03 MAY 2019

# UIPM 2019 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP SZEKESFEHERVAR: DREAM DAY FOR ALEKSZEJEV (HUN)

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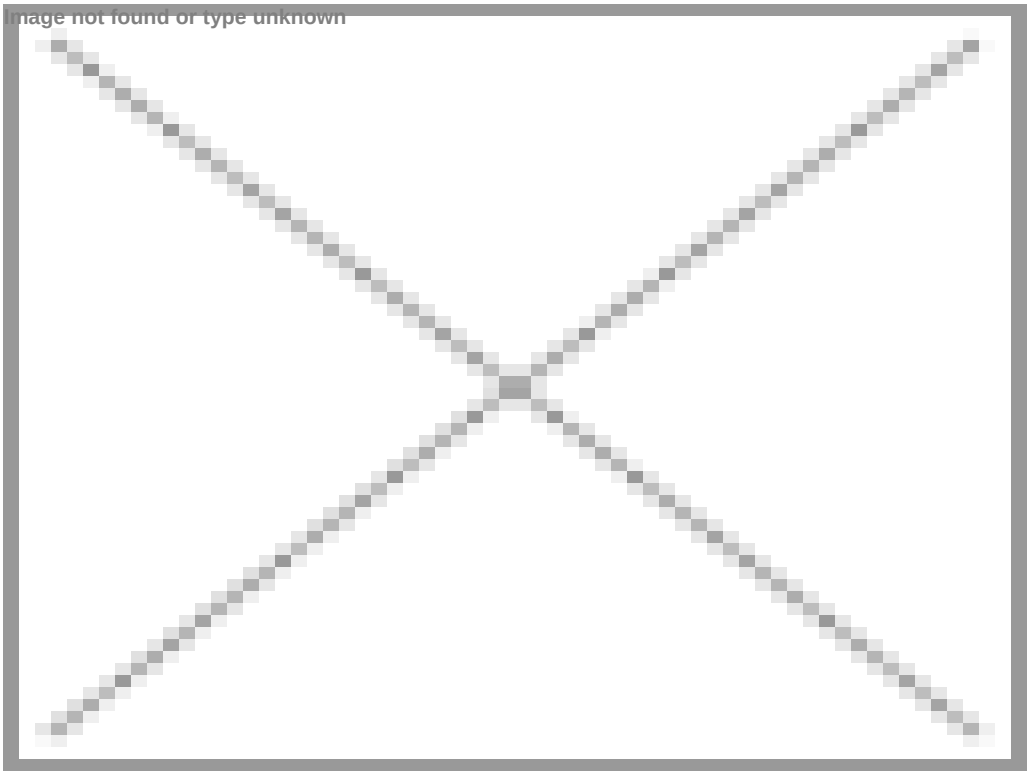


- **Fairytale home gold for 2017 UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final winner**
- **Silver medallist Ozyuksel (TUR) pays emotional tribute to late father**
- **Bronze for Buriak (RUS) as Asadauskaite (LTU) and Clouvel (FRA) fade**

**Tamara Alekszejev's** beaming smile from the top of the podium told the story of a perfect day for one of **Hungary's** leading pentathletes at UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Szekesfehervar.

In the absence of her team-mate, world No.2 Sarolta Kovacs (HUN), Alekszejev (HUN) led from the front in the Women's Final and fought off a brave late surge from **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Turkey** to claim gold in front of a partisan crowd.

