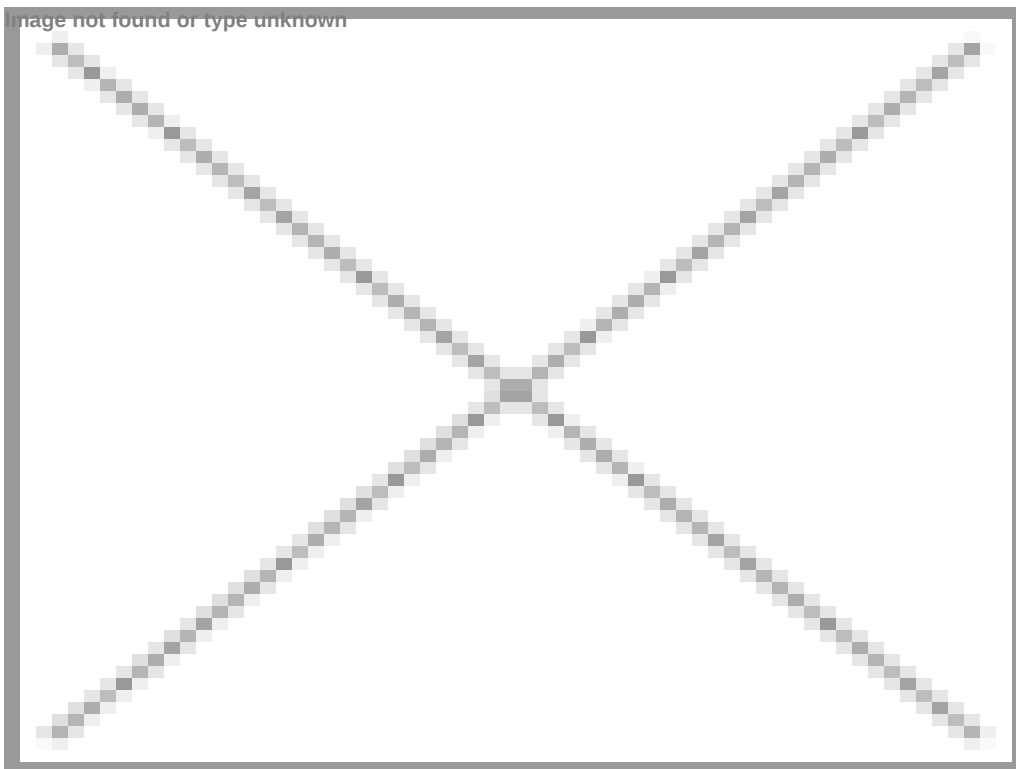


13 SEP 2018

# UIPM 2018 PENTATHLON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: COOKE (GBR) CLAIMS DRAMATIC GOLD



**Jamie Cooke** of **Great Britain** prevailed in one of the most dramatic Modern Pentathlon races of all time to claim Men's Individual gold at the UIPM Pentathlon World Championships.

After 200 metres in the pool, more than 35 fencing bouts, a round of show jumping, four laser shooting series and four 800m runs, in a Pentathlon Stadium at 2,200m altitude, the most coveted prize of the year was decided by a photo finish.

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**Valentin Prades** of **France** had done all the hard work. The European champion had moved with stealth through the pack from 14th place, and on the last lap he muscled his way past Cooke (GBR) and then the leader, **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of **Ukraine**. But as he rounded the bend to enter the final straight, he made the mistake of raising his arm in celebration. It wasn't over.

From somewhere, 27-year-old **Cooke** (GBR) summoned the strength to take one last shot at glory, and he launched into a sprint, catching **Prades** (FRA) just as they reached the finish line. As they took the tape, **Cooke** (GBR) clearly touched it first, albeit his victory had to be confirmed by photo. The new world champion wept with elation and amazement as he realised what he had done, and **Prades** (FRA) raised himself off the floor to congratulate his rival, one warrior to another.

