

## MADRID 1986

Ten days of competition (13<sup>th</sup> August-23<sup>rd</sup> August), 34 countries, 1119 athletes in the swimming pools and on the springboards, 32 medals assigned. These are the numbers of an historical edition: in fact, for the first time the USA loses the leadership of the World Championships in favour of East Germany. The final medals counting shows the East Germany standing first - 14 gold, 11 silver and 4 bronze -, followed by the USA – 10 gold, 10 silver, 13 bronze – and West Germany.

It is a bad moment for the USA swimming team, and the satisfactions which have come from Matt Biondi partially soothed the wound. The 21 years-old wins 7 medals: 3 gold (100m freestyle, 4x100m freestyle, 4x100m medley), 1 silver (100m butterfly), 3 bronze (50m freestyle, 200m freestyle, 4x200m freestyle). Most of East Germany's achievements came from the women swimming, almost entirely dominated. Kornelia Gressler, Kristin Otto, Heike Friedrich, Silke Hoerner: these are some names of the athletes who brought Ddr at the top of the medal showcase.

However, no doubts it has been a German speaking edition, looking also at the performances of the West Germany: Michael Gross confirms himself while starts emerging the talent of Rainer Henkel who collects 2 gold (400m and 1500m freestyle) and 1 silver (4x200m freestyle). Worth to be mentioned is the Hungarian swimming team which reaches 3 gold with Tamas Darnyi (200m and 400m medley) and Jozsef Szabo (200m breaststroke).

Greg Louganis kept on achieving applauses and triumphs in men's diving, but after him China started showing her power by collecting silver and bronze, while among the women the Chinese's achievements were made of gold and silver. Even if it's not the unbeatable team of Beijing 2008, Madrid 1986 has been the first occasion for China to put the basis for future's victories. Meanwhile, USA loses their leadership in the Synchro as well: Canada wins three gold. It has been also the first appearance of women Water-Polo tournament, won by Australia, while the Yugoslavia stood among men.

It was a transition edition for Italian swimming and three silver avoided another disaster after the poor results in Guayaquil. Gianni Minervini is second in the 100m breaststroke after the Canadian Victor Davies; Stefano Battistelli defeats two specialists like Salnikov and Dassler winning an unexpected silver in the 1500m freestyle and the third silver came from the water-polo team defeated by Yugoslavia of coach Ratko Rudic after eight extra time in an epic final.