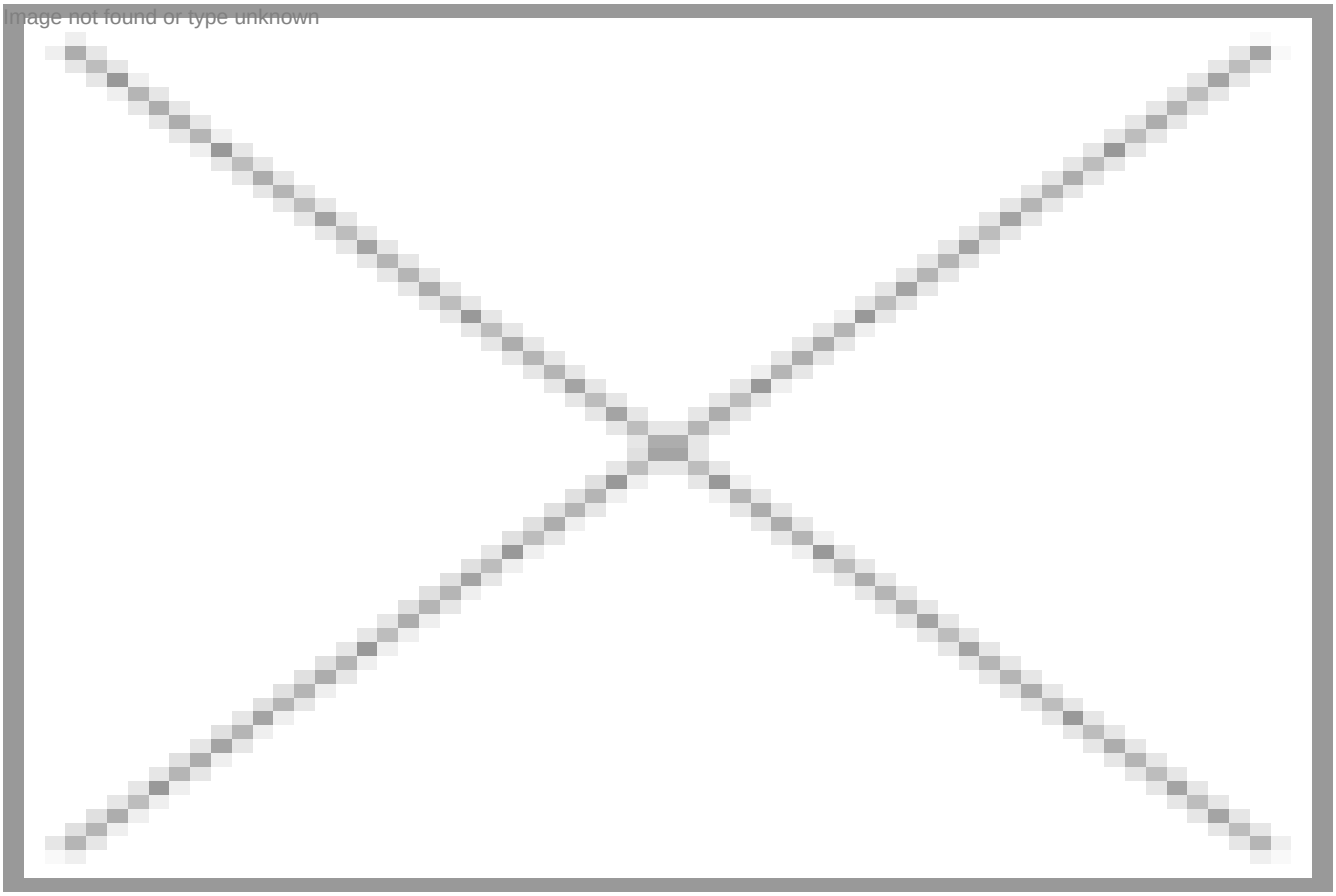
Ozyuksel (TUR) seemed to have all the momentum on the final lap after cancelling out most of the 56sec starting advantage held by the local favourite and closed the gap to within 10sec.

Refusing to let anyone change the script of her fairytale day, 2017 UIPM Pentathlon World Cup

Final winner Alekszejev (HUN) gritted her teeth and powered through the final 800m to seal gold.

**Anna Buriak** of **Russia** protected her starting position of third to win her first Pentathlon World Cup medal, one place ahead of **Volha Silkina** of **Belarus**. World No.7 **Annika Schleu** of **Germany** finished 5th and **Anna Maliszewska** of **Poland** took the final podium place.

Two of the pre-race favourites, London 2012 Olympic champion **Laura Asadauskaite** of **Lithuania** and **Elodie Clouvel** of **France**, have lost their chance for a medal during the Riding discipline.




