

30 MAY 2023

# UIPM 2023 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP FINAL: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

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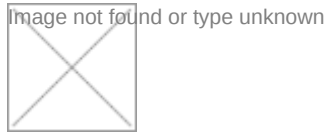
- Serapinaite (LTU) and Shaban (EGY) are top qualifiers for Ankara (TUR)
- Glittering array of past champions in the chase for Olympic places
- Who will be the first two pentathletes to qualify for Paris 2024?

There is a moment in every Olympic cycle when the reality of qualification is no longer somewhere on the horizon. It's here.

Four days from now in Ankara (TUR), two athletes will have earned their countries a direct qualification quota place for Modern Pentathlon at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

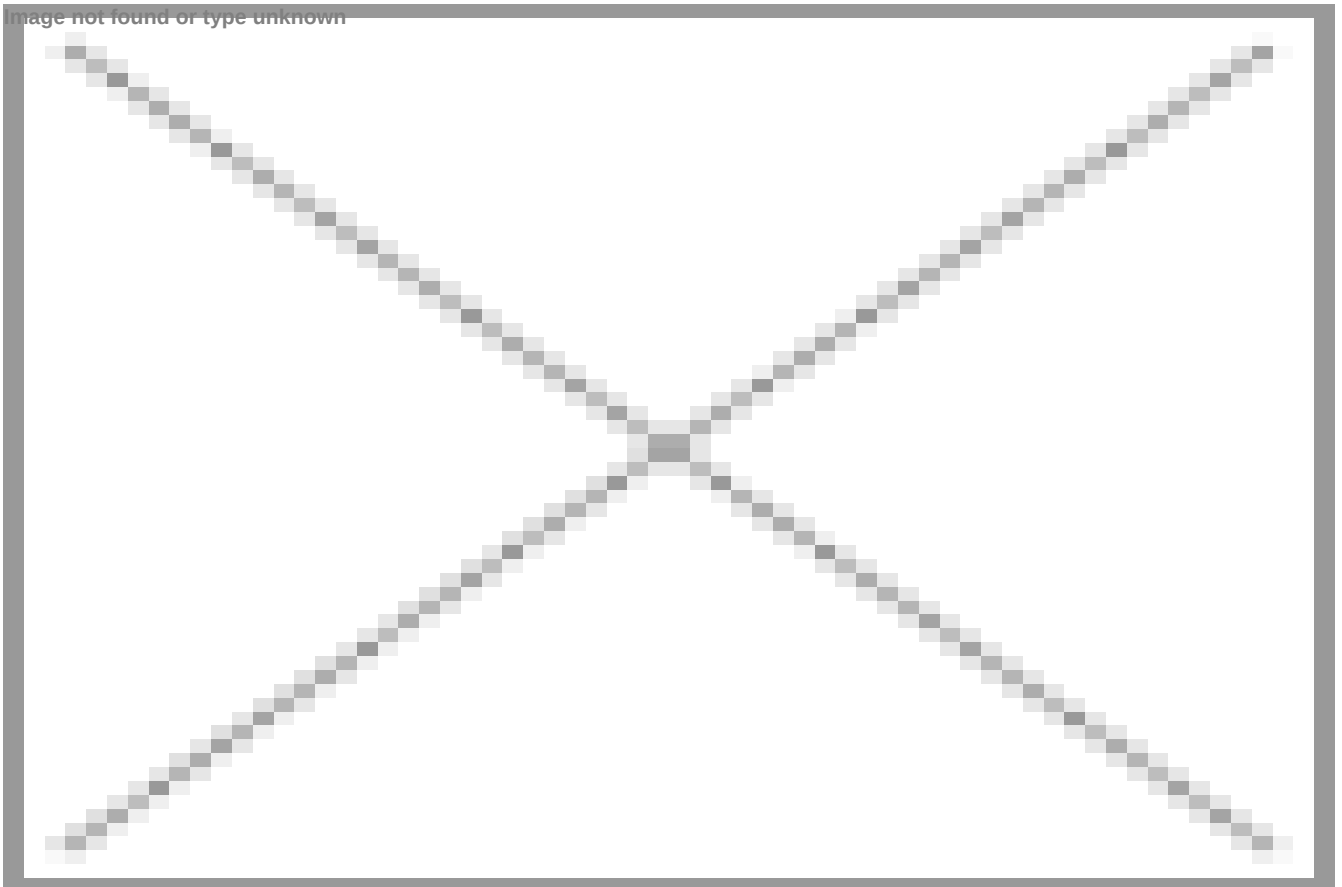
Success at the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final is the first of numerous opportunities to stake a claim to be on the start line in Versailles, but competition is fierce with only one female and one male athlete earning the accolade.

And there are dozens of athletes among the 72 qualifiers who are capable of winning if they can achieve peak performance on the day.



Turkish Airlines is the official airline of UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final Ankara. Visit the event page to find a discount code for travel to this competition.

### Ones to watch – Women



Two female athletes achieved the highest level of consistency during the regular season, enabling them to top the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup qualification rankings.

