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UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP BUDAPEST: FIRST TASTE OF GOLD IS SWEET FOR GNEDTCHIK (AIN) AND ELGENDY (EGY)

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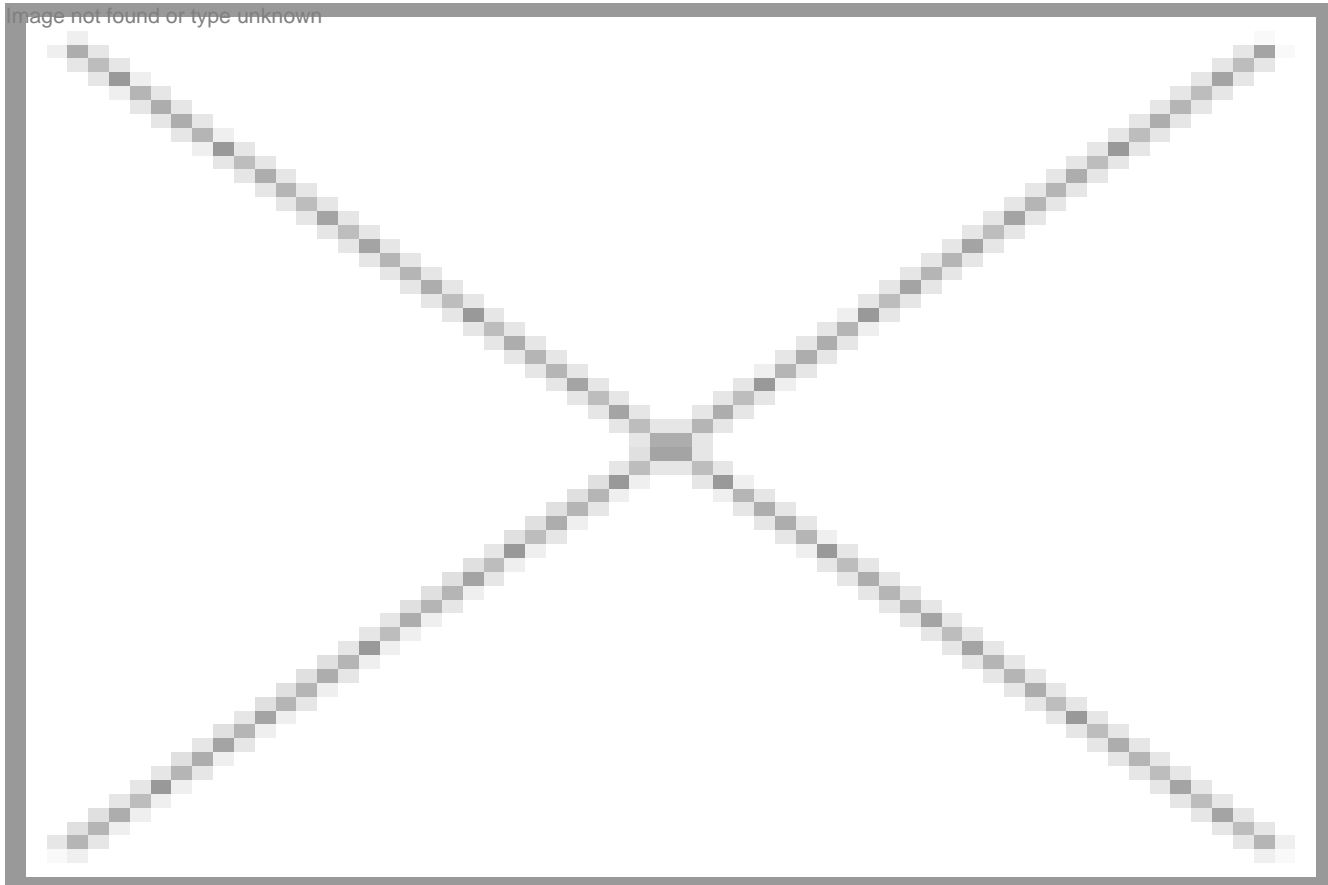


- Independent neutral athlete, 20, announces her talent on world stage
- Second consecutive silver for Seong (KOR) as Micheli (ITA) earns bronze
- Mohamed Elgendy (EGY) wins epic gold ahead of Szep (HUN) and Shaban (EGY)

Next-generation athletes **Mariya Gnedtchik** (AIN) and **Mohamed Elgendy** of **Egypt** lit up Super Saturday with thrilling maiden victories in front of a packed crowd at UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Budapest.

