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

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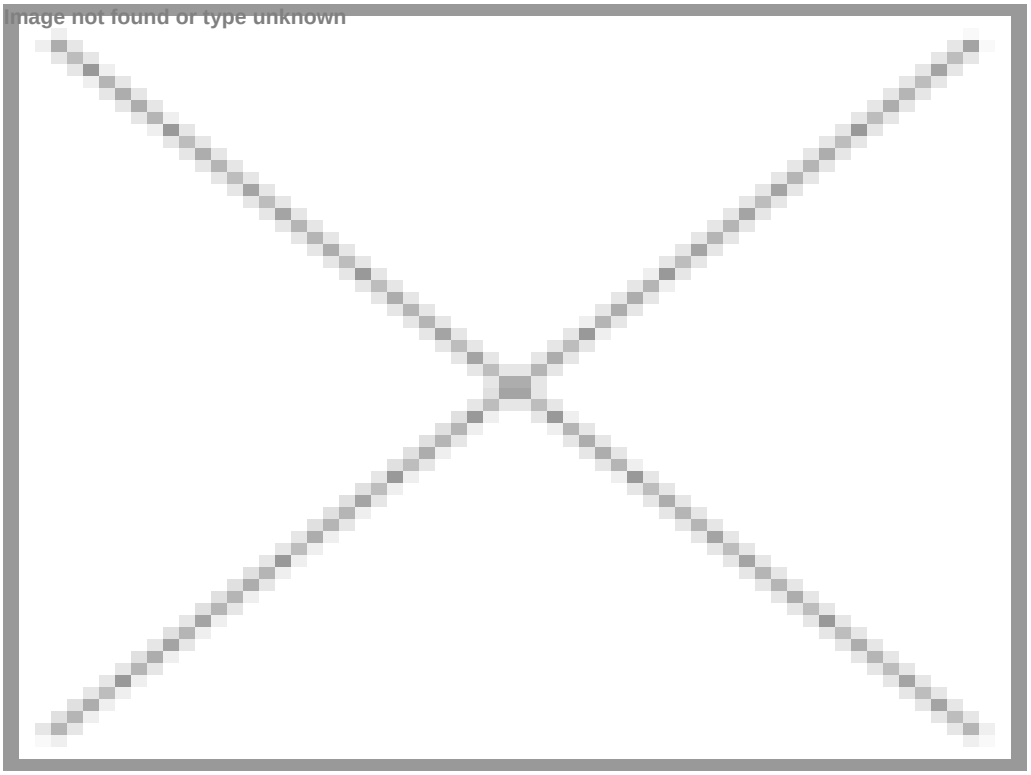
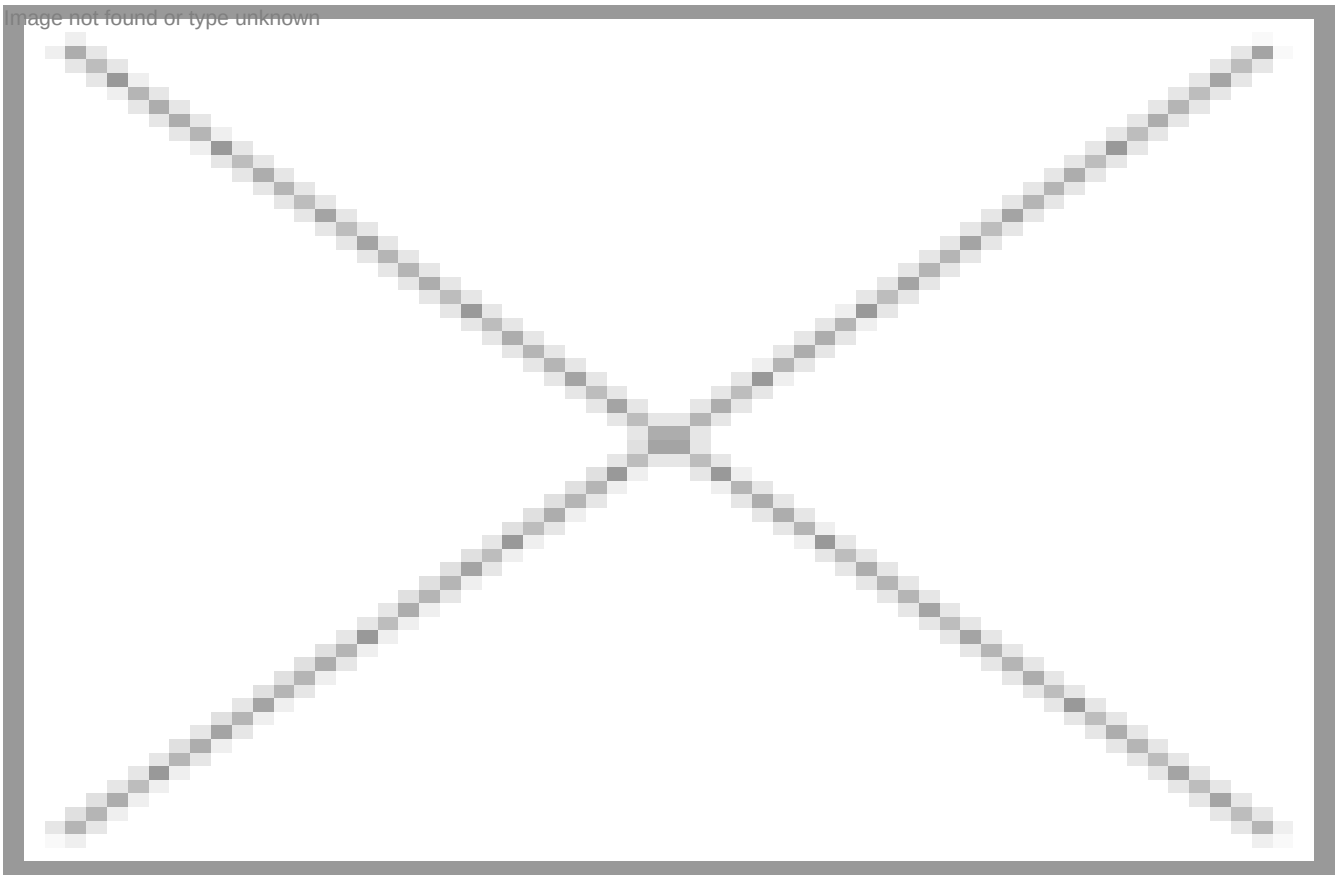


