18 JUL 2017

UIPM 2017 UNDER 19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: ITALY RETAIN WOMEN’S RELAY GOLD

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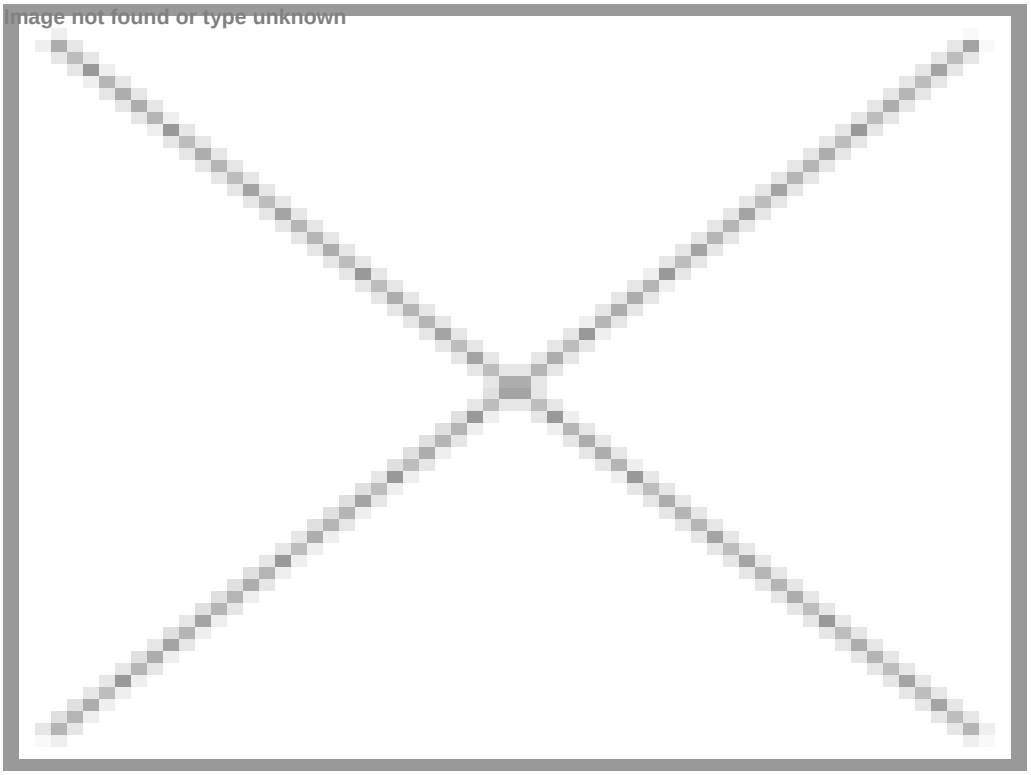

Italy drew first blood at the UIPM 2017 Under 19 World Championships as they successfully defended the Women’s Relay title.

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Last year in Limerick (IRL) this event was won by Elena Micheli and Aurora Tognetti and today their compatriots Beatrice Mercuri and Maria Lea Lopez kept the flag flying with an assured performance, finishing 3rd in Fencing and 4th in Swimming before seizing their opportunity in the Laser-Run.

Italy (Mercuri/Lopez) started the climactic event with a 4sec deficit to leaders Kazakhstan (Akbota Bekbassar & Sofya Prizhennikova), who had come first in Fencing with a tally of 25V/11D. However, their running let them down and it was Egypt (Mariam Amer & Salma Abdelmaksoud) who ended up being Italy's main challengers at Juliska Sports Center in Prague (CZE).

For some of the race Egypt (Amer/Abdelmaksoud) held the initiative and the two nations left the range together after the final shoot, but in the end Italy (Mercuri/Lopez) pulled away to win by 14sec with bronze medallists Hungary (Luca Barta & Michelle Gulyas) a further 7sec behind after an impressive Laser-Run.

All of the medallists celebrated at the finish line in scenes of joy.

