



**MAKING HER MARK:** Lithuania's Ruta Meilutyte looks up after setting a world record in the women's 100m breaststroke semifinal at the Swimming World Championships in Barcelona on Monday

## Teen star Ruta sets world record

**Barcelona:** Lithuania's teenage Olympic champion Ruta Meilutyte broke the women's 100m breaststroke world record with a new mark of 1min 04.35secs on Monday in the semi-finals at the swimming world championships.

The 16-year-old, who pulled off a shock win in the Olympic final in London last year, blazed into Tuesday's final in Barcelona and punched the water repeatedly with delight when her record was confirmed.

She broke the four-year-old mark of 1min 04.45secs, set by Jessica Hardy of the USA during the era when the high-tech swim suits were legal and the petite Lithuanian burst into tears as her achievement sank in.

Meilutyte, who trains in Plymouth, England, is the hot favourite in both the 50m and 100m breaststroke in Barcelona, an unusual position for the blonde schoolgirl, who was little known outside swimming circles just a year ago.

Meilutyte was voted best Lithuanian athlete of 2012 in her home country after her Olympic triumph.

The Lithuanian sent warning signals to opponents in June when she became the first woman to go under 30 seconds in the 50m breaststroke in a textile

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suit with a European record of 29.96 sec. Last month, she also beat her own European record in the 100m breaststroke with 1min 05.20 sec.

#### **Sprenger avenges Olympic defeat**

Australia's Christian Sprenger gained revenge for his defeat in last year's Olympic final when he won the men's 100m breaststroke gold at the swimming world championships on Monday. South Africa's Olympic champion Cameron van der Burgh, who

edged Sprenger into second in the Olympic final, was second and Brazil's Felipe Lima third. Sprenger clocked 58.79secs, ahead of Van der Burgh, the world record-holder, who was just 0.18secs behind, while Lima touched the wall at 59.65.

#### **Sjostrom regains 100m butterfly title**

Swedish teenager Sarah Sjostrom regained her women's 100m butterfly world title at the swimming world championships on Monday with Australia's Alicia Coutts claiming silver and defending champion Dana Vollmer of the USA bronze. Sjostrom, who won the 2009 title aged just 15, hit the wall at 56.53secs, with Coutts at 0.44secs back and Vollmer, the Olympic champion and world record-holder, at 0.71 behind.

Meanwhile, Cesar Cielo of Brazil won a second consecutive men's 50 metres butterfly title at the world championships on Monday. AGENCIES