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UIPM PENTATHLON WORLD CUP FINAL TOKYO: REDEMPTION FOR PRADES AS FRANCE WIN MIXED RELAY

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Elodie Clouvel added Mixed Relay gold to individual silver and Valentin Prades shook off the disappointment of 4th place as France ended the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Final on a high.

The alliance of the Rio 2016 women's silver medallist and the men's world No.1 proved irresistible to the rest of the field, although Ireland ended up within 2sec of gold after a strong performance by two-time champions Natalya Coyle and Arthur Lanigan-O'Keeffe.

Lithuania (Gintare Venckauskaite & Justinas Kinderis) joined them on the podium after bravely holding off the challenge of 4th-placed Poland (Oktawia Nowacka & Daniel Lawrynowicz).

It was a dynamic finish to four days of intense competition in rainy Tokyo as the first official test event of the 2020 Olympic Games was successfully concluded.

MEDALLISTS' REACTION

Two days after narrowly missing out on Olympic qualification as she was beaten by Laura Asadauskaite of Lithuania, Clouvel (FRA) said: "It was a very good day. I had to focus really hard on the race for first place with the Lithuanian girl, but we managed to win in the end. An amazing day and congratulations to Tokyo on the great organisation."

Prades (FRA) had also been in contention for the Olympic qualification spot before struggling with his shooting in the men's event. He wore an expression of relief as he said: "I feel like I redeemed myself after yesterday's performance when my shooting was bad."

"My last lap was easy because Elodie did such a good job to stay close on her second lap to the Lithuanian, a very fast woman. It was a good fight with Justinas Kinderis on the first lap but I managed to shoot better. It was very close."

"I'm looking forward to coming back to Tokyo for the Olympic Games."

Both members of the Ireland duo expressed satisfaction at their performances after disappointing results in the individual events, where the Riding discipline was their downfall.

Coyle (IRL) said: "The competition was very tough. It's quite humid out here as well, so it was a really tough finish."

"We didn't have the individual competitions we would have liked after the Riding, so it's really nice to cap it off with a silver medal."

"Our big competition this year is the European Championships, which is our main Olympic qualifier, so it's brilliant to be coming home on that long-haul flight with a medal."

Lanigan-O'Keeffe (IRL) added: "My individual event was going really well until the Riding, which didn't go my way, so there was a bit of determination and a bit of anger today."

"It went well and we won silver so I'm really happy. I took a lot of motivation from Joe Choong, who