**MEDALLISTS' REACTION**

Smiling and laughing as she awaited the medal ceremony, Alekszejev (HUN) said: "I'm very happy – I can't believe I am the winner.

"Fencing was perfect and Riding was perfect, and in the Laser Run I had 33sec but I knew that Ilke is a very good runner and she came hard.

"My last shooting was not good because I was looking at Ilke and I thought 'oh my God'. After the shooting I just stayed strong for 800 metres.

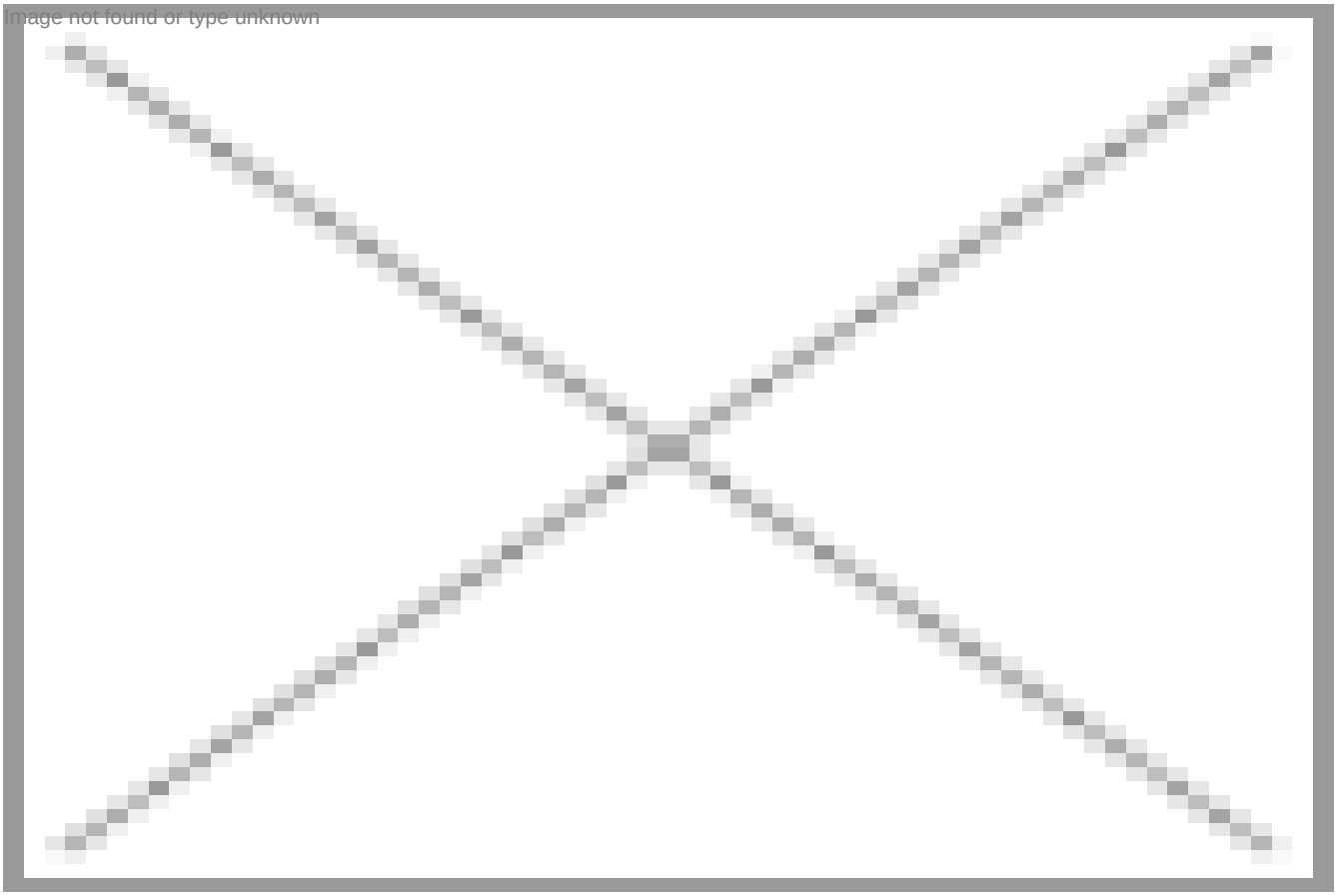
"Today was very hard but I am very happy."

