

16 JUL 2023

# UIPM 2023 U17 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: GOLDEN GLORY FOR EGYPT AND FRANCE



ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT: July 15, 2023 – **Egypt** and **France** savoured gold as the curtain fell on a Finals day of epic drama at the UIPM 2023 U17 World Championships.

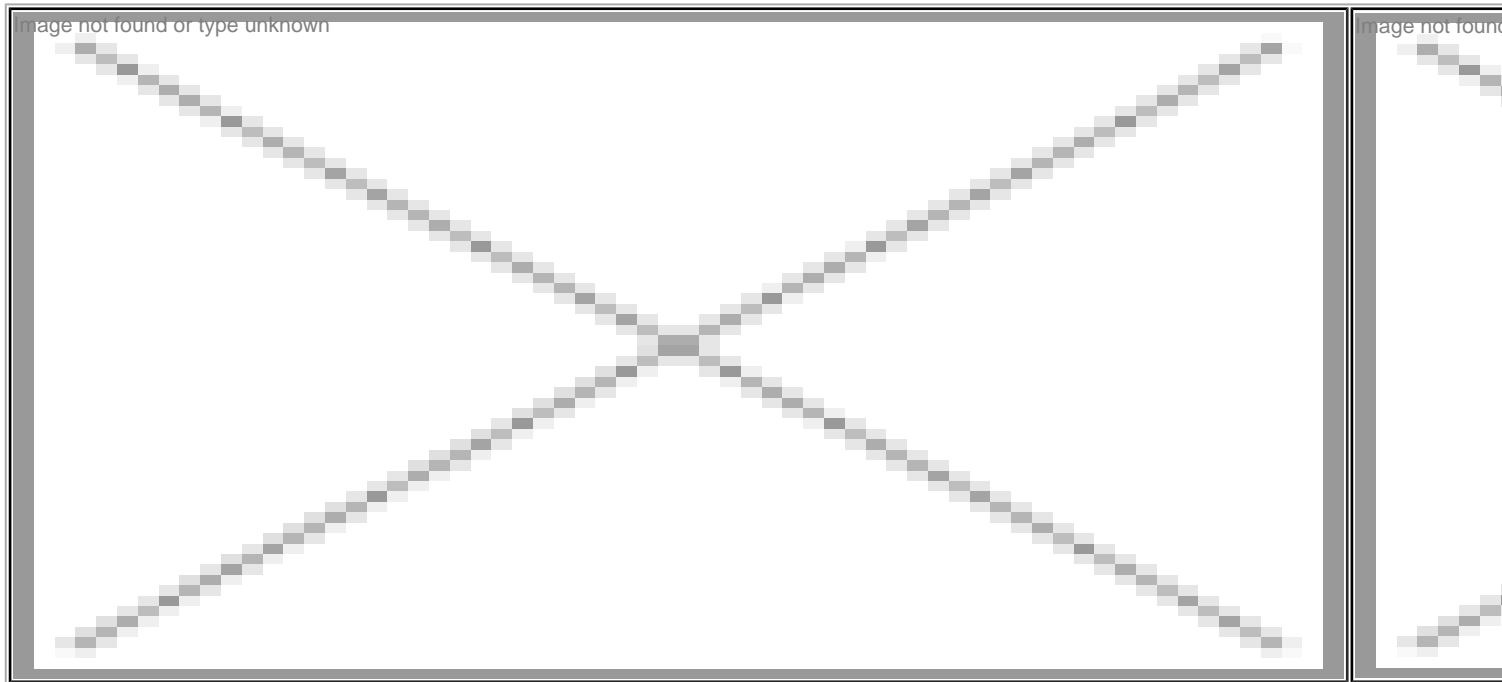
**Farida Khalil** (EGY) drew the love of the crowd and made history as the first Youth athlete to become individual world champion in a full Modern Pentathlon.

The impressive Khalil (EGY) crossed the line 15sec ahead of the competition in the Women's Final, with **Nadja Farmand** of **Germany** and **Annachiara Allara** of **Italy** claiming silver and bronze respectively. The Egyptians doubled up with team gold with Germany taking silver and **Hungary** bronze.