Gnedtchik (AIN), 20, erased a 28sec deficit in Laser Run to grasp control of the Women's Final, the independent neutral athlete securing her first medal in a major UIPM competition and taking a massive stride towards qualification for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

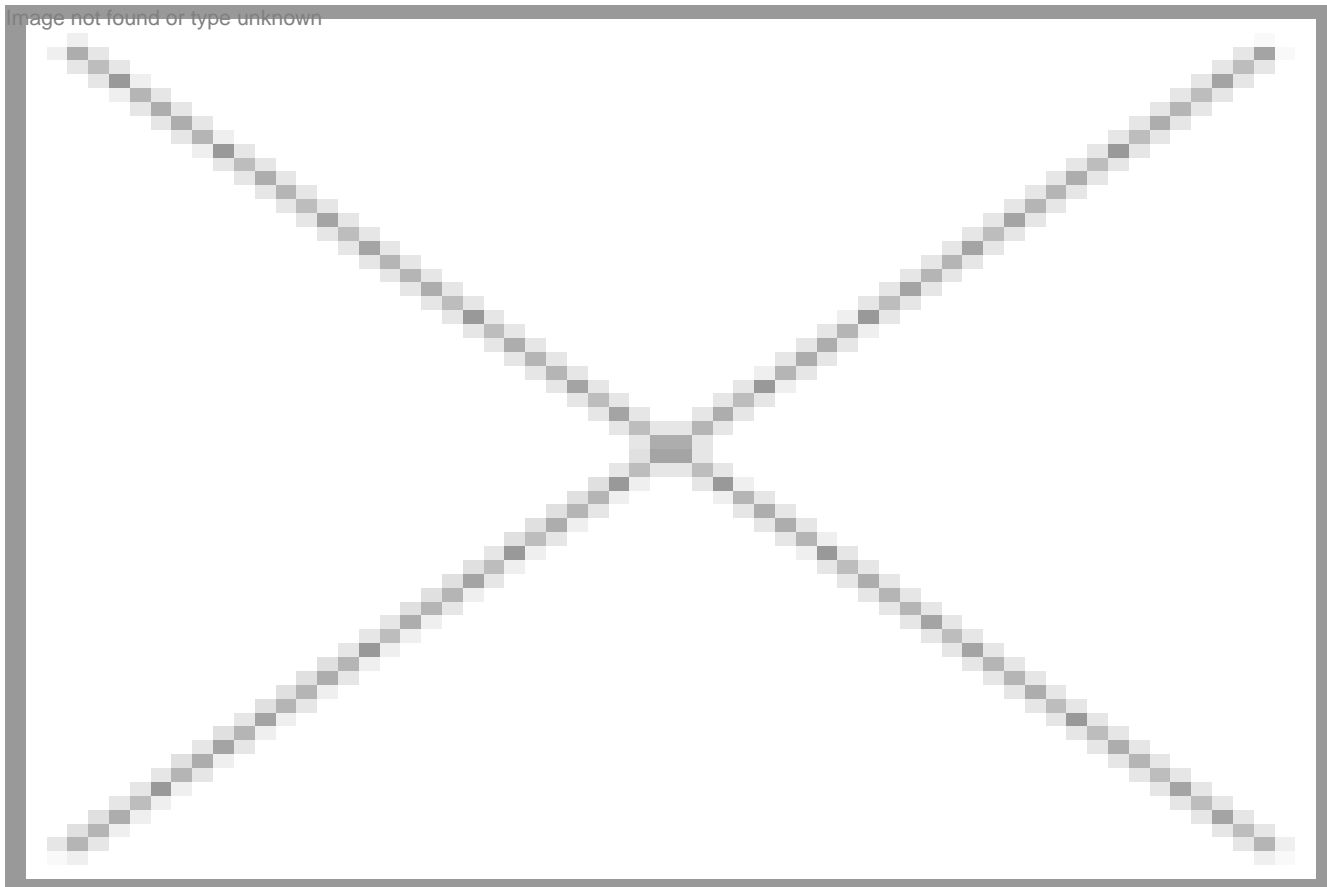
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A second consecutive silver was confirmation of the form of another precocious athlete, **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea**, while there was relief and redemption for two-time world champion **Elena Micheli** of **Italy** as she came from behind to win her first medal of the Olympic season.

