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UIPM 2017 LASER-RUN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: BENGGS (FIN) AND OOSTHUIZEN (RSA) TAKE TOP HONOURS

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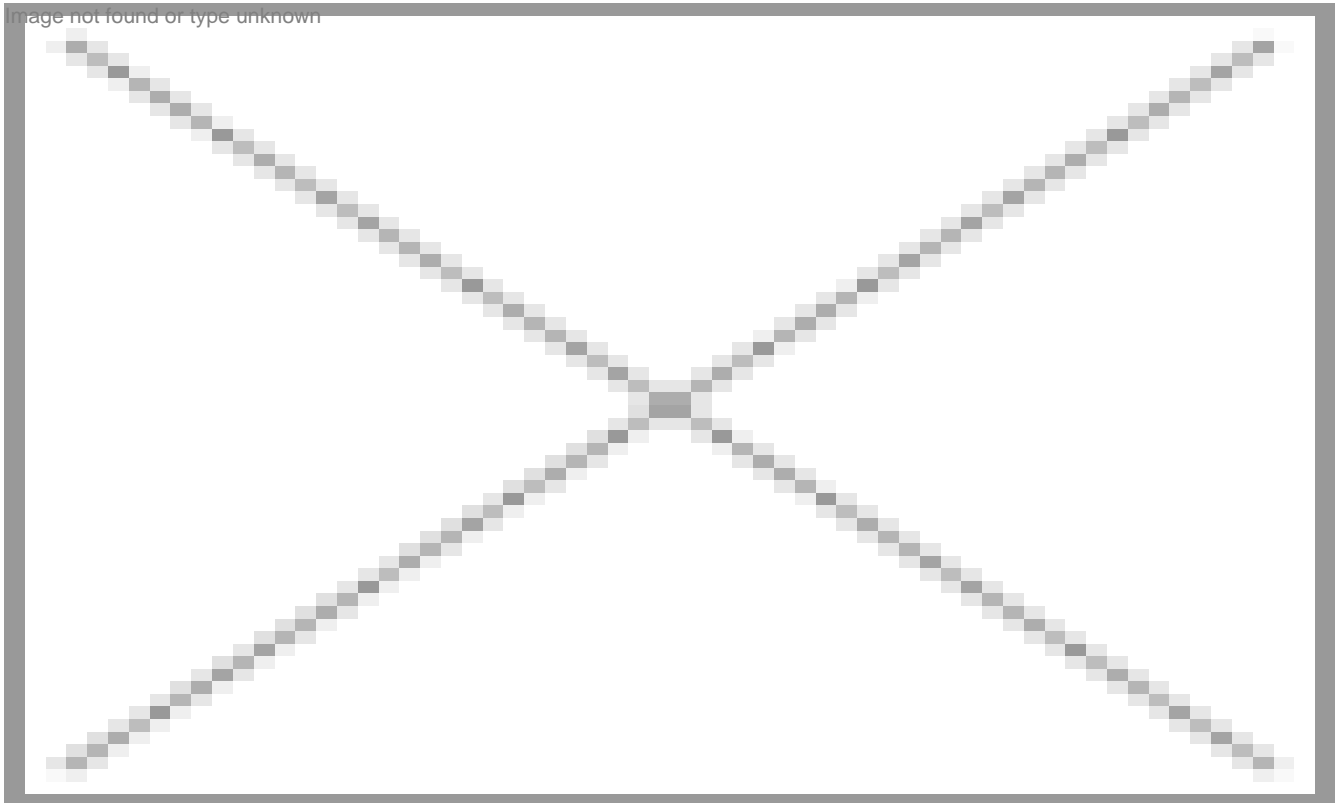


The 3rd UIPM Laser-Run World Championships in Cape Town, South Africa exploded into life with hundreds of athletes from around the world taking part in the individual events.

Athletes from countries as diverse as Ivory Coast, Thailand and Monaco collected medals alongside more established UIPM member nations across 10 categories from Under-11 to Masters 60+.

South Africa, the host nation, dominated proceedings and ended up with a huge medal count, including the Men's Individual title at senior level which went to Pieter Oosthuizen. The Women's Individual senior event was won by Eevi Benggs of Finland.

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Modern pentathlete Oosthuizen (RSA), who was a gold medallist at the recent UIPM Biathlon/Triathlon World Championships in Viveiro (ESP), enjoyed the adulation of the home crowd after winning a tense battle with silver medallist Alexandre Dallenbach (SUI), while Khuanchai Khosinklang (THA) claimed a surprise bronze.

Oosthuizen (RSA) said: "I went into the race hoping to get another medal having started my Laser-Run career at the 1st World Championships in France, and it paid off today. The conditions were a little bit tough and the wind made shooting difficult.

"My running and shooting are my strongest points in pentathlon but today I messed up my shooting. My main competitor, Alex from Switzerland, got a penalty for not touching the table, costing him a penalty of 20secs, which gave me an advantage I was able to maintain during the last 800m for the win.

"It's a very nice feeling, almost a feeling I can't describe because all my friends and family are here and this is not only my home country but my home town."

Bengs (FIN), who is also a modern pentathlete, was joined on the podium by silver medallist Suzie Cave (GBR) and Charlotte Menard (FRA), who took bronze.

Bengs (FIN) said: "This is a really nice place and I'm happy that UIPM brought the Laser-Run World Championships here.

"I had a little bit of a struggle at the start, when I twisted my ankle, and it was really hurting at the first shooting range. But when I ran away the pain went away – it wasn't perfect but it was a pretty steady performance.

"In Finland right now we have to train inside because it has been raining and pretty cold, but we have a young team with us and we are really excited about Laser-Run."

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Cape Town is the third host of the UIPM Laser-Run World Championships after Perpignan (FRA) in 2015 and Lisbon (POR) in 2016, and racing is taking place at Cape Town Stadium, in the shadow of the iconic Table Mountain.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "The individual events of the 3rd UIPM Laser-Run World Championships took place in fantastic conditions and we had a great competition with all the different age groups.

"I'm very happy that the South African Modern Pentathlon Association (SAMPa) has organised this excellent event, and we are looking forward to the relays tomorrow. I congratulate the organising committee and all the athletes who achieved good results."

The two-day competition concludes on Sunday, October 15 with the Mixed Relays, as well as the open division race where participants of different ages have the opportunity to compete together.

All results will be available at the UIPM website at the conclusion of the competition.

For photography and video content check out the UIPM pages on Facebook and Twitter.