

06 SEP 2019

UIPM 2019 PENTATHLON AND LASER RUN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: SILKINA (BLR) CLAIMS THE CROWN

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Volha Silkina became the second women's world in two years from **Belarus** in two years as she left the competition trailing at Kincsem Park.

The 24-year-old followed in the footsteps of 2018 champion **Anastasiya Prokopenko** (BLR), who finished 4th and secured a share of team gold along with 17th-placed **Iryna Prasiantsova** (BLR).

Silkina (BLR) had been the dominant athlete for much of the day, scoring an exceptional 270 points in Fencing and enjoying a clear ride. She protected her 31sec lead in Laser Run without alarm, as the battle raged behind her.

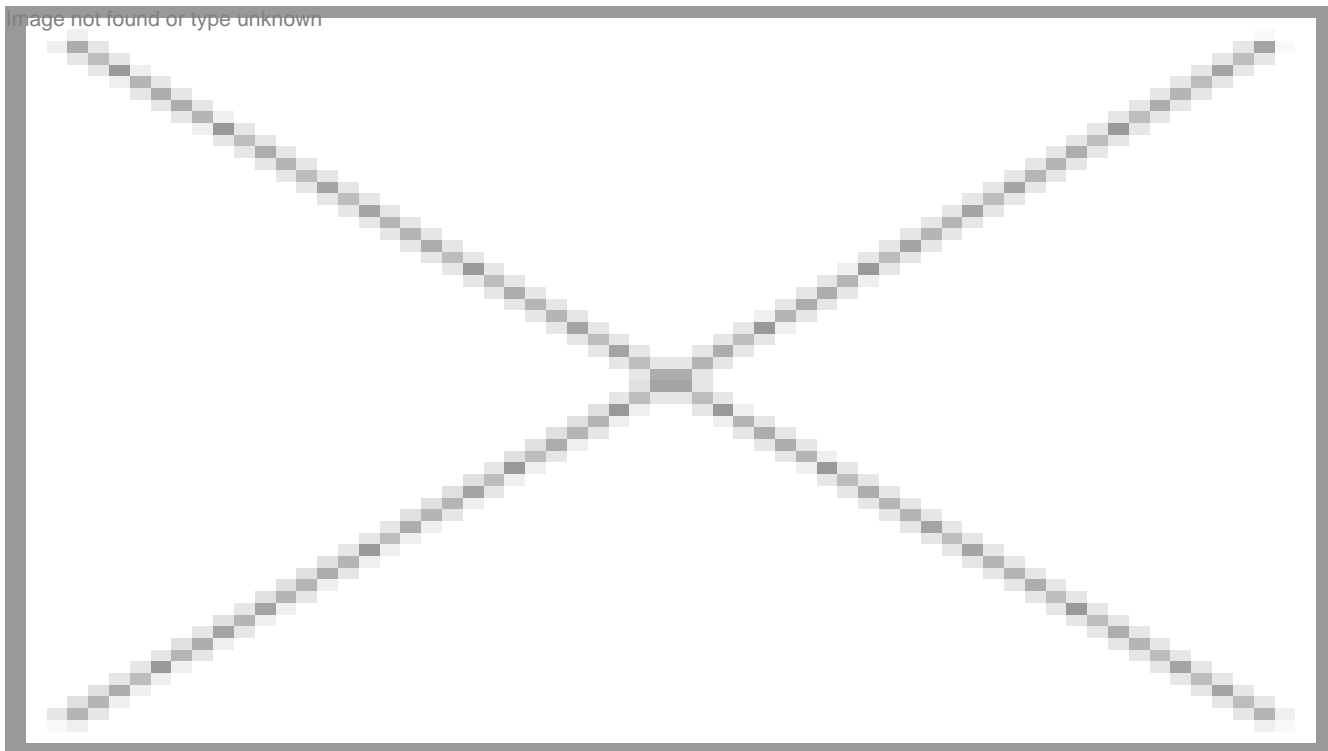
After an epic duel with bronze medallist **Kate French** of **Great Britain**, **Elena Micheli** of **Italy** finished second to secure a silver medal that had more significance than usual.

By finishing in the top three, Micheli (ITA) and Silkina (BLR) secured qualification places for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. French (GBR) already claimed her place by winning silver at the

European Championships.

Behind the top four, **Annika Schleu** of **Germany** finished strongly as usual to claim 5th place and **Elodie Clouvel** of **France** completed the top six. The quest for Tokyo 2020 qualification continues for the Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist.

Team silver went to Great Britain (French, **Joanna Muir** and **Francesca Summers**) and bronze to Germany (Schleu, **Rebecca Langrehr** and **Janine Kohlmann**).



MEDALLISTS' REACTION

Silkina (BLR) said after receiving her gold medal: "I can't believe it yet, I have a lot of emotions.

