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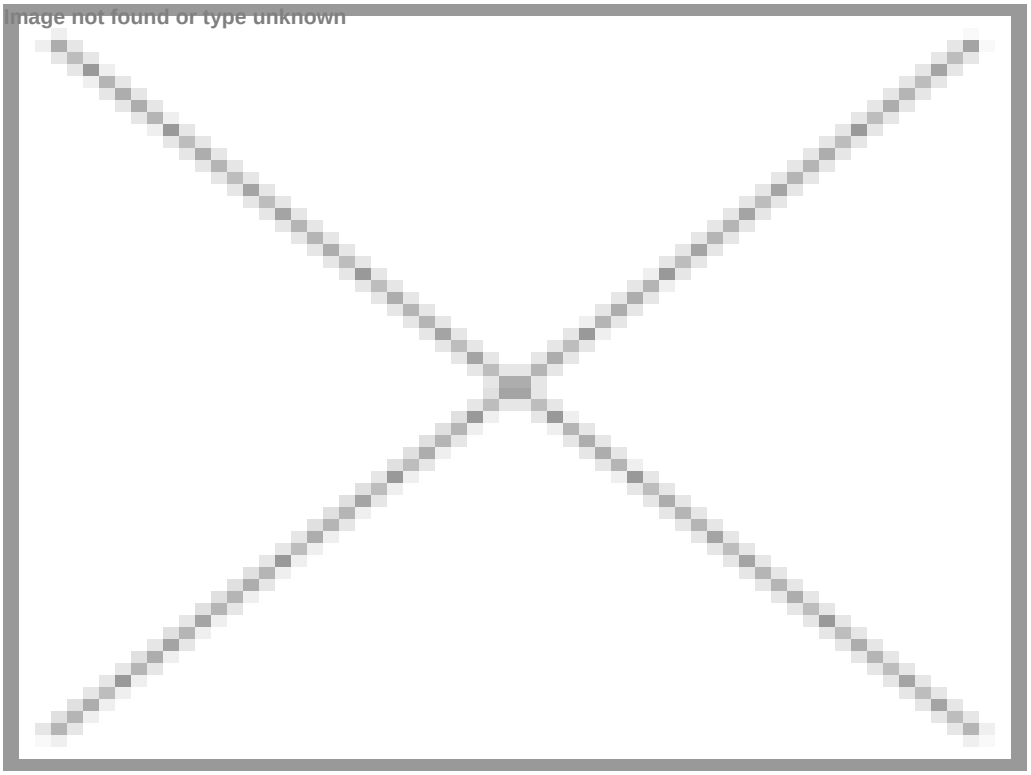
UIPM SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE: WHAT ARE YOUR RESOLUTIONS FOR 2022?



At the end of the busiest year I can remember – dealing with a complex pandemic situation, managing a rescheduled Olympic Games and discussing fundamental changes to our sport – I have one question for every member of our global community to consider.

What are your resolutions for 2022?

I'm very aware that it has been a tough time for those who have devoted their lives to Modern Pentathlon, especially the athletes and coaches, officials and administrators operating at the elite end of the sport.

Change is difficult to manage, and you have been working for many years towards the goal of creating success in a sport you understand well. Now you are being asked to adapt – not only for the immediate changes relating to Paris 2024 but also for the transformation coming down the road for the longer-term future.

Adaptation can be challenging, but I also believe we – as people, and more particularly as Modern Pentathlon people – are capable of responding to the challenge. Our community is bursting with innovation and intelligence and I've lost count of the number of times I've already seen you demonstrate flexibility and positivity in the face of change.

I fully believe we can work together to make Modern Pentathlon better for everybody.

So now is the time to look forward – and there is a lot to look forward to. In just a couple of months we will have the first Pentathlon World Cup with the elimination format and the new showpiece of all five disciplines in 90 minutes.

Spectators in Cairo and viewers watching on TV and online will be the first to see pentathletes riding, fencing, swimming, shooting and running in this compelling new format – and it will be amazing to visualise this concept making its debut on the Olympic stage in Paris!

Knowing the dedication to Modern Pentathlon that exists in our community, I imagine most athletes who intend to compete in 2024 will have already adjusted their training. I hope this new challenge is creating a fresh perspective, perhaps a new type of motivation.

Of course it's possible that some athletes will be better suited to the new order and the short, sharp format – it's exciting to think we will see new types of pentathletes on the podium and leading the world rankings, alongside those current superstars who I'm sure will also respond well to the challenge.

Depending on your age and stage of development, perhaps you are immediately focusing on being the best in 2022 or trying to peak for 2024 – planning how to manage the transition from one discipline to another within 90 minutes.

For those taking a longer-term view of prospects around Los Angeles 2028 or even Brisbane 2032 – with the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026 on the horizon as a major development goal – perhaps you are already channelling more energy into Swimming, Fencing and Laser Run and moving the focus away from Riding.

As I wrote already, adaptation can be hard but it's easier for those who see the opportunity within.

So, athletes, please think about your resolutions for 2022 while I tell you one of mine.

One of my big goals – shared by the wider UIPM executive and administration – is to improve communication with the athletes who underpin our sport.

I believe we already made progress towards this resolution in 2020 and 2021, but we also heard the criticism from those who feel we can do much better. This feedback can, and will, help us to improve, working closely with a new UIPM Athletes Committee that you elected to represent your best interests in the coming years.