

Bronze for Alia Atkinson at World Championships



Alia Atkinson won bronze in the 100m breaststroke final at the 2015 FINA World Championships in Kazan, Russia.

Atkinson clocked 1:06:42 to finish behind rivals, Russian Yulia Efimova (1:05.66) and Lithuanian world and championship record holder, Ruta Meilutyte (1:06.36).

The Jamaican swimmer, with the feat, adds to her rich swimming legacy by winning the island's first ever medal at a world long course swimming championship.

Before the race started, swimming fans knew that the race would be between Atkinson, Meilutyte and hometown favourite Efimova. A battle for medals had been anticipated for months and Atkinson had set a new national record (1:06:21) to qualify for the finals third fastest behind Efimova (1:05:60) and Meilutyte (1:05.64).

When the starter's gun sounded, it was Meilutyte who had the best reaction time of 0.60. Atkinson and Efimova recorded identical reaction times of 0.69.

Heading to the first and only turn, it was still Meilutytė with the advantage, splitting 30.27, with Efimova and Atkinson bunched closely behind with times of 30.76 and 30 .94. The eventual podium party had left the rest of the field as they had the only sub 31 splits.

With 50 metres to go, Efimova and Atkinson continued to apply the pressure to the world record holder. Both women had faster final lap times than Meilutytė. However, it was the Russian who had a lot more left in the tank as she overhauled Meilutytė to record a win in her home country. Meilutytė barely hung on to the silver as she was a mere six hundredths ahead of Atkinson.

Atkinson, who was 9th two years ago in Barcelona, has now won a medal at every major competition except the Olympics and, with her current form, that too looks likely to change come 2016 in Rio.

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