An incredibly dramatic Men's Final followed in the evening session at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport, where **Mathis Issaka Idelarge** (FRA) won a four-way sprint to the finish line to become world champion.

Idelarge (FRA) prevailed but only by 1sec from silver medallist **Bartosz Szmytko** of **Poland**, who in turn finished 1sec ahead of **Tarek Sadek** (EGY) whose team-mate **Mohamed Hassan** (EGY) narrowly missed out on a medal. Egypt unsurprisingly added another team gold as **Ukraine** (silver) and Poland (bronze) joined them on the podium at the end of a late night in Alexandria (EGY).

Athletes from 26 nations are taking part in the first global youth competition to feature a five-discipline Pentathlon, run according to the sequence of Fencing/Obstacle/Swimming/Laser Run that will be adopted at all levels of Modern Pentathlon after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.



### Women's Final

Farmand (GER) was the standout performer in Fencing, claiming an exceptional 30 victories with only five defeats in the Ranking Round to take a 20-point lead into Super Saturday. And with team-mates **Hannah Dicks** (GER) and **Amelie Treib** (GER) lurking after success in the Bonus Round, Farmand (GER) proved her mettle again with victory in the final bout to protect her lead.

Khalil (EGY) also scored well in Fencing (24V/11D) and made some ground on the leaders with a 5th place in Obstacle – which was dominated for the second time this week by **Amaya El-Masri** (GER) as the only athlete to finish the course in less than 30sec. **Diana Rajinckas** of Hungary and **Alessia Canto** (ITA) were next-fastest over the sprint course.

Over to the Swimming pool and it was here that Khalil (EGY) made a major move towards overall supremacy, with the day's best time of 2min 14.48sec, a fraction faster than **Wakana Uchiyama** of Japan with **Zofia Wyczolek** of Poland timing 2:16.65.

Laser Run began with Farmand (GER) holding a 13sec lead over local favourite Farida (EGY), with Dicks (GER) a further 20sec behind. And it was all about the top two as they jostled for that coveted gold medal, Farida (EGY) eventually holding her nerve to seal an unforgettable win on home soil. Allara (ITA) flashed around the course in 10:06.10 to clinch a surprise bronze with a time only bettered by **Ganah Elgindy** (EGY), who finished 5th after a 10:01.59.