Thanks to her gold medal here in Ankara (TUR) and bronze in Sofia (BUL), **Ieva Serapinaite** of **Lithuania** scored 136 qualification points – one more than **Salma Abdelmaksoud** of **Egypt**, who won bronze in Cairo (EGY) and Budapest (HUN) and reached the Final in Ankara (TUR).

As the season wore on, Serapinaite (LTU) and the rest of the field sensed the growing threat of her team-mates, Laser Run specialists **Gintare Venckauskaite** (LTU) and **Laura Asadauskaite** (LTU) – who secured Tokyo 2020 Olympic qualification by winning this event in 2019 in Tokyo (JPN).

They are likely to be part of the storyline this week, along with 2022 world champion **Elena Micheli** of **Italy**, although her form – 4th in Cairo (EGY) and 17th in Budapest (HUN) – is perhaps not yet where she would like it to be.

Speaking of form, **Blanka Guzi** of **Hungary** could be a contender after her world-record winning performance on home soil in Budapest (HUN), which she followed with a 7th in Sofia (BUL). And **Kerenza Bryson** of **Great Britain** comes into the Final on the back of a double gold in Sofia (BUL), making her a real contender alongside world No.4 **Jessica Varley** (GBR), last year's silver medallist.

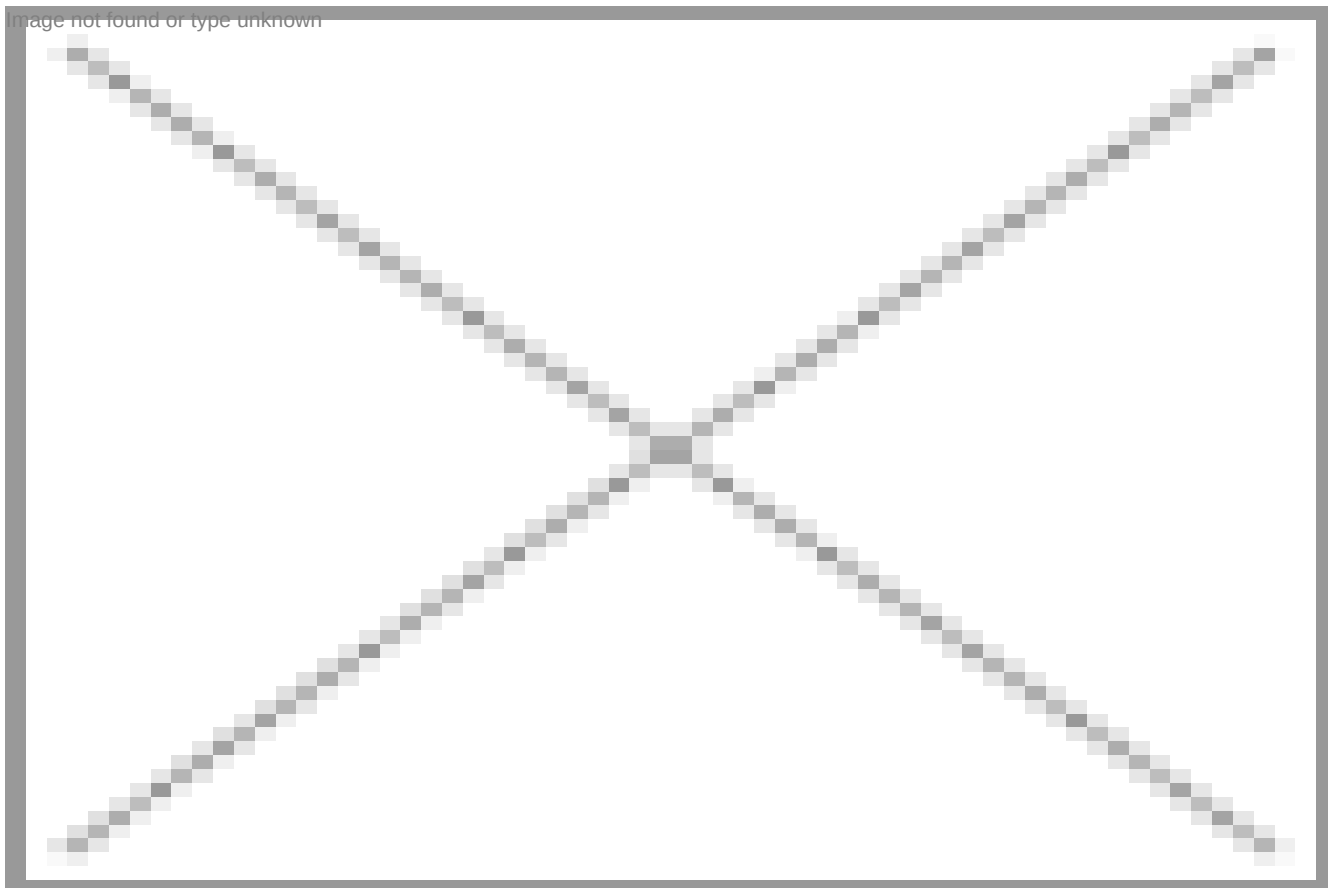
The defending champion this week is **Elodie Clouvel** of **France**, who started the season with silver in Cairo (EGY) and followed up with 6th in Ankara (TUR). Like two-time World Cup winner **Marie Oteiza** (FRA), if the world No.2 can steady her nerves in the shooting range she could be hard to beat.

