

21 FEB 2022

NORDIC LASER SPRINT ADDS A NEW EDGE TO ANOTHER EXCITING WINTER PENTATHLON IN DAVOS (SUI)



As the curtain came down on a hugely successful Winter Olympic Games in Beijing last weekend, the world was already looking forward to the next instalment in Milano Cortina in 2026.

There, we will see another new Winter Olympic sport, ski mountaineering, added to the Games, to go along with the traditional sports which already thrill sports fans and viewers around the world.

What only insiders know however, is that in 1948, on the occasion of the Winter Olympics in St. Moritz, a Winter Pentathlon with the disciplines of cross-country skiing, shooting, downhill skiing, fencing and horse riding was part of the program. Unfortunately, this exciting combination and twist on Modern Pentathlon did not make it permanently into the Olympic programme for Winter Games.

Almost 40 years later, the Swiss pentathlete Ernst Burn took up the idea of a winter competition format in 1986 in Davos (SUI). Markus Hostetter, a passionate skier and horseman, also took part and became an enthusiastic pentathlon fan in both the summer and winter versions with his first

participation.

Ever since, he has continued the tradition of the winter pentathlon in the spirit of the founders as an athlete and as host and organiser in Davos. This year, the Ernst Burn Memorial successfully experienced its sixth edition thanks to the excellent organisation of Hostetter and his tireless helpers.

In addition to the classic Winter Pentathlon, swimming and snow laser run were added as disciplines for the first time, as was the Nordic laser sprint, a combination of cross-country skiing and laser shooting. And so the hard-bitten among the allrounders were able to compete in eight disciplines.

Romain Chauvet (FRA) mastered this mammoth programme best and won with an impressive total of 2,262 points ahead of Denise Silk (GBR) with 2,252 points and Robin Schmidt (GER) with 2,139 points. In a hugely impressive follow-up, Chauvet also won the Winter Pentathlon with 1,191 points, followed by Beate Schenkel (GER) with 1,185 points and Denise Silk (GBR) with 1,145 points.

In the classic Winter Pentathlon, the new Riding format was particularly well received by the athletes and the organisers. After a common warm-up phase, a Caprilli Test was ridden and the completion of the course was evaluated by a local, neutral riding instructor according to the rider's seat and influence, as well as mistakes. All Riding skills were tested, and the focus was always on horse welfare and harmonious cooperation between horse and human.

It is hoped that this exciting format will continue next year, especially the Nordic laser sprint which looks to have the potential to establish itself as an attractive additional discipline for the Winter Pentathlon with individual and relay disciplines. It is planned to feature this competition in the junior and youth-age categories too.

The competitors gave thanks to Mr. Hostetter and his team for the great days together in a wonderful winter landscape. The next Winter Pentathlon in Davos is planned from January 30 to February 5, 2023, where the first days can be used for cross-country and downhill training.