

IRON LADY STRIKES GOLD AS ARENA SWIMMERS ENJOY BERLIN SUCCESS

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Katinka Hosszu demonstrated why she is known as the 'Iron Lady' as she claimed three medals in one night as Arena swimmers continued their success at the European Championships in Berlin.

Marco Koch claimed gold in the 200m breaststroke, Jeremy Stravius was second in the 50m backstroke and Pawel Korzeniowski finished third in the 200m butterfly.

Hosszu is known as the 'Iron Lady' because of her gruelling programme where she competes in many events.

Tonight she dominated the 200m medley to win in a championship record of 2:08.11.

She then dead-heated with fellow Arena swimmer Mie Nielsen, the 17-year-old Dane, to share 100m backstroke gold in 59.63.

The 25-year-old then returned for the final event of the night where she anchored the Hungary 4x200m freestyle quartet to bronze.

She said: "I really love to race. That is the main reason why I enter so many events.

"I do like to challenge myself – like swimming in the 100m backstroke, I haven't swum it too many times in a championship meet.

"It is just so much fun to get up and race and try to do my best. "

She dominated the medley from the start and believes she could go faster if there was someone there pushing her.

"It is a bit more difficult to swim your maximum under these conditions when there is not much competition," she said.

"I feel I have to improve on that for sure. I do feel I could have gone a little faster if someone is right next to me and trying to race at the end.

"This is why the 100 back was so much fun for me because it was so close because we tied. It was just so much fun to race."

Nielsen is the daughter of Benny Nielsen, the 1988 Olympic butterfly silver medallist and at just 17 now has European titles at both long and short-course.

She said: "I should have been way faster but I was very stressed before this final.

"It is unusual to share a gold medal. Obviously I would have preferred to have a medal for myself but still, it's a gold medal."

Koch almost took the roof off as the German crowd greeted his victory in the 200m breaststroke with the 24-year-old setting a new championship record of 2:07.47.

"It was a really fun race," he smiled. "The atmosphere was really great: every time I rose out of the water I could hear the crowd cheering.

"The first 100 was pretty fast but on the last 50 I wanted to attack and that is what I did."

Stravius took silver in the 50m backstroke in 24.84, matching his second place in the 100m.

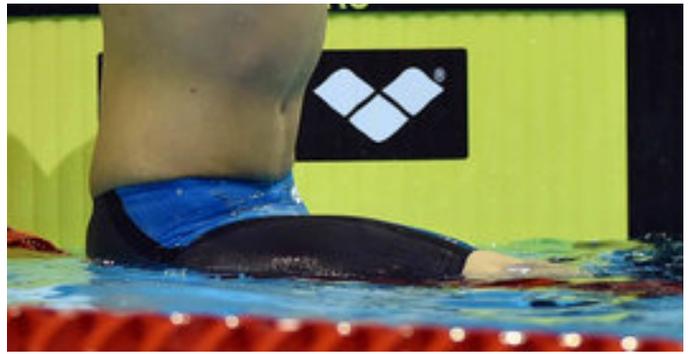
"Needless to say I am very happy to be able to win silver from an outside lane," he beamed. "I stayed very concentrated throughout this one lap."

Korzeniowski was third in the 200m butterfly 1:55.74 while Lotte Friis was fourth in the 800m freestyle in 8:27.21.



IMAGES





SPOKESPEOPLE



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