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## WOMEN'S WATER POLO: HUNGARY AND NETHERLANDS BOOK THEIR TICKET TO TOKYO



With the Tokyo Olympics just six months away, the remaining Olympic women's water polo tournament berths were secured last Saturday (January 23) in Trieste (ITA) in the semi-finals as Hungary and 2008 Olympic champion the Netherlands defeated respectively 2016 Olympic silver medallists Italy and Greece.

The Hungarian women tumbled the Qualification Tournament host from their Olympic dream with a final score of 13-10 (3-1, 2-2, 4-4, 4-3), while the Dutch prevented the Hellenic squad to return to the Olympics after missing Rio in 2016 with a 7-4 victory (1-2, 2-2, 2-0, 2-0).

Hungary's Head Coach Attila Biro admitted the difficulty of the match: *"It was a really tough game for both teams. Our goalie was a little bit better than the Italian's and I think we had huge mental power."*

*"I knew that we couldn't win by four-five-six goals obviously, that's why we were winning by one or two goals. We tried to push in defence mostly. But, hopefully on attack we were much, much better than two days ago (5-8 loss to Greece)."*

*"Staying calm until the end of the game and take a high rhythm and push hard in defence was the key to win."*

For Hungary, it was the goal-scoring queen, Rita Keszthelyi, who once again reigned supreme with six goals, lifting her Trieste tally to an incredible 26.

The finals that were held on Sunday January 24 did not count for the Olympic Qualification.

The 10-team line-up for the Women's Water Polo tournament at Tokyo 2020 is now complete:

- Japan (host)
- USA (2019 FINA World League winners, defending Olympic champions)
- Spain (2019 FINA World Championships silver medallists)
- Canada (2019 Pan American Games silver medallists)
- Australia (Oceania continental selection)
- South Africa (Africa continental selection)
- Russia (2020 European Championship silver medallists)
- China (2018 Asian Games winners)
- The Netherlands (Olympic Qualification Tournament)
- Hungary (Olympic Qualification Tournament)

The USA, led by captain Maggie Steffens, is certainly ramping up the preparation for what could be their third consecutive Olympic title, after claiming victory in London 2012 and Rio 2016. In addition, the North American team has bagged most of the international titles of the highest competitions including the last three World Championships (Kazan 2015, Budapest 2017, Gwangju 2019) and the last three World Cups (2010, 2014 and 2018).

Hungary has missed the podium (4th place) at the last three Olympic Games, while the Netherlands is qualified for the first time since 2008 when they clinched the Olympic honours in Beijing (CHN).

Simone van de Kraats (NED) expressed her team's joy: "We're so happy that we are finally at the Olympics. It's amazing, this feeling."

The Trieste competition's outcome came as truly encouraging in the lead-up to the Games after being held in a successful and safe "bubble". Players and coaches were strictly traveling from the hotel to the swimming pool and all matches were played behind closed doors, with no spectators.

Greece's Christina Tsoukala commented the much-awaited return to competition: "Returning? It's hard! But we all wanted to start again after almost a year without an international match, so it's good, we're happy."

The FINA Men's Water Polo Olympic Games Qualification Tournament will take place in Rotterdam (NED) from February 14-21, 2021.

[More on fina.org](https://www.fina.org)

## MORE LIVE SESSIONS ON FINA LEARNING PLATFORM!



Today, as part of its Development initiatives, FINA will hold a "Q&A / Panel Discussion on the effects of COVID19" with Canada's diving ace Jennifer Abel, a three-time Olympian and 10-time World medallist.

The panel, moderated by Mathz Lindberg, will also include high-profile speakers Australia Head Coach Chava Sobrino and International Judge Mohammad Hassan.

In this Q&A's conference, Jennifer Abel will explain how she has coped with the pandemic and all the obstacles it has put on her preparations for the Olympic Games. She will go through her training tips when the pools are closed and how she stayed fit and motivated for a whole year. She will also touch on the mental aspect COVID-19 has had, and still has, on athletes' minds.

Tune in at 13:00 (CET) [here](#)

The Live Sessions, designed to help the Aquatics community, were launched in June 2020 on FINA's educational tool, the Learning Platform. They are developed and presented by experts in the field of the respective disciplines and are open to everyone. All the sessions are recorded and can be found available [here](#):

An additional two Sessions are scheduled for February 3 and February 10. Topics discussed will range from "Strength and Conditioning" (expert to be confirmed) to "Nutrition for Divers" by GSO University Professor Bernadot.

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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT



# FINA AQUATICS WORLD MAGAZINE STEPS INTO DIGITAL WORLD

The bi-monthly FINA Aquatics World Magazine, launched in 2010, is transitioning from paper to digital in line with today's best practice and technology in an effort to reduce the footprint of paper impression, but also to reach a wider and younger audience.

The digital Magazine, from now on, on a monthly basis, will continue to feature exclusive interviews of the world of Aquatics' stars, behind-the-scene stories and event highlights across FINA's six disciplines (swimming, diving, water polo, artistic swimming, open water swimming and high diving). New sections - with increased visual and multimedia elements - will be available in the updated version of the highly-appreciated Magazine that is distributed to all FINA Family in the five continents. The latest edition of the printed Magazine can be read [here](#). The inaugural digital issue will be available on the first week of February 2021. The contribution from the most experienced and knowledgeable Aquatics experts will undoubtedly make this Magazine a top source of content for our six discipline.

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The Fédération Internationale de Natation, FINA (founded in 1908) is the governing body for aquatics worldwide.

Its five disciplines - Swimming, Open Water Swimming, Diving, Water Polo and Artistic Swimming - are all included in the Olympic programme. High Diving is on the World Championships programme since 2013. FINA organises World Championships, World Swimming Championships in 25m-pool and World Masters Championships every two years. FINA



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counts 209 affiliated National Federations on the five continents and has its headquarters in Lausanne (SUI).