**Cooke** (GBR) said afterwards: "I was really struggling on that last lap, but then I pushed on. My grandad died last week.

"I've worked so hard for this over the last year. I've had a fantastic season in training, and I just tried to go as hard as I could.

"My first shoot was terrible, so I was trying to make amends for that. I've been working with a guy called Dave Aldred on my shooting, my coach Mark and Jan [Bartu, GBR performance director] with my team in Bath, and it's just a dream come true.

"I saw Valentin go past me and I thought 'oh no', but I just dug in and kept going and see what could happen, and I just found in the last 100m that I had something left in my legs."

Silver medallist **Prades** (FRA) said: "I started 14th after bad Riding, but I said 'OK, run like a crazy boy like at the Olympics, and we will see'. I started slowly because at altitude, a lot of people are dead after two laps.

"We had a big training camp at altitude, and I knew I was ready. I knew I could do it and I stayed focused on my run and my shoot, and the last lap was amazing.

“Not a very good finish because Jamie passed me in the last metre, but I’m so happy because it was a special season for me. I was injured and I didn’t start to run until March, my first competition was very bad, but I am European champion and now silver at the World Championships.

“It’s amazing, and I am very happy for me and my group and my trainer – we work very hard every day and today is the cherry on the cake.”

The bronze medal added yet another prize to the collection of **Tymoshchenko** (UKR), world champion in 2015 and Olympic silver medallist at Rio 2016. He said: “Valentin went faster than me, and I couldn’t do anything. I almost stopped. The last 100m was very tough, and then Jamie went very fast too. I can’t understand where they got that ability to run.”

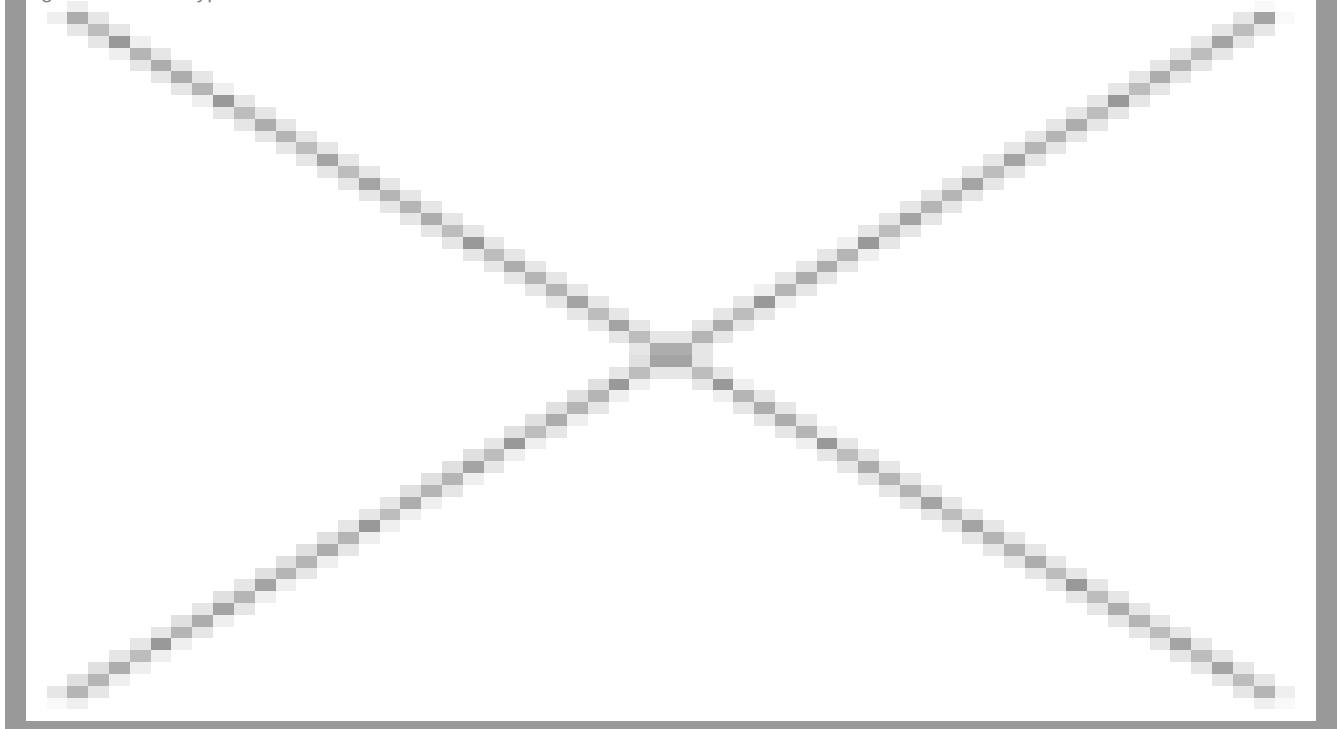
Only three men reached the podium but numerous others occupied those top three positions during an extraordinary climax to an unforgettable week of sport in the world’s first all-in-one Pentathlon Stadium.

