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UIPM 2017 WORLD CUP III: PRADES (FRA) LIGHTS UP ELECTION DAY WITH GOLD

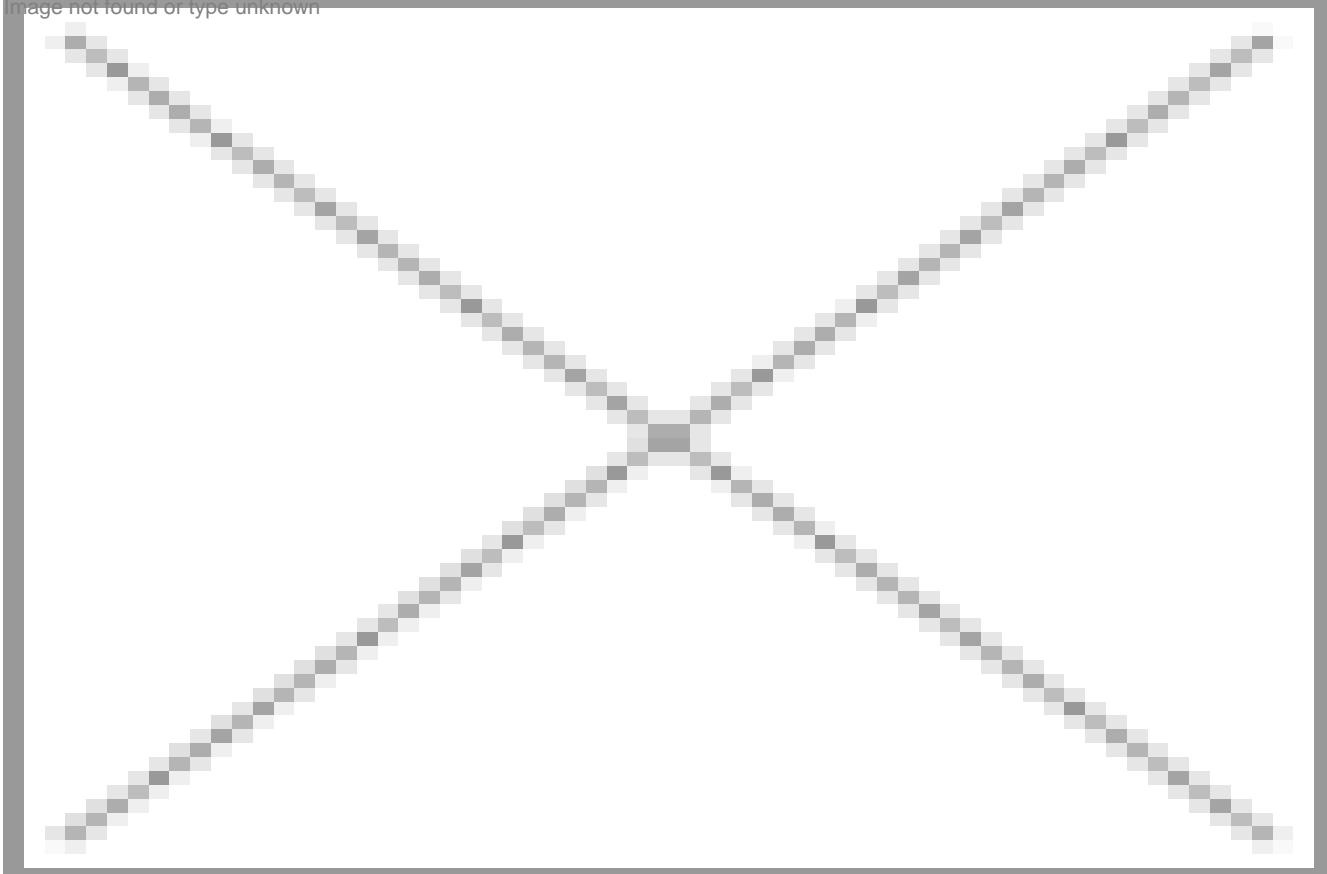


- World No.2 wins thrilling battle on day France votes for new President
- Home favourite Demeter (HUN) claims silver in sprint finish
- Tymoshchenko (UKR) secures third consecutive World Cup medal

On the day France went to the polls to elect a new President, "La Marseillaise" rang out at World Cup III after Valentin Prades gave his country an early cause for celebration.

