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WINNERS OF TEST EVENT IN BUDAPEST (HUN) ENDORSE NEW-LOOK MODERN PENTATHLON

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- Final trial of Paris 2024 Olympic Games format proves successful
- Dejardin (FRA): 'It goes fast and it's harder but we need this change so it's cool'
- Rinaudo (ITA): 'I enjoyed the competition and I like this new format ... it can work really well'

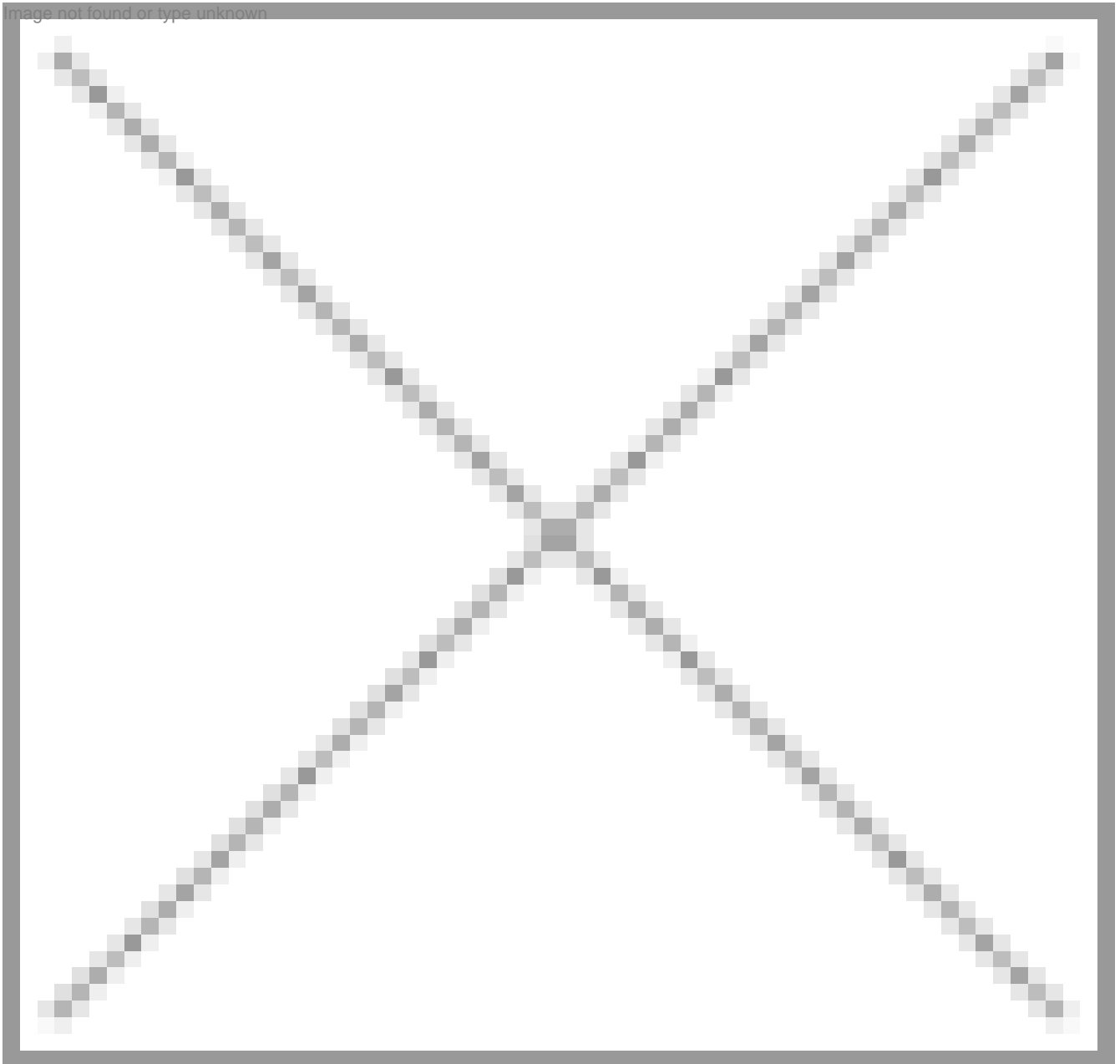
The winners of the final Paris 2024 Olympic Modern Pentathlon test event have strongly endorsed the innovative new format.

The new-look Modern Pentathlon was tested for the third time in Budapest (HUN) over the past four days, enabling athletes from 10 nations to experience the 90-minute showpiece designed to change the face of the sport for athletes and audiences.

The future vision for Modern Pentathlon, a core Olympic sport since it was created especially for the Games by Baron Pierre de Coubertin and introduced in Stockholm in 1912, sees pentathletes compete in a faster, more dynamic sequence with an elimination system adding more pressure.

The new finals format begins with Riding, followed by the Fencing Bonus Round and Swimming, before closing with the popular Laser Run – with 5-15 minutes' break in between each discipline.

