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UIPM 2023 U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: SWITZERLAND AND KOREA SAVOUR RELAY GLORY



Twin sisters from **Switzerland** and a male duo from **Korea** became the first-ever Under 19 world champions in a full Modern Pentathlon including the new Obstacle discipline.

A thrilling Women's Relay on the opening night of the UIPM 2023 U19 World Championships was won by 17-year-olds **Florina** and **Katharina Jurt** (SUI) after a tight contest with silver medallists **Annachiara Allara** and **Teresa Gioia** and bronze medallists **Gabrielle Holland** and **Susie Roberts** of Great Britain.

Earlier, Korea returned to the top of the podium after drawing a blank at the recent U17 World Championships with an impressive Men's Relay gold for **Juchan Lee** and **Hanseo Cho**. Silver went to **Denis Agavrioloie** and **Matteo Bovenzi** (ITA) while **France** claimed bronze thanks to **Karl Furderer** and **Nathan Dupuy-Leriche**.

Teenage athletes from 34 nations are competing in Istanbul (TUR) and pioneering the new five-discipline sequence of Fencing/Obstacle/Swimming/Laser Run that will be adopted at all levels of

Modern Pentathlon after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Medallists' reaction

Women's Relay gold medallist Florina Jurt (SUI) said: "I'm so happy, we gave everything to win. I love the new discipline, I liked Riding but the change is really great.

"I think my dream is the same as all other athletes – we want to go to the Olympics and do our best."

Katharina Jurt (SUI) added: "I'm feeling overwhelmed because I never thought it would be possible for us to be better, because our Fencing was not that good. We were 3rd last.

"After the Obstacle, we won and we changed many places, I think six, and then the Laser Run is our discipline. It was a nice feeling to run in this beautiful weather, and it was a beautiful end.

"I love the change, too. We have ridden for a long time, since we were little, and we liked Riding but Obstacle is good for us because we are great in the discipline. We trained hard to get that far in the discipline.

"To win the Olympics in Los Angeles is a great goal for us, and together it will be a long and cool journey."

Men's Relay gold medallists Lee (KOR) and Cho (KOR) said in a joint interview: "We are very happy about the medal today. Very excited.

"The Obstacle discipline was very exciting, although hard. It was our first time competing in Obstacle, we trained a little in Korea. Our dream is the Olympic gold medal, in Los Angeles.

"Thank you to our Team Korea coaches, and our families too."

Men's Relay

An impressive 18 nations lined up in the Men's Relay and despite performing well with 24 victories, Korea (Lee/Cho) were out-performed by **Quinn Schulz and Connor Chow of Canada**, who top-scored with 25V/9D. **Mexico (Angel Charbel Martinez & Jorge Hernandez)** notched 22V/12D. Korea (Lee/Cho) came out on top with four additional points in the Bonus Round, where **Uzbekistan (Sadriddin Kobiljonov & Aziz Muminov)** stood out with four successes.

There was a clear winner in Obstacle as Italy (Agavrioloie/Bovenzi) became the only team to break the 1min barrier with their excellent combined time of 58.63sec. Host nation **Türkiye (Baris Dogu Celik & Erkan Altunay)** and Korea (Lee/Cho) were next-fastest over the course.

On to Swimming and Italy (Agavrioloie/Bovenzi) continued their podium advance with another standout performance. With 1:48.93 they were more than 5sec quicker than **Egypt (Marwam Allam & Yassin Elhady)** and **Japan (Yousuke Tomita & Keigo Ito)**.

An intriguing Laser Run brought the Final to a close and Korea (Lee/Cho) finally prevailed by 11sec over Italy (Agavrioloie/Bovenzi), with France (Furderer/Dupuy-Leriche) finishing a comfortable 3rd ahead of Japan (Tomita/Ito) and Mexico (Martinez/Hernandez), whose time of 12:26.70 was comfortably the best.

Women's Relay

With 16 nations lining up, it was **Elisa Ramos** and **Isabella Zetina** of **Guatemala** who narrowly emerged on top in Fencing. Their Ranking Round score of 18V/12D was matched by both Germany (**Sarah Dicks** & **Josefine Unterberger**) and Egypt (**Nouran Beheiry** & **Habiba Ramadan**), but six points in the Bonus Round gave Guatemala (Ramos/Zetina) the edge overall.

Three countries demonstrated a superior mastery of the Obstacle course and it was Switzerland (Jurt/Jurt) who came out on top with a combined time of 1:21.86, with **Czech Republic** (**Katerina Vanova** & **Alexandra Fernandes**) less than 1sec behind and **Hungary** (**Orsolya Varga** and **Mira Mecsnober**) also very quick.

There was no sign of any team achieving overall dominance as **Poland** (**Katarzyna Debska** & **Malgorzata Karbownik**) proved fastest in Swimming with a time of 2:10.27 and both Great Britain (Holland/Roberts) and **Korea** (**Yuri Kim** & **Nayeon Kim**) in hot pursuit.

The starting leaders in Laser Run were Czech Republic (Vanova/Fernandes), Poland (Debska/Karbownik) and Hungary (Varga/Mecsnober) but the Eastern European challenge was overturned by three exceptional performances. Switzerland (Jurt/Jurt) timed 13:37.10 to win gold by 4sec from Italy (Allara/Gioia, 13:57.50) with Great Britain (Holland/Roberts) timing 13:54.70 to deny the Czech duo a medal.

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2023 U19 World Championships runs from July 25-30, continuing on Wednesday, July 26 with the Women's Individual Qualification. The Men's Individual Qualification follows on July 27.

Thirty-six female and 36 male athletes then compete in the Fencing Ranking Round on July 28 before completing the Individual Finals the next day. The Mixed Relay closes the competition on Sunday July 30.

Visit the UIPM website or download the newly-updated “UIPM Central” from your app store to keep track of live results throughout the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon U19 World Championships.

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