The local crowd may not have wanted her to win but there was huge admiration for the courage of the 22-year-old silver medallist, who competed superbly to win her fourth Pentathlon World Cup medal in the aftermath of a family bereavement.

Ozyuksel (TUR) said: "I was just focusing on my Fencing and my Riding. I did my best score in Fencing and did very well in Riding, and actually it was very different for me because I am always starting from behind.

“It was the first time I was able to start the Laser Run in the top five like this, and I focused on my shooting and I’m so happy.

“Last week I lost my dad, and I am really sorry about that. I took this medal for him.”

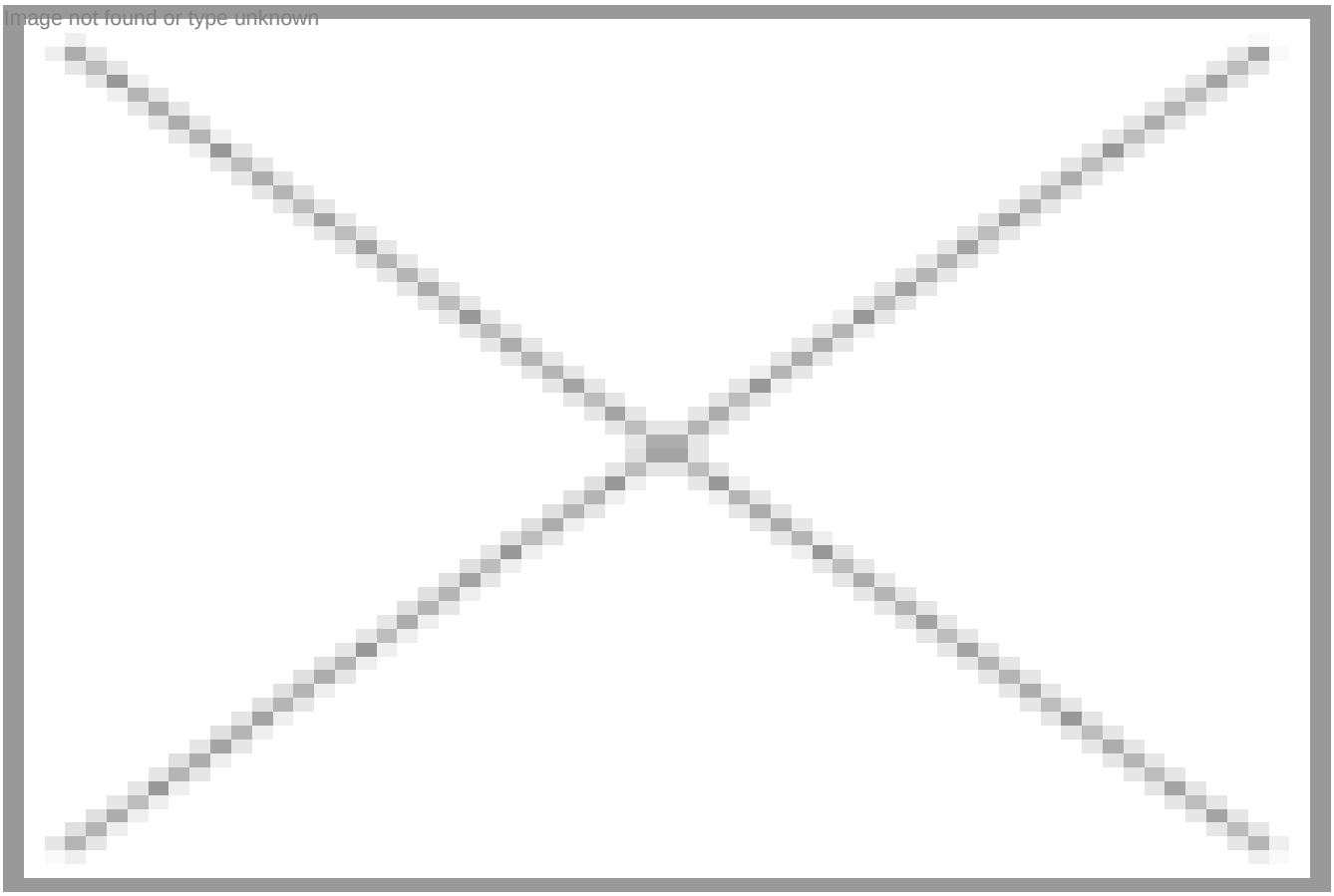



Buriak (RUS) added: “I was good in Fencing and Swimming, not the best in Riding but then good in the Laser Run, and that’s what made it possible for me to be in third place.

“It’s my best result of the year and also my first international competition of the season. I would like to add that this is my comeback after four years of training in Russia. This is my comeback to the podium.”

**SWIMMING**

Clouvel (FRA) was easily the most impressive performer in the pool, timing 2:10.84. The next fastest was **Ieva Serapinaite** (LTU) in 2:13.02 and **Elena Micheli** of **Italy** in 2:13.32.



