

15 MAY 2021

UIPM 2021 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP FINAL: 'THE ACCIDENT OF MEXICO IS FINISHED FOR ME



- Third-time World Cup Final winner Prades (FRA) puts infamous defeat behind him
- First-time medallist Toolis (GBR) beaten to gold in final moments of Laser Run
- Bronze for Luo (CHN) as athletes give everything in chase of Tokyo 2020 places

He lost the title of world champion in a moment of infamy, but **Valentin Prades** of **France** seems determined to make sure his career is remembered for gold and not silver medals.

Already established as one of the greatest pentathletes of his generation, Prades (FRA) was crowned winner of the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final for a third time after an epic battle with silver medallist **Thomas Toolis** of **Great Britain**, adding to the titles he won in Nizhny Novgorod (RUS) in 2013 and Vilnius (LTU) in 2017.

For all his success, it has been difficult for the 28-year-old to escape the connotations of the UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Championships in Mexico City (MEX), where he was overtaken on the finish line by James Cooke (GBR) after a premature celebration.

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The drama of that moment even eclipsed the near miss Prades (FRA) suffered at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, when he missed out on the bronze medal by 1sec. On today's evidence, he is focused on erasing both of those memories and creating a new career-defining snapshot at the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Toolis (GBR) gave Prades (FRA) exactly the test he needed during an astonishing Laser Run. They started only 1sec apart and Prades (FRA) had a healthy lead going into the final shoot, but he froze and spent 25sec on the range, enabling Toolis (GBR) to snatch the lead.

Knowing he had only 800m to catch his rival and get some much-needed revenge in the ongoing Anglo-French rivalry, Prades (FRA) timed his attack superbly and muscled past his opponent in the final 200m before collapsing with exhaustion at the finish.

Toolis (GBR) was not the only first-time medallist on the podium as bronze was won by **Shuai Luo** of **China**, the 2017 Asian champion and 2019 silver medallist, making his way up from a starting place of 11th.

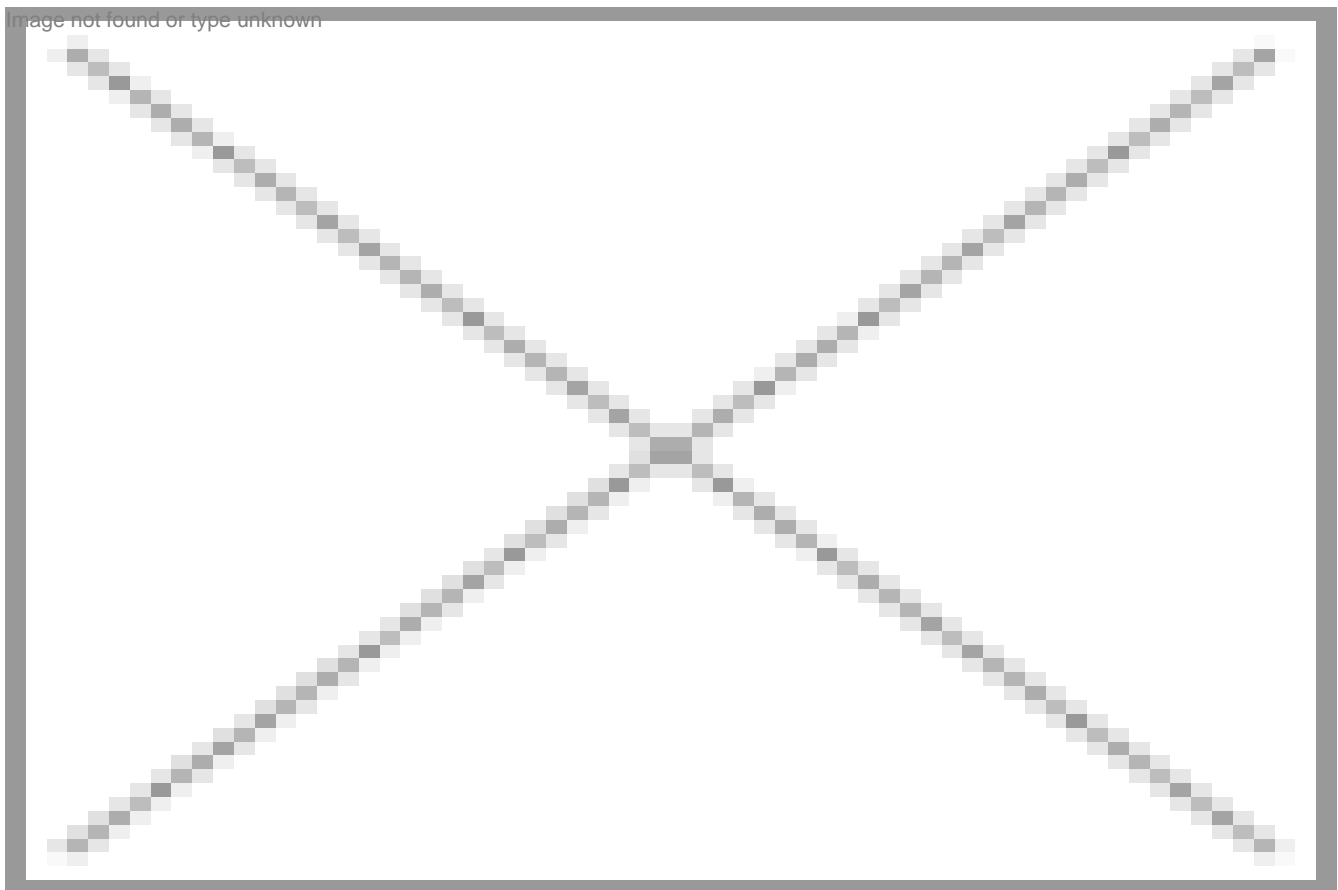
With only one remaining opportunity to gain Tokyo 2020 qualification points on offer at the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Cairo (EGY) in June, many experienced and decorated pentathletes left nothing in the tank in a sprint to the line.