World No.2 Prades (FRA), who finished 4th at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and won silver at World Cup II, confirmed his strong form with victory in a pulsating Laser-Run that provided a fitting climax to the Men's Final.

All day long it had seemed impossible to call a winner, and seven athletes started the Laser-Run within 15 seconds of the leader, Bence Demeter (HUN), the gold medallist at World Cup I.



Prades (FRA) used the first 800m lap to move from 3rd to 1st and at that point the tall, muscular 24-year-old looked poised to stretch away.

When he stalled at the 2nd shooting range, Jung Jinhwa (KOR) leapt into the lead.

Then at the 4th shooting range, Pavlo Tymoshchenko (UKR), winner of silver at World Cup I and gold at World Cup II, briefly took the top spot.

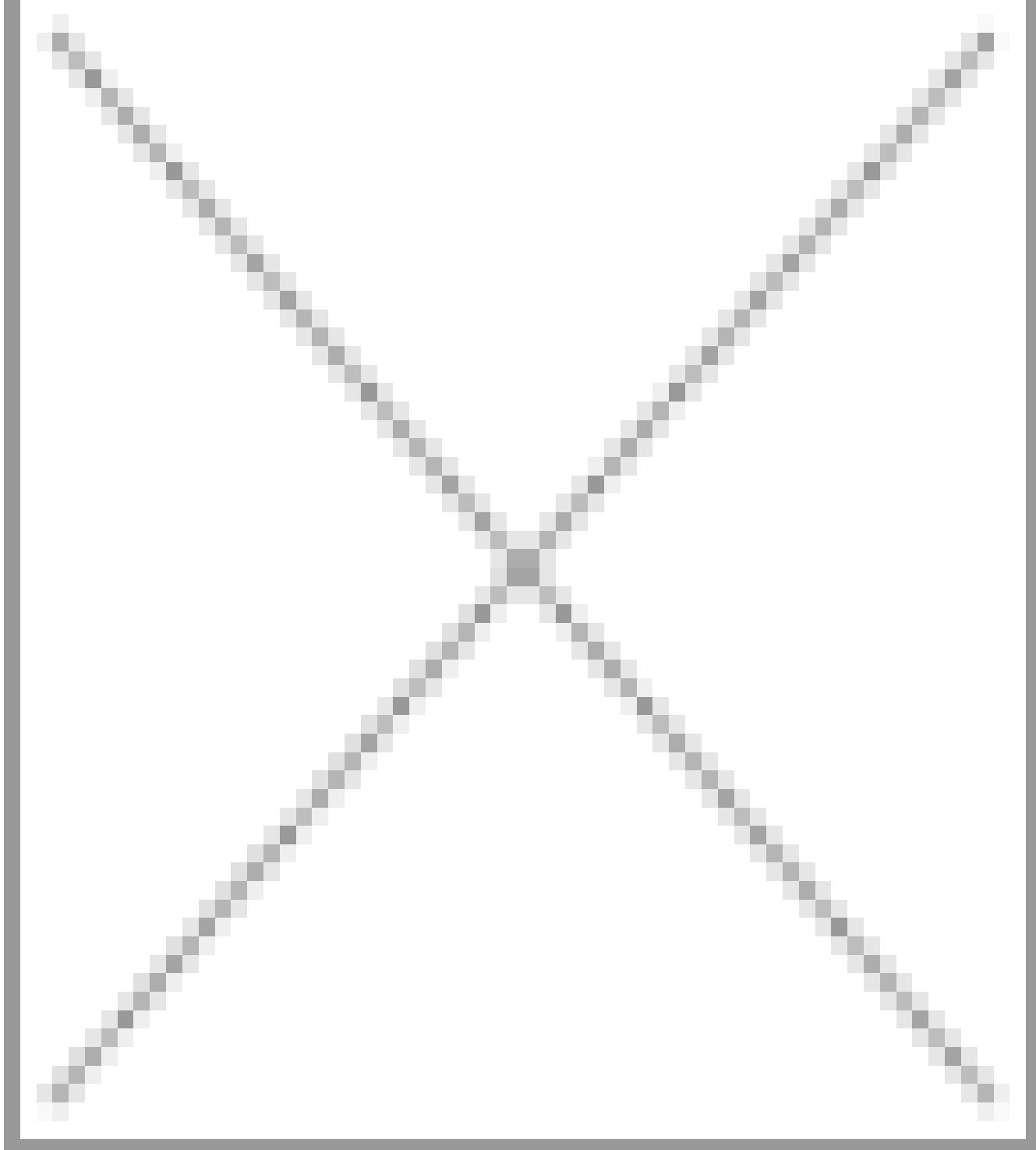
But every time he had his supremacy challenged, Prades (FRA) came up with the answer - and his strong running eventually propelled him across the line in 1st place.