**Amro Elgeziry** of **USA** led the Laser Run but faded at the halfway point. The local hero, **Alvaro Sandoval** of **Mexico**, was never far from the front and finished 7th. **Ahmed Hamed** of **Egypt** burst into the lead during the third lap and ended up crossing the line in 5th.

**Jan Kuf** of **Czech Republic** started 3rd and finished 4th, while 2016 champion **Valentin Belaud** (FRA) advanced to 6th and **Zhang Linbin** of **China** was the top Asian finisher as he completed the top eight.

Team gold went to **France**, silver to **Great Britain** and bronze to **Ukraine**. This came 24 hours after **Hungary** won gold in the women’s team event, ahead of **France** (silver) and **Germany** (bronze).

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## Swimming

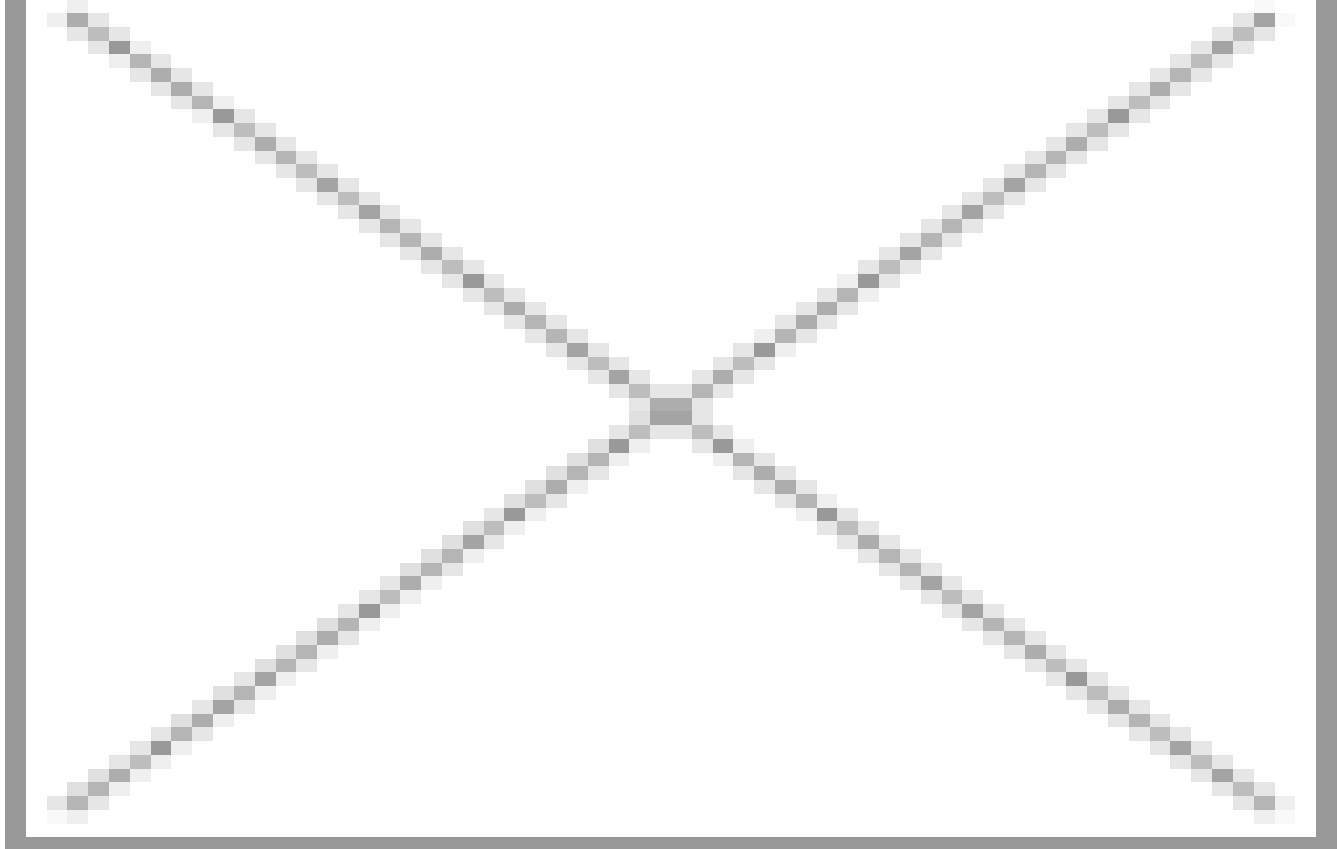
**Great Britain** made their intentions clear with a typically dominant performance. **Myles Pillage**