"We will see what happens next year because we have two very strong pentathletes and we already have two qualifications for Tokyo 2020.

"In the European Championships I took the 6th place but I didn't execute my skills properly. I knew that the World Championships was my last chance to secure a place for Belarus so that we could look forward to Tokyo in an easy way."

Aged 20, **Micheli** (ITA) found herself on the podium at senior level only two years after winning the world junior title. She said: "It's incredible and there are no words to describe how I feel. When I left Italy I said to myself, 'This isn't your World Championships, you are young and there will be many more.'

"I can't explain this. I just decided to concentrate on simple things and not think big. No pressure. The running track is quite hard, but I am so happy with this performance."

French (GBR) added: "I couldn't be happier. After Europeans it was quite hard to get going again so I'm so pleased that I managed to pull out another good performance.

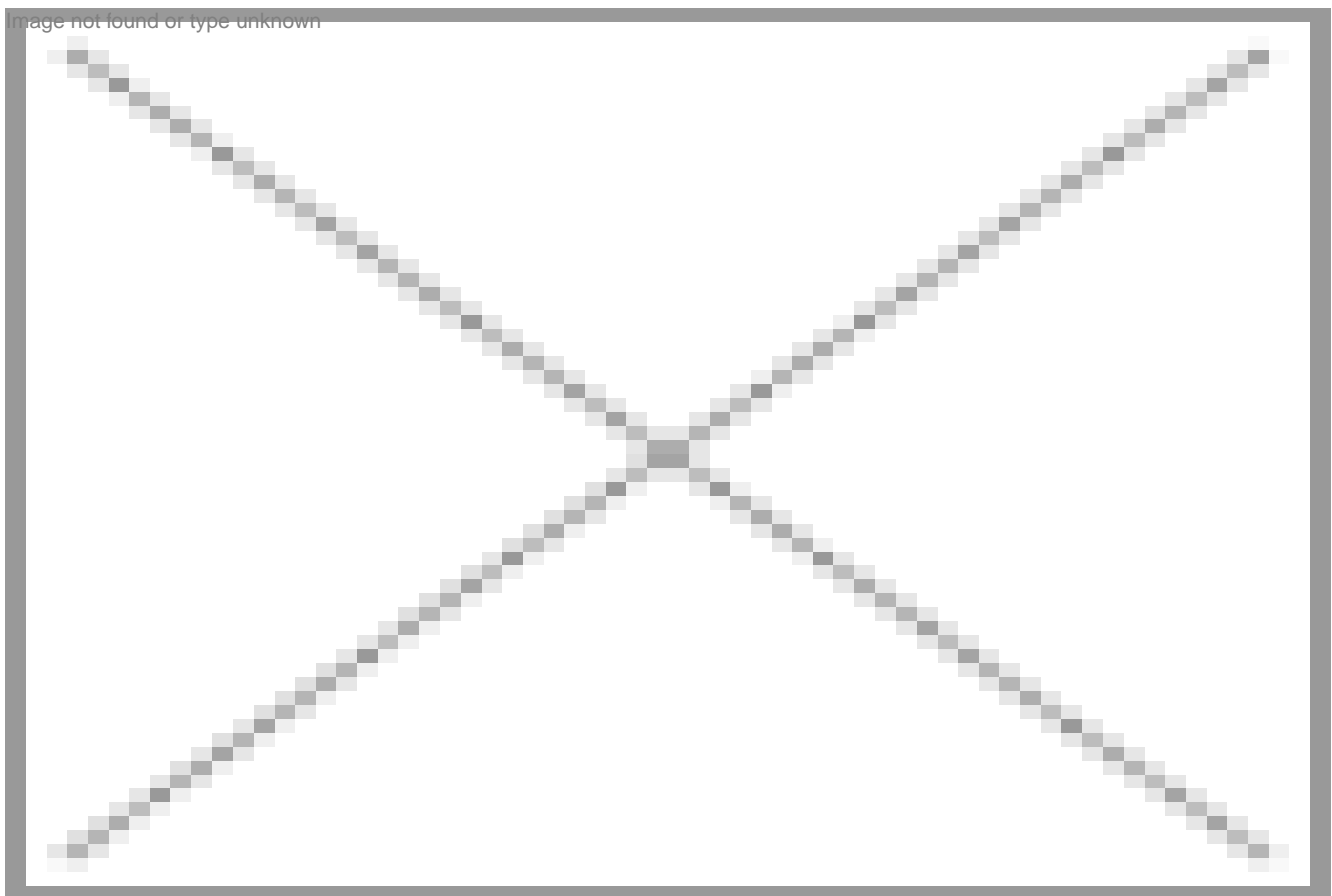
"I will sit down with the coaches now to make plans for Tokyo but it's still not guaranteed that I will be there because we have a strong team.

