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UIPM 2023 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP SOFIA: PRADES (FRA) ON FIRE TO LEAD FRENCH QUARTET IN MEN'S SEMI- FINALS

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- Dominant Prades (FRA) heads a star-studded field for Saturday's Men's Final
- Joseph Choong (GBR) and Balazs Szep (HUN) safely through to chase leader
- Ten nations represented in Final with Todor Mihalev (BUL) carrying hosts' hopes

Valentin Prades of **France** roared into the Men's Final on the back of a stellar exhibition of his all-round talents on an exciting fourth day of UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia.

Prades (FRA), ranked 7th in the world, rushed to the head of a formidable field of leading contenders ahead of Super Saturday in the Bulgarian capital as he racked up 27 victories in Friday's Fencing Ranking Round.

That performance on the piste was enough to give Prades (FRA) a 35-point lead on reigning

Olympic champion and World No.1 **Joseph Choong** of **Great Britain** with **Balazs Szep** of **Hungary**, the World No.3, sure to be among those hunting down Prades (FRA) on Saturday afternoon.

Ten different nations and three continents will be represented by the 18 Men's finalists with Prades (FRA) leading a French quartet safely through Friday's Men's Semi-finals with **Christopher Patte** and **Pierre Dejardin** qualifying in Semi-final A and **Ugo Fleurot** battling through a tense Laser Run in Semi-final B.

Hungary will have three representatives with Szep (HUN) joined by **Richard Bereczki** and **Gergely Regos**, who claimed the last spot with a ninth-placed finish in Semi-final B, which was won by **Taishu Sato** of **Japan** with **Marvin Dogue** of **Germany** in second after Prades (FRA) had eased up.

Earlier Semi-final A had seen a home favourite cross the line first when **Todor Mihalev** of **Bulgaria** finished narrowly ahead of **Shuai Luo** of **China**. Sato (JPN) and Mihalev (BUL), each of whom claimed 24 victims in the Fencing Ranking Round, will be among the athletes closest behind Prades (FRA) when the Men's Final begins with **Jihun Lee** of **Korea**, who had 25 Fencing wins, first on the Frenchman's tail.

UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia continues tomorrow (May 13) with both the Men's and Women's Finals on 'Super Saturday', with the Mixed Relay concluding the competition on May 14.

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

The list of qualified athletes for the Men's Final is as follows:

Rank	Name	Nation	MP	Points
1	MIHALEV Todor	BUL	11	68
2	LUO Shuai	CHN	11	51
3	ZILLEKENS Christian	GER	11	49
4	PATTE Christopher	FRA	11	49
5	DEJARDIN Pierre	FRA	11	47
6	BERECZKI Richard	HUN	11	44
7	GRYCZ Marek	CZE	11	42
8	MOHAMED Moutaz	EGY	11	40
9	CHOONG Joseph	GBR	11	40
10	SATO Taishu	JPN	11	65
11	DOGUE Marvin Faly	GER	11	64
12	SZEP Balazs	HUN	11	63
13	PRADES Valentin	FRA	11	63
14	PILLAGE Myles	GBR	11	62
15	FLEUROT Ugo	FRA	11	61
16	HAMAD Eslam	EGY	11	61
17	LEE Jihun	KOR	11	61
18	REGOS Gergely	HUN	11	61