(GBR) was quickest in 1:54.95, narrowly ahead of **Cooke** (GBR) in 1:55.25 and Joe Choong (GBR) in 1:59.83.

**Elgeziry** (USA) broke up the British party with his 1:56.00 and defending champion **Jung Jinhwa** of **Korea** was not far behind on 2:00.71.

## Fencing

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Two athletes emerged with top marks on the piste, as **Zhang** (CHN) and **Kuf** (CZE) each managed 24V/11D, and it was **Zhang** (CHN) who maximised his score in the Bonus Round with the final victory for two extra points.

**Alexander Nobis** (GER) and **Elgeziry** (USA) also put themselves in a strong position with 23V/12D, as did **Sandoval** (MEX, 22V/13D) and **Tymoshchenko** (UKR, 21V/14D). **Cooke** (GBR) left himself with a fair amount of work to do after scoring 18V/17D.

## Riding

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There were three perfect scores of 300, but none by the competition leaders. **Gergely Regos** (HUN), **Brice Loubet** (FRA) and **Gianluca Micozzi** of **Italy** all emerged with an unblemished while **Riccardo de Luca** (ITA) only dropped one penalty point.

As the rounds progressed, the competition really opened up as **Tymoshchenko** (UKR) conceded 21 points, **Cooke** (GBR) 24, **Prades** (FRA) 28, **Kuf** (CZE) 32 and **Zhang** (CHN) a damaging 42.

The final rider, Elgeziry (USA), also struggled and dislodged four obstacles for a score of 272, but such was the carnage that preceded his round, he still went into the Laser Run as the overall leader, 6sec ahead of **Sandoval** (MEX) and 18sec ahead of **Kuf** (CZE).

Behind them, a posse of podium seekers prepared to hunt the leaders down.

## Laser Run

The unpredictability of Laser Run was beautifully captured in an enthralling race that saw eight athletes occupy medal positions.