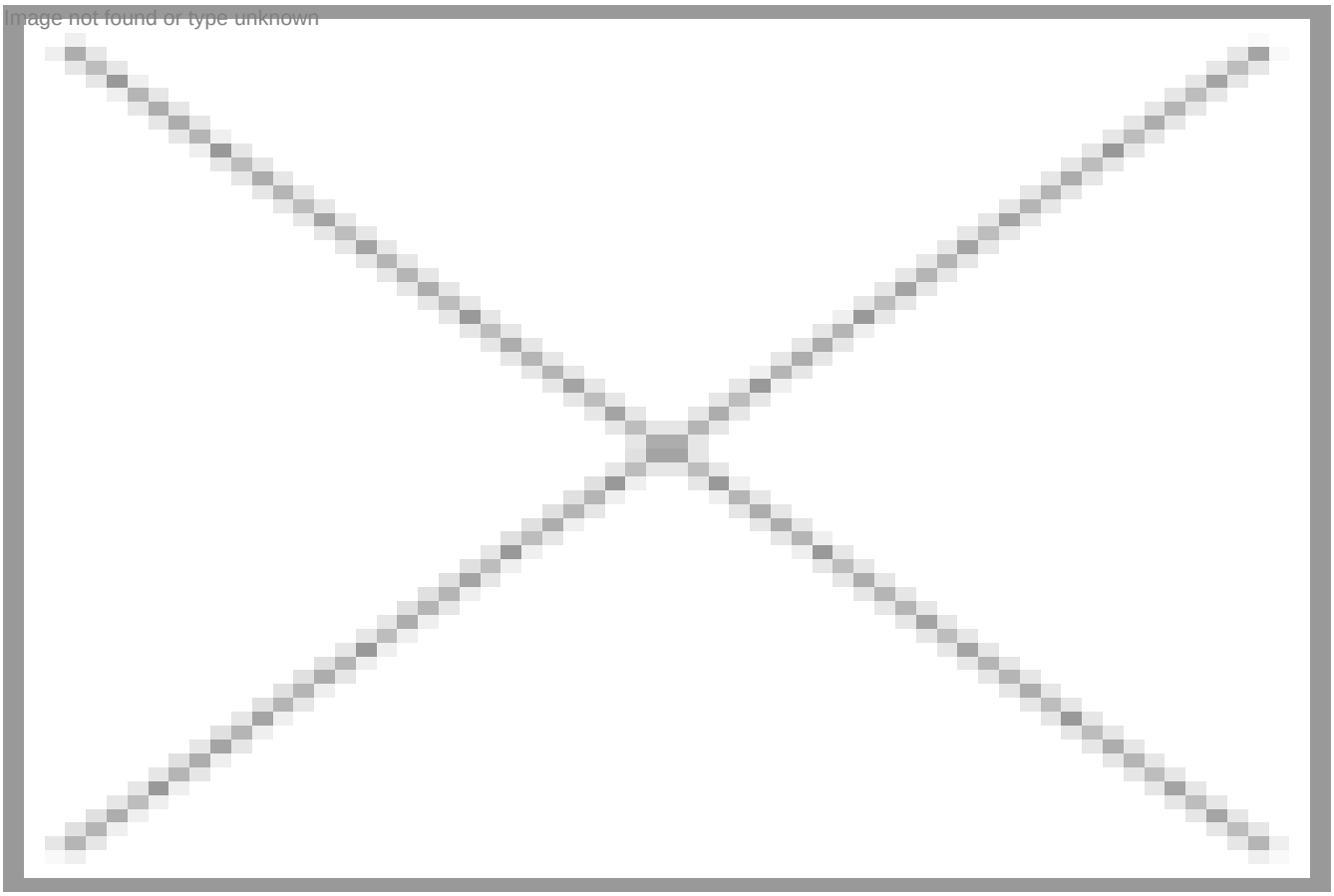

**FENCING**

Alekszejev (HUN) made her name in Vilnius (LTU) two years ago when a strong Fencing performance formed the basis of her being crowned Pentathlon World Cup champion.

Today her superiority on the piste was even more impressive, as she notched up a remarkable 29V/6D in the Ranking Round – and even added two points in the Bonus Round.

The local favourite was untouchable but Asadauskaite (LTU) and Silkina (BLR) put themselves in contention for the podium with 24V/11D.

The Bonus Round provided plenty of excitement as **Mariana Arceo** of **Mexico** added five points to her score and the returning Rio 2016 Olympic bronze medallist **Oktawia Nowacka** (POL) scored four.




**RIDING**

Knowing she had such a big lead to protect must have relieved some of the pressure for Alekszejev (HUN), but she summoned a masterful degree of control and made another major statement of intent with a clean round and a perfect score of 300.

Before that, Clouvel (FRA) and Asadauskaite (LTU) had fallen out of contention after their rides, incurring 49 and 85 penalty points respectively.

It was left to Silkina (BLR, 300) and Buriak (RUS, 293) to keep some semblance of pressure on the leader, while there were also clean rounds for **Sive Brassil** of **Ireland**, **Ronja Steinborn** (GER) and Aurora Tognetti (ITA), gold medallist at the 2016 UIPM Youth A World Championships.