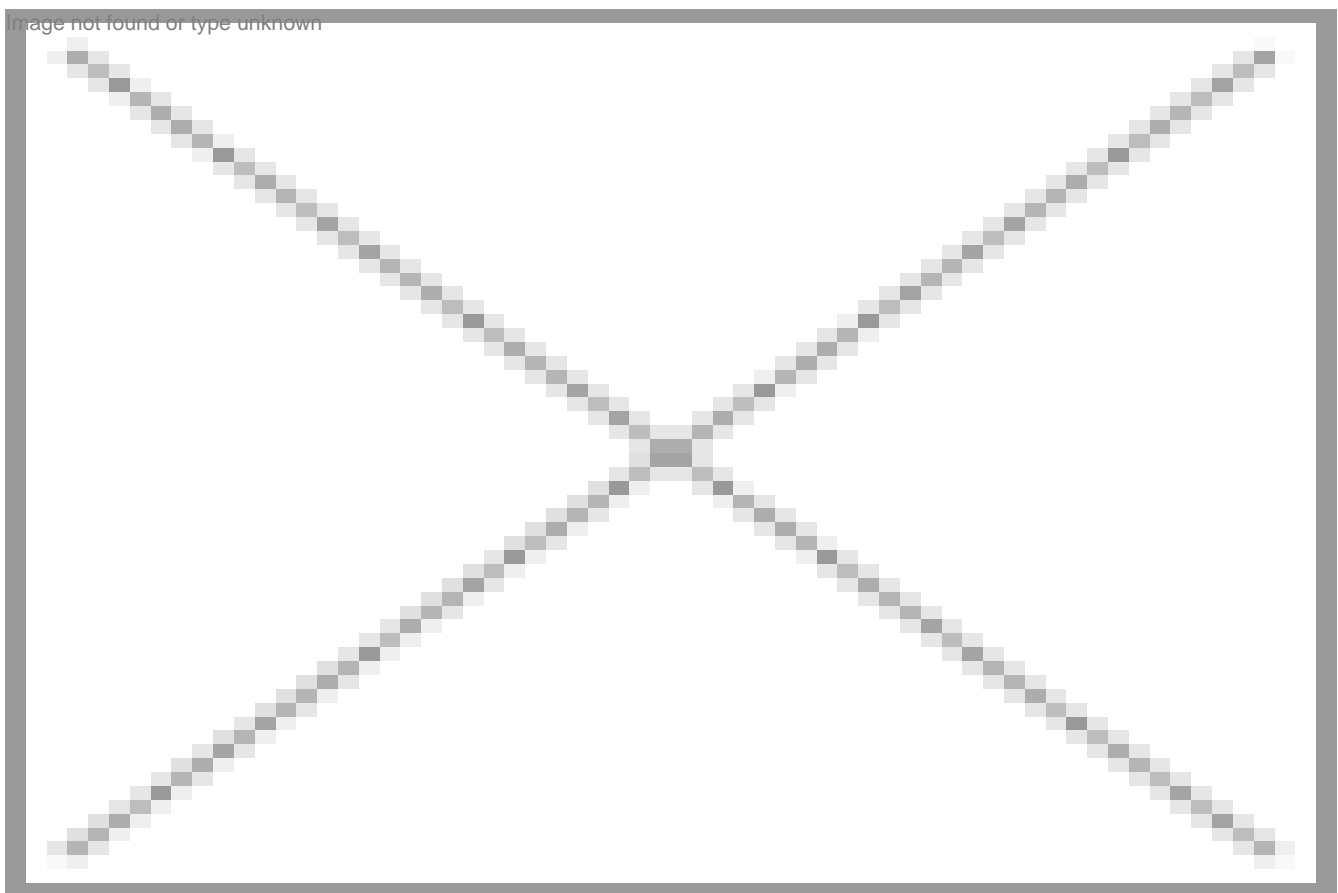
hunted down Marvin Dogue to win the gold medal yesterday, and I tried to do the same today with Prades. So thanks Joe!”

Kinderis (LTU) added: “It was difficult conditions for everyone, although in Lithuania we are used to the rain. Valentin Prades had a hard competition yesterday and so did I, and I think Arthur was a bit fresher because his individual competition ended in the Riding. It was tough.

“I think this was great preparation for the European and World Championships and a good result and good practice for us ahead of the Olympic Games.”

SWIMMING

Immediately France (Clouvel/Prades) set the tone for the day as they won the final swimming heat in a time of 1:55.85. Ireland (Coyle/Lanigan-O’Keeffe) were not far behind in 1:56.58 while Russia (Gulnaz Gubaydullina & Kirill Belyakov) were next-fastest in 1:57.85.



FENCING

With the competition following a clear pattern, favourites France (Clouvel/Prades) continued to lead from the front on the piste with a result of 24V/10D in the Ranking Round and the maximum two points in the Bonus Round.

Ireland (Coyle/Lanigan-O’Keeffe) scored 23V/11D while Poland (Nowacka/Lawrynowicz) stayed in contention with 22V/12D.

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RIDING

A perfect score of 300 in the Mixed Relay is more unusual than in the individual events but Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Kinderis) showed high-class horse management to achieve two clear rounds. Russia (Gubaydullina/Belyakov) also performed superbly with only one time penalty conceded.

However, there was no material change at the top of the standings as France (Clouvel/Prades) scored 295 and Ireland (Coyle/Lanigan-O'Keeffe) 290.

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LASER RUN

Starting with a 15sec cushion over Coyle (IRL) and 20sec ahead of Venckauskaite (LTU), Clouvel (FRA) struggled with her first shoot and got stuck on the range for 26sec.

It was Venckauskaite (LTU) who reacted fastest to the opportunity, overtaking Coyle (IRL) and gradually hunting down the leader until they reached the second shoot together.

To her credit, Clouvel (FRA) refused to let the Laser Run specialist leave her behind, but Venckauskaite (LTU) handed over a 1sec lead to Kinderis (LTU), while Coyle (IRL) protected her position in 3rd.

Immediately Prades (FRA) made a statement of intent with a rapid shoot, while Lawrynowicz (POL) began to put pressure on Lanigan-O'Keeffe (IRL).