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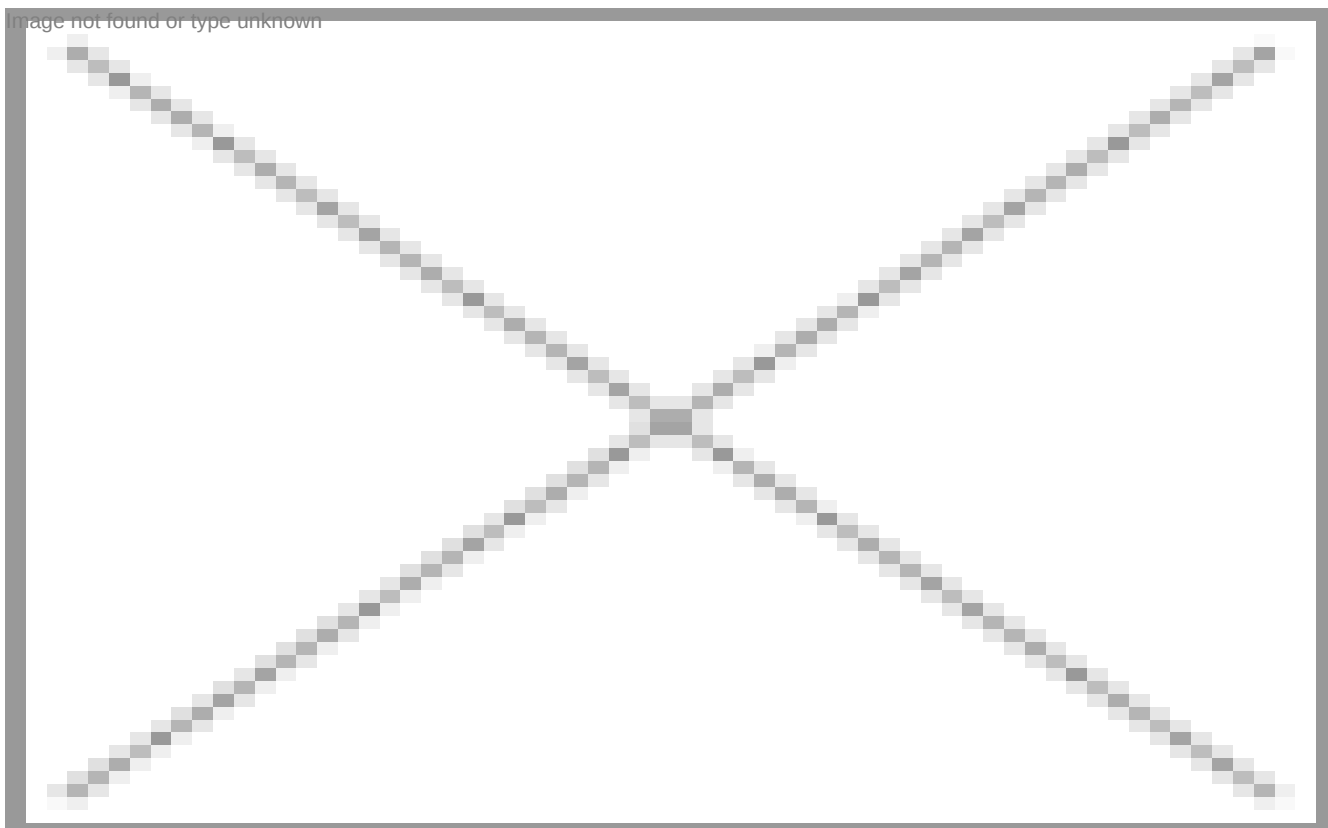
**Elgeziry** (USA) looked strong throughout the first two laps, but then went into freefall. **Sandoval** (MEX) lost ground at the shooting range where **Kuf** (CZE), **Tymoshchenko** (UKR) and **De Luca** (ITA) made their experience count.

But then the tale began to twist. **Hamed** (EGY) ran strongly to lead a chasing pack into the range for a mass arrival at the third shoot, and the 21-year-old hit his five targets in 9sec and burst into the lead.

