

### Men's tournament

#### Semi-final, 17.30 Spain v Croatia 9-8

##### David Martin, head coach, Spain

"I don't have words for this. It was another really difficult game for us. I am so proud of my team. We scored some beautiful goals. We are hungry for trophies and medals and overjoyed with another final we will play. I am very proud of the guys, not because of the victory, but because of all the hard work they have done so far. We can lose or win, but for me the most important thing is to see them fighting for their dreams. We have tough two weeks behind us, and I see that the players are getting very tired, they played their hearts out tonight. Whoever comes in the final it won't be easy, both Hungary and Montenegro are very strong, the Hungarians play at home, and Montenegro has been in top form during the whole championships, very hard to decide which would be better opponent. Our aim is to win the gold medal, so we will put all our efforts to be the champions."

##### Ivica Tucak, head coach, Croatia

It was a tough, hard game thrilling till the end. The match could have gone both ways. Spain is an excellent team, they beat Serbia, now us. We still haven't secured the berth for Tokyo and that remains a problem for us. We will have to go about it the longer, more complicated way. But that's also sport. I congratulate Spain on their victory. Today they were better.

##### Daniel Lopez, goalie, Spain

"It was a very tough game, but we achieved the victory as a team. I am delighted that we reached the final. We will play for the title, and it is not important who we will have to face. We want to win the European Championships."

##### Felipe Perrone, player, Spain

"It's great! We haven't been training in vain. Once again we are in the final and we are so happy! This is one more chance to win the gold. I think we play beautiful water polo, with a lot of dynamics, swimming. It is a pure and beautiful game. Now we have to rest. We are physically destroyed. One more final is ahead of us and one more chance for the triumph. This is what we train for every day."

##### Andro Buslje, player, Croatia

"Unfortunately, we lost another semi-final to Spain. We haven't secured the berth for Tokyo we will have to go through Olympic Qualification Tournament now. My congratulations go to Spain. Today they were a better than us. This is all I can say at this moment."

## Ligue Européenne de Natation

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :  
 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)  
 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)  
 @LENaquatics  
 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

**Semi-final, 19.00**

**Montenegro v Hungary 8-10**

**Vladimir Gojkovic, head coach, Montenegro**

We weren't at our best tonight. We obviously exhausted ourselves too much in the last game. The beginning was good, later we didn't use some of our chances and we fell into a hole from where we had to climb out. However, every time we scored a goal, we immediately got one and that prevented us from really getting back into the game. At the very end we again had one more chance for a tie but missed it. Still, we are hugely motivated to try to clinch the bronze medal. I hope this signifies that Montenegro is back and ready to become a regular player in the medal games. And medal would mean a lot for us, it would be a huge incentive, especially to my young players."

**Tamas Marcz, head coach, Hungary**

„Congratulation for our opponent and my team as they did not lose their faith at 0-2, not even for a second. That was a very tough match. They showed an unlimited desire, which I have not seen from them for a while. Now we feel enormous relief as the road to the final was anything but easy. This tournament is full of with fantastic teams which include this great Montenegrin side. I'm aware that Spain wants the title as much as we do and they also had an extremely strong line-up. They were the rightful winners of their semi-final but I think we have also deserved to become finalists."

**Aleksandar Ivovic, player, Montenegro**

"We started off well. They are stronger individually than us, still, we came back but later our concentration dropped in offence. When that happens it is difficult to win against a top team like Hungary. We had troubles with scoring, unfortunately my efficiency was not good either. All this prevented us from making the match thrilling till the end. Still, this is a huge success for us, especially for our younger players. We will be very motivated to win the bronze medal and win against Croatia after having lost to them in the prelims."

**Gergo Zalanki, player, Hungary**

"I felt that we have produced a very entertaining match for the audience, we would like to thank the fans for giving us so much energy. We have been well-prepared for this game, Montenegro couldn't surprise us, they played exactly how we expected. Although it was a very close clash, we were the ones who could dominate it. Before the semi-finals we did not really think about the opportunity of the Olympics qualification, but even now that we know we are going to Tokyo, we only think about playing for the gold medal against Spain on Sunday."

**Ligue Européenne  
de Natation**

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :

 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)

 @LENaquatics

 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

### **Denes Varga, player, Hungary**

“I think we won this match because our defence began to work and we could keep them on five goals for a longer period of time. It was an extremely tight battle all the way, maybe their level of defending dropped a bit in the third and perhaps they were a bit more tired than us. We must be happy for this victory as beating this outstanding Montenegrin team is a great feat – it will take some time to sink in but soon we need to prepare for the final.”

### **For places 5-8th, 14.30**

#### **Italy v Russia 14-12**

### **Alessandro Campagna, head coach, Italy**

“What is the most important in today’s match is the victory and the qualification for the World Championships. This result was of course not our dream, but it was an important victory. The European Championships in January are always strange, because the players are not on the top physically or mentally. That is why I’m not worried about this performance. The Olympic Games are the most important for us this year, and we will see what we can achieve there. Croatia finished 9th before they won the gold medal in 2012. Now we have one more game to go. We are always motivated to win and close the championships with a victory.”

### **Sergey Evstigneev, head coach, Russia**

“It was a very important game in terms of qualification for the World Championships. Unfortunately, we lost it. We made a lot of mistakes both in defence and offense. We didn't control the pressing. Next match is also important for various reasons. We will see who comes, maybe Greece. We always have a motivation to win and gain confidence when playing against top teams.”

### **Alessandro Velotto, player, Italy**

“It's a good victory. It's not easy for us to play this kind of placement games. We had to find the right motivation as this match was also important for 2021 World Championships. Now we have one last match. It will be a good test for us mentally to see how to play and approach matches once we are out of the medal games.”

