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UIPM 2018 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP KECSKEMÉT: SHOWDOWN OF THE STARS

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Two Olympic champions go up against the world's six top-ranked pentathletes in what promises to be an incredible Women's Individual competition at Pentathlon World Cup Kecskemét.

Laura Asadauskaite of **Lithuania** (London 2012) and **Chloe Esposito** from **Australia** (Rio 2016) compete against each other for the first time since the Rio Games and their renowned Laser-Run speed raises the prospect of a battle that retains suspense right to the end.

However, many other leading ladies have stood up to be counted in 2017 and 2018 and the top six on the current rankings are all in Hungary today taking part in the qualifying for Saturday's final.

A wide array of athletes will be going for gold such as the world champion and world No.1, **Gulnaz Gubaydullina** of **Russia**, world No.2 **Anastasiya Prokopenko** from **Belarus** and the **Hungary** trio **Tamara Alekszejev**, **Sarolta Kovacs** and **Zsolia Foldhazi**.

Ninth-ranked **Kate French** of **Great Britain**, one of the top performers throughout 2017, makes

her first appearance of the season and world No.6 **Annika Schleu** will aim to make sure **Germany** continues to make regular appearances on the podium after the recent retirement of the 2008 Olympic champion, Lena Schöneborn.

In the Men's Individual event (qualifying tomorrow; Final on Sunday), there is also a celestial gathering with the 2016 Olympic champion, **Alexander Lesun (RUS)**, taking on most of the form athletes in the sport with all but one of the world's top 10 taking part.

Korea are sure to have a say in how the podium places are settled with world champion **Jung Jinhwa** and high-class team-mates **Jun Woongtae** and **Lee Jihun** all involved, **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of **Ukraine** in the mix as always and the challenge of **France** led by world No.5 **Valentin Prades**.

Hungary are also sure to be competitive with the likes of world No.1 Robert Kasza and No.9 **Bence Demeter**.

Last year, the men's title at World Cup Kecskemét was won by **Prades (FRA)** in an incredibly close finish ahead of **Demeter (HUN)** and **Tymoshchenko (UKR)**.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "We are very pleased to be here again in Kecskemét, an important destination for flagship UIPM competitions for many years

"The Pentathlon World Cup offers a global and local showcase to our partners, broadcast partners and officials. It also provides a perfect opportunity for our elite pentathletes and their coaches to put their hard work into practice in a world-class competition environment.

"With the Olympic Summer Games Tokyo 2020 only two years away, we are starting to see new talent emerge and this is a very exciting time for our movement."

You can tune in to live action from the Finals (May 5-7) on UIPM TV from 11:30 CEST (Paris, Berlin, Budapest time) while all results will be available at the UIPM website.