Jamie Cooke of **Great Britain** prevailed in one of the most dramatic Modern Pentathlon races of all time to claim Men's Individual gold at the UIPM Pentathlon World Championships.

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.



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.”

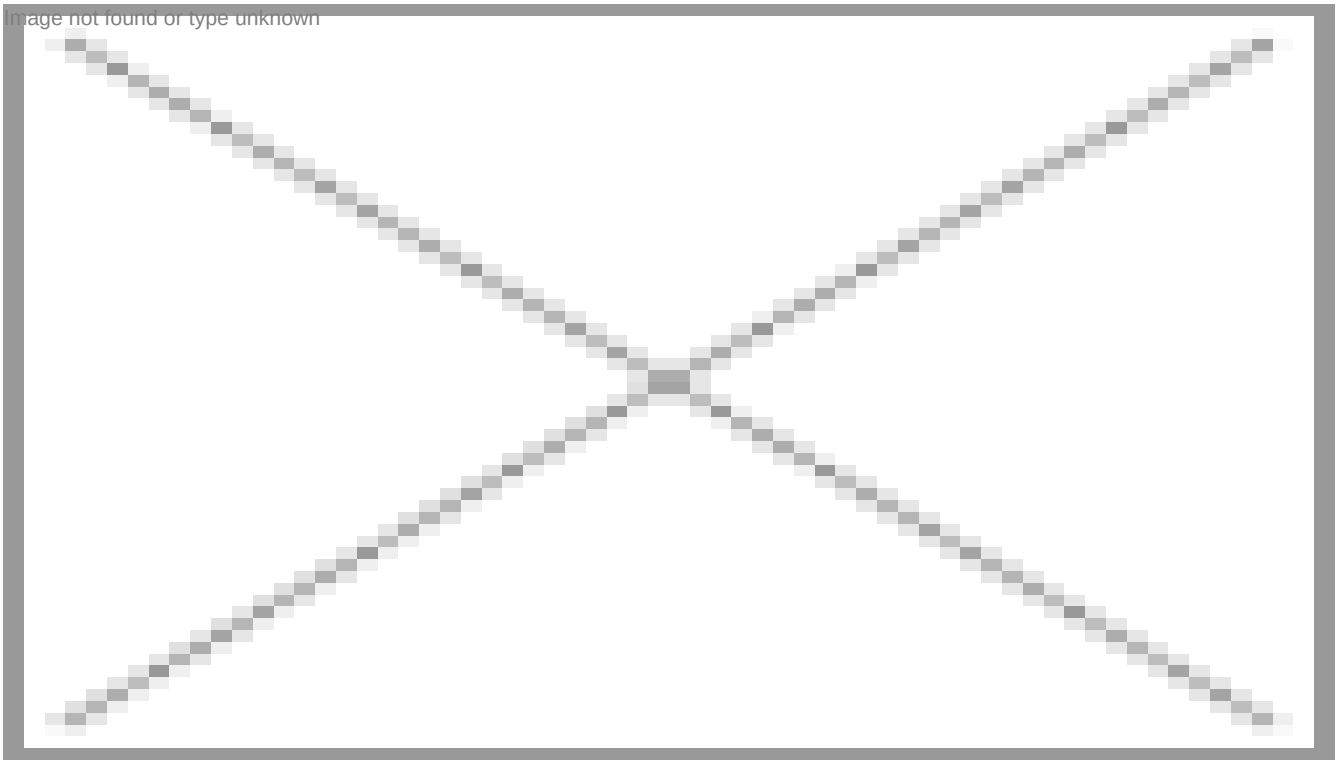
The bronze medal added yet another prize to the collection of **Tymoshchenko** (UKR), world champion in 2015 and Olympic silver medallist at Rio 2016. He said: “Valentin went faster than me, and I couldn’t do anything. I almost stopped. The last 100m was very tough, and then Jamie went very fast too.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



