

Americans set pair of world records in 4x100 mixed medley relay

By **PAUL NEWBERRY**
Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Matt Grevers wasn't sure what was going on. He wasn't alone.

One of swimming's newest — and certainly craziest — events was on display yesterday at the world championships, where the United States set a pair of world records while winning the 4x100 mixed medley relay.

Grevers led things off by swimming the backstroke, giving the Americans a slight lead, but breaststroker Lilly King — competing against seven men, including Britain's world-record holder Adam Peaty — was only in fifth place when she passed off to teammate Caeleb Dressel.

"When Caeleb was in the water, I had no idea who's winning the race," Grevers said. "I don't know if we're ahead or behind. I don't know how it's all going to balance out, how much of a lead Simone (Manuel, swimming the freestyle anchor) is going to need. It's just chaos."

It worked out just fine for the Americans.

Dressel, swimming against only one other man, pushed the US to a commanding lead. Manuel cruised to victory, touching in a time of 3 minutes, 38.56 seconds.

That easily eclipsed the mark of 3:40.28 put up by an entirely different US foursome — Ryan Murphy, Kevin Cordes, Kelsi Worrell and Mallory Comerford — in the morning prelimi-



UNITED States' Lilly King, Matt Grevers, Simone Manuel and Caeleb Dressel, from left, pose with their gold medals in the mixed medley relay during the swimming competitions of the World Aquatics Championships yesterday.

(AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

naries.

"It's really cool that we had two relays that would've won tonight," Grevers said.

Australia took the silver, while Canada and China tied for the bronze.

Governing body FINA

added two mixed relays to its programme at the 2015 world championships in Kazan, Russia, also debuting the 4x100 mixed freestyle relay.

While scorned by swimming traditionalists, the athletes seem to enjoy the uniqueness of men and women competing in the same events.

The International Olympic Committee clearly saw the appeal, approving the 4x100 mixed medley relay for the 2020 Tokyo Games.

"It's interesting to watch," Grevers said. "You're not sure who's winning, even when one team is real far ahead. It's uncharted territory, which is really fun, because as swimmers we usually know what's going on."

The mixed events have forced both athletes and

coaches to address a whole new set of strategic challenges.

For the athletes, especially the women, it's the adjustment of swimming in very choppy water when the competitor in the next lane is far ahead. For the coaches, it's deciding on the fastest combination of two men and two women in four different strokes.

Given the depth of its talent, the US will be an overwhelming favourite when the mixed medley relay makes its Olympic debut.

Grevers and his team mates already are eyeing the chance to claim another medal.

"It's tough to get on this team. It's tough to get on the relays," he said. "It's definitely a huge motivation."

STUNNER IN BUDAPEST: LEDECKY LOSES FOR 1ST TIME AT WORLDS

By **PAUL NEWBERRY**
Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Katie Ledecky reached for the wall.

Someone else was already there.

For the first time ever at the world championships, Ledecky knows what it's like to lose.

Bidding to become only the second female swimmer to win six golds at a single worlds, Ledecky settled for silver in the 200-metre freestyle yesterday evening when Italy's Federica Pellegrini surged to a stunning victory on the final lap.

Pellegrini, the world-record holder, avenged a close defeat at the hands of Ledecky two years ago in Kazan, Russia. This time, it was the Italian touching first in 1 minute, 54.73 seconds.

Ledecky and Australia's Emma McKeon tied for the silver at 1:55.18.

"I just didn't really have it today," Ledecky said. "I can't complain really with the silver medal."

While Pellegrini covered her mouth in delight and climbed atop a lane rope to celebrate, Ledecky stared blankly at the scoreboard.

She had never seen a "2" beside her name at the world championships.

But there it was in Budapest, where Ledecky's unbeaten streak in the second-biggest swimming competition after the Olympics finally came to an end.

"I didn't really feel at the end that I had that extra gear that I normally have," said the 20-year-old Stanford student from the Washington, D.C., suburbs. "I didn't really see much for the last 50."

Ledecky had been 12 of 12 over the last three world championships, including



ITALY's gold medal winner Federica Pellegrini, United States' silver medal winner Katie Ledecky and Australia's silver medal winner Emma McKeon, from left, show off their medals after the 200m free final at the World Aquatics Championships yesterday.

(AP Photos/Darko Bandic)

three golds in this stately European capital. But her most audacious schedule yet — six freestyle events covering distances ranging from 100 metres (on a relay) to 1,500 (the gruelling metric mile) — finally caught up with her along the banks of the Danube.

Missy Franklin will remain the only female swimmer to win a half-dozen events at worlds, while Ledecky can still take comfort in being the winningest female swimmer overall. Twelve golds leave her trailing only fellow Americans Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte for the most victories.

And now she's got a silver, too.

"It happens," said Ledecky, who will be a heavy gold medal favourite in her last two events, the 800 free and 4x200 free relay. "It happens to every athlete at some point. I know this race will really motivate me moving forward and the

rest of the week as well."

Of course, losing to Pellegrini was hardly an embarrassment.

The 28-year-old became the first swimmer in the history of the championship to capture seven medals in a single individual event.

Pellegrini's incredible run in the 200 free began at the 2005 worlds in Montreal, where she grabbed a silver.

She was third in 2007 at Melbourne, and then had back-to-back victories, including a world-record performance in 2009 (1:52.98) that still stands from the rubber-suit era.

