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Hungary and Bulgaria pocket one gold each
at the ISSF World Cup in Fort Benning

Fort Benning (USA), 10 May 2018 - Two final went down today in Fort Benning, where the third stage of the 2018 ISSF World Cup Series is currently underway. In the first one, Hungary's Istvan Peni signed an outstanding comeback, while Maria Grozdeva of Bulgaria added another gold to her impressive showcase.

50m Rifle 3 Positions Men

“A miraculous comeback.” That’s how Hungary’s Istvan Peni defined the way he climbed back from the 8th to the 1st position in the men’s 50m Rifle 3 Positions final in Fort Benning (USA). The 21-year-old shooter, in fact, suffered a serious malfunction in his rifle during the opening kneeling position — which he closed in last place 5.4 points away from the leader. A gap that increased to 7.4 during the following prone position.

With his rifle still stuck in the kneeling settings, the Hungarian shooter shot with great consistency in the standing series, progressively erasing the gap that separated him from the top position, climbing up to the 2nd place with his 43rd shot and definitely taking the lead with his second-to-last one.

As he concluded his match with 451.4 points, Peni pocketed the second World Cup gold of his career in this event, adding it to the two bronzes he won this year in Guadalajara (MEX) and Changwon (KOR). Denmark’s 35-year-old Steffen Olsen fired three times in the eighth ring during the elimination phase, finishing with 450.2 points and the silver medal around his neck.

Hitting an 8.9 with his second-to-last shot, People’s Republic of China’s 22-year-old Yang Haoran went from the top to the 3rd position, taking bronze with 441.0 points. It’s Yang’s second World Cup medal in this event, the one being a silver he won in Munich (GER) back in 2015.

Right outside of the podium, Italy’s 23-year-old Lorenzo Bacci took 4th place 430.7 points, pulverizing the 37th place he obtained at last month’s ISSF World Cup in Changwon (KOR).

Firing a disappointing 8.4 with his 41st shot, Serbia's 33-year-old Milutin Stefanovic slid down one place and was eliminated in 6th position with 409.7 points. One shot later, another bad score costed Norway's Henrik Larsen the elimination: indeed, the 20-year-old shooter nailed a 6.9 that made him slip from 2nd to 5th place, where he finished his match with 419.3 points.

The first two athletes who left the match at the end of the second standing series were Stevan Pletikoscic (46), also of Serbia, and first-time finalist Petr Nymbursky (22) of the Czech Republic, who respectively took 7th place with 398.3 points and 8th with 398.0.

25m Pistol Women

The third competition day at the ISSF World Cup Stage 3 in Fort Benning (USA) saw Bulgaria's 45-year-old shooter Maria Grozdeva win the 14th World Cup gold medal of her fantastic career. An impressive achievement for the veteran shooter and President of the Bulgarian Shooting Union.

Along her match, Grozdeva scored 4 hits in seven of the ten final series, battling with Serbia's Zorana Arunovic all along the match and finally building a consistent gap in the second-to-last round, when the Serbian 31-year-old only scored 1 hit and the Bulgarian legendary shooter nailed another 4-hit series.

With three hits between the two shooters and only one series to fire, Grozdeva's 3 hits were enough to secure the brightest medal and sign off with 35 total hits, while Arunovic closed with 32 and the silver around her neck.

The bronze was awarded to the reigning Olympic Champion — Greece's Anna Korakaki, who lost a thrilling shoot-off against Arunovic and finished in 3rd place with 29 hits.

The Greek 22-year-old was followed by Germany's Doreen Vennekamp (23), who missed the podium by two hits and placed 4th with 23, while her teammate Sandra Reitz signed the best World Cup placement of her career in the 25m Pistol Women event. The 33-year-old athlete, indeed, took 6th position with 15 hits, besting the 9th place she obtained in Baku (AZE) two years ago.

Between the two German shooters, three-time World Cup medalist Naphaswan Yangpaiboon (29) of Thailand took 5th place with 19 hits.

Eliminated after four rounds, Switzerland's 49-year-old Heidi Diethelm Gerber — bronze medalist in this event at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games — took 8th place with 6 hits, compromising her final with two consecutive 1-hit series in her first and second one.

One round later, it was People's Republic of China's Zhang Mengxue who left the match: the Chinese 27-year-old — Olympic Champion in the Air Pistol event at Rio 2016 — nailed the second World Cup start of her career in this event, finishing 7th with 11 hits.

The ISSF World Cup Stage 3 in Fort Benning will continue tomorrow with the 10m Air Rifle Men final, taking place at 11:30 am (UTC-4:00).

All matches will be streamed live on the [ISSF website](#), on the Federation's [Livestream channel](#) and on its official [Facebook page](#).

Live results of the competitions, news and updates will be available on www.issf-sports.org and on all ISSF social media platforms: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Weibo](#) and [Youku](#).

For the 50m Rifle 3 Positions Men complete results [click here](#).

For the 25m Pistol Women complete results [click here](#).

For the provisional medal standings [click here](#).

For editorial photos [click here](#).

Notes for the editors:

The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events, and it has over 160 affiliated National Federations worldwide. Shooting is an Olympic sport since the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Find out more about the International Shooting Sport Federation at www.issf-sports.org.

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