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The Settebello Display at the Manara: 14-5 against the team from Georgia

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The first game of 2017 involving the Italian National Water Polo Team, Settebello, took place on Tuesday 10 January, in the Manara Swimming Pool, in Busto Arsizio. **This long-awaited event turned into a great show both in and out of the water.**

Over one thousand people filled the stands for the second World League game involving the Italian team lead by coach Sandro Campagna. **In the pregame, there were numerous poolside activities,** which continued, during the intervals, with a performance by Sport Management's synchronised swimmers and a ceremony in which Chairman Tosi awarded the legendary Ratko Rudic, the FINA Commission Chairman, Gianni Lonzi, and the Mayor, Emanuele Antonelli, and Deputy Mayor, Stefano Ferrario, of Busto Arsizio. And at the end of the game, all of the players on the national team stayed to sign autographs and to take pictures with their enthusiastic fans.

For the record, victory went to Settebello, who now lead Group C in the World League, with full points. **The game ended 14-5.** Eight players scored, and Fondelli was the best scorer with three goals. The Italian team suffered only during the first quarter, when, with two goals down, they started their comeback, which brought them up to +10 in the fourth quarter. The goal by Bitadze ended the game. The game saw the debuts in the national team of Roma Vis Nova's goalkeeper Gianmarco Nicosia and Ortigia's centre player Giacomo Casasola. **The next match will be on 14 March, in Palermo, against the Russian team.**

During the press conference at the end of the match, **Coach Campagna** said, "These matches help to understand the type of play we want to work on, as we look to the important international matches. At the beginning, the team remained in their area, but then we advanced in counterattack and made some fine plays. We need to play with lots of movements and with intensity. The inexperience of many young players, including the two making their first appearances, and many being called for the first time, meant that we suffered from a psychological point of view. Lacking experience, we need to understand how to speed up the plays, but there'll be time and a way to do it. All the same, I liked the team's reaction and the defensive play. Now, we're looking to the next match against Russia, to develop these concepts."

Chairman Tosi was also enthusiastic; during the press conference, he paid tribute to Sandro Campagna. "I want to thank the Federation, our staff and all our collaborators, who with all their efforts contributed to the success of this amazing event. There were a lot of spectators in the stands, and I hope there'll be even more in the future. I also want to thank Mayor Antonelli and Deputy Mayor Ferrario for their collaboration and their attendance at the game, and the town of Busto, for having responded so well to this event."

Finally, **Valentino Gallo, the Captain of Settebello** said, "I want to compliment Chairman Tosi and my team for the amazing display we saw today on the stands. Playing for the Italian National Team is always exciting, and doing it in the pool where I train every day is even more so. I want to thank all the fans that cheered and encouraged us, from the first to the last minute."

di Marco Corso Translated by Bonomi & Romagnoni (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)