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Favourites of open water swimming Olasz Anna

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After the retirement of Olympic champion Éva Risztov, Anna Olasz has become Hungary's main favourite in the women's open water events of the 2017 FINA World Championships. Arizona State University student Olasz was silver medallist in the 25km at the 2014 European Championships and at the 2015 FINA World Championships. Her goal is to achieve some good results at the domestic world championships as well.

Hungarian fans have mixed feelings about women's open water swimming ahead of this year's FINA World Championships. They were definitely very sad to hear that Olympic champion Éva Risztov had announced her retirement, but there are more and more talented young swimmers in the team like Adél Juhász, Janka Juhász, Nikoletta Kiss, Adél Farkas, Kata Sömenek Onon or Nikolett Szilágyi.

What's more, Hungary still have a world-class open water swimmer: Anna Olasz. The Szeged-born athlete began her career in the pool of course, she had some notable results at the 2009 European Youth Championships and at the 2010 Youth Olympic Games.

She won her first medal in a major international event in 2011 at the European Junior Championships, where she finished third in the 5km competition. She almost qualified for the 2012 Olympics, but she was really unlucky, since only one swimmer per nation could take part in the Games, and it was Éva Risztov from Hungary.

2013 was a turning point in her career: she finished first in the 5km and second in the 10km event, and won the gold medal in the overall competition. She started her studies at the Arizona State University, where Hungarian Olympic champions Attila Czene and Ágnes Kovács also used to study.

"I see their names on a memorial tablet every day, since they hold the university record in one event each" - Olasz said to delmagyar.hu.

Anna Olasz won silver in the 25km at the 2014 European Championships in Berlin. In 2015 she achieved the same result behind Ana Marcela Cunha at the FINA World Championships in Kazan, and finished second in the overall competition of the FINA/HOSA World Cup, too. However, she seemed to miss the Olympics again, because she finished 11th in the 10km at the World Championships, but since her Russian rival was deprived of her quota due to

her former doping case, she could still take part in the Games in Rio, where she finished 14th.

Olasz's trainings have been controlled by swimming coach legend Bob Bowman (Michael Phelps's coach) for more than a year and a half. She will have the opportunity to take part in open water swimming competitions from May: first in the Hungarian Long Distance Pool Championships, then in the Hungarian Open Water Championships and in the Italian Championships, which will be a chance for Hungarian swimmers to qualify for the World Championships.

"I can not wait for the domestic world championships. It will be a fantastic event, and the fact that a lot of family members and friends will support us, gives us extra motivation".

"In the open water competitions everything is possible, there can always be some surprises. In 10 km there are at least 10 swimmers, including the Dutch, Italian, French and Brazilian ones, who have a real chance to win a medal. In 25 km there are maybe less favourites, but that is a 5-and-a-half-hour-long race, so that is still unpredictable."

ANNA OLASZ

Born: Szeged (Hungary), 19 September 1993

Medal record:

World silver medallist (2015 Kazan, 25 km)

European silver medallist (2014 Berlin, 25 km)

European Junior bronze medallist (2011 Navia, 5 km)

European Cup: silver medallist (2013)

World Cup: silver medallist (2015)