Massive Swell Separates the Men from the Boys at the Billabong ISA World Surfing Games in Peru

Hometown Boys, Game Changers, and Dark Horses from Latin America Charge Some of the Biggest Waves Ever For the World Surfing Games

Billabong ISA World Surfing Games
Punta Hermosa, Peru
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The Billabong ISA World Surfing Games Presented by Amarok of Volkswagen awoke to a massive swell on Day 3 of the event, as surfers battled not only their competitors but some of the biggest waves ever at a World Surfing Games today at Punta Hermosa, Peru.

Despite the challenging conditions there was spectacular surfing throughout the day that often had the teams and spectators on their feet and cheering. Micah Lester snatched another top place, proving the United Kingdom can hang with the best of them. His 15-yr-old teammate Luke Dillon lit up the scorecards as well.
"Just to be in a heat with a CT legend like Mick Campbell is so cool, but to get through the heat as well is the stuff groms dream of," said a genuinely stoked Luke Dillon after Round 2. “I deffo want more of this!”

Brazil’s Peterson Crisanto, Tahiti’s Hira Teriinatoofa, France’s Vincent Duvignac and South Africa’s Casey Grant blitzed their heats and honored their countries.

With the Billabong ISA World Surfing Games moving exclusively to the big sweeping rights at Caballeros, the usual surfing powerhouses continued to dominate on day three of what has been dubbed the Surfing Olympics.

World Tour surfers Mick Campbell and Drew Courtney lead the charge as the Australian team put on a blistering performance along the shifting, long right-handers. Not to be outdone, the American contingency fronted by Mike Losness and Ben Bourgeois also managed to continue their advance as both surfers squeaked through their Round Three Open heat.

The Repercharge Round (which saw the first eliminations of the event) had some of the most exciting surfing seen so far. Signaling the rise of the South American surf scene, the highest-scoring heat of the day went to Chile’s Guillermo Satt. Going top to bottom and cutting through the open face with a Ginsu-like precision, the young Chilean dropped an 8.83 and a 7 in the opening five minutes of the heat, making him one of the most in-form surfers of the day. Satt would better his 7 with another 8-point ride further solidifying Chile’s place in the pantheon of surfing nations.

And there were more: Venezuelan Jesus Chacon scorched the chilly water for a red hot first while only wearing a spring suit. Tamaka Itsuki showed us that big surf talent is no stranger to the Japanese surfers, while Israel’s Gil Zilka and Gil Keren, along with Germany’s Vincent Scholz and Tim Schubert battled their way back to contention. Edgar Nozes from Portugal did the same. And it’d hard not to root for Gabriel Benesenes, who kept the landlocked Swiss dream alive.

But it was host country Peru that has impressed the crowd the most. When people talk about surfing in Peru Sofia Mulanovich’s name immediately comes up, and rightfully so - she’s single-handedly made Latin American women’s surfing a viable pursuit for the up-and-coming generation of ladies. Unknown to most of the rest of the world she has a brother who is a local hero – and great surfer. Peru’s produced some legendary surfers over the years, and for the 2010 ISA incarnation, the nation’s proud team is led by Sofia’s brother Matías Mulanovich.

Today the Peruvian men are a championship powerhouse: Matias, Gabriel Villarán and Cristobal del Col all advanced into Round 4, looking more like medal contenders as the contest rolls on. Talented surfers to be sure, but you may also credit some of their success on a keen understanding of the lineups and conditions that they’re competing in. No question that the surf’s been, in a word,
challenging, and while some competitors were lost in the victory-at-sea surf, the Peruvian’s have stayed the course.

“It has been a difficult day again because there were heaps of waves, and it looked like a blender out there,” said Peruvian team member Gabriel Villarán “Our performances are the fruit of our preparation over the last two months. We are super-motivated to make the finals and keep on working as a team.”

The Puerto Rican national team seems to be insistent that they’re capable of producing world title-caliber talent. Long touted as the “Hawaii for the East Coast,” during the winter months when massive North Atlantic storms push swell down to the island’s northwest corner, the surf can definitely be Hawaii-esque in its size and power. That fact probably best explains how Alejandro Moreda got through their heats today. Teammate Carlos Cabrero was the only one of the Puerto Rican men relegated to the repercharge round – and he promptly won his repercharge heat.

Tomorrow morning, the surfers contending in Round Four/Heat One could be a final at just about any big-time contest anywhere in the world. But more than the talent level, it’s a pivotal moment in both America and Australia’s bids for gold. With heavy hitters Courtney and Campbell squaring off against California boys Byrne and Losness.

The big surf countries who still had most of their team advancing were Brazil, South Africa, Peru, and of course Australia and Team USA.

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About the International Surfing Association (ISA)
The International Surfing Association (ISA) is recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the World Governing Authority for Surfing. It was originally founded as the International Surfing Federation in 1964 and has been running world championships since 1964 and the Junior World Championships since 1980.

ISA membership includes the surfing National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of over 60 countries on six continents. Its headquarters are located in San
Diego, California. It is presided by Fernando Aguerre, first elected in 1994 in Rio, and re-elected six times since. The ISA's four Vice Presidents are Alan Atkins (Australia), Robin de Kock (South Africa), Mike Gerard (USA) and Karín Sierralta (Peru).