At the halfway point of lap three, everything changed again as **Tymoshchenko** (UKR) overtook **Hamed** (EGY) and then **Cooke** (GBR) moved up to 2nd and **Prades** (FRA) to 3rd. In that moment, the three podium athletes were confirmed but in what order would they finish?

**Tymoshchenko** (UKR) left the range first, but his rivals had youth on their side and they had enough stamina to seize the moment. In the end, **Cooke** (GBR) seized it with both hands.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Here in the Olympic city of Mexico City, the UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Championships have come to an end and we saw, for the first time in history, the Pentathlon Stadium – a temporary pool and all five disciplines in one stadium.



“The

athletes performed at the highest level, and this was underlined with the finish to the Men’s Laser Run today. I have big respect for them all and in the name of the Union I would like to thank all the athletes, coaches and trainers for what they have done here.

“I pay tribute to the host country and the organising committee, under the leadership of Horacio de la Vega, and the national federation, Juan Manzo and all the volunteers. We are so thankful for what the Mexican Olympic society did for us, and the way the media escorted us and promoted us.

“We are looking forward to the next World Championships in Budapest (HUN) in 2019, which will be a qualification event for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.”

The UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Championships have now concluded and the next event on the Modern Pentathlon calendar is the CISM Military World Championships in Budapest (HUN) from September 25-30.

Stay tuned to the UIPM website for news, reports and results.

| Rank | Name               | Nation | MP Points |
|------|--------------------|--------|-----------|
| 1    | COOKE James        | GBR    | 1435      |
| 2    | PRADES Valentin    | FRA    | 1435      |
| 3    | TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo | UKR    | 1429      |
| 4    | KUF Jan            | CZE    | 1425      |
| 5    | HAMED Ahmed        | EGY    | 1424      |
| 6    | BELAUD Valentin    | FRA    | 1420      |
| 7    | SANDOVAL Alvaro    | MEX    | 1416      |
| 8    | ZHANG Linbin       | CHN    | 1413      |
| 9    | CHOONG Joseph      | GBR    | 1410      |
| 10   | DE LUCA Riccardo   | ITA    | 1408      |
| 11   | NOBIS Alexander    | GER    | 1406      |
| 12   | DEMETER Bence      | HUN    | 1405      |
| 13   | REGOS Gergely      | HUN    | 1402      |
| 14   | ANDERSON Brendan   | USA    | 1396      |

|    |                   |     |      |
|----|-------------------|-----|------|
| 15 | LOUBET Brice      | FRA | 1395 |
| 16 | KINDERIS Justinas | LTU | 1393 |
| 17 | DOGUE Patrick     | GER | 1392 |
| 18 | TSIKHANAU Pavel   | BLR | 1391 |
| 19 | SEO Changwan      | KOR | 1391 |
| 20 | BUSTOS Esteban    | CHI | 1389 |
| 21 | MICOZZI Gianluca  | ITA | 1385 |
| 22 | JUNG Jinhwa       | KOR | 1384 |
| 23 | HAMAD Eslam       | EGY | 1379 |
| 24 | PADILLA Manuel    | MEX | 1377 |
| 25 | PAVLYUK Denys     | UKR | 1375 |
| 26 | PALAZKOV Ilya     | BLR | 1373 |
| 27 | ELGEZIRY Amor     | USA | 1368 |
| 28 | LUO Shuai         | CHN | 1366 |
| 29 | LI Shuhuan        | CHN | 1364 |
| 30 | FERNANDEZ Charles | GUA | 1361 |
| 31 | PATTE Christopher | FRA | 1355 |
| 32 | GUTKOWSKI Lukasz  | POL | 1349 |
| 33 | FEDECHKO Yuriy    | UKR | 1347 |
| 34 | PILLAGE Myles     | GBR | 1331 |
| 35 | DOGUE Marvin Faly | GER | 1321 |
| 36 | CRUZ Luis         | MEX | 1232 |