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# PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES: ATHLETES SPEAK OUT IN SUPPORT OF NEW MODERN PENTATHLON FORMAT



The current world champion and two other leading pentathletes have registered their support for the new Modern Pentathlon format proposed for introduction at the Olympic Summer Games Paris 2024.

The IOC Programme Commission has made recommendations about the composition of the Paris 2024 sporting programme and the IOC Executive Board will meet to decide the final programme on December 7.

The three athletes – **Valentin Belaud** of **France**, **Charles Fernandez** of **Guatemala** and **Bence Kardos** of **Hungary** – made their comments in an article in the Hungarian newspaper Nemzeti Sport.

Belaud (FRA), who won gold at both the UIPM 2016 and 2019 Pentathlon World Championships, said: "I support with excitement this new version of modern pentathlon. As mentioned by Mr Bach [IOC President Dr Thomas Bach] at our highest instances of pentathlon, 'Change or be changed!'

"I am a high-level athlete since around 15 years now and I have seen the evolution in Pentathlon. The first quality of a pentathlete is to be adaptable and that's what we've been doing for many years now.

"This new version is, to my eyes, a great way to make the Pentathlon discipline grow...

"Today, I'm 28 years old and this new version also scares me! Not for our sport that I love but for my eagerness to be adaptable. I am world champion with the current version of pentathlon and my first thoughts go towards keeping this version and resisting change. But this would be a selfish thought because this could question our place in the Olympic Games...

"The UIPM has worked for many years on improving our sports for all the nations in the world to embrace it! So, like any change, it does scare me but for all the youth generation of pentathletes out there who dream of representing their country at the Olympic Games, I need to overcome this fear and work in order to progress, continuously.

"What is important for us athletes today is to continue to discuss with the UIPM via the Athletes Committee to bring up our thoughts and ideas in order to obtain the best Olympic version of our sport."

UIPM Athletes Committee Member Fernandez (GUA), Pan American Games champion and former junior world champion, said: "I know it has been very difficult to understand the changes that have been happening in Pentathlon.