At the final shoot, Prades (FRA) took 14sec to get his five shots but it was enough to give him a clear run to gold, as Kinderis (LTU) had fallen back into the battle for silver and bronze. This was where Lanigan-O'Keeffe (IRL) seized the moment with a 7sec shoot and a lung-bursting final lap that even had world No.1 Prades (FRA) looking over his shoulder on the final straight.

The fastest Laser Run of the day came from Germany, with individual bronze medallist Annika Schleu and silver medallist Marvin Dogue recording an impressive 10min 44sec to finish 5th overall. Russia (Gubaydullina/Belyakov) completed the top six and host nation Japan finished 7th (Natsumi Tomonaga & Tomoyuki Ono) and 13th (Shino Yamanaka & Hikaru Shimano) with their two teams.

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UIPM REACTION

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "The Mixed Relay today was not part of the official test event for this Olympic Games but maybe it will be in the future."

“This competition was again so exciting, with many changes in the rankings in Riding and Laser Run, and I’m so happy that our national federations are strongly supporting our wish for the future. We saw exciting Fencing and super Swimming and the Mixed Relay is a really important part of our movement as we promote our sport as a team sport.

“Thanks to Tokyo for allowing us to include this Mixed Relay so that we could have the complete package that we have run all season and the years before.

“I congratulate all the athletes for their performances here and wish them luck in the upcoming Olympic qualification events: the Pan American Games, the European Championships, the UIPM Pentathlon World Championships in September and the Asia & Oceania Championships in November.

“We have already seen world-class performances here and the spectators and media here in Tokyo have been very impressed and enjoyed our sport. We go home with pride and a very confident feeling for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.”

Christian Roudaut, Chair of the UIPM Coaches Committee, said: “In the name of all the coaches of the world and those present here in Tokyo, we are all pleased with the high-quality organisation of this official Tokyo 2020 Olympic test event.

“We could see that the athletes were very happy to compete and to engage with the public in very good conditions. On behalf of the coaches I congratulate the organisers.”

Janusz Peciak, 1976 Olympic champion and UIPM Executive Board Member for Sport, added: “I was very happy about the Riding at this Tokyo 2020 Olympic test event, because it was the first time since the Rio 2016 Olympic Games that we had 4ft jumps.

“It was a good test and we could see that only the best riders scored high points. Everybody really has to think about this and work on their Riding because it will be the same for the Tokyo Olympics. I’m very happy with the Riding course design by Olaf Petersen.

“My goal is that all future World Cups will include jumps at the same level as we had here.”

WATCH AND FOLLOW

The Pentathlon World Cup Final has now concluded. Highlights are available on many TV networks after the competition was televised live or ‘as live’ in 143 countries, with a total of 90 hours of coverage. This amounts to a total potential reach of 409 million.

The next competition on the UIPM calendar is the UIPM 2019 Junior World Championships in Drzonkow (POL) from July 7-14. The senior showpiece competition of the season will be the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Budapest (HUN) from September 2-8.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram throughout the season for additional content and visit the UIPM website for news and world rankings.

Rank	Team	Nation	MP Points
1	CLOUVEL Elodie PRADES Valentin	FRA	1479

2	COYLE Natalya LANIGAN-O KEEFFE Arthur	IRL	1477
3	VENCKAUSKAITE Gintare KINDERIS Justinas	LTU	1476
4	NOWACKA Oktawia LAWRYNOWICZ Daniel	POL	1475
5	SCHLEU Annika DOGUE Marvin Faly	GER	1447
6	GUBAYDULLINA Gulnaz BELYAKOV Kirill	RUS	1442
7	TOMONAGA Natsumi ONO Tomoyuki	JPN	1430
8	PRASIANTSOVA Iryna KASYANIK Kirill	BLR	1413
9	SOTERO Alice DE LUCA Riccardo	ITA	1403
10	ACHTERBERG Samantha ELGEZIRY Amro	USA	1399
11	MORSY Haydy ELGENDY Ahmed	EGY	1361
12	MUIR Joanna CURRY Samuel	GBR	1337
13	YAMANAKA Shino SHIMANO Hikaru	JPN	1332
14	OLIVEIRA Priscila NASCIMENTO Felipe	BRA	1303
15	ORUMBKOVA Fariza ILYASHENKO Pavel	KAZ	1293
16	ARCEO Mariana PADILLA Manuel	MEX	1102
17	ZHONG Xiuting LUO Shuai	CHN	1089
18	PERMYKINA Valeriya TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo	UKR	522