

How Schooling can win the biggest race of his life



LANE 1
Aleksandr Sadovnikov
(Russia)

Age: 19
Qualifying time: 51.71s
Personal Best: 51.50s



LANE 2
Michael Phelps
(US)

Age: 31
Qualifying time: 51.58s
Personal Best: 49.82s
(2009 supersuit time)



LANE 3
Li Zhuhao
(China)

Age: 17
Qualifying time: 51.51s
Personal Best: 51.24s



LANE 4
Joseph Schooling
(Singapore)

Age: 21
Qualifying time: 50.83s
Personal Best: 50.83s



1 The walk

- Do the things that keep him focused and relaxed so he can run through the race plan. "He walks in confident, not cocky, like Matthew McConaughey in the Wolf Of Wall Street," coach Sergio Lopez noted in the semi-final.
- He also likes to let out a loud "ooh" just before he gets on the blocks.



2 The start

- He has the quickest reaction time in the heats and semi-finals (0.61sec*), showing he is really in the zone.
- Utilise one of his strengths, powerful underwater kicks, to generate momentum until he has to surface at the stipulated 15m mark.

3 First 50m

- The first two strokes after surfacing dictate the tempo. So it is crucial that he keep his muscles tight to sustain speed.

4

The turn

- He has to kick off the wall strongly and use his underwater kicks to generate momentum.
- Again, he has to keep his muscles tight at the breakout.

6 The finish

- He will go all out because he is hungry for the win and because strength training improved his endurance and efficiency.
- He is more efficient in Rio. He took 36 strokes at the 2015 World Championships, he is taking 33 now.

5 Last 25m

- He has added an afterburner to his swim at the Olympics, so he does not fade as he did at the 2015 World Championships.
- This could be the X-factor that helps him see off Michael Phelps, who has a reputation for being a slow starter and a strong finisher.



NOTE: The Straits Times was speaking to Singapore coach Sergio Lopez; his assistant, former national swimmer Gary Tan; and Schooling Sr, Colin.
*Michael Phelps (0.67sec), Chad le Clos (0.65sec)



LANE 5
Chad le Clos
(South Africa)

Age: 24
Qualifying time: 51.43s
Personal Best: 50.56s



LANE 6
Laszlo Cseh
(Hungary)

Age: 30
Qualifying time: 51.57s
Personal Best: 50.86s



LANE 7
Tom Shields
(US)

Age: 25
Qualifying time: 51.61s
Personal Best: 51.03s



LANE 8
Mehdy Metella
(France)

Age: 24
Qualifying time: 51.73s
Personal Best: 51.24s