Fabian Liebig of **Germany** finished an exceptional Laser Run in 4th place and was followed across the line by five former world champions – current title-holder **Valentin Belaud** (FRA), **Justinas Kinderis** of **Lithuania**, **Jinhwa Jung** of **Korea**, **Adam Marosi** of **Hungary** and **Pavlo Tymoshchenko**

of **Ukraine**.

Swimming

The dominant figure in the pool was another former world champion, Cooke (GBR), who took advantage of the absence of Joseph Choong (GBR) and Woongtae Jun (KOR) to win convincingly in 1:59.03 ahead of Bence Kardos (HUN, 2:02.58) and Toolis (GBR, 2:03.16).



Fencing

The Fencing Ranking Round was held on May 13 and featured standout performances by Jung (KOR), Prades (FRA) and Tymoshchenko (UKR).

Jung (KOR) was the last man standing after defeating Tymoshchenko (UKR) in the final bout in the Bonus Round, which had earlier seen gains for **Ilya Palazkov** of **Belarus** (five wins) and **Alexander Lifanov** of **Russia** (four).

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Riding

A heavy shower interrupted the tranquillity but otherwise it was another serene day of high-quality equestrian in Hungary.

Nine athletes managed a perfect score of 300 including Prades and Belaud (FRA), Luo (CHN) and the **Egypt** duo of **Ahmed Hamed** and **Eslam Hamad**, while seven others incurred only minor time penalties including Toolis (GBR), Tymoshchenko (UKR), Marosi (HUN) and brothers **Patrick** and **Marvin Dogue** (GER).

The drama was reserved for the final ride, where Jung (KOR) dislodged three obstacles to relinquish his overall lead.

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Laser Run

Any athlete who can complete a Laser Run 15sec faster than the rest of the field is a threat from any position, and so it proved that Liebig (GER) made up 20 places from a starting position of 24th to come within 3sec of a medal.

His experience also underlined the tightness of the field, where the first four starters were separated by just 6sec. In that sense it was surprising that it became a private battle for gold between Prades (FRA) and Toolis (GBR), a gripping duel that the underdog almost won.

