

## 2022 European Water Polo Championships, Split (CRO) – Day 8

### Spain and the Netherlands pass the 100-goal barrier

The Netherlands and Italy had already booked the top spots respectively two days ago, today they went 5/5 with easy wins. The Dutch became the third team ever which managed to score more than 100 goals in the prelims (since the current format was introduced in 2016, Spain and Russia had passed the mark already in the previous editions). Now Spain also netted more than 100, for them this was the third time after 2016 and 2018.

**Women's Round 5. Group A:** Hungary v Romania 22-0, Greece v Croatia 24-4, Germany v Netherlands 3-29. *Rankings:* 1. NED 15, 2. GRE 12, 3. HUN 9, 4. CRO 6, 5. GER 3, 6. ROU 0. **Group B:** Slovakia v Spain 3-26, Serbia v Israel 4-15, Italy v France 19-6. *Rankings:* 1. ITA 15, 2. ESP 12, 3. ISR 9, 4. FRA 6, 5. SRB 3, 6. SVK 0.

**Quarter-finals (Monday):** 16.00 Netherlands v France, 17.30 Croatia v Italy, 19.00 Hungary v Spain, 20.30 Greece v Israel.

**For places 11-12<sup>th</sup>:** 10.00 Romania v Slovakia. **For places 9-10<sup>th</sup>:** 11.30 Germany v Serbia

The last day of the prelims was no different to the previous one – since the favourites met the lower ranked sides, only the goal difference was in question in each game. And all but one of the 'Big Five' passed the 20-goal barrier, and Italy got also close, netted 19, downing France.

Title-holder Spain even passed the 100-goal mark in total, after hitting 26 against Slovakia. Spain achieved this feat for the third time in the last four editions (women play five games in the prelims since 2016). They netted 105 in Belgrade and 110 in Barcelona and now had 103. (The record is held by the Russians, who scored 112 in 2020, and also had a 107-goal run in 2018.)

In the last match of the prelims, the Netherlands also joined the 100+ club, for the first time, after thrashing the Germans – what's more, produced two more, 105, than Spain.

Earlier Hungary shut out the Romanians, just like the Dutch, so the newcomer side have been unable to score in eight consecutive quarters now. Croatia did just a bit better against Greece – they produced four in 11 minutes, only to remain scoreless in the remaining 21.

On paper, the encounter of Israel and Serbia promised some excitements since a single-goal win by Serbia would have set up a three-way tie, with Israel bowing out. Then the match didn't bring any tensions, the Israelis killed the party in eight minutes, stormed to a 5-0 lead and claimed a huge victory to join the men's team in history-making by advancing from the group phase for the first time. Fun fact: now both teams face Greece in the knockout stage.

---

Ligue Européenne de Natation  
9 rue de la Morâche - 1260 Nyon - Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 552 99 99  
Email: [lenoffice@len.eu](mailto:lenoffice@len.eu)  
[www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

## Game recaps

### Group A

#### Hungary v Romania 22-0

Romania remained scoreless for the second game in a row. They were unable to create any serious danger, could have only four shots directed to the Hungarian goal (had 12 attempts altogether). Had some minor positives in defence, killed man-downs, a saved penalty, but not much more.

The Magyars couldn't afford taking the match less seriously as in two days time they are about to face Spain in the quarter-finals. Accordingly, they started the day with a morning swim in the sea in front of their hotel, followed by a hard training and then the game, where they netted 22 goals at the end and secured the third place in the group.

#### Greece v Croatia 24-4

For a couple of minutes, it looked pretty encouraging from the Croats' perspective as they managed to equalise twice early on. What came next was less promising for the home fans – a 7-0 rush by the Greeks. They really lifted the level of their game, in one telling scene Eleftheria Plevritou jumped backwards to save a lob-shot which already beat her goalie.

The Greek defence softened a bit only after 11-2, then the Croats could score twice 51 seconds – however, it turned out those double were their last hits in the game. However bad it looked like, it's still a fact that they were unable to put away the ball in the remaining 21:27 minutes. Not as if they hadn't created any chances, alone in the second half they had at least five brilliant opportunities, including one-on-ones, but wasted all.