The Men's Final was even more eventful as Laser Run specialists Elgendy (EGY) and **Balazs Szep** of **Hungary** emerged from the pack to stun the leaders and win gold and silver respectively in an epic finish, with **Mohanad Shaban** (EGY) adding yet another medal for the North African powerhouse nation.

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Egypt has now won six of the nine medals in Men's Finals during this Pentathlon World Cup season, a treasure chest of glory shared by four athletes – and a fifth team member, **Ahmed Hamed** (EGY), finished in 4th place today as Egypt and Hungary filled the entire top six.

Medallists' reaction

Women's silver medallist Seong (KOR) said: "In World Cup Ankara I won a silver medal and again in this competition I won a silver medal. I'm very happy but there was a little bit missing from my shooting.

"I will try to win the next competition. It's a very difficult season and physically I'm very tired, but I will go back to Korea and rest before the next World Cup, the World Cup Final and the World Championships."

Bronze medallist Micheli (ITA) said: "It has been quite a difficult period, I came through an injury so it has been tough. All of us in this competition were near to the podium zone, so it was quite hard to imagine what it would be like to start in 5th place with such great athletes behind me and in front of me.

"It was a surprise for me to end up in 3rd, so I'm really happy. Our sport is complicated with lots of different probabilities, but I can feel right now that I'm in the place where I belong and where I want to stay.

"I'm really happy and I need to thank all my coaches and my staff, who are always behind me and helping me."

Men's champion Elgendy (EGY) said: "I'm so happy about this result. I have been training for such

a moment.

“In the last two World Cups I was not able to get a podium due to the Riding and a mistake in the shooting. I am so happy with this medal.

“At the beginning of the Laser Run I didn’t consider that I could get gold, or even a medal, because it was so hard during the race. I was closing and closing, so I’m so happy that I did it – the last 600m was so hard for me.

“I’m sharing a room with my brother Ahmed and I’m so happy to get a medal. It’s my first medal in a World Cup and it’s a gold medal. I was just waiting for this moment for two years, and finally I get it.”

Silver medallist Szep (HUN) added: “My shooting was perfect, I think I had three mistakes so it was very good for me. The running was very hard so I’m very happy.

“It’s my third time competing here in Hungary and the first two were very bad. I was hoping that the third would be good and it’s the best.”

Bronze medallist Shaban (EGY) said: “It was a hard race today. The Egyptian team has so much competition with each other, and the Hungarians are so strong.

“It was a hard race in the Laser Run, and until the last race we didn’t know who would win the competition.

“Back to the podium but I don’t feel happy, because I can perform better than I did in this race. Maybe the shooting was too bad today, and maybe in the next competition it will be all good.”