image not found or type unknown

image not found

### Men's Final

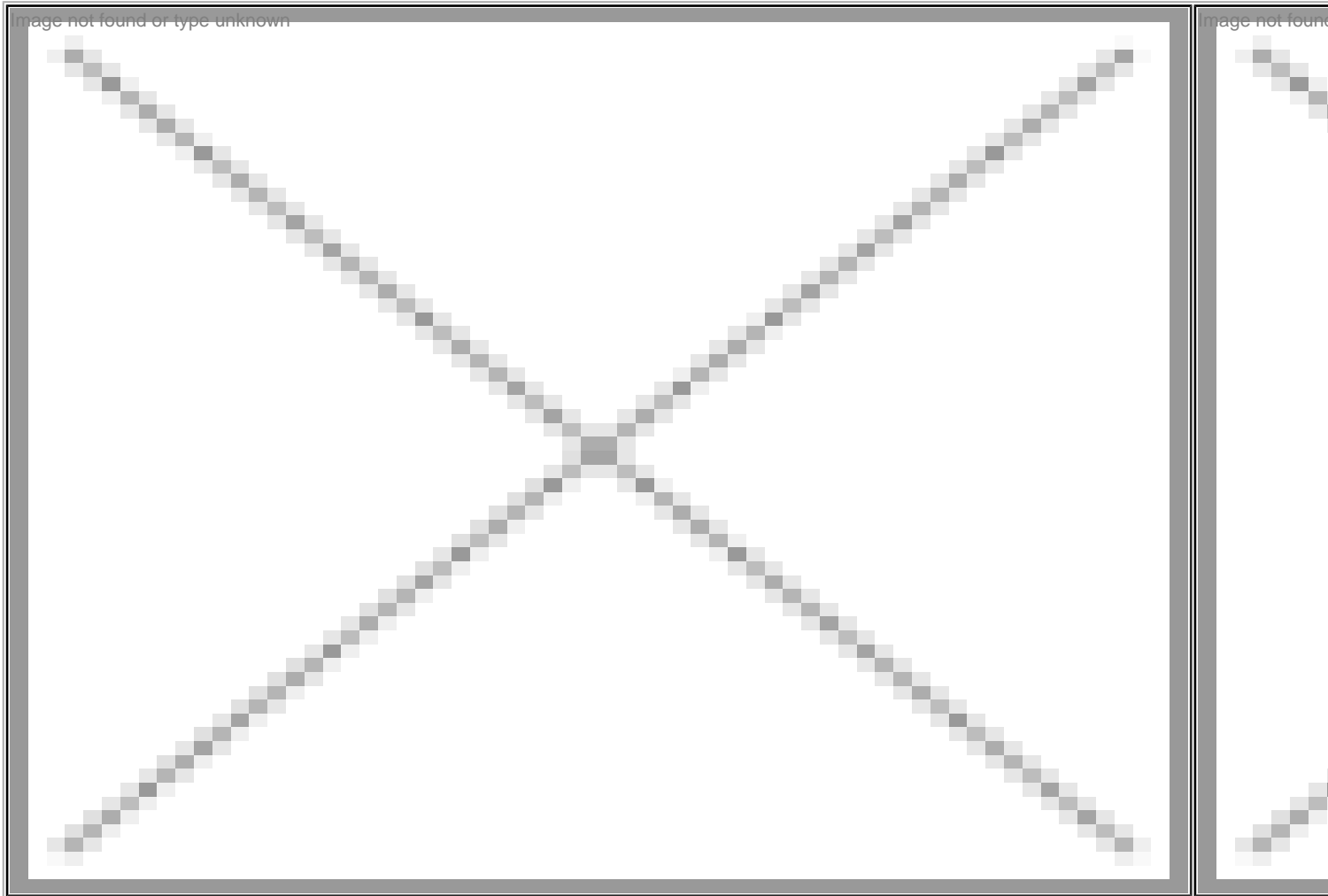
**Jacob Li** of **Canada** was the king of the piste with 26 victories giving him pole position in the Ranking Round and a 10-point advantage over local athletes Hassan (EGY) and **Sief Soliman** (EGY), on 24V/11D. Hassan (EGY) had the last laugh in the Bonus Round, reducing the lead of Li (CAN) to six points.

Slippery conditions caused by high humidity on the Obstacle course meant that Swimming came next, and Szmytke (POL) obliterated the field with an outstanding 1:58.08 – a time that would be competitive in a senior men's final. Team-mate **Krystian Trepczyk** (POL) and **Oleksandr Klymenko** of **Ukraine** were next-fastest.

Several exceptional Obstacle performances followed, with Li (CAN) maintaining his podium ambitions with 27.25 and **Franciszek Dubrawski** (POL) timing 26.49. There was no doubt about the day's Obstacle star, however, as **Platon Iefremenko** (competing as a neutral under the UIPM flag) scorched the course with a stunning 24.22.

Such was the variety of skills and specialties on show that there was a bunch start at the front of the Laser Run, with Klymenko (UKR) following leaders Szmytke (POL) and Hassan (EGY) over the start line just 1sec later.

The anticipated epic duly ensued, but it was 5th-placed starter Idelarge (FRA) who pounced having quietly stalked his prey all day. His time of 9:01.70 was only bettered by an exceptional 8:49.60 by **Reuben Cawley** of **Great Britain**, ending a day that showed not only the diversity of global talent at this level but the rich potential of the new-look Modern Pentathlon to be even more exciting than previous editions.



### Medallists' reaction

Women's world champion Khalil (EGY) said: "It's a great feeling and I thank God for this great achievement. I've been working hard for about two years to achieve this.

