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UIPM 2022 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP CAIRO: GLORY FOR MICHELI (ITA) AND PATTE (FRA) ON A BRILLIANT FINALS DAY

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- Elena Micheli (ITA) takes Women's gold ahead of Michelle Gulyas (HUN)
- Nerveless shooting helps Christopher Patte (FRA) to Men's gold
- New Format proves to be a huge success with athletes and spectators alike

The first super Saturday under Modern Pentathlon's New Format lived up to its billing as **Elena Micheli (ITA)** and **Christopher Patte (FRA)** claimed their first gold medals of the World Cup season in spectacular style at the UIPM 2022 World Cup Cairo.

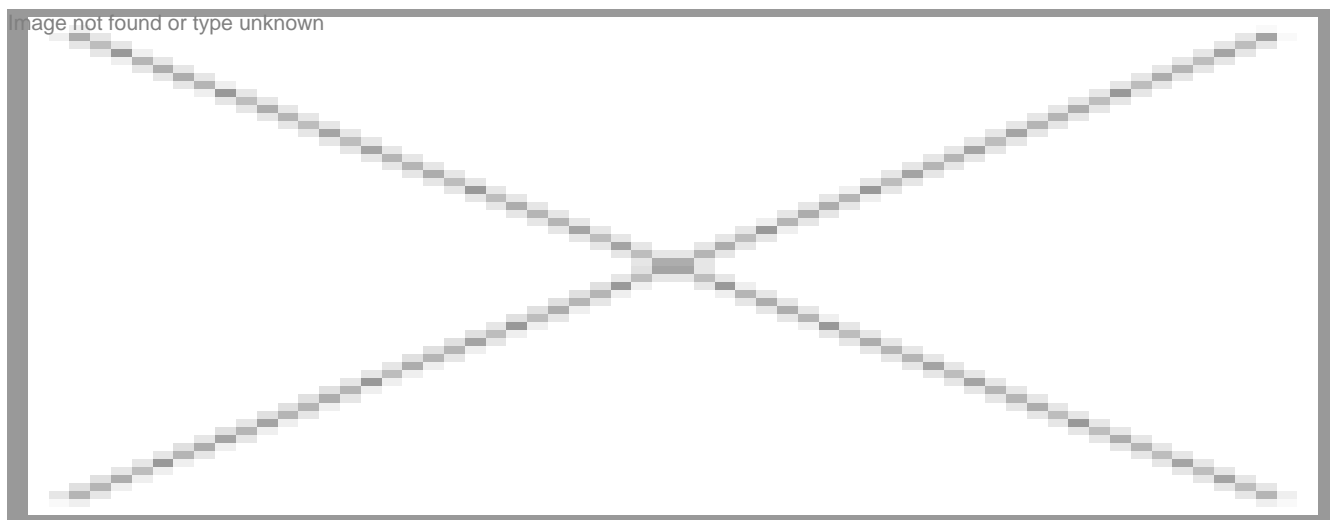
With both the Women's and Men's Finals taking place on the same day there was so much at stake in the glorious sunshine in the Egyptian capital.

It was Micheli who reached out and claimed gold in the Women's Final after a gripping battle with

close friend **Michelle Gulyas (HUN)** who took silver on a prolific day for Hungarian athletes. World Cup debutant **Emma Whitaker (GBR)** made a stunning statement of intent for the year ahead by claiming bronze.

For a time it looked as though Italy would claim both gold medals as **Matteo Cicinelli (ITA)** led the way in a pulsating Men's Laser Run. However the class of Patte (FRA) shone through in the decisive stages as his imperious shooting saw him take the lead and race away to glory. Hungarian compatriots **Csaba Bohm** and **Balazs Szep** showed remarkable energy reserves to haul in Cicinelli in the final straight and ensure Hungary finished the day with three podium places.

In all, this was a day which emphatically proved the New Format, which features just 18 competitors in each final and all five disciplines taking place in the span of 90 minutes, is an exciting leap forward for the sport and one which gives the athletes the opportunity to show their very best.