At the same time, the Greeks made a 13-0 run till the end, so they'll arrive on a high note to the quarters where they face Israel, while the Croats are set to make a historical QF appearance, however, they need to rise to the occasion when they clash with Italy in two days.

#### Germany v Netherlands 3-29

The only question was whether the Netherlands would pass the 100-goal mark in the prelims for the first time (in the current format – they scored 175 goals in the first edition in 1985, when the championship was played in a round robin format and consisted of 7 rounds). And since the Dutch shut out the Romanians two days earlier, the Germans also had to dig deep to break the favourite side's defence.

From their perspective, the opening quarter predicted a minor disaster as the Dutch stormed to a 0-9 lead – then at least the Germans could score a first one, a fine lobshot went in at 0-15. In the second half they could resist the enormous pressure a bit better, they could net two more in the last period and also prevented the group winner from reaching the 30-goal barrier. Still, the 29 goals is the second best

---

Ligue Européenne de Natation  
9 rue de la Morâche - 1260 Nyon - Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 552 99 99  
Email: [lenoffice@len.eu](mailto:lenoffice@len.eu)  
[www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

offensive effort here in Split, after Spain's 32 hits against Serbia. And of course, this was more than enough to join the 100+ club – and the 105 goals is the tied 4<sup>th</sup> best of all-time.

## Group B

### Slovakia v Spain 3-26

The second game in the morning, followed Hungary's rout against Romania, was also a lopsided one, as expected. The Slovaks did better though – unlike the Romanians, who could only four shots on target, they had 41 attempts altogether and the Spanish goalies had to deal with 21 of those and three actually beat them (though need to add that Spain didn't do much pressing, played zone defence for the whole game, so shooting was an obvious finish of almost each possession for the Slovaks).

The Spanish also put a focus on their centre-play – some kind of a preview what might come in the quarter-finals against Hungary –, so Maica Garcia could have some fine put-away, she netted six altogether.

### Serbia v Israel 4-15

This was the only game in the last round of the prelims, which may have offered some thrills as the Serbs held a chance to force a three-way tie and advance to the quarter-finals. All they needed was a win against Israel – that would have put them on equal points with Israel and France, and there was a long list of scenarios how the ranks would look like in case a one-goal win by the Serbs (since the matches between Serbia and France, and Israel and France were decided by a single goal respectively, math stepped in, there were different options...).

Well, Israel threw the mathematical options to the trash-bin in eight minutes as they built a massive 0-5 lead by the end of the first period. The strong start made its impact, even though the following periods were much more balanced, the Serbs did better in defence, scored some fine goals, still they stood no chance to have a realistic chance for a positive outcome.

The Israelis could score whenever it was needed, though also had some misses in man-ups. At the end, only the final result mattered, it was another great win, and that put them to the third place. Thus, they could celebrate a historical qualification: a first quarter-final game. Considering that this is their third appearance, it is a significant development – and to add some flavour, they are to meet Greece among the best eight, while they are coached by a Greek, Dimitrios Mavrotas.

By the way, the celebrations also got a special flavour as one of the rookie players, Alma Yaacobi was celebrating her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Israeli fans greeted her with big posters while the DJ played a 'Happy birthday' song – quite a way to make this special day memorable. Though the young lady already left her mark as she scored two goals in the game!

### Italy v France 19-6

Group winner Italy claimed another comfortable win – it was a lopsided contest right from the beginning, the Setterosa rushed to a 5-0 lead in eight minutes to set the tone, and kind of held that

---

Ligue Européenne de Natation  
9 rue de la Morâche - 1260 Nyon - Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 552 99 99  
Email: [lenoffice@len.eu](mailto:lenoffice@len.eu)  
[www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)

average till the end. They netted five in the second, four in the third, and five in the fourth. The French could break the Italian defence in the second period, though they did it three times then, but couldn't add more in the third. Then they came up with three again in the fourth, though that was just a bit more than consolation.

*3 September 2022*

---

Ligue Européenne de Natation  
9 rue de la Morâche - 1260 Nyon - Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 552 99 99  
Email: [lenoffice@len.eu](mailto:lenoffice@len.eu)  
[www.len.eu](http://www.len.eu)