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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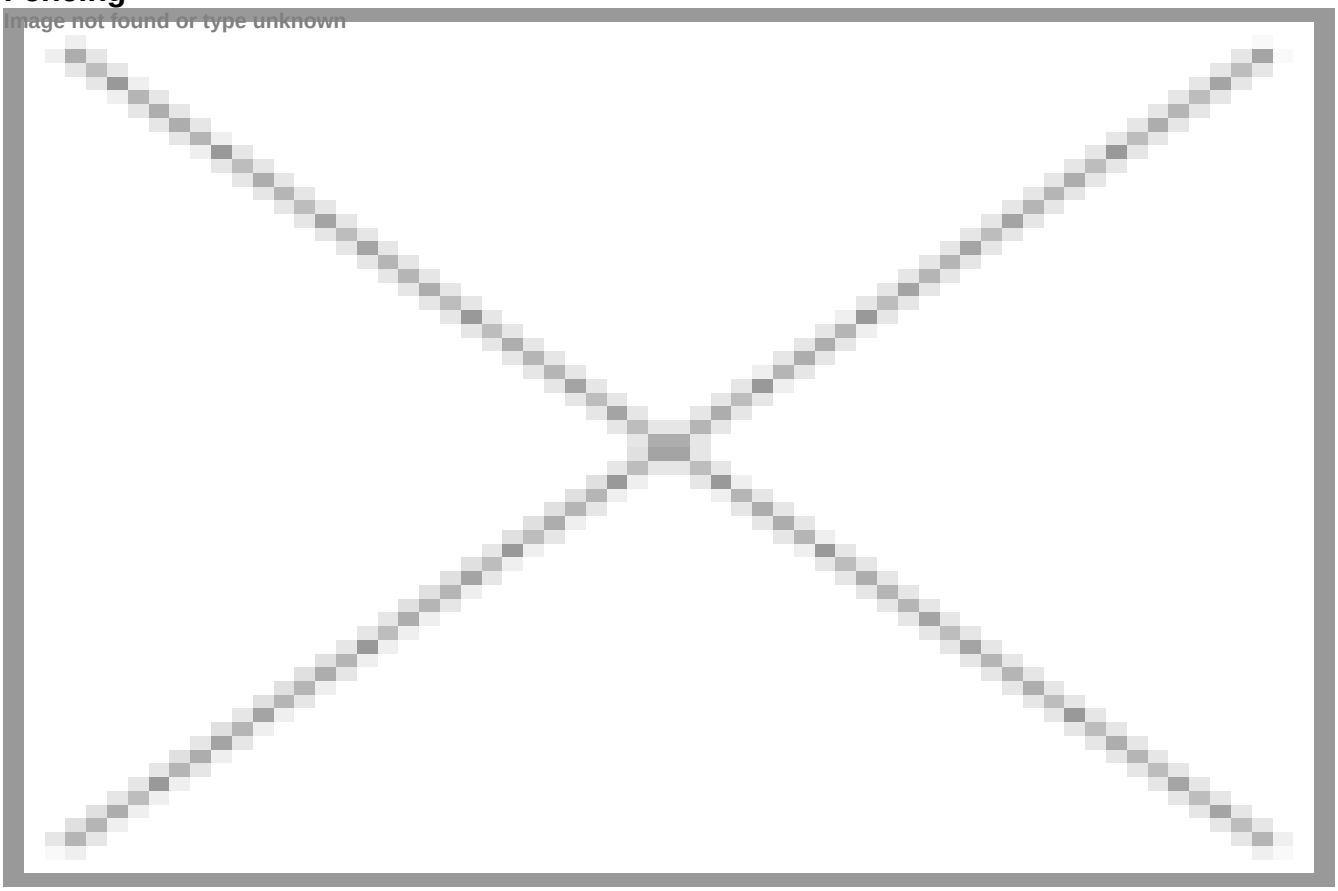