The standard was as high as the level of motivation, with 15 athletes timing under 11min. Liebig (GER) clearly stood out with a time of 10:16.45 while Luo (CHN) impressed with 10:36.61 and 2018 Youth Olympic champion **Ahmed Elgendy** (EGY) finished 16th after a time of 10:32.98.

Medallists' reaction

Prades (FRA) said: "I feel very good. It's a nice competition and I love this event with the Olympic format - it's good preparation for Tokyo.

"It's my third victory in the World Cup Final and it's good. I had a terrible last shoot and Tom [Thomas Toolis] was fast, he was 5-6sec ahead of me but I'm a crazy boy and I said 'come on, you can do it'. The last 50m was very hard."

Asked about the UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Championships in Mexico City (MEX), where Prades (FRA) was beaten to gold on the finish line by James Cooke (GBR), he said: "This time I win. The accident of Mexico is finished for me."

Toolis (GBR) said: "I can't actually believe it. It's been a good season but I've never had a podium

before and it feels amazing.

"All I wanted to do was shoot well, because I know I can run. The sun came out and I think it actually helped me, and I knew if I shot well I would have a chance.

"I know how fast [Prades] is and it's really frustrating. When I went out for the last lap I knew he would come hard and I thought 'how long can I hold him off?'

"I gave it my all, and I pushed at 200m but he took me at about 150m and I didn't have the legs. Congratulations to him for first place."

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UIPM President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Today in the Men's UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup Final we saw an exciting finish that encapsulated the unique drama of Modern Pentathlon.

"We saw a dramatic race for gold between the French and British leaders and we saw many experienced athletes giving everything in their efforts to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games taking place in 2021.

"On behalf of the UIPM Executive Board I am grateful for the excellent preparation of this Pentathlon World Cup Final by the Hungarian Modern Pentathlon Association, with support from the City Government of Szekesfehervar.

"We are witnessing a World Cup Final that is a truly fitting climax to the season after the World Cups in Budapest and Sofia, and with the World Championships still to come in Cairo we have been able to guarantee our athletes a fair chance to qualify for the Olympic Games and to compete after a very difficult year due to the pandemic."

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup Final concludes tomorrow (May 16) with the Mixed Relay.

Television coverage is available in 141 countries – find out which networks are broadcasting the action in your country.

Live streaming is available on UIPM TV, while results of all competitions are available at the UIPM website and the 'UIPM Central' app.

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Rank	Name	Nation	MP Points
1	PRADES Valentin	FRA	1479
2	TOOLIS Thomas	GBR	1475
3	LUO Shuai	CHN	1471
4	LIEBIG Fabian	GER	1468
5	BELAUD Valentin	FRA	1467
6	KINDERIS Justinas	LTU	1466
7	JUNG Jinhwa	KOR	1464
8	MAROSI Adam	HUN	1463
9	TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo	UKR	1462
10	DOGUE Marvin Faly	GER	1460
11	HAMED Ahmed	EGY	1453
12	FERNANDEZ Charles	GUA	1450
13	DOGUE Patrick	GER	1440
14	STASIAK Sebastian	POL	1438
15	LIFANOV Alexander	RUS	1436
16	ELGENDY Ahmed	EGY	1434
17	KUF Jan	CZE	1432
18	HEREDIA VIVES Aleix	ESP	1428
19	COOKE James	GBR	1422
20	PALAZKOV Ilya	BLR	1417
21	SEO Changwan	KOR	1416
22	HAMAD Eslam	EGY	1416
23	SANDOVAL Alvaro	MEX	1413
24	KARDOS Bence	HUN	1408
25	CURRY Samuel	GBR	1407
26	DALLENBACH Alexandre	SUI	1404
27	SVECHOTA Ondrej	CZE	1391
28	DEJARDIN Pierre	FRA	1387
29	LI Shuhuan	CHN	1385
30	PADILLA Manuel	MEX	1383
31	SVECOVS Pavels	LAT	1382
32	GUTKOWSKI Lukasz	POL	1381
33	RADZIUK Yaroslau	BLR	1374
34	CARRILLO Duilio	MEX	1372
35	KASZA Robert	HUN	1334
36	LANIGAN-O'KEEFFE Arthur	IRL	296