"I took it one step at a time. Whenever I finished one discipline, I focused on the next one and never told myself that the competition was over, even if I was doing well.

"I am very thankful for the inclusion of Obstacle. I love Riding, I love horses, but I think with Riding I would have a very long way to prepare for it and train for it. Obstacle is very easy and quick for me to adapt, and I feel that having five disciplines at this age gave me an advantage.

"I'm happy that my family was here and all of their efforts paid off."

Silver medallist Farmand (EGY) added: "I'm so happy, I can't believe it. It's so nice. Fencing was really good, amazing, and I was really happy with my Obstacle time and then Swimming was OK. In Laser Run, shooting could be better but it was OK.

"It was stressful and I tried to stay concentrating, but next time I will try to do better. I will be in

Istanbul for the U19 World Championships and we will see what comes next.

“In Germany we used to go to a hall to train for Obstacle, but we didn’t do it so many times and we will learn it more.”

Allara (ITA) said: “I’m really happy because I didn’t think it would happen and I don’t know what more to ask.

“During the Fencing [Bonus Round], better than during the Ranking Round, I competed at the full extent of my abilities and I am proud of myself. In Obstacle, I improved compared to the last time [in the Women’s Qualification]. In Swimming, I maintained my average time and I gave it all during the Laser Run.

“During the Laser Run, I wasn’t thinking [about the others]. I was just concentrating on my shooting and running without looking at the others.

“I like the Obstacle discipline, I think I can improve but I like the course. Obviously, my dream is to compete in the Olympic Games but for now I just want to keep doing what I am doing and have fun.”

Men’s champion Idelarge (FRA) said: “At first, I was very happy when I crossed the finish line but I couldn’t really celebrate it because something hurt so much that I had to stop and it stopped the euphoria.

“Looking back, I realise that what I accomplished is grand and I am very, very proud of it. It’s really important for me, it’s something that represents a lot of work so it’s a crazy feeling.

“During the sprint, I felt strong pain but I told myself that I was so close and that I couldn’t stop and I fought with myself because I wanted to stop and fall down but I kept on running and I pushed until I reached the finish line.

“During the Obstacle discipline, I felt stressed because we don’t know it very well and I couldn’t work it a lot. I find it fun but we didn’t master it yet and I like to master all the disciplines.

“I won’t compete during the rest of the season, I will take a break until next season. My dream is to get a gold medal at the Olympic Games.”

Silver medallist Szmytke (POL) added: “I feel good and I’m in shock because I did not expect a medal in the Final, because I started training for Fencing in October. That’s not much time to learn, but it was much better than I expected.

“In the sprint I was so exhausted, I didn’t feel anything. I just said ‘go ahead and finish as best you can’, I didn’t think about it during the race.

“I will probably go to Istanbul but it depends on my coach. I think I will go, and after that I don’t know. It’s possible I will end Pentathlon and go to Swimming.”

Sadek (EGY) said: “I’m feeling very proud. I’d love to thank my coaches and my mother. At the beginning of the season it was so hard, I had a bad ankle injury, but thank God with all my doctors’ and coaches’ help, I came to the World Championships and did my best.

“The last 600m was so hard – a very good competition between all the athletes, but thank God I came 3rd and I would like to congratulate all my fellow athletes.

“I think running is the best sport in Pentathlon. I broke my 200m record in Swimming, and Obstacles too, and I did very well in Fencing.

“My dream is to compete in the Los Angeles Olympics 2028. Obstacle was so much fun, and it felt so good to be competing.”

#### Watch and follow

The UIPM 2023 Pentathlon U17 World Championships, which concludes tomorrow (July 16) with the Mixed Relay, is the first of three UIPM Pentathlon World Championships to feature the new-look Modern Pentathlon this year.

Later in July, Istanbul (TUR) will host the U19 equivalent and in September, U22 athletes will gather in Druskininkai (LTU) for the UIPM Junior World Championships.

Visit the UIPM website or download “UIPM Central” from your app store for all competition results.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram throughout the season for additional content.

Image not found or type unknown

