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ASWS 2019: KAZAN FIELD FEATURES OLYMPIC AND WORLD MEDALLISTS



The Olympic medal-winning Russians Svetlana Kolesnichenko and Svetlana Romashina are only the two out of some 20 prominent names on the entry list for the FINA Artistic Swimming World Series in Kazan to be launched this Friday as the artistic week-end in the heart of Russia will kick off on April 19, to hit the tape in 3 days.

Kazan's premiere

The event, hosted by the Kazan's Aquatics Palace, is the third out of eight legs in the 2019 circuit, which is designed to reach climax in Budapest at the Super Final premiere later this mid-June. Like the Hungarian capital, Tatar's city is pretty well known in the aquatics world. Appearing on the map in 2013, Kazan turned out to be a proud host for the FISU Summer Universiade, two years later (2015) it provided background to the FINA World Championships and FINA World Masters Championships. Kazan already hosted 3 Junior World Championships in artistic swimming and diving, and a number of other top level competitions such as diving and swimming events, though never before had a chance to offer hospitality for the Artistic Swimming World Series. Finally, the gap shall be filled this April, bringing here a selection of the world's best names.

Some 300 athletes of 12 nations will have 3 busy days, swimming 5 technical (solo, mixed duet, duet and team) and 5 free routines (solo, mixed duet, duet, team, combination and highlight). The participants number impresses as the 3rd leg of the FINA Artistic Swimming World Series integrates the Russian Championships one of the strongest in the continent.

Ten sets of medals are again on offer, including a very spectacular mixed duets contest, introduced exactly four years ago in the same city.

All eyes on stars

As for the stars to watch, the Russian girls will be the major attractions, as they normally are wherever they come. Italy, China, Belarus, Hungary and Austria are among the main contenders for the podium spots.

Solo

Svetlana Kolesnichenko will hope to bring her vast experience to mark her official start of the international season. Last year, the 2016 Olympic champion and 13 times World champion set the bar at sky high with 95.5000 points for the free program, whereas her teammate Varvara Subbotina posted a season-best in the tech event, 94.1509. However, the latter will not be a part competition this weekend, the same holding true for the “reigning queens”. Ukrainian Marta Fiedina and Yukiko Inui of Japan, recording the 2019 best at 92.7000 for free and 90.5294 for technical programmes, will not come to Kazan leaving the door open for Vasilina Khandoshka of Belarus. Remember her breakthrough bronze at the inaugural leg of the ASWS 2019 in Paris. Top class swim shall be expected by the Italian star Linda Cerruti, already silver this year (solo free, leg#1). In Kazan, she is going to swim both solos cherishing a good hope to add up to her 6 medals collection of 2018.

Duets

The very Linda Cerruti pairing her many-year partner Costanza Ferro shall be a sure bet in duets.

Last year they hit 1-2 in both routines, and already got a silver at each of the two previous FINA ASWS 2019 stops. Although they could never reach before the Ukrainian headliners Marta Fiedina/Anastasiia Savchuk and the Aleksii sisters (who collected the best harvest on points: 91.4462 – for technical, and 92.8000 for free programme), Kazan will give them a good chance to exhibit.

A great comeback of Svetlana Romashina to match Svetlana Kolesnichenko is in the focus, of course. With their eyes on Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, the home hopes are more than ready to present in Russia their new programs.

[...]

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FINA PRESIDENT PAYS VISIT TO FINA DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN KAZAN



FINA President Dr. Julio C. Maglione paid a visit to the brand new FINA Aquatics Development Centre in Kazan, Russia, on April 14 as the complex opened its doors to the first Scholarship holders about a month ago.

Although the centre was officially inaugurated in September 2018, the purpose of the visit was also to inspect the progress of the preparations to the FINA Artistic Swimming

World Series 2019 to be held for the first time in Kazan this weekend, from April 19-21.

President Maglione took a tour of the facilities while the athletes were doing their practice afternoon session and praised the work of the centre which is serving as a catalyst in young Aquatics talent's sport careers.

On the occasion, school kids were also invited to visit the state-of-the-art Aquatics Palace of Kazan, the venue which staged the highly successful diving and water polo competitions of the 16th FINA World Championships in July / August 2015.

President Maglione had a meeting with Head Coach Gulnara Garipova, Director General of ANO Directorate for Sports and Social Projects, Azat Kadyrov, and Centre Coordinator Ranko Tepavcevic, also Deputy Director General of ANO Directorate for Sports and Social Projects.

On February 15, Kristina Panasenka of Kyrgyzstan was the first ever athlete to integrate the Development Centre and she was then joined by another six young athletes from Georgia, Latvia, Moldova, Montenegro and Pakistan (2), all aged between 16 and 21 years old.

“As of today only swimmers have been offered the opportunity to train here, but divers will join them soon. This centre is one of very few others that is ready to provide world-class infrastructure for swimmers and divers”, noted FINA President.

“All athletes started their training and there is a warm atmosphere within the group. The athletes became friends, which helps them to adapt to their new strict but productive living conditions. They have a good motivation to improve their results and nothing distracts them from the training process – this is the main thing!” Azat Kadyrov added.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



The FINA Development Centre in Kazan provides athletes with conditions for professional growth. Being located in Kazan also allows them to take part in the FINA competitions, for example, the Swimming World Cup or the Diving World Series (which take place annually in Kazan) without additional travel expenses and with the opportunity to compete in the pool which has become famous on the world sport stage.

[...]

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TOKYO 2020 UNVEILS DETAILS OF OLYMPIC COMPETITION SCHEDULE

The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games announced, on Tuesday April 16, the competition schedule for each sport of the Olympic Games.

The action-packed programme will feature a record 33 sports and 339 events and will run from 24 July until 9 August 2020.

The Aquatic sports (swimming, diving, artistic swimming, water polo and marathon swimming) will kick-off on Saturday July 25 with swimming heat sessions. The swimming competition will run until Sunday August 2, while the water polo tournaments will also start on Saturday July 25 but will run until the very last day of the Games, Sunday August 9.

Diving will take place from Sunday July 26 until Saturday August 8, with a one-day-break on Thursday July 30.

Artistic swimming preliminary rounds will be performed on Monday, Tuesday and Friday 4-5 and 7 August, while the medal events will be on Wednesday August 5 and Saturday August 8.

Finally, the marathon swimming races will be held on Wednesday August 5 and Thursday August 6 respectively.

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