MEDALISTS' REACTION — WOMEN

Once she caught her breath Micheli (ITA) reflected on his triumph and said: "It's my first World Cup medal and a gold one! I'm very excited for that. It's been a difficult year but I had the support of my federation so I want to thank them. I'm here and I won and it's thanks to them. I'm really happy. I know that this is the good way to work. I had that confirmed today."

Silver medalist Gulyas (HUN) said: "It's amazing. It's so good to be back again, after seven months without competition. I hope the spectators were enjoying it as much as we were enjoying it to compete."

Bronze medal winner Whitaker (GBR) said: "I can't believe it really. This week has been amazing. Even to get into the Semi-final was a dream come true and then today, for it to go perfect, I can't believe it. It's a dream come true and so exciting for the rest of the season."

MEDALISTS' REACTION — MEN

Gold medalist Patte (FRA) savoured his victory and said: "I'm very happy. For me, this competition [in Cairo] is my favourite in terms of organization, very nice sun, such nice people in Cairo and great volunteers. I thank UIPM for organizing this event. It's the same as I had said three years

ago — if you shoot five, you win!”

Silver medalist Bohm had barely caught his breath as he said: “It was really tough but I had great shooting and that made it easier. I was sad with my Fencing performance but my purpose in the Final was to just enjoy all of it.

His fellow countryman Szep (HUN) reflected on bronze and laughed: “It almost killed me! I am dead. The Riding was bad for me but the Fencing was good. It was a hard Laser Run. We went out in the last 600 metres with the Italian boy and it was very hard. I’m very happy to now be finishing [in third place].

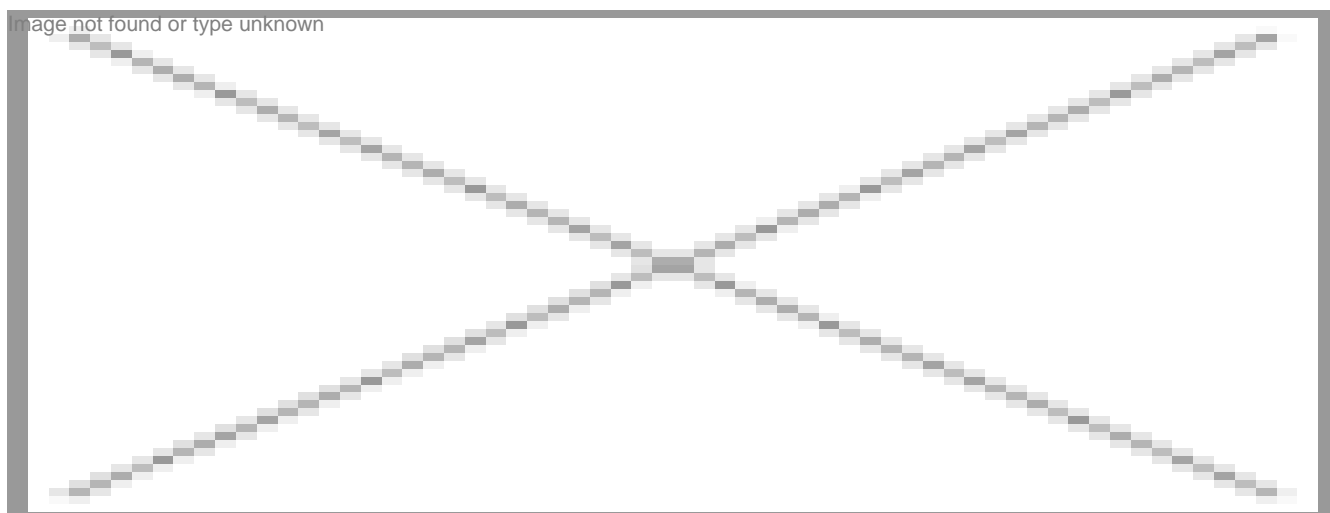
WOMEN’S FINAL

RIDING

The Women’s Final kicked off Saturday’s proceedings and there was plenty to cheer from the start for the home fans as Malak Ismail (EGY) turned in a hugely impressive performance in the Riding discipline, picking up maximum points. In total, five of the 18 riders recorded the maximum with Gulyas (HUN) and Whitaker (GBR) among the perfect quintet which also included Natalia Dominiak (POL) and Maria Lea Lopez (ITA)