Pellegrini was runner-up at the last two worlds, finishing behind Franklin in 2013 at Barcelona and Ledecky two years ago.

Now, the Italian is back on top.

"I honestly thought the one to win the race would be Katie," Pellegrini said. "It wasn't."

McKeon got off to a blis-

tering start, making the first turn more than a half-second below the record pace, while Ledecky — normally a slow starter because of her distance background — was lagging in fifth.

Ledecky turned on the speed and was just one-hundredth of a second behind the Aussie when they made the final flip. But the two leaders, having spent so much energy dueling each other, didn't have anything left for the final lap.

Pellegrini sure did.

Her closing 50 was a blistering 28.82 — nearly a full second faster than both Ledecky and McKeon.

"Everything seemed to be in slow motion to me in the water," Pellegrini said. "At 150 metres on the turn we were all there, so I closed my eyes."

She paused for a moment, as if trying to convince herself that it really happened.

"It's incredible," Pellegrini said. "I didn't believe I would make it. I still



ITALY's Federica Pellegrini celebrates after winning the gold.

can't believe it."

She wasn't the only Italian on top of the medal podium. Gabriele Detti rallied to win the men's 800 free, racing past both teammate Gregorio Paltrinieri and Poland's Wojciech Wojdak after those two put on a thrilling back-and-forth duel.

Detti finished in 7:40.77, holding off Wojdak by less than a second while Paltrinieri faded to bronze.

Standing in the aisles and screaming furiously, the packed house at Duna Arena came to cheer for Katinika Hosszu, who also was in the 200 free final, and Laszlo Cseh, one of the favorites in the 200 butterfly.

Hosszu wasn't a factor, finishing seventh. Cseh rallied furiously over the final lap but couldn't catch South African star Chad le Clos, who took the gold in 1:53.33.

Cseh settled for silver, though that didn't prevent him from pausing on deck to salute the raucous crowd. The bronze went to Japan's Daiya Seto.

Britain's Adam Peaty cruised to victory in the 50 breaststroke, a non-Olympic

event, but his time was a bit of a letdown. After breaking the world record in both the preliminaries and the semi-finals — the latter in 25.95 — Peaty settled for only the second-fastest time ever (25.99) in the final. Brazil's Joao Gomes Junior claimed the silver and South Africa's Cameron van der Burgh took bronze.

After Ledecky's disappointment, the US finished on a strong note with its second world record of the day in the 4x100 mixed medley relay. Matt Grevers, Lilly King, Caeleb Dressel and Simone Manuel won gold with a time of 3:38.56, easily beating the mark of 3:40.28 put up by an entirely different US foursome — Ryan Murphy, Kevin Cordes, Kelsi Worrell and Mallory Comerford — in the morning preliminaries.

Australia took the silver, while Canada and China tied for bronze in an event that will part of the Olympics for the first time in Tokyo.

"It's pretty cool," Grevers said, "that we had two relays that would've won tonight."

Outcry grows over Virginia Tech's plan to honour Michael Vick

BLACKSBURG, Va. (AP) — Public opposition is growing against the planned induction of former football star Michael Vick into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame.

The Roanoke Times reported Tuesday that two online petitions at change.org had received more than 90,000 combined signatures against the September induction. The Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine has also announced its opposition.

The university in Blacksburg has continued to defend its recent decision, noting that some believe Vick is the greatest athlete in school history.

Vick served 19 months in federal prison on 2007 dog-fighting convictions. He was a top contender for the 1999 Heisman Trophy after leading the Hokies through an undefeated regular season and to a spot in the national championship game.

He went on to play professionally for the Atlanta Falcons and Philadelphia Eagles.



VIRGINIA Tech quarterback Michael Vick (7) eludes Clemson's Keith Adams for a short gain in the Gator Bowl NCAA college game in Jacksonville, Florida, on January 1, 2001.

(AP Photo/Steve Helber)

WARRIORS' GREEN SUED OVER ALLEGED ASSAULT BY COUPLE

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Golden State Warriors star Draymond Green was sued Tuesday by a couple who claim he and his entourage assaulted them last year in Michigan.

Jermaine Edmondson and Bianca Williams filed the lawsuit seeking unspecified monetary damages in California's Alameda County.

The lawsuit claims Green bumped into them at a night club in East Lansing last summer and that the forward bullied Edmondson, who was then a football player at Michigan State University, about how he pays for scholarships for people like him.

It claims men in his entourage then physically assaulted him, pushing him against a wall and choking him. When his girlfriend tried to intervene, one of the men pushed her into a wall, the lawsuit says.

The next night they ran into Green at a restaurant

and when the couple approached him to make peace, he slapped Edmondson in the face, the lawsuit claims.

Green did not immediately respond to a text message seeking comment.

The couple's lawyer, Lisa Bloom, said at a news conference in Los Angeles Tuesday that they decided to file a lawsuit because Green has refused to accept responsibility for the July 2016 incidents.

"The filing of this lawsuit was a last resort," Bloom said.

Green, a former Michigan State Spartan, last year paid \$560 for a noise violation in a deal that got rid of a misdemeanor assault-and-battery charge filed in the case.

Green has been an essential member of the Warriors team that has won two championships in the past three years, and last month was named the NBA's Defensive Player of the Year.