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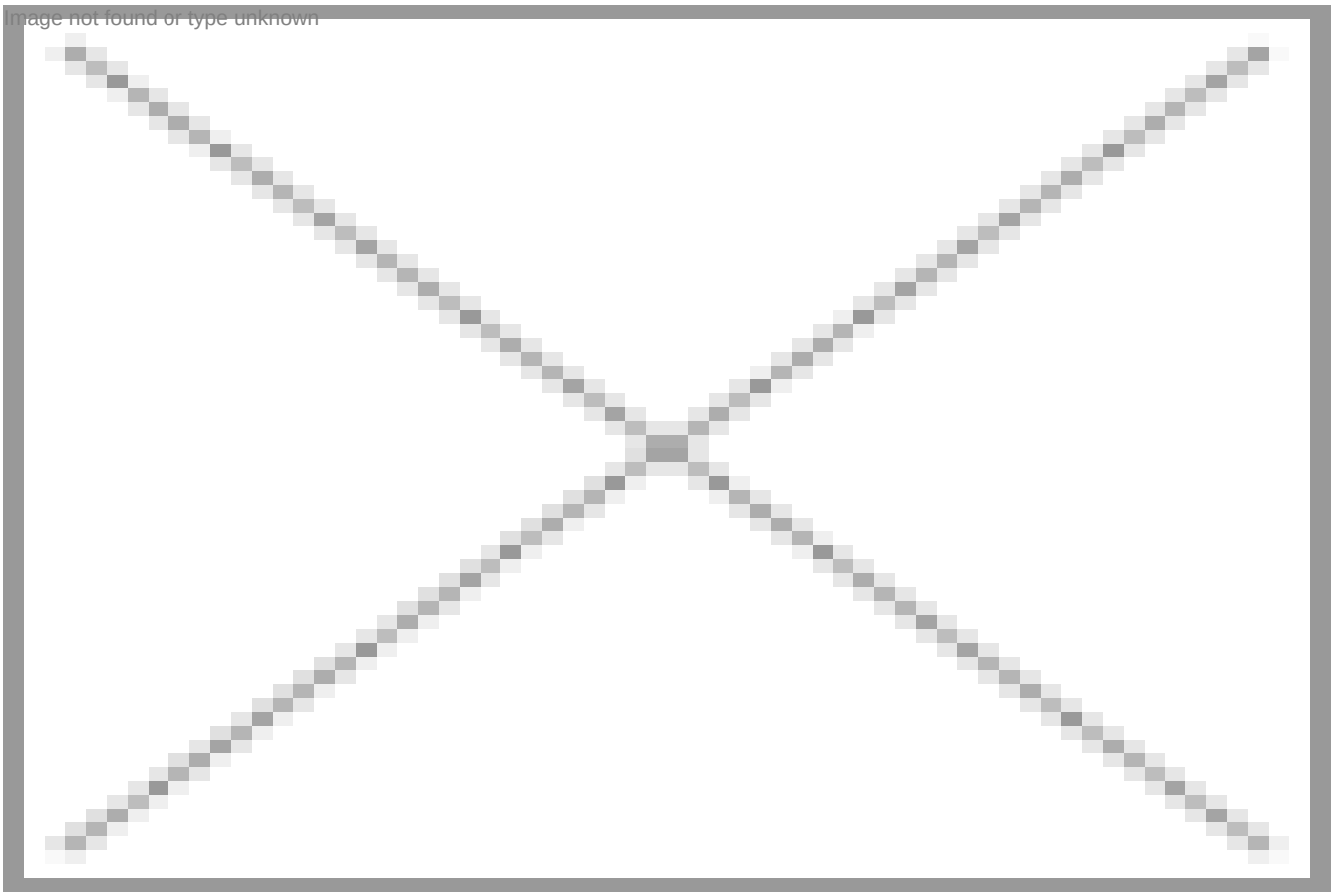


**LASER RUN**

Each of the top three started with solid shooting and running, but Ozyuksel (TUR) moved from 5th to 4th on the first lap and attacked for the podium on the second, passing Buriak (RUS) and then Silkina (BLR), as world silver medallist Schleu (GER) made moves in the background.

Alekszejev (HUN) stumbled over her second shoot (20sec), giving the marauding Ozyuksel (TUR) some faint hope, and when the Turk zipped in and out of the range on the last two visits, Alekszejev (HUN) knew she had a race on her hands.

However, the 30-year-old summoned her experience to keep her lead at 8sec and secure yet another famous victory for the Hungarian pentathlon archives.

Ozyuksel (TUR, 11:38.85) was the top Laser Runner on the day, ahead of **Gintare Venckauskaite** (LTU, 11:44.07) and Asadauskaite (LTU, 11:49.38), while **Joanna Muir** of **Great Britain** moved all the way up from 25th to 8th to finish one place behind her compatriot **Jessica Varley** (GBR).

**UIPM REACTION**

Martin Dawe, UIPM Executive Board Member for Marketing, said: “The Laser Run has been the climax of a really exciting day.

“We’ve had the top lady athletes here, performances have been fantastic and it’s obvious that the closer we are getting to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, the standard is improving and people are starting to look to qualify for the Games.

“But also, in pentathlon, today served to remind us that you never win until you cross the line.