### **Vincenzo Renzuto, player, Italy**

“It was hard to play after our lost semi-final. This clash was really odd. Russia was playing very well in both offense and defence. We had to do our best to win this game. We wanted to play for the medals but now the minimum goal is to finish 5th. I think our opponent will be Serbia and I am looking forward to play against them.”

## Ligue Européenne de Natation

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :  
 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)  
 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)  
 @LENaquatics  
 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

### **Konstantin Kiselev, player, Russia**

“It was a hard game for us, a very physical one. They were shooting a lot and with quality. Their goalkeeper was especially good today. Our defence was OK but the offense was not so good. Our man-up was really bad. The next match will be tough too, but we will do our best. We would prefer Greece.”

### **Konstantin Kharkov, player, Russia**

“We played a great match with a strong team. We did well, but I think that we could have done better. Now we concentrate on our next game, we will see who we meet for the 7th place.”

### **For places 5-8th, 16.00**

### **Serbia v Greece 12-9**

### **Dejan Savic, head coach, Serbia**

“We never thought we would win the Europeans for the fifth time in a row. Still, it is important to note that we would have needed only one goal to win the quarter-final, but that was an important game for our team’s mentality. It was not easy to prepare the players after the quarter-final loss. It is a success that we managed to overcome that psychologically. We had the control of the match the whole time. We will be motivated for the match against Italy, they are our old rivals so it is question of prestige.”

### **Theodoros Vlachos, head coach, Greece**

“We didn't expect to play for 5-8th place against Serbia. They are always a favourite for gold. It is difficult to play against such a strong opponent. I am satisfied with performance of my team today, they fought till the end. We had some bad luck, conceded some unlucky goals, two or three at least. Also some passes didn't work. Our next match against Russia won't be easy. We will give our best.”

### **Stefan Mitrovic, player, Serbia**

“It was, and it wasn't a shock to lose to Spain. They are playing at a very high level and are constant at it. They may not be the best individually but together they form an amazing team. It is always more difficult to play against such teams than against a team of top individual players. Playing for the 5-8th places is psychologically difficult. Today we had to do without Dusko Pijetlovic and had to give an extra effort to compensate his absence. There were a lot of fouls and exclusions but we remained calm till the end. I am really proud of my team-mates. We managed to rise and move forward after the quarter-final loss.”

## Ligue Européenne de Natation

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :

 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)

 @LENaquatics

 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

### **Branislav Mitrovic, goalie, Serbia**

"Neither team could play this match with a 100 per-cent focus. We were not prepared to fight for the 5th place, but these matches also have to be played. Our attitude was good, and we wanted this win more than them."

### **Konstantinos Genidounias, player, Greece**

"I would not believe if someone told me we would play against Serbia in this phase but it just shows that anything can happen in these championships. We were competitive in the first half. We lost the match in the third quarter when they pulled away by three goals and we couldn't come back. We have a lot of motivation for the next match. Firstly, to qualify for the Worlds, secondly to close the championships with a victory and keep the momentum for the Olympic Qualification Tournament in March."

### **For places 9-10th, 13.00 Georgia v Germany 8-9**

### **Revaz Chomakhidze, head coach, Georgia**

"This loss was due to the difference between our preparations. Germany had the possibility to put everything into the second half of the championship, while we put emphasis on preparing for the first group matches. Our physical condition was the main problem today. To be among the top 10 teams at the European Championships is a great success for the Georgian water polo. From my point of view, we showed good quality and we played some good games. I am satisfied with the progress."

### **Hagen Stamm, head coach, Germany**

"In the first two quarters we were not able to score, but I am satisfied, because the team fought hard to succeed. We knew that we were in better physical condition than Georgia and we could come back in the last quarter, but I thought that the 4-goal difference would prove to be too much. Eventually we did it, so now I feel very good. The players will have one week off now to go to their own clubs, because of the championship for the clubs. After that we will start the preparation for the Olympic qualification tournament."

### **Ben Reibel, player, Germany**

"Wow, what a clash! We were four goals down, but we fought hard and we could score from our chances in the last quarter. I think we can be satisfied with the 9th place as we were in group A, where we competed with two semi-finalists. We can be proud of ourselves because we have shown how great this team is. I really hope that we can qualify for the Olympics, we would like to play in Tokyo as well."

## Ligue Européenne de Natation

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :

 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)

 @LENaquatics

 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

**For places 11-12th, 11.30**  
**Turkey v Romania 3-20**

**Athanasios Kechagias, head coach, Romania**

“We wanted to stay focused throughout the whole game and we managed to do that. It was an important victory for us. I am satisfied with the work the players have done together and the effort they have shown in this tournament. In my opinion the team has improved a lot.”

**Turunc Sinan, head coach, Turkey**

“I am not disappointed with the 12th place, but with the performance in the last game, as it was very weak. The players are the most important during the match, they play and they decide in each situation. The coach is the second who helps them, and the referee is the third. That is how it works. Our next few weeks are depending on our qualification, we will see if we have a chance to fight for the participation at the Olympic Games or not.”

**Cosmin Radu, player, Romania**

“Today we played very concentrated. After the disappointment on Wednesday, we were able to get up from the floor. We expected this clash to be tougher, but we were outstanding, and made easy work of it. I think we cannot be fully satisfied with the 11th place as we wanted to finish higher, but this is the reality for this team. It was positive that we could perform very well in a few encounters.”

*24 January 2020*

## Ligue Européenne de Natation

9, rue de la Morâche  
CH 1260 Nyon  
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 22 552 99 99  
Fax: +41 22 552 99 89  
lenoffice@len.eu

Connect with us :

 [www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

 [facebook.com/www.len.eu](https://facebook.com/www.len.eu)

 @LENaquatics

 [dailymotion.com/lentv](https://dailymotion.com/lentv)