Women’s Final

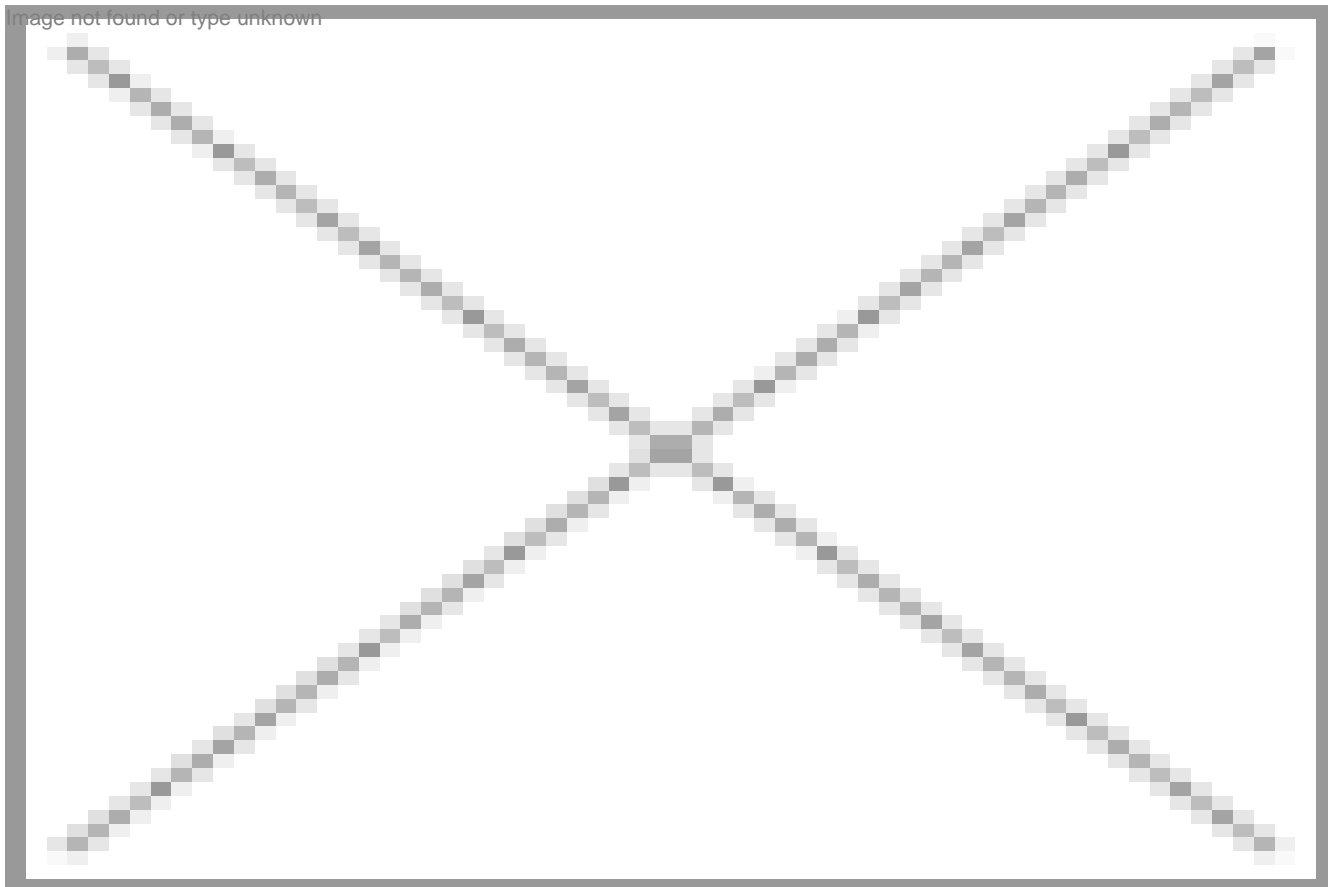
Riding

With a challenging course and a time limit of 1min 2sec, athletes knew they were facing a serious test of their equestrian skills and Micheli (ITA) was the first to pass the examination, going clear with only one time penalty for a score of 299.

Ilke Ozyuksel of **Türkiye** and **Blanka Bauer** (HUN) also went clear, and **Elodie Clouvel** of **France** incurred one knockdown but became the first to go under 1:02. In front of her home crowd, **Michelle Gulyas** (HUN) looked tense but escaped major damage with a 284.

The last two riders had the opportunity to distance themselves from the pack, but Gnedtchik (AIN) dropped 21 points and Seong (KOR) 15, seemingly leaving the competition wide open.