Two athletes emerged with top marks on the piste, as **Zhang** (CHN) and **Kuf** (CZE) each managed 24V/11D, and it was **Zhang** (CHN) who maximised his score in the Bonus Round with the final victory for two extra points.

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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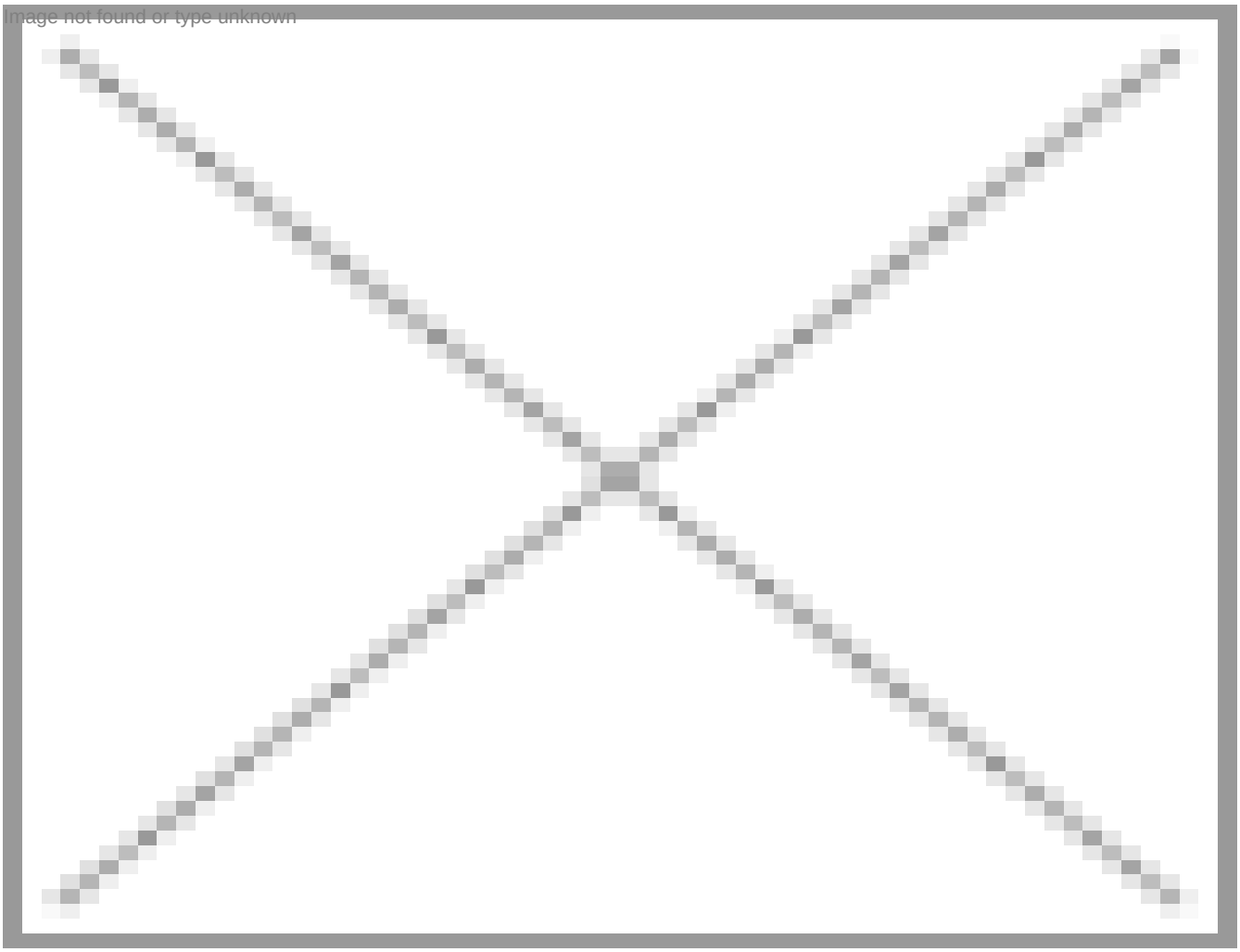

