

## European Aquatics Championships, Rome (ITA), Day 9 – Summary

### Historical high diving gold for Schmidbauer, big five for Pellacani

Germany's Iris Schmidbauer claimed the first-ever high diving gold medal in the European Championships' history, while Chiara Pellacani also added a special chapter to the books by becoming the first female diver to collect five medals at one edition. The Italian enjoyed a great afternoon as she won the women's 3m event. No Tom Daley? No problem – came the answer from the Brits whose rookie duo of Ben Cutmore and Kyle Kothari won the men's 10m synchro.

#### *Diving*

It's the third time that the Ukrainians were dropped to the second place in the last round, despite leading almost all the way – after the women's 10m synchro and individual it happened in the men's 10m synchro too. The youngest European champion in history, Oleksii Sereda – had won the title aged 13 in 2019 –, teamed up with Kirill Boliukh who is even younger than him, turned 15 in March. But age is just a data, and the two teens were simply brilliant, performed a series of magnificent dives in rounds 2-4 – only 3 of the 27 marks were 7.5, the rest was between 8.0-9.0. They also had the highest scoring attempt of the afternoon for 79.68 points.

However, the Brits did also really well. Newcomers on this level, Ben Cutmore and Kyle Kothari managed to keep their consistency – and at the end it worked in their favour. While the scores for their four free DD dives never dropped below 70 points, Boliukh committed the first mistake in the fifth round, but there Cutmore also had a smaller error, so the gap remained 5.5 points.

Then came the final round, the Brits produced their best jump in the final for 76.80 and that put the pressure on the Ukrainian youngsters. And they cracked under that a bit while performing one of the hardest dives (3.7DD, 4 and half summersaults) – both made a mistake which ultimately cost them the title by 2.46 points.

The Brits were celebrating – it turned out that there is life in the platform events despite the Tom Daley Era seems to be coming to an end. Indeed, the British King of the Platform made a huge splash in this pool back in 2009 when he became world champion at the age of 15 – now he may come back for a couple of more seasons, but his potential successors already proved themselves in the sacred Foro Italico.

In women's 3m final Chiara Pellacani was to meet with destiny: she could become the first female diver ever to get five medals at one championship. Among the men, the mighty German Patrick Hausding achieved that once in 2010 (it was a huge thing back then as no mixed events were in the programme, he medalled over all three heights) – now Pellacani had a gold in the team event, a silver in 3m synchro and bronzes from mixed 3m synchro and the 1m final.

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Finishing first in the prelims, Pellacani felt some pressure at the beginning, her first attempt in the afternoon was not the best one, but soon she got going – unlike many of her potential rivals who produced one erroneous dive after the other. Swiss Michelle Heimberg held on, but she had a mediocre one in the third round while Pellacani almost break the 70-point barrier (69.75 – turned out to be the final’s best jump) to take over the lead.

That gave her the confidence and she had two more for 63.00 points apiece. On the contrary, her closest rivals, Heimberg and Britain’s Yasmin Harper could not do the same: they did well in the penultimate round, but their last dives were not clean (got 57 and 54 respectively), so Pellacani won comfortably, by 16.95 points ahead of Heimberg. And soon she received medal No. 5 here in Rome, finishing the championship with 2 golds, a silver and two bronzes – and adding a chapter to the history books.

### ***High diving***

Shortly after Pellacani’s fine victory, another historical chapter could have been added to the local books some 100m metres away in the high diving pool where Elisa Cosetti was leading after three rounds and was just one dive away from becoming the first ever high diving European champion.

In the first two rounds on Thursday and in the third this evening she did great dives, 12 out of 15 her marks were 8.0 or higher. At the same time, the three favourites couldn’t offer the same balance – both Germans, Anna Bader and Iris Schmidbauer made minor mistakes, just as Ukraine’s Antonina Vyshynova. Still, the standings before the last round offered some thrills as the Germans trailed by only 8.30 points and sat tied second behind Cosetti.

The Italian needed another great dive since Schmidbauer had a monstrous 4.3DD attempt to perform (the highest DD in the competition) – and it turned out that the top rivals regrouped themselves. Vyshynova cracked a 94.00 pointer, an almost perfect dive. Schmidbauer’s wasn’t as outstanding but good enough for 90 points, catapulting her to the top spot. Compatriot Anna Bader, bronze medallist at the inaugural Worlds in Barcelona 2013, missed her last dive, got only 62, fell behind the top two.

Thus Cosetti needed a relatively good one to blow up the arena, but she couldn’t deliver it. She got 5.0s from all judges, a strong sign that it was a weaker one – and she dropped to the third place, though was still happy with the podium.

In ‘halftime’, the men’s event promises a fantastic culmination for Saturday evening as the first two rounds offered a truly fantastic level among the best ones. Romania’s Catalin Preda and France’s Gary Hunt received a series of 10s in the opening round and today they were also on fire. Though it was Britain’s Aidan Heslop who scored 140 points with his second dive, the top blast for today, so he awaits the final two dives in the second place, trailing only by a mere 4.60 behind Preda. A gap of 0.05 points separate Hunt and the other Romanian Constantin Popovici in the third and fourth place, but even home hero Alessandro de Rose can create some noise on Saturday as he lagged only 24.90 points behind.

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***Open water swimming***

After meeting with the team leaders, the LEN Technical Open Water Committee agreed to accommodate the teams' request to not scratch the Team Relay event from the programme so that event will be held on Sunday afternoon.

Upon the recommendation of the LEN Medical Committee, the Technical Open Water Swimming Committee informed the teams that the swimmers entered both the 5km and 25km races must choose one of the events, they are not allowed to swim in both as these events are now held on the same day (because of the rescheduling).

Considering the possible challenges over the course which may require more time from the swimmers than usual to cover the 25km in the afternoon race, the starting time was moved back to 13.00 to ensure that all swimmers finish the race in proper daylight.

The planned schedule as of today:

**Saturday, 20 August**

10.00: 5km (M&W, parallel)  
13.00: 25km (M&W, parallel)

**Sunday, 21 August**

10.00: 10km (M&W, parallel)  
16.00: Team Event (4x1500m mixed relay)

Please note, that this programme is still subject to change in case of advert weather conditions. However, the current forecasts promise manageable racing conditions for the weekend.

*19 August 2022*

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