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UIPM 2020 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP CAIRO: WORLD CHAMPIONS SILKINA (BLR) AND BELAUD (FRA) LEAD THE LINE



- Rivalries reprised as world's leading pentathletes open Olympic season in Cairo (EGY)
- Elgendi (EGY) prepares to defend his title as host nation aims for more success
- Olympic qualification on the line as 26 places at Tokyo 2020 remain at stake

With 26 places at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games remaining unaccounted for, the most versatile athletes in Olympic sport return to the start line this week at UIPM 2020 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo.

The season-opener in the Egyptian capital promises to be a thrilling and intriguing competition, with a host of leading athletes still chasing that elusive Olympic quota place for their countries.

Both of the 2019 world champions are on the entry list and they can expect a stern examination from athletes from multiple rival nations, not the least host nation Egypt.

Road to Tokyo

For the many athletes hoping to qualify for Tokyo 2020 through the UIPM Olympic Ranking List, a good performance this week in Cairo (EGY) will put them in a strong position with three more rounds of the Pentathlon World Cup and a Pentathlon World Cup Final in Seoul (KOR) to come.

Failing that, the UIPM Pentathlon World Championships in Cancun (MEX) at the end of May will represent the final chance to qualify, with up to three automatic places on offer to each gender.

Egypt have already secured two quota places at Tokyo 2020 thanks to the individual victories in the 2019 African Championships by **Haydy Morsy** (EGY) and **Sherif Nazeir** (EGY).

However, one male and one female Olympic place remains within the grasp of this week's host nation, and many eyes will be on teenage phenomenon **Ahmed Elgendi** (EGY), winner of gold at UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo.

Find out more about the Tokyo 2020 qualification process.

Ones to watch

Both of the reigning individual world champions return for their first global competitions since winning the coveted titles in Budapest (HUN) in September 2019.

Volha Silkina of Belarus continues her internal rivalry with compatriots **Anastasiya Prokopenko** (BLR) and **Iryna Prasiantsova** (BLR) in a star-studded women's field.

High-class competition is sure to come from the likes of Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Elodie Clouvel** (FRA), **Marie Oteiza** (FRA), **Annika Schleu** of Germany and the 2019 and 2020 Budapest Indoor International champion, **Joanna Muir** of Great Britain.

Russia has a strong team on the start line, led by **Uliana Batashova**, **Gulnaz Gubaydullina** and the 2019 world junior champion **Adelina Ibatullina**.

Other prominent names likely to be jostling for podium places are 2019 silver medallist **Natalya Coyle** of Ireland, **Tamara Alekszejev** of Hungary, **Gintare Venckauskaite** of Lithuania and the world Laser Run record-holder **Ilke Ozyuksel** of Turkey.

On the men's side, Belaud (FRA), world No.3 **Valentin Prades** (FRA) and No.4 **Marvin Dogue** (GER) are the obvious athletes to catch, but **Korea** are likely to have a strong say in the podium places thanks to their high-performing trio of world No.2 **Lee Jihun**, world bronze medallist **Jun Woongtae** and 2017 world champion **Jung Jinhwa**.

Other well-known names on the entry list at Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of Ukraine, **Arthur Lanigan-O'Keeffe** (IRL), **Ilya Palazkov** (BLR) and 2019

bronze medallist **Justinas Kinderis** (LTU).

It's all happening in Africa

Pentathlon World Cup Cairo will be the ninth 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 2020, apart from this week's gathering of elite athletes in Cairo (EGY), numerous cities across Africa will stage editions of the UIPM Global Laser Run City Tour and the UIPM Biathle/Triathle National Tour, and Hurghada (EGY) will host the UIPM 2020 Youth World Championships (U19/U17) from October 4-10.

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 two years' time – the 4th Youth Olympic Games in Dakar (SEN) in 2022.

President's statement

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann commented: "Cairo has become a regular host of UIPM Sports competitions with a tradition of excellence going back many years. The annual Pentathlon World Cup Cairo is always an exciting season-opener for our athletes.

"But this is no ordinary season, and you will see that in the intensity of competition. There are still 26 places at the Olympic Games to be secured, and many of the world's leading pentathletes will be looking to secure important points in the Olympic qualification rankings.

"Tokyo is going to be a wonderful moment for our sport with all five disciplines coming together in one Pentathlon Stadium for the first time at the Olympic Summer Games. We will have 50,000 spectators each day inside the Tokyo Stadium."

Competition schedule

UIPM 2020 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo begins on Wednesday, February 26 with qualification for the Women's Individual Final (Friday, February 28). The action continues on Thursday, February 27 with qualification for the Men's Individual Final (Saturday, February 29). The Mixed Relay closes the competition on Sunday, March 1.

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.