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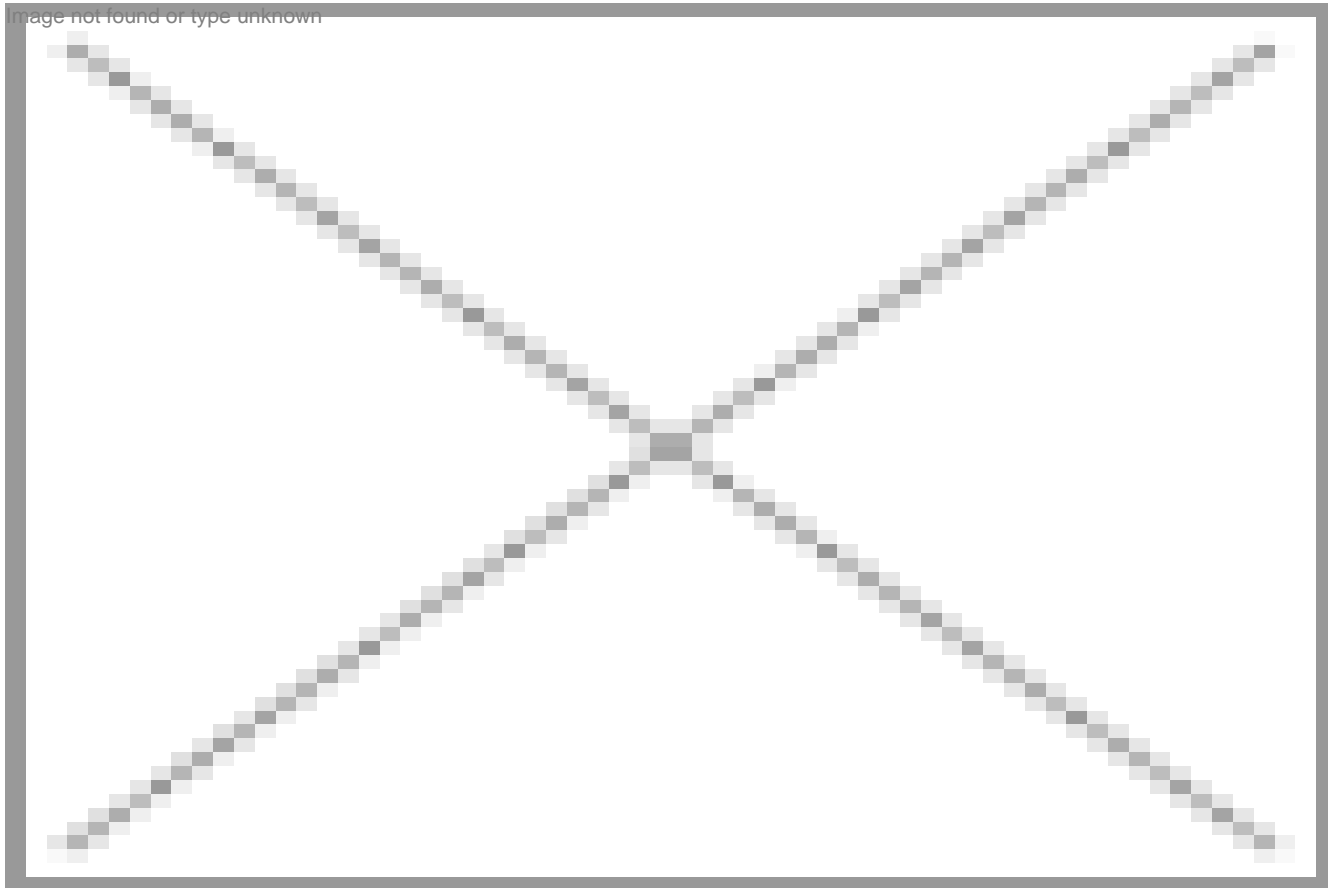
Fencing

With an impressive 26 victories and eight defeats, two 20-year-old athletes – Seong (KOR) and Gnedtchik (AIN) – demonstrated their competitive maturity in the Fencing Ranking Round.

With a score of 24V/10D, Gulyas (HUN) made sure to keep pressure on the leaders, while Clouvel (FRA) and Ozyuksel (TUR) also went over the 20V mark.

The top performer in the Bonus Round was **Olivia Green** of **Great Britain**, but there were no major gains in the top half of the leaderboard and Seong (KOR) extended her overall lead slightly by winning the four available points for defeating Gnedtchik (AIN) in the final bout.