Behind him, Demeter (HUN) summoned the stamina to overtake Olympic silver medallist Tymoshchenko (UKR) on the final straight and claim silver to add to the bronze medal won 24 hours earlier by his fellow home athlete, Sarolta Kovacs (HUN).

Korea won the next two places with Jun Woongtae advancing to 4th and Jung finishing 5th. Eslam Hamad (EGY) completed a special day with a promising 6th, ahead of world champion Valentin Belaud (FRA, 8th) and world champion Alexander Lesun (RUS, 10th).

"I just tried to stay calm and focus on my shooting, and luckily it was good enough today," said Prades (FRA), winner of the 2013 World Cup Final in Nizhniy Novgorod (RUS) and World Cup III in Rome (ITA) in 2016, after a compelling Laser-Run that electrified the Hungarian crowd.

"I hope this is a good preparation for the World Championships in Cairo in August. The European Championships and World Championships are my big targets this summer and the World Cup is a great form of preparation."



Earlier, the Koreans dominated Swimming with the fastest three times set by Hwang Woojing (1:59.14), Jung (2:00.68) and Jun (2:01.03).

The 'bunching' of results continued in the Fencing Ranking Round where Demeter (HUN) managed 24V/11D, one more victory than Pavlo Zvedeniuk (UKR) and Justinas Kinderis (LTU).

However, there was an incredible performance in the Bonus Round by Hamad (EGY), who won 10 consecutive bouts, before Zvedeniuk (UKR) ended his run and claimed the last three points.

There were numerous immaculate performances in Riding, where Robert Kasza (HUN) and Hamad (EGY) enjoyed perfect scores of 300 and Tomoyuki Ono (JAP), Gianluca Micozzi (ITA) and Gergely Demeter (HUN) conceded only one penalty point.

After a day of high-class performances, a dramatic Laser-Run was the perfect climax and "La

"Marseillaise" seemed a fitting national anthem to hear on such an important day for France.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Today we saw a great competition, with athletes who won medals at the Olympic Games and other top athletes involved in an exciting finish in the Laser-Run.

"I have to underline that the horses given to the athletes for this World Cup in Kecskemét were first class and the facilities were very good, and the athletes really appreciate that.

"Like yesterday in the Women's Final, our men have shown very high performances in this great Olympic sport. It shows we are on the right track for the last World Cup in Drzonkow, and after that we will prepare for the best athletes to compete in the World Cup Final.

"I have to thank everyone who has supported this competition and we are looking forward to the Mixed Relay tomorrow."

World Cup III closes tomorrow (May 8) with the Mixed Relay. Live streaming is available on UIPM TV according to the schedule below.

The World Cup circuit resumes in three weeks with World Cup IV in Drzonkow (POL) from May 25-29. The 2017 World Cup Final takes place in Vilnius (LTU) from June 23-25.