"I will take a well-earned break now, take some time off and look forward to next season."

SWIMMING

Gulnaz Gubaydullina of **Russia** is no stranger to success in the Swimming pool but she was pushed all the way by **Alice Sotero** (ITA). Gubaydullina (RUS), the 2017 world champion, timed 2:07.95 with just a slim margin of victory over Sotero (ITA, 2:08.11).

It was also close for 3rd and 4th as Clouvel (FRA, 2:08.45) narrowly beat **Sarolta Kovacs** of **Hungary** (2:08.62) to the touch.



FENCING

To have one athlete at the top of the leaderboard in Fencing is a satisfying moment for any team, but Belarus had a double helping of joy as Silkina and Prasiantsova topped the standings.

Silkina (BLR) was the queen of the piste as she scored 28V/7D in the Ranking Round and took the scalp of Clouvel (FRA) in the final bout of the Bonus Round, adding two points to her overall score.

Prasiantsova (BLR) achieved 26V/9D, one more victory than Clouvel (FRA) and **Kim Sunwoo** of **Korea**. Also prominent were French (GBR) and Micheli (ITA), each of whom scored 24V/11D.

Laura Asadauskaite of **Lithuania**, who was aiming for an exceptional golden treble after winning the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final and the European Championships, suffered an injury that

prevented her from taking any further part in the competition.

Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Oktawia Nowacka** of **Poland** also did not start the Riding event.

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RIDING

As Riding took centre stage at the heart of the Pentathlon Arena, Silkina (BLR) strengthened her prospects even further with a clear round, one of only five on the day.

Like Kovacs (HUN) and **Shino Yamanaka** of **Japan**, the overall leader only conceded time penalties, while Langrehr (GER) and Gubaydullina (RUS) were the two athletes who managed a perfect score of 300.

Clouvel (FRA) had a major scare when her horse pulled out of a jump halfway through and took out the obstacle. After the obstacle was rebuilt, both rider and horse regained their composure but the damage was done and the Olympic silver medallist incurred 43 time penalties.

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LASER RUN

Silkina (BLR) started with an exceptionally large lead of 31sec, with Micheli (ITA) and Kim (KOR) separated by only 1sec and French (GBR), Prasiantsova (BLR), Kovacs (HUN), Clouvel (FRA), Gubaydullina (RUS) and Kohlmann (GER) all within 1min of the leader.

Even a less established athlete as Silkina (BLR) would have known that she only had to hold her nerve on the shooting range to secure that coveted gold medal. And that is exactly what she did, allowing herself a wave to the crowd halfway through the final lap.

As Kim (KOR) faded, more established athletes began to gain ground on Micheli (ITA), but the 20-year-old showed remarkable steel to maintain her position, especially on the final lap after French (GBR) briefly overtook her.

Behind them, there were some valiant bids for the podium from the likes of Prokopenko (BLR) and Schleu (GER), while Gintare Venckauskaite (LTU) and Muir (GBR) timed under 2:10 for their Laser Run, but this day was destined to be a tale of new pretenders.

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PRESIDENT'S REACTION

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "It was really a surprise to find Belarus winning a second consecutive gold medal in the Women's Final at the Pentathlon World Championships, but from the beginning she performed like a true champion.

"Behind her, the other athletes worked so hard to get on the podium and secure automatic places and important ranking points for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games qualification.

"We had excellent horses and great performances, and the many spectators from Hungary created a special atmosphere. To have the pool within the Pentathlon Arena like we did last year in Mexico City, I think it was a super day and we look forward to the Men's Final tomorrow and the Mixed Relay on Sunday, which is also the 2nd UIPM Pierre de Coubertin Pentathlon Day.

"Thanks again to the local organising committee and to the athletes for their great performances today."

MEN'S FINAL

The Men's Final also kicked off today with the Fencing Ranking Round. **Lee Jihun** (KOR) took a convincing lead with 26V/9D, three more victories than his compatriot **Jung Jinhwa** (KOR) and **Valentin Belaud** (FRA), with **Ilya Palazkov** (BLR) scoring 22V/13D.

WATCH AND FOLLOW

The Pentathlon World Championships is being televised live or 'as live' in 144 countries, with a total of 133 hours of coverage secured by TV networks. This amounts to a total potential reach of 431 million homes.

Check out which TV network is showing the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Championships in your country!

On 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 for additional content, and visit the UIPM website or download the “UIPM Central” app to keep track of results.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

The UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Championships continues on Saturday, September 7 with the Men's Final and concludes on Sunday, September 8 with the Mixed Relay.

The UIPM Laser Run World Championships is also taking place from September 6-8. Visit the UIPM website [\[LINK\]](#) for a report from day one (Women's Finals).

Tickets can be bought at the official event website.