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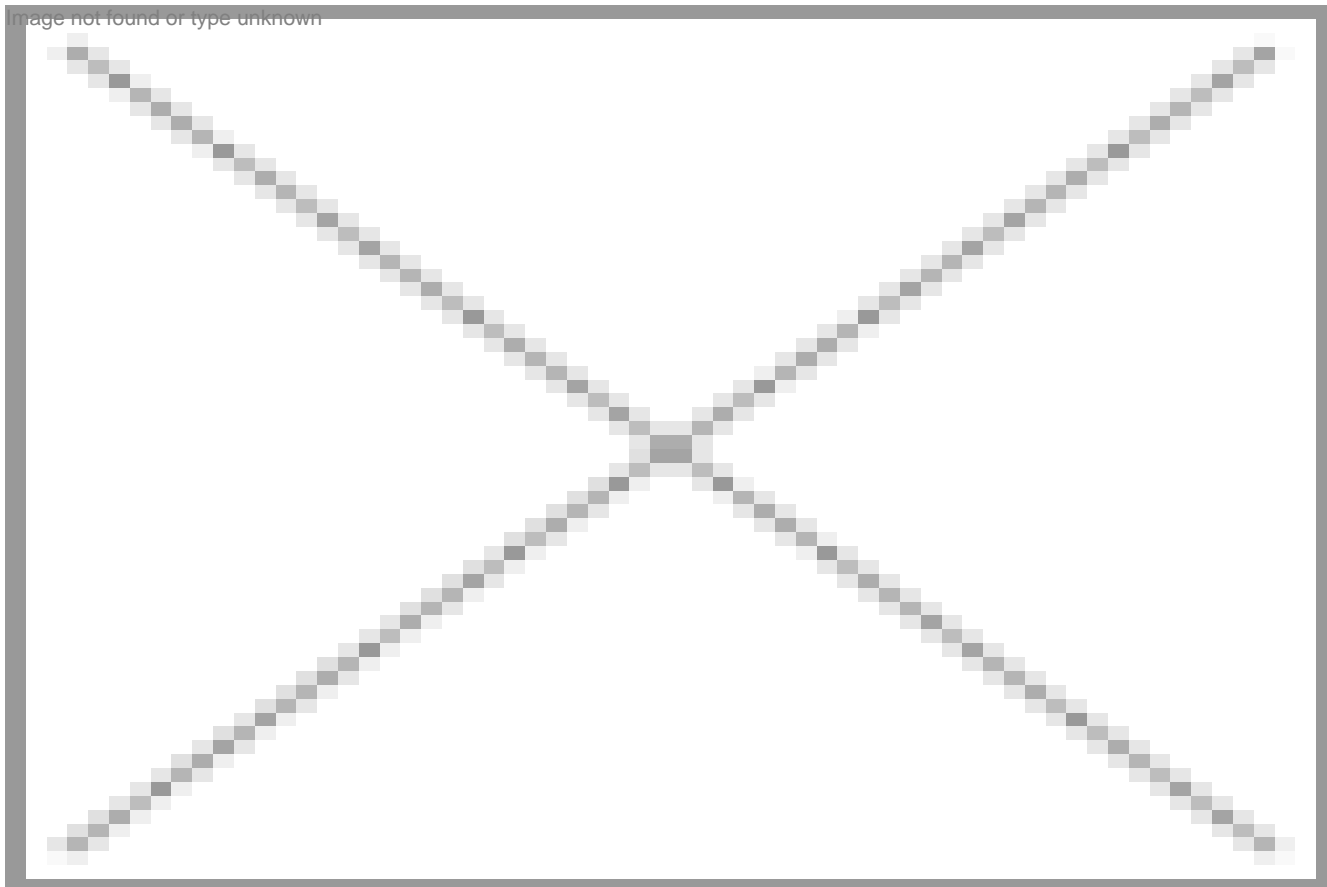


Swimming

The race to the podium became even more intriguing after Swimming, with Gulyas (HUN), Clouvel (FRA) and Micheli (ITA) moving into 2nd, 3rd and 5th place overall respectively and Gnedtchik (AIN) losing a lot of ground with the slowest swim of the day.

Gulyas (HUN) was fastest in the pool by 2sec, timing 2:09.12 ahead of Micheli (ITA) in 2:11.19. But Seong (KOR) refused to let the gap widen too much, preserving a 7sec overall lead to take into Laser Run.

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Laser Run

Seong (KOR) went out hard on the opening lap to extend her lead to 14sec, followed by a solid shoot, but Gnedtchik (AIN) was even quicker and immediately looked decisive on the range, moving from 8th into a battle for 3rd with **Veronika Novotna** of **Czech Republic**.

