We can clearly see what positions the participating regions take in the overall standings. Following tough struggles in 31 finals, three leading clubs – Moscow, Volgograd Oblast and Sverdlovsk Oblast – occupy the first three spots on the medal table followed far behind by the rest of participating regions whereas another frequenter of the podium, St. Petersburg, often settles for silver instead of gold. The host of the tournament, Republic of Tatarstan, is in sixth place.

Today's heats saw three out of six gold medals go to the Volgograd Oblast, two to St. Petersburg and one to the Penza Oblast.

The list of top multiple medallists for today is as follows:

1. Nikita Konovalov (Volgograd Oblast) - 4 gold and 1 silver.
2. Daria Ustinova (Sverdlovsk Oblast) - 3 gold and 1 bronze.
3. Svetlana Chimrova (Moscow) - 3 gold.

Konovalov and Ustinova predictably met the qualifying time standards in their events and earned berths for the European championships that are due to be held in Israel in December.

Today's semifinals though were full of surprises. Daniil Pakhomov broke the two-year-long junior world record in the 100m individual medley (54.26). But in order to meet the qualifying standard and to place higher than the second place, he will have to pick up speed for tomorrow's final. Another interesting semi, the men's 50m breaststroke, was not marked with any records but it saw the leaders of the race – Igor Golovin and Sergey Geybel – achieve a qualifying time. To secure their berths, they will need to swim at the same speed in tomorrow's final heats.

Six swimmers punched their tickets to the European Short Course Championships today.

Men's 4x50m freestyle

1. Volgograd Oblast - 1:27.41
2. St. Petersburg - 1:28.29
3. Sverdlovsk Oblast 3 - 1:28.95

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*"To be honest, since it's just another tournament in the lead-up to major events, we haven't been gearing up specifically for this competition. We arrived here directly after concluding our altitude training programme that's I didn't know how I will manage to swim this race. All in all, I'm happy with my result and with the fact that I qualified for the European championships. It's not the first time when I compete after altitude training and the results I show after them always come as a surprise to me. I failed to show my best result but on the whole I'm pleased. Normally I prefer long course, but I do well in short course, too. The main thing is that I'm quite good at flip turns,"* Maria Astashkina said after her silver medal win.

Women's 100m breaststroke

1. Natalia Ivaneeva (Volgograd Oblast) - 1:05.82 (Q)

2. Maria Astashkina (Penza Oblast) - 1:06.12 (Q)

3. Daria Chikunova (St. Petersburg) - 1:06.63

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Men's 50m backstroke

1. Andrey Schabasov (St. Petersburg) - 23.65 (Q)

2. Anton Butymov (Komi Republic) - 23.87

3. Stanislav Donets (Ulyanovsk Oblast) - 23.89...

...5. Nikita Bodrov (Moscow) - 24.11 (NJR)

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*"Yesterday I had the initial symptoms of a disease: cough, stuffiness in nose. I even thought that I will have a fever in the morning. My coach and I were concerned that I was going to have sinusitis because I regularly have it on such occasions, especially after swimming the backstroke. I usually fall ill for two weeks after that. But after today's practice I felt a little bit better. It's more likely that I feel low not because of a disease but because of stress I put my body under during the first two competition days. I haven't competed for a long while and here I had lots of physical exertion all at once. That's why I hope that tomorrow I will feel even better. I'm not completely happy with my result; I fell short of the best time a little. I know that I can do more and will be able to swim much faster. I still have some drawbacks; you can see them in my relay performance. As for individual races, the results are improving quite noticeably: in the freestyle I had 21.69 first, then I had 21.44 in the morning and in the evening it was 21.30 already. There is every reason to believe that each time I will race, my results will get better and better,"* said Nikita Konovalov after grabbing gold in the 50m butterfly event.

Men's 50m butterfly

1. Nikita Konovalov (Volgograd Oblast) - 22.59 (Q)

2. Alexander Popkov (St. Petersburg) - 23.00 (Q)

3. Kirill Kiselyov (St. Petersburg) - 23.29

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Women's 200m individual medley

1. Viktoria Andreeva (Penza Oblast) - 02:08.34 (Q)

2. Irina Shvaeva (St. Petersburg) - 02:10.95

3. Anastasia Osipenko (Krasnoyarsk Krai) - 2:12.22

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Mixed 4x50m freestyle

1. St. Petersburg - 1:31.80

2. Novosibirsk Oblast - 1:32.76

3. Moscow - 1:32.97

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All results of the fourth competition day are available [here](#) (in Russian).

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