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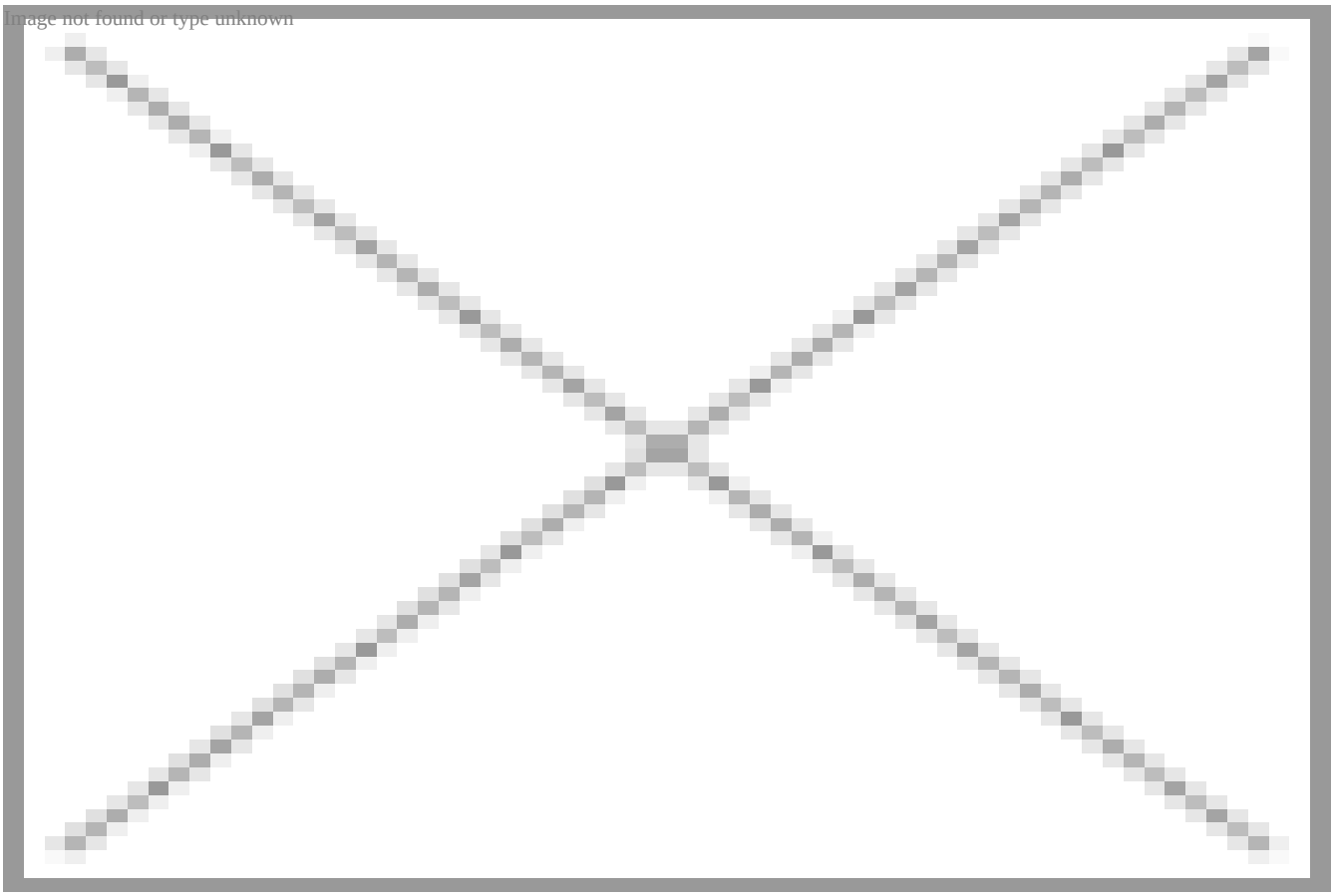

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “I was very impressed to see 19 countries competing on the opening day of the 2017 UIPM Under 19 World Championships. A total of 32 countries will compete here in Prague and they are coming from all continents.

“This sends out a strong message that we are developing young athletes from all over the world to take part in flagship competitions. I congratulate the winners and the organisers who have done an excellent job to make this competition a success.”

The UIPM Under 19 World Championships, formerly known as the UIPM Youth A World Championships and comprising a Tetrathlon format (Fencing / Swimming / Laser-Run), continue tomorrow (July 19) with the Men’s Relay and conclude on July 24.

All results are available at the UIPM website.