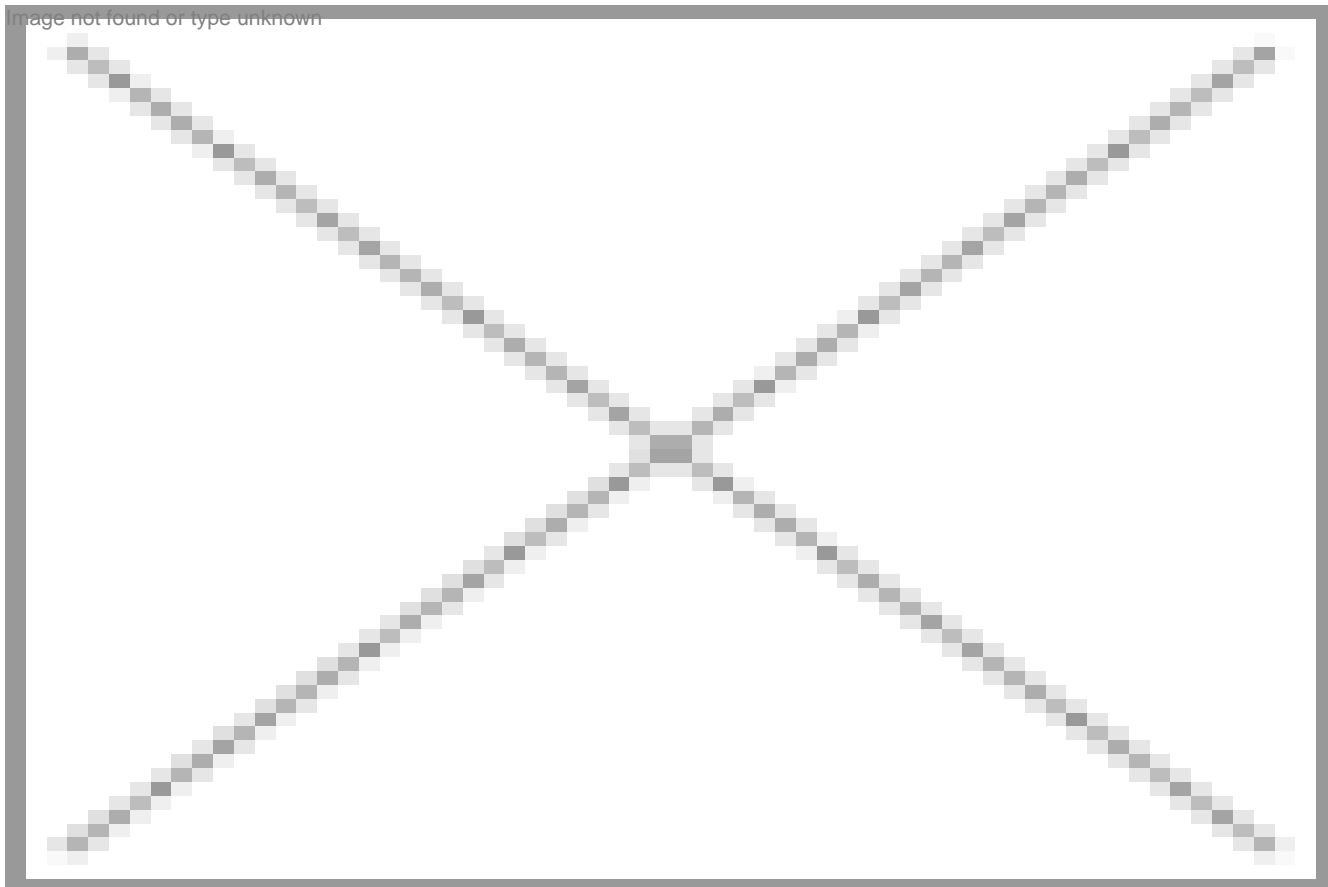
By the second shoot, Gnedtchik (AIN) and Gulyas (HUN) and their contrasting body language indicated which of the two was destined to seize the day. Meanwhile an 11sec shoot was a signal of intent from Micheli (ITA), who had **Valeriya Permykina** of **Ukraine** for company on the third lap.

This was where Gnedtchik (AIN) dropped Gulyas (HUN) and started to hunt down the leader, continuing to chew into the 28sec margin that had separated them at the start. At the third shoot, Seong (KOR) lost 5sec to the irrepressible Gnedtchik (AIN), who executed the decisive overtake halfway through the fourth lap and never looked back.

A 21sec final shoot for Seong (KOR) left her with no option but to secure silver, which she did despite all the top athletes swarming around behind her. Micheli (ITA) overtook Permykina (UKR) and briefly lost hold of bronze at the final shoot, only to find the stamina to bite back and secure that precious first medal of the season.

The big movers on the last lap were Ozyuksel (TUR) and world Laser Run record-holder Bauer (HUN), who finished 5th and 6th respectively as Gulyas (HUN) ran out of steam. Gnedtchik (AIN) was almost 10sec faster around the course than anyone else, timing 11:01.30 for an unforgettable victory that announced her arrival as a breakthrough contender for major honours this season.

