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UIPM 2017 SENIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: GERMANY REPEAT WOMEN'S RELAY TRIUMPH



Another day, another successful title defence at the 2017 UIPM World Championships as Germany claimed gold in the Women's Relay.

Lena Schoeneborn and Annika Schleu (GER) have established themselves as the leading female duo in pentathlon and a masterful performance today saw them finish 33sec ahead of the chasing pack.

A day after the repeat success of Korea (Jun Woongtae & Hwang Woojin) in the Men's Relay, it was another demonstration of a nation targeting an event in which they are particularly strong, albeit Schoeneborn and Schleu (GER) will both have their eyes on individual glory on Sunday.

"I think the girls did a really good job, it started in the Swimming and Fencing was good, and they continued to perform well in Riding and Laser-Run," said coach Kim Raisner (GER).

"It was really nice to have a silver medal for the men yesterday, and now we have a gold for the

women and of course we hope we will have some more medals to come.”

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They may have finished a distant second but silver was a joyous result for Egypt (Mariam Amer & Sondos Aboubakr) in front of their home crowd in Cairo.

One of the locals celebrating at the Pegasus Club was Aya Medany, three-time Olympian, Member of the IOC Athletes' Commission and Chair of the UIPM Athletes Committee.

“This is the first medal for our team in the seniors, it's in Egypt and I'm very pleased and happy,” said Medany (EGY). “Mariam and Sondos are like my little sisters, I can't explain how I feel but I wish them all the best.

“Mariam is still young and I hope she will compete in the Youth Olympic Games, and they have both just come from the Junior World Championships. They still have a lot more to do this week.”

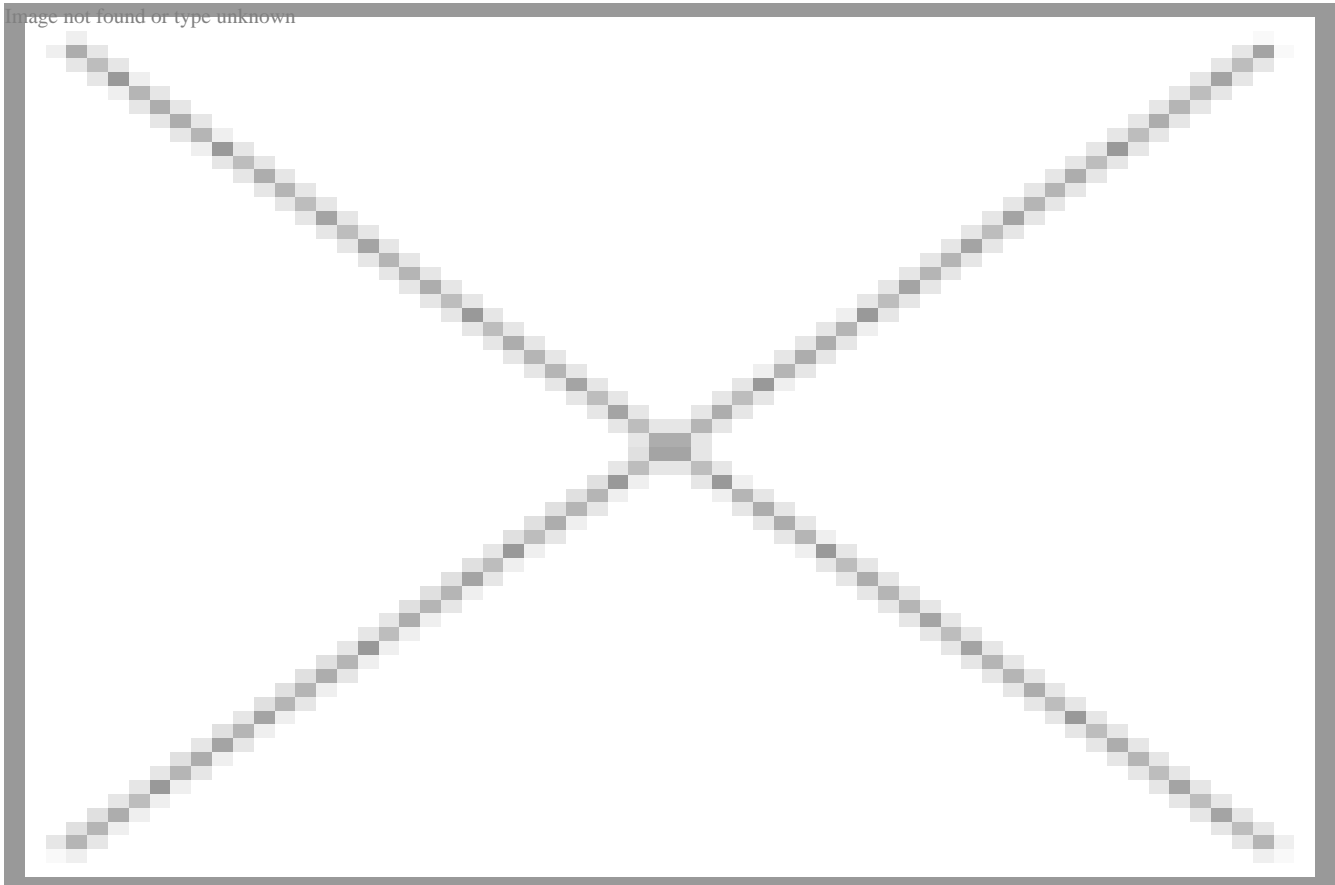
Another team celebrating on the podium was Japan, hosts of the next Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020, as Rena Shimazu and Shino Yamanaka secured a bronze medal after a gutsy Laser-Run.

Japan (Shimazu/Yamanaka) had begun the Laser-Run in 6th place after a damaging experience Riding saw them incur 42 penalty points.

Prior to that, there had been three Asian nations contending but Korea (Kim Unju & Mina Jeong) were unable to start due to an injury, and China (Zhong Xiuting & Zhang Lishan) suffered elimination.

Korea (21V/15D) and China (20V/16D) had been two of the top three performers in Fencing, along with Germany (21V/15D). Russia (Kseniia Fraltsova & Adelina Ibatullina) were fastest in Swimming with 2:03.82.

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(Amer/Aboubakr) moved firmly into contention during the Riding with a perfect score of 300, with Italy (Claudia Cesarini & Aurora Tognetti) not far behind on 293.

Germany (Schoeneborn/Schleu) started the Laser-Run with a cushion of 27sec over Italy (Cesarini/Tognetti) with Egypt (Amer/Aboubakr) 2sec further back. The hosts managed to move into silver medal position but the big story of the Laser-Run was the performance of Japan (Shimazu/Yamanaka) whose time was only bettered by 5th-placed Russia (Fraltsova/Ibatullina).

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "We had a winning team today comprising the 2008 Olympic champion, Lena Schoeneborn, and Annika Schleu, who was 4th in the 2016 Olympic Games, and what was very important today is that we had three continents on the podium.

"This is a clear message that we are a global sport and our teams like to compete in the relay competitions. I hope we can have such great atmosphere in the individual competitions as we had today, and I congratulate the host nation for their medal today which is so important in the promotion of the remaining days."

The action at the UIPM Senior World Championships runs from August 22-28 and continues tomorrow (August 24) with qualifying for the Men's Individual Final.

The Men's and Women's Individual and Mixed Relay finals (August 26-28) will be available to watch on TV through the continental broadcaster Eurosport, 11 other national TV networks and online at UIPM TV and the Olympic Channel.