There were three perfect scores of 300, but none by the competition leaders. **Gergely Regos** (HUN), **Brice Loubet** (FRA) and **Gianluca Micozzi** of **Italy** all emerged with an unblemished while **Riccardo de Luca** (ITA) only dropped one penalty point.

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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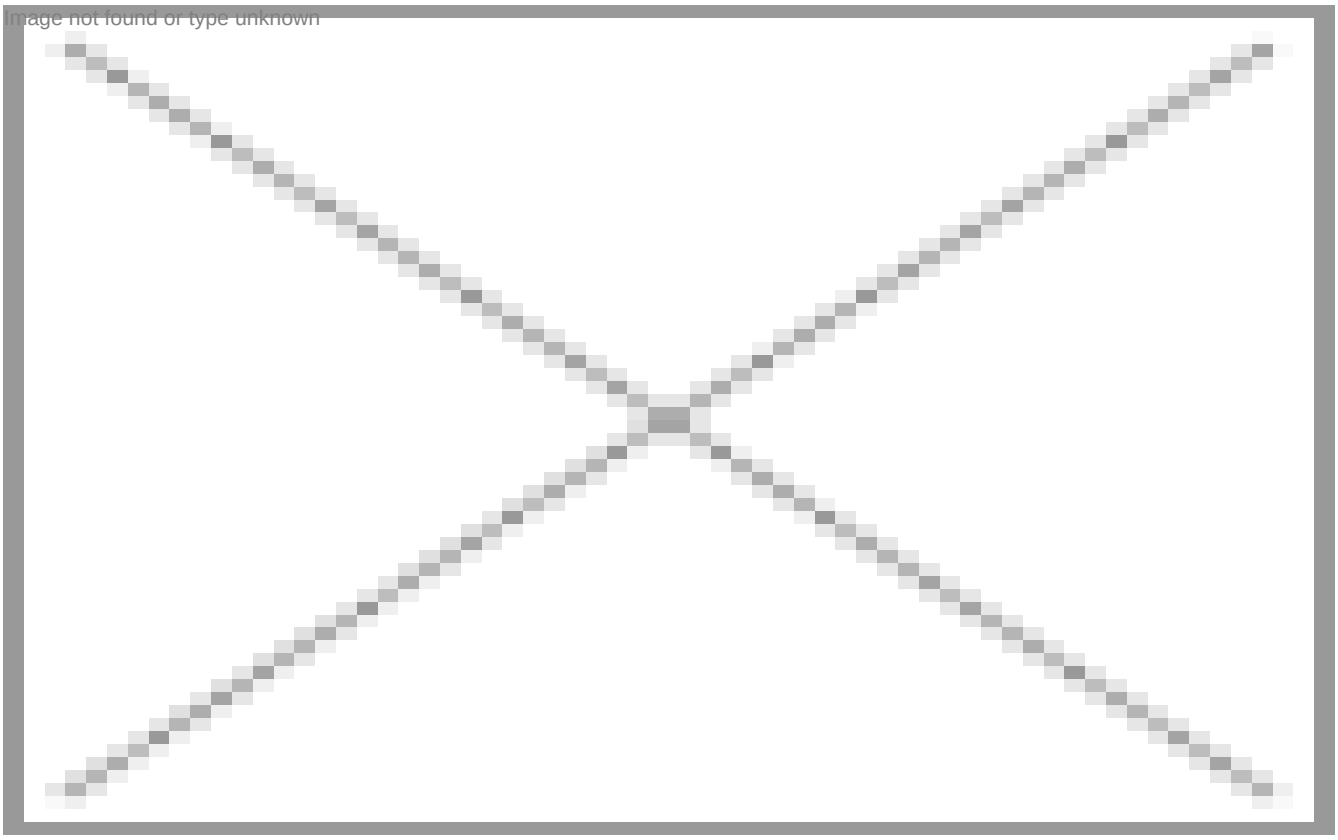

Elgeziry (USA) looked strong throughout the first two laps, but then went into freefall. **Sandoval** (MEX) lost ground at the shooting range where **Kuf** (CZE), **Tymoshchenko** (UKR) and **De Luca** (ITA) made their experience count.

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.

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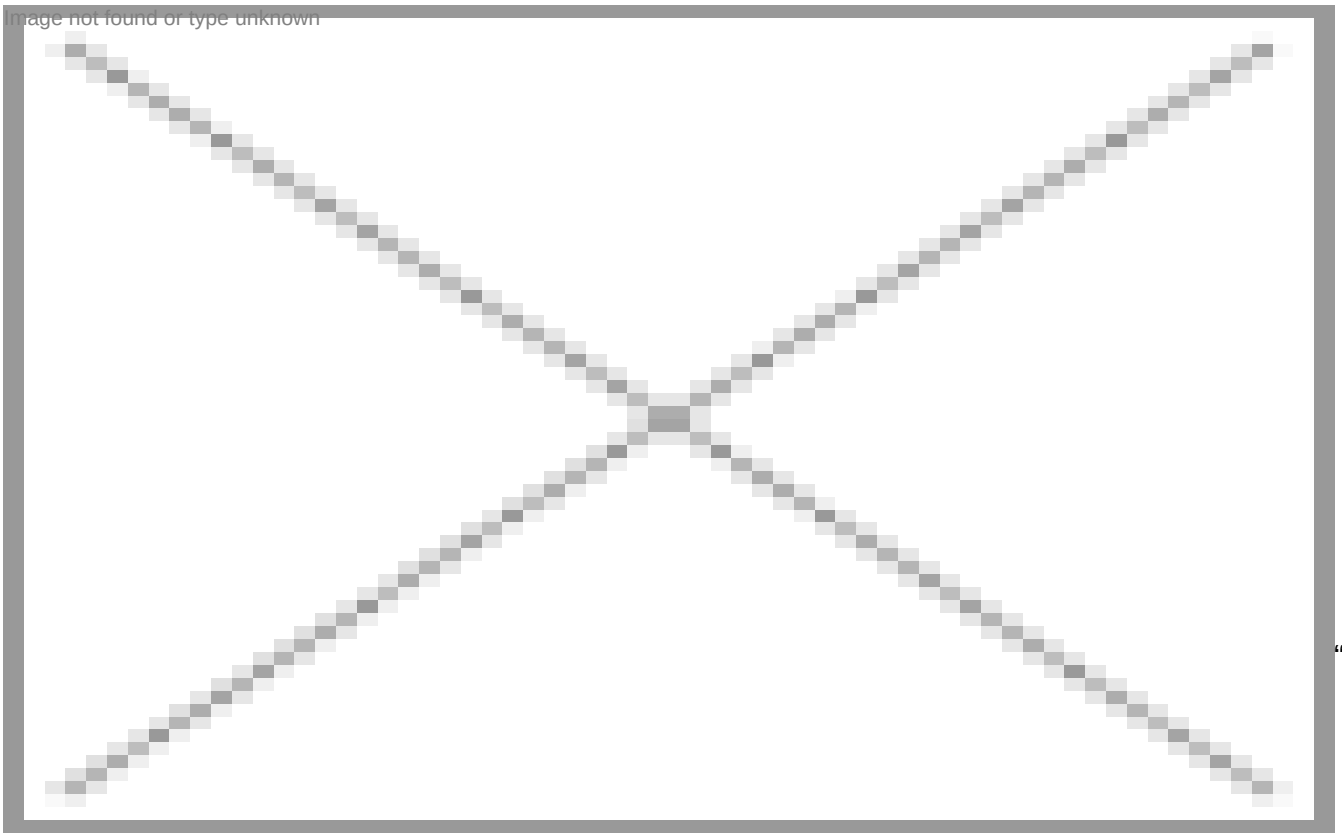

“The athletes performed at the highest level, and this was underlined with the finish to the Men’s Laser Run today. I have big respect for them all and in the name of the Union I would like to thank all the athletes, coaches and trainers for what they have done here.

“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