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Men's Final

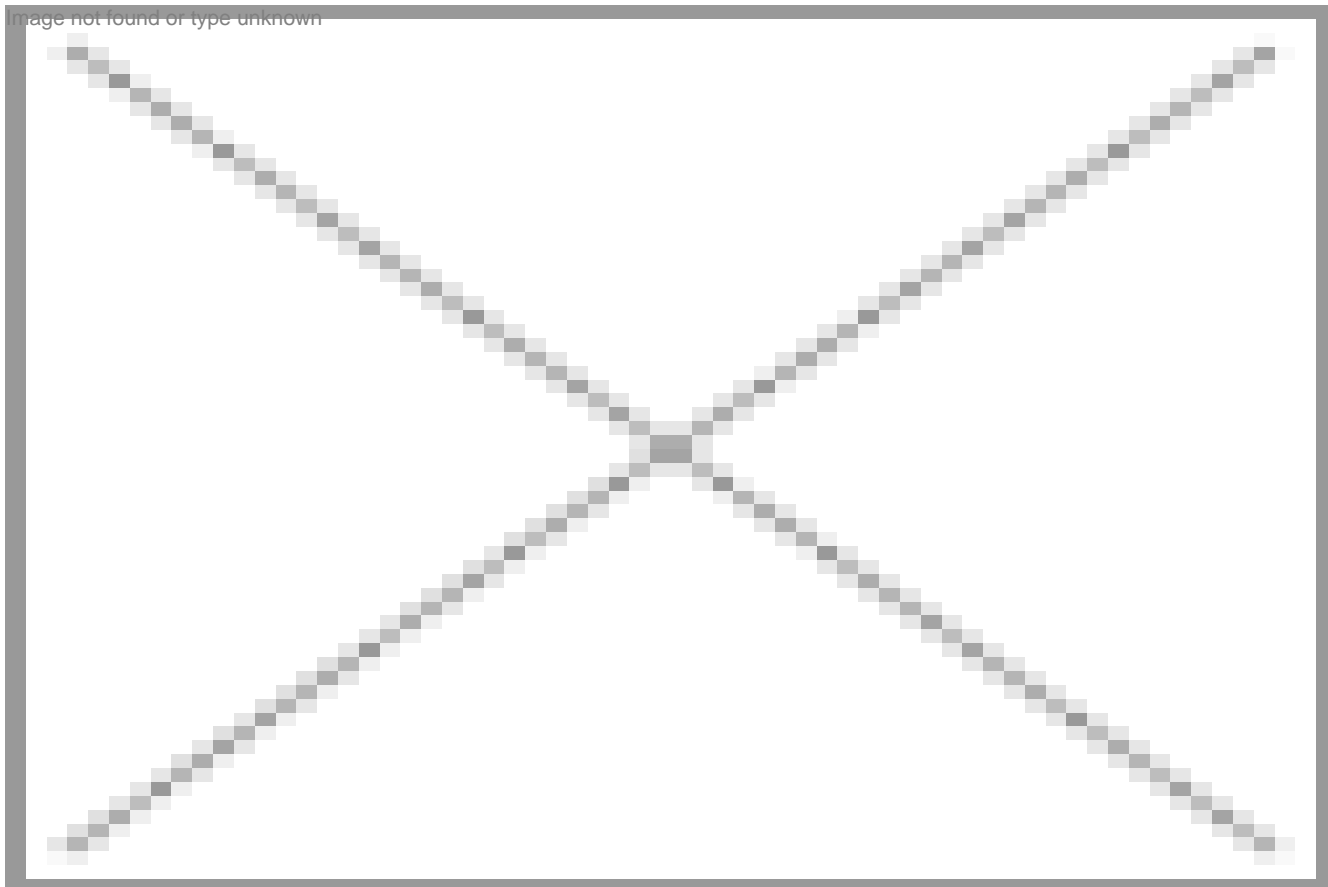
Riding

Hamed (EGY) was the first rider to escape with only one blemish on his scorecard, registering a 293 that enabled him to climb up the leaderboard as others struggled, and three refusals resulted in elimination for **Yuriy Kovalchuk** (UKR).

There were no other eliminations, but two team-mates suffered what looked like terminal damage to their medal hopes as **Changwan Seo** (KOR) and the final rider, **Woongtae Jun** (KOR), dropped 54 and 50 points respectively.

Bence Demeter (HUN) took full advantage, emulating the performance of Micheli (ITA) in the morning with a majestic 299 that delighted a capacity home crowd. **Pavels Svecovs** of **Latvia** and Shaban (EGY) got round with only one knockdown and **Jan Kuf** (CZE) incurred only nine time penalties, while **Valentin Prades** (FRA) and Elgendy (EGY) stayed in touch with 286 and 285.

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