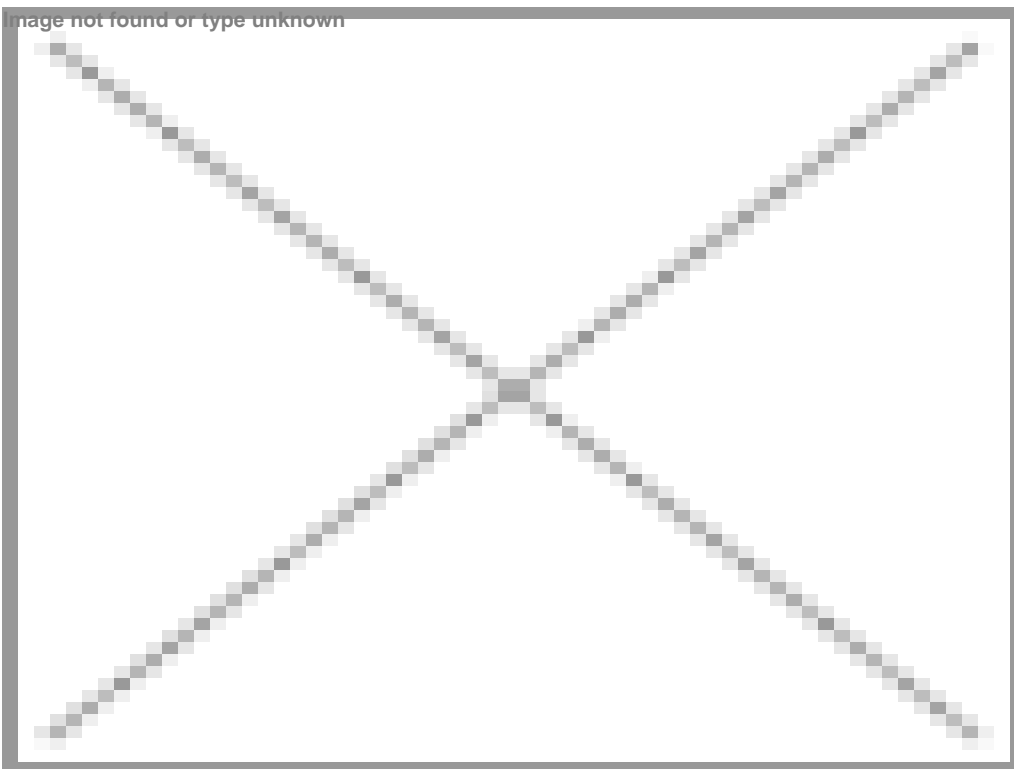


26 FEB 2019

UIPM 2019 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP CAIRO: BATTLE FOR OLYMPIC PLACES BEGINS



The world's best pentathletes will renew hostilities this week with Olympic qualification adding competitive intrigue at UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo.

The season-opener in the Egyptian capital promises to be a mouth-watering affair as **Anastasiya Prokopenko** of **Belarus** comes up against **Annika Schleu** of **Germany**, who she defeated to win gold at the UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Championships in Mexico City (MEX).

In the Men's Individual, world No.2 and 2018 world silver medallist **Valentin Prades** of **France** will be one of the favourites along with Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of **Ukraine**.

ROAD TO TOKYO

An A-list cast will assemble on the start line in Cairo (EGY) with qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games firmly on the minds of all participants. For the majority, the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Tokyo (JPN) in June offers the first chance to seal the Olympic dream, and a good performance this week in Cairo will put them in a strong position to qualify for the Final with three more World Cups to come.

Already this week in Cairo, there has been cause for celebration for **Egypt** with two home athletes securing the first two quota places at Tokyo 2020. Thanks to their individual victories in the African Championships, **Haydy Morsy** (EGY) and **Sherif Nazeir** (EGY) became the first to put their names into the equation for the Olympic Games.

Both of the new African champions were convincing winners – **Morsy** (EGY) defeated **Alida van der Merwe** of **South Africa** by 27sec, while **Nazeir** (EGY) was even more emphatic in finishing 40sec ahead of **Mohanad Shaban** (EGY).