Local favourite **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** is another top-10 athlete lurking in the field, along with **Olivia Green** (GBR), while 20-year-old **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea** leads the charge of the next generation – and Asia – after her silver medal in Sofia (BUL) capped a strong season.

From the Western Hemisphere, **Mariana Arceo** of **Mexico** reached the top eight in the qualification rankings and, besides the individual event, will be a big contender for gold in the Mixed Relay if selected.

Visit the UIPM website to see the full UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup rankings for women.

## **Ones to watch – Men**



Few athletes are able to overcome the handicap of a poor Fencing performance in Modern Pentathlon, but for those who excel on the piste, the challenge is more about learning to defend a lead.

Accomplished fencer **Mohanad Shaban** (EGY) showed admirable improvement in this regard during the regular season. Having been caught in Laser Run to finish 4th in the season-opener in Cairo (EGY), he responded with remarkable maturity to win gold in Ankara (TUR) and silver in Budapest (HUN), giving him a colossal 163 qualification points.

By contrast, an athlete who tends to operate by stealth is 2nd-ranked **Martin Vlach** of **Czech Republic**, the Laser Run world record-holder who took bronze in Cairo (EGY) and Budapest (HUN) either side of a 5th place in Ankara (TUR).

With 148 points, Vlach (CZE) arrives here just ahead of **Valentin Prades** (FRA), gold medallist in Sofia (BUL) and an athlete with supreme pedigree having won the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final three times – in 2013, 2017 and 2021.

Speaking of pedigree, it's hard not to view the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and 2022 world champion **Joseph Choong** (GBR) as the men's gold-medal favourite this week. Even though his last visit to Ankara (TUR) did not yield a vintage performance, a 4th place in Sofia (BUL) suggested ominous momentum.

There are a few athletes so consistent in their application of the five disciplines that when all goes well, they are simply unbeatable. Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist, defending World Cup Final champion, world No.1 and world record-holder **Woongtae Jun** (KOR) certainly belongs in that category, as demonstrated by his awesome gold in Budapest (HUN).

So who else has what it takes to scale the men's podium on Super Saturday? There is a long list

of contenders including **Valentin Belaud** (FRA), team-mates **Csaba Bohm** and **Balazs Szep** (HUN) and the veteran Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist, **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** of **Ukraine** and Sofia (BUL) silver medallist **Taishu Sato** of **Japan**.

Visit the UIPM website to see the full UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup rankings for men.

## Road to Paris 2024

The first direct qualification quota places for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games will be won on 3 June – the individual finals day at the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final.

There are another 14 competitions taking place in 2023 and 2024 where points count towards the dream of competing in the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad in Paris (FRA). Discover the Modern Pentathlon qualification pathway.

## President's welcome

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Türkiye has become a very dependable partner in our global sports movement and this week Ankara hosts the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final for the second successive year with a wonderful Pentathlon Arena where spectators will be able to watch all five disciplines in the same venue.

"The format will be an exact replica of the Olympic Games Paris 2024 Modern Pentathlon competition, enabling athletes and coaches to precisely rehearse their actions and routines.

"I would like to thank the Turkish Modern Pentathlon Federation for arranging this showpiece competition, as well as the upcoming UIPM 2023 U19 World Championships in Istanbul where we will see the exciting integration of Obstacle into Modern Pentathlon.

"For now, it is all about the elite competition here in Ankara, where 72 of the world's most versatile athletes are competing at the highest level in the historic Modern Pentathlon disciplines of Riding, Fencing, Swimming and Laser Run in the hope of making their Olympic dreams come true.

"Once again, I ask athletes to remember their responsibility to compete in a spirit of fair play, as our founder Pierre de Coubertin envisaged, and respect the Olympic values as we together enjoy the glory of our wonderful sport of Modern Pentathlon. Faster, Stronger, Higher ... Together."

## Watch and follow

Live coverage of the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final is available to subscribers on UIPM.TV where annual packages cost €14.99.

The competition begins on May 31 with the Fencing Ranking Round – visit the UIPM website or download the "UIPM Central" app to keep track of competition results.

The Semi-finals take place on June 1-2, followed by the Women's Final and Men's Final on June 3 and the Mixed Relay on June 4.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram throughout the season for additional

content.

## **Competition schedule**

### **UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final**

*Times denote start of UIPM.TV live coverage (CEST)*

May 31: Fencing Ranking Round

June 1: Women's Semi-Final A (9am) | Women's Semi-final B (3pm)

June 2: Men's Semi-Final A (9am) | Men's Semi-final B (3pm)

June 3: Women's Final (9am) | Men's Final (3pm)

June 4: Mixed Relay (11.30am)