“After the high standard of competition today we are all looking forward to another pentathlon

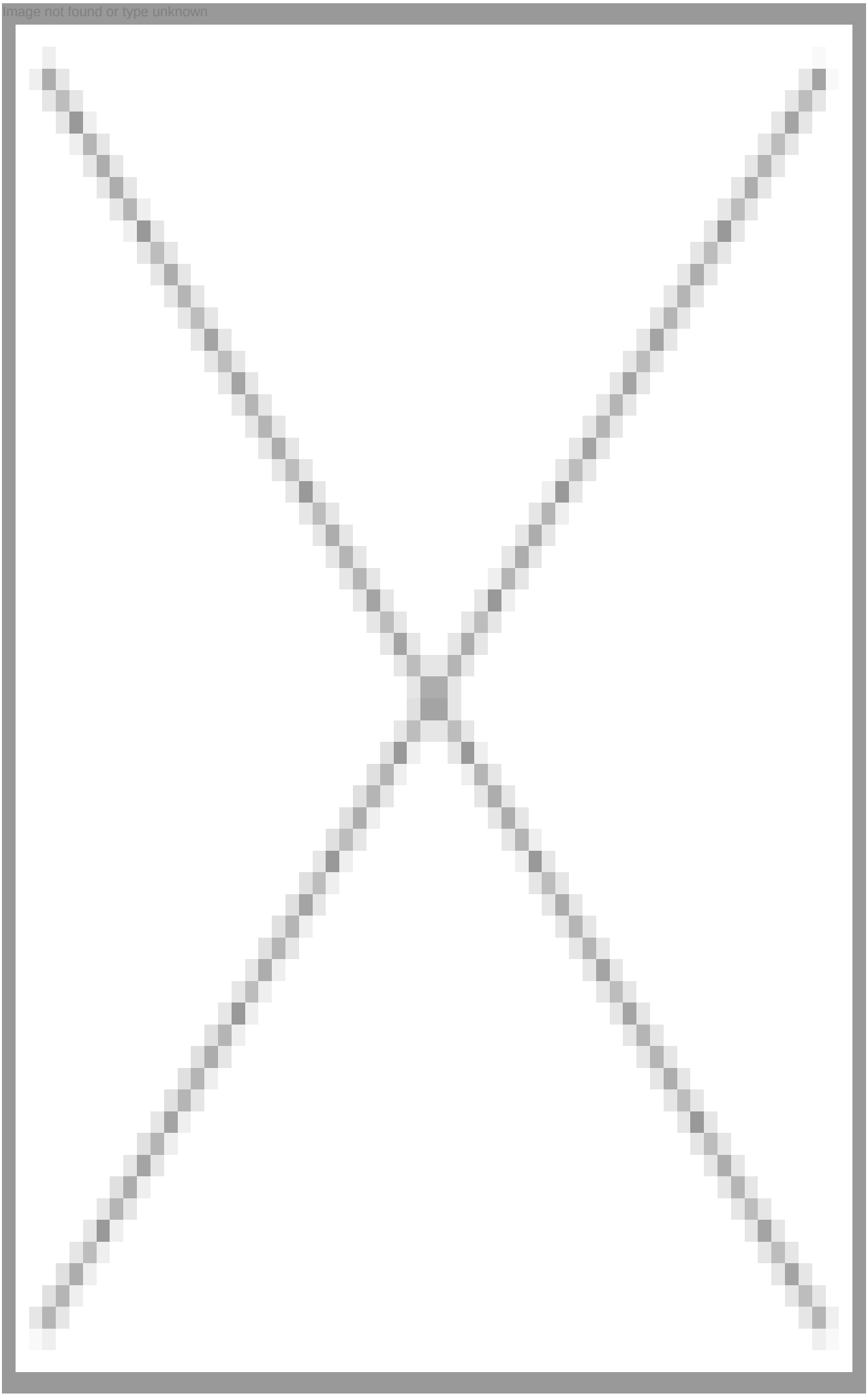
showcase tomorrow, when almost all of the top-ranked male athletes will be here competing for medals and qualifying points.

“The local organising committee have done a great job, the venue dressing and everything else has been excellent. I’m also delighted that the home nation, Hungary, have won the gold medal. I think it puts them in good standing ahead of the World Championships in September.”

WATCH AND FOLLOW

Pentathlon World Cup Szekesfehervar continues tomorrow (May 4) with the Men's Final, followed by the Mixed Relay on Sunday, May 5.

Live stream is available on UIPM TV and up-to-date results of all competitions are available at the UIPM website.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