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Synchronised swimming: almost anything is possible in a free combination

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Since the World Championships of 2003 in Barcelona synchronised swimming tournaments feature free combination, one of the most spectacular events. This event is in fact the combination of the original three - solo, duet, team- events with 10 members. Its great popularity is due to its resemblance to a water show, a spectacular and entertaining water theatrical performance.

Rules allow for any number of swimmers in combination routines. There can be trios or quartets doing identical as well as totally different choreographies. The rules and regulations stipulate one provision: distinct parts of the routine in the choreography may not be too much separated spatially. The 4-and-a-half-minute combo is the longest synchronised swimming event and it may also contain a 10-second podium choreography, if the routine is started there (but starting in water is also allowed).

Due to its diversity and highly flexible rules system it is the most popular event among spectators. This event allows for performing the most creative patterns which is also enhanced by the high number of participants (10 members): more varied spatial arrangements can be performed than in 8-member team routines and the longer time limit provides for more ideas.

As for the history of World Championships, the Russian team did not enter this event in 2003 so the first tournament was won by Japan in Barcelona, Spain and the US both claimed silver. At the latest tournament in Kazan the order was Russia, China and Japan. The podium in 2013 was again topped by the Asians ahead of Spain and the Ukraine.

The combo routine offers the greatest chance to break the Russian hegemony -characteristic of the discipline for long-. Swimmers of other leading synchronised swimming nations, including China, Japan and the Ukraine do their best to make sports history which is quite good news for the spectators of the World Championships in Budapest. It is a question

whether Europe can return to the podium or the swimmers of Asia continue their progress through hard work, endurance and incredible self-discipline threatening the Russian hegemony.

Last time in Kazan the Russian national team excelled undoubtedly with their combo routine recalling the story of Don Quixote gaining 98.300 points.

At the 2017 FINA World Championships champions will be appointed in 9 events during the 7 competition days of synchronised swimming: one in solo, in duet, in team, two in mixed duet and one in combo, the specialty with 10-member teams.

Events will be hosted in a very special, historic venue, the City Park Lake, where spectators can follow the World Championships on the grandstands of 5000 seats.