FENCING

As the action moved to the piste with the Fencing Bonus Round, it was the strong performances of Rebecca Langrehr (GER) and Sarolta Simon (HUN) in the Fencing Ranking Round earlier in the week which put them ahead of the rest in the discipline, both notching up 26 victories. In the Bonus Round, home favourite Amira Kandil (EGY) picked up six points while Micheli (ITA) sent a statement of intent as she added eight points.



SWIMMING

The frenetic pace of proceedings was adding to the excitement but as the athletes moved to the pool, there were no signs of letting up. Elodie Clouvel (FRA) led the pack with a blistering pace of 2:13.58, only Micheli (ITA) able to come anywhere close as she clocked in at 2:14.38. Gulyas (HUN) and Kandil (EGY) were next best with Aurora Tognetti (ITA) the only other competitor to go sub-2.20.00.

LASER RUN

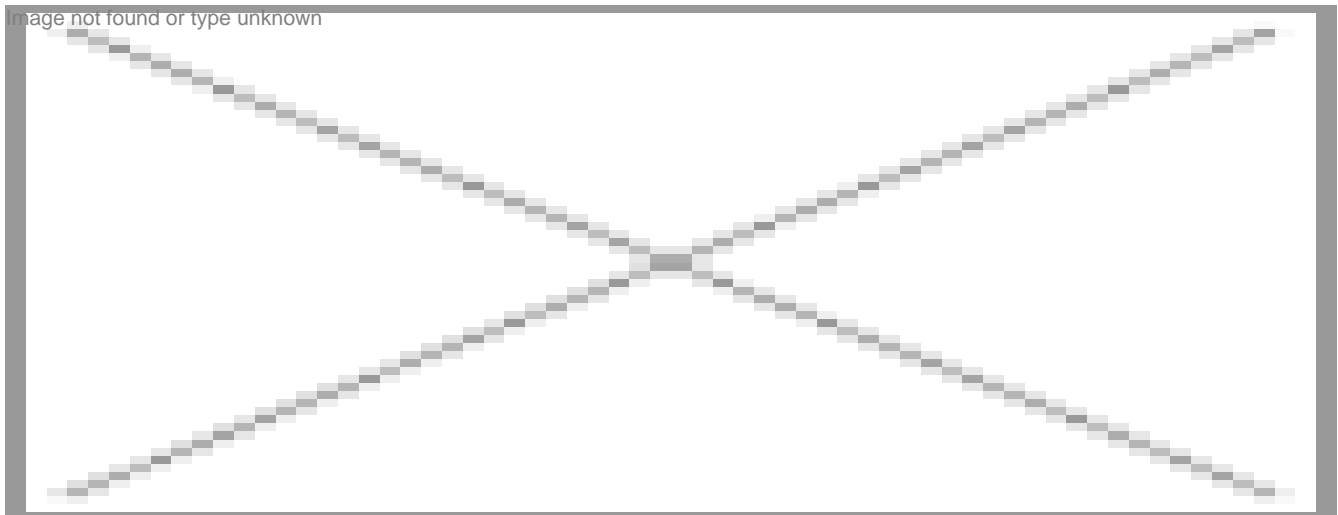
With a slender 7sec lead over world No.2 Gulyas (HUN), Micheli (ITA) knew she would have to perform strongly to earn the top spot on the podium - and so it proved.

Conserving energy in the run, which now consists of five laps of 600m, Gulyas (HUN) attacked her rival on the shooting range, making up ground on the first three visits.

After the second shoot the two leaders left the range together, and again after the fourth shoot - setting up a grand finale. At this point many people would have backed the athlete with momentum - Gulyas (HUN) - but Micheli (ITA) proved her class with a superb riposte, moving away from a tiring Gulyas (HUN) to win by 5sec.