The format is designed to create a more compelling spectacle for TV and online viewers - and for on-site audiences like the Olympic Games spectators who will become the first to see all five Modern Pentathlon disciplines in the space of 90 minutes at Paris 2024 (see timings below).



Unlike the previous test events in Budapest (HUN) and Cairo (EGY) in 2020, different permutations of the format were rehearsed at the University of Public Service in recent days, with 12 athletes competing in the women's final on April 24 and 18 athletes taking part in the men's final on April 25.

Athletes' reaction

Asked for his impressions of the new format after winning the Men's Final, UIPM Pentathlon World Cup and Pentathlon World Championships medallist **Pierre Dejardin** of **France**, said: "It goes very fast, it's quite hard. The transition between swimming and Laser Run goes very, very fast.

“Shooting after swimming is really not easy but it brings a little something extra because it's harder, so you have to focus much more on the shooting than before. We start almost without warming up so we need to manage everything well. But it's interesting! Mentally, it's one and a half hours of intense pressure.”

Asked if viewers might find the new Modern Pentathlon easier to follow and understand, Dejardin (FRA) added: “Yes, definitely, because you can follow the whole pentathlon from beginning to end in only 90 minutes.

“Honestly, I am happily surprised that everything was running smoothly. Yes, it goes fast and it's harder but it's part of the change and we need this change so it's cool.

“I was a little scared because I didn't know how it was going to all work out. But in the end it doesn't change that much for us, even the 5 x 600m, and it's even better because it gives us an extra lap of running. It's all about managing your race, but in the end it's very interesting.”

Alice Rinaudo of **Italy** also spoke with enthusiasm after demonstrating her versatility on the way to victory in the Women's Final.

Asked about the new sequence of Riding-Fencing-Swimming-Laser Run, the 2018 Under 19 world champion said: “I enjoyed the competition and I like this new format! I have to better manage the time but it can work really well and I like this sequence.”

Asked if she felt the new format would be more understandable and easier for audiences to follow, Rinaudo (ITA) said: “Absolutely yes! Better to follow and understand all the disciplines. One thing I would change is to have more time between Swimming and Laser Run... just five minutes more would be enough.

“If this can help to have more visibility or more spectators, obviously it's important to change the format for Paris 2024.”

Mihaly Koleszar of **Hungary**, who finished 3rd in the Men's Final, added: “We have to compete in five different disciplines in one day, competing three days in a row, so it's very hard to concentrate from the very first touch to the last metres in running.

“I like both formats of Pentathlon and I could not decide which one I like most, but maybe this one because it's shorter and it needs much more technique.

“I actually felt really good, especially on the second day. I cannot say why but I felt really fresh and concentrated and I knew that if I did the disciplines exactly how I could, I would be able to stand on the podium and I'm very happy that it happened.

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Implementation and next steps

The final test event in Budapest (HUN) will now be fully evaluated and discussed at the next meeting of the New Pentathlon Task Force ahead of the implementation of the new format in UIPM competitions starting in 2022.

Discussions are ongoing with the Paris 2024 Organising Committee and Olympic broadcasting partners about the incorporation of the new Modern Pentathlon format, which has met with positive feedback from the IOC Executive Board, into the Olympic Games schedule.

UIPM has stressed the need for athletes to have sufficient rest between semi-finals and finals to maximise the potential of the new format to amplify and improve the overall Olympic Games viewer and spectator experience.

UIPM Secretary General Shiny Fang said: “This is an exciting moment not only for our core Olympic sport but for the wider Olympic Games product. Our test events have proved that the new Modern Pentathlon format is not just a dream but a reality.

“We can all look forward with confidence to the implementation of the format in 2022 and to the very special moment when spectators at the Olympic Games will see all five disciplines of the Modern Pentathlon in a 90-minute showpiece.

“There are some challenges in incorporating the format to be compatible with the schedule put forward by Paris 2024, but we are certain that with flexibility on all sides we can deliver the Olympic Modern Pentathlon in this new format in such a way that adds value for all stakeholders.”

UIPM President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "The third test event for the future Modern Pentathlon format has been tested in Budapest and it was a big success for the women and men's parts – we tested in different ways so that we have much more experience now.

"It's important to have feedback from the athletes, coaches and trainers. We will study these documents and then we have to make some changes, or not – this is what we will find out in the next days. But I would like to underline that all the feedback so far from athletes, coaches and trainers from the 10 nations competing here have been nearly 100 per cent positive.

"It was much more than we thought we could achieve. The athletes who competed here can in future be our ambassadors to all the other nations and athletes when they come together in other competitions in the near future.

"Thanks again to the organising committee for the facilities they have presented to us and how they have managed the health and safety protocols based on COVID-19.

"We can say in summary: it was a success, it was a very important step and now we can communicate what we have achieved here. This was the right step in the preparations for the Olympic Games Paris 2024."