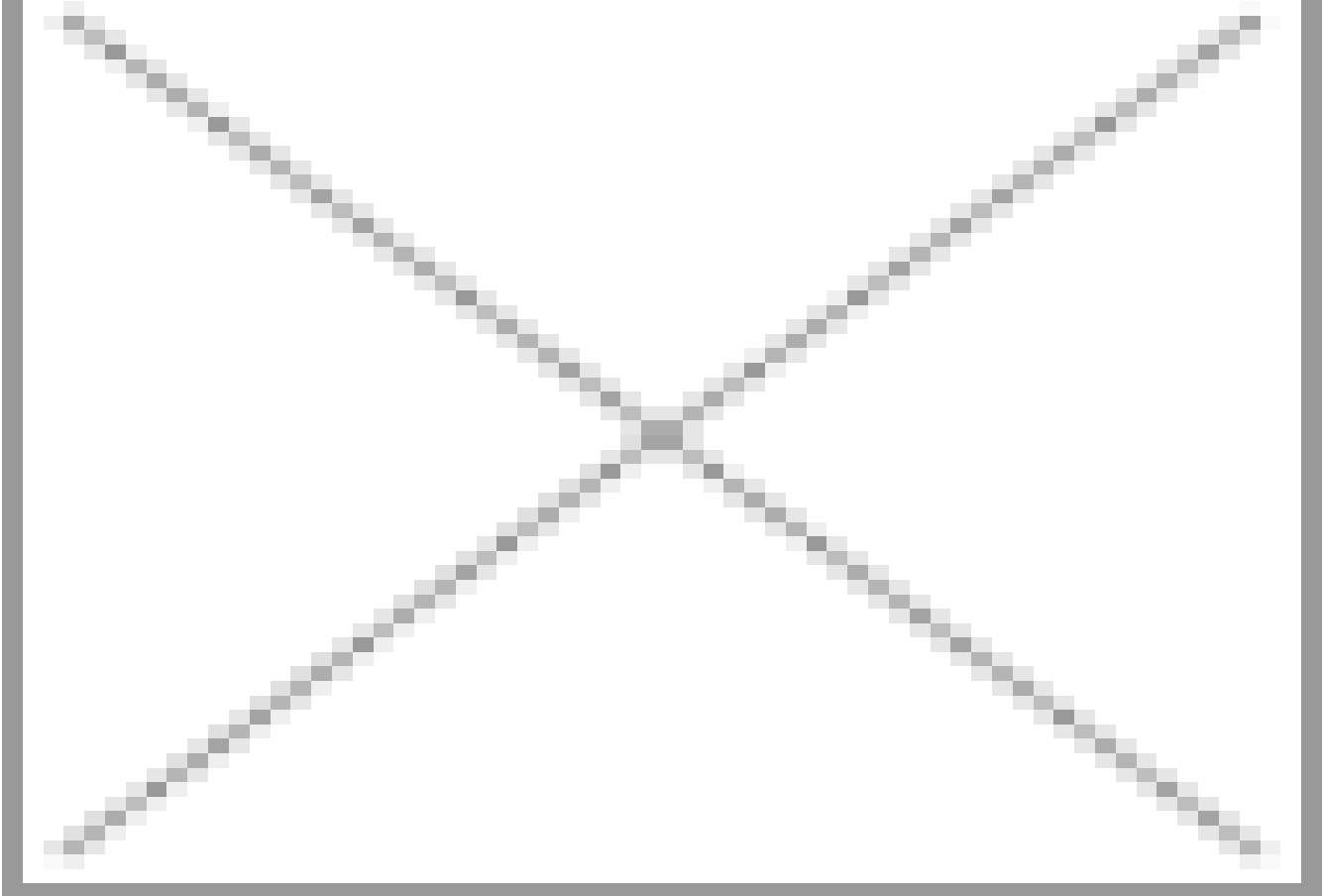
Find out more about the Tokyo 2020 qualifying process.

ONES TO WATCH

More than half of the world's 20 top-ranked athletes are registered to take part in Pentathlon World Cup Cairo. On the women's side, the world gold and silver medallists will face a challenge from Russia duo **Uliana Batashova** (4), **Gulnaz Gubaydullina** (7), **Sarolta Kovacs** of **Hungary** (2), **Natalya Coyle** of **Ireland** (6) and the Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Elodie Clouvel** (FRA, 10).

The top-10 contingent on the men's side includes **Arthur Lanigan-O'Keeffe** (IRL, 3), Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of **Ukraine** (4), **Ilya Palazkov** (BLR, 5), **Valentin Belaud** (FRA, 6), **Patrick Dogue** (GER, 7) and **Joe Choong** (GBR, 10).

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Apart from supporting their new African champions in the face of a top-quality field, Egypt supporters will also have high hopes for the 2018 UIPM Junior Male Athlete of the Year, **Ahmed Elgendy** (EGY).

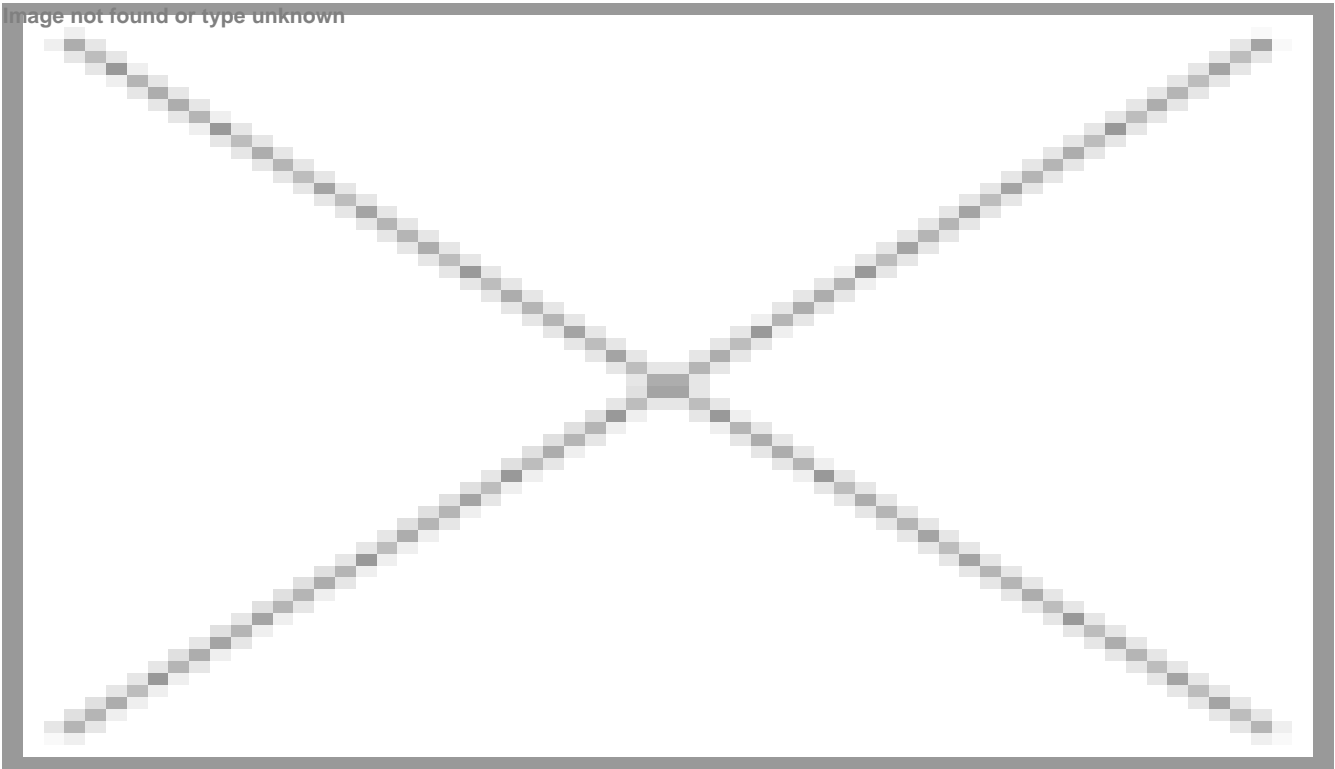
Elgendy (EGY) had an extraordinary breakthrough year, winning gold at both the UIPM Junior and Youth World Championships and the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games. And he started 2019 by winning his first senior title at the Budapest Indoor International.

Elgendy (EGY) said: “I just won my first senior competition in Budapest, and for the upcoming period I hope to repeat my successful season of 2018 and do better.

“I can’t believe what I did in 2018, it was a surprise for me. In some competitions I was planning for it, but in some I wasn’t expecting to do so great, especially the Junior World Championships in Czech Republic.

“The Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires was my proudest achievement, because it was my dream for four years and I finally achieved it.”

ALL ROADS LEAD TO AFRICA



Pentathlon World Cup Cairo will be the eighth global UIPM competition to be held in Africa since 2016. The continent has staged the UIPM Pentathlon World Championships and the UIPM Pentathlon Junior World Championships as well as the Laser Run and Biathle/Triathle World Championships in that time.

In 2019, apart from this week's gathering of elite athletes in Cairo (EGY), 14 cities across Africa will stage editions of the UIPM Global Laser Run City Tour and another three will play host to the UIPM Biathle/Triathle National Tour.

The benefits of this continuing expansion and increased exposure of UIPM Sports in new countries and communities across Africa are sure to be underlined when the continent hosts its first Olympic Games in three years' time – the 4th Youth Olympic Games in Dakar (SEN) in 2022.

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

The UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup 2019 series was officially launched today with a press conference attended by Dr Ashraf Sobhi, Minister of Sport for Egypt, and Eng Hisham Hatab, a chairman of the Egypt Olympic Committee.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann commented: "We have now created a traditional season-opener here in the capital of Egypt, a place where we have enjoyed many successful and well-organized UIPM competitions/events, including the UIPM 2017 Pentathlon World Championships.

"This year we are going to see pentathlon at its best, as athletes from all countries plot their journey in Tokyo and aim to achieve peak performance.

Behind the scenes we will continue to develop and grow our sport through projects like the Pentathlon Stadium and the Mixed Relay, which we are targeting for inclusion in the Olympic Games Paris 2024."

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo begins on Wednesday, February 27 with qualification for the Women's Individual Final (Friday, March 1). The action continues on Thursday, February 28 with qualification for the Men's Individual Final (Saturday, March 2). The Mixed Relay closes the competition on Sunday, March 3.

WATCH AND FOLLOW

During each finals day you can watch a live stream of the Fencing Bonus Round, Riding, Laser Run and the medal ceremony on UIPM TV and YouTube, with no geographical restrictions. The Laser Run and medal ceremony can also be watched live on Facebook.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram throughout the Pentathlon World Cup for additional content, and visit the UIPM website or download the "UIPM Central" app to keep track of results.