Some distance behind them, the early work of Clouvel (FRA) in getting past Kandil (EGY) in a bid to reach the podium was undone by a superb Laser Run by World Cup debutante Whitaker (GBR), whose time of 11:36.11 was only bettered by compatriot Jessica Varley (GBR, 11:28.86).

Clouvel (FRA) had to settle for 4th and there was a standout performance from 5th-placed Natalia Dominiak of Poland, who pushed home favourite Kandil (EGY) into 6th.



MEN'S FINAL

RIDING

The Men couldn't quite match the Women's feat from earlier in the day with just four finalists completing a perfect Riding round. There was little surprise that eventual champion Patte (FRA) was among them. So too was Bohm (HUN) with Emiliano Hernandez (MEX) and Jan Kuf (CZE) also completing clear rounds within the time limit. There was disappointment for the hosts when Mohamed Elgendy (EGY), younger brother of Tokyo silver medalist Ahmed, was one of three riders eliminated in the Riding discipline.

FENCING

Another of the four Hungarians in the Men's Final, Gergely Regos (HUN) enjoyed a spectacular Fencing Bonus Round as he added 10 points to his total. Almost as impressive was Cicinelli's (ITA) prowess on the piste as he added 8 points. Egypt's Ahmed Hamed had turned in a dominant display earlier in the Fencing Ranking Round with 22 victories to finish top of the pile in the

discipline.

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SWIMMING

Cicinelli showed no signs of cooling off in the pool as he motored through the field, for a brief time looking as though he may even go sub-two minutes. His time of 2:02.64 was clearly best of the day with Moutaz Mohamed (EGY) next best in 2:04.49. Only four hundredths of a second could separate Bohm (HUN) and Fernand Mitterand (GER) in third and fourth respectively with Patte (FRA) further back in the swimming pack, finishing eighth in 2:09.96.

LASER RUN

In a further sign that the New Format can bring even more drama to Finals day, just 40 seconds separated the top 12 athletes as they lined up for the decisive Laser Run.

Cicinelli (ITA) would be first to set off and, while he had a 19-second advantage over Hernandez, with Kuf and Patte not too far behind, the Italian knew he was going to be hunted down by the richly talented field.

Hernandez (MEX) ate into the lead within the first lap and in spite of holding his nerve in the first shooting round, Cicinelli now had company at the front of the field.

The penultimate shoot would be when Patte (FRA) began to make his move with unerring accuracy. The Frenchman stalked Cicinelli and overtook him just ahead of the final shoot.

If the question was whether Patte (FRA) could possibly turn in another faultless shoot, he answered emphatically, firing five rapid green lights and even taking a second to wag his finger in celebration as he wheeled away from the range.

Cicinelli (ITA) was desperately trying to stay in the medal positions but in the final few hundred metres it was Hungarian legs that looked the freshest, Bohm (HUN) and teammate Szep (HUN) straining every sinew to claim silver and bronze ahead of a shattered Cicinelli (ITA).

Valentin Belaud (FRA) came in fifth with room for one more Hungarian near the top of the final standings as Regos (HUN) finished sixth.

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PRESIDENT'S REACTION

UIPM President Dr. Klaus Schormann said: "Today was so exciting and it's so pleasing to see that the athletes have enjoyed this format. What we, the spectators, could see is that this format really does pave the way forward to the Paris Olympics in 2024. The athletes gave everything today and showed the work they have been doing, preparing throughout the winter.

"I thank the organizers for this great facility and event organisation. It is so important for us to have competitions in facilities like this with the Pentathlon Stadium style, everything so close together. I look forward to another day full of highlights tomorrow in the Mixed Relay."

WATCH AND FOLLOW

UIPM 2022 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo concludes tomorrow (March 27) with the Mixed Relay.

Live stream of the Finals will be available on UIPM TV and up-to-date results of all competitions are available at the UIPM website.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for additional content, and download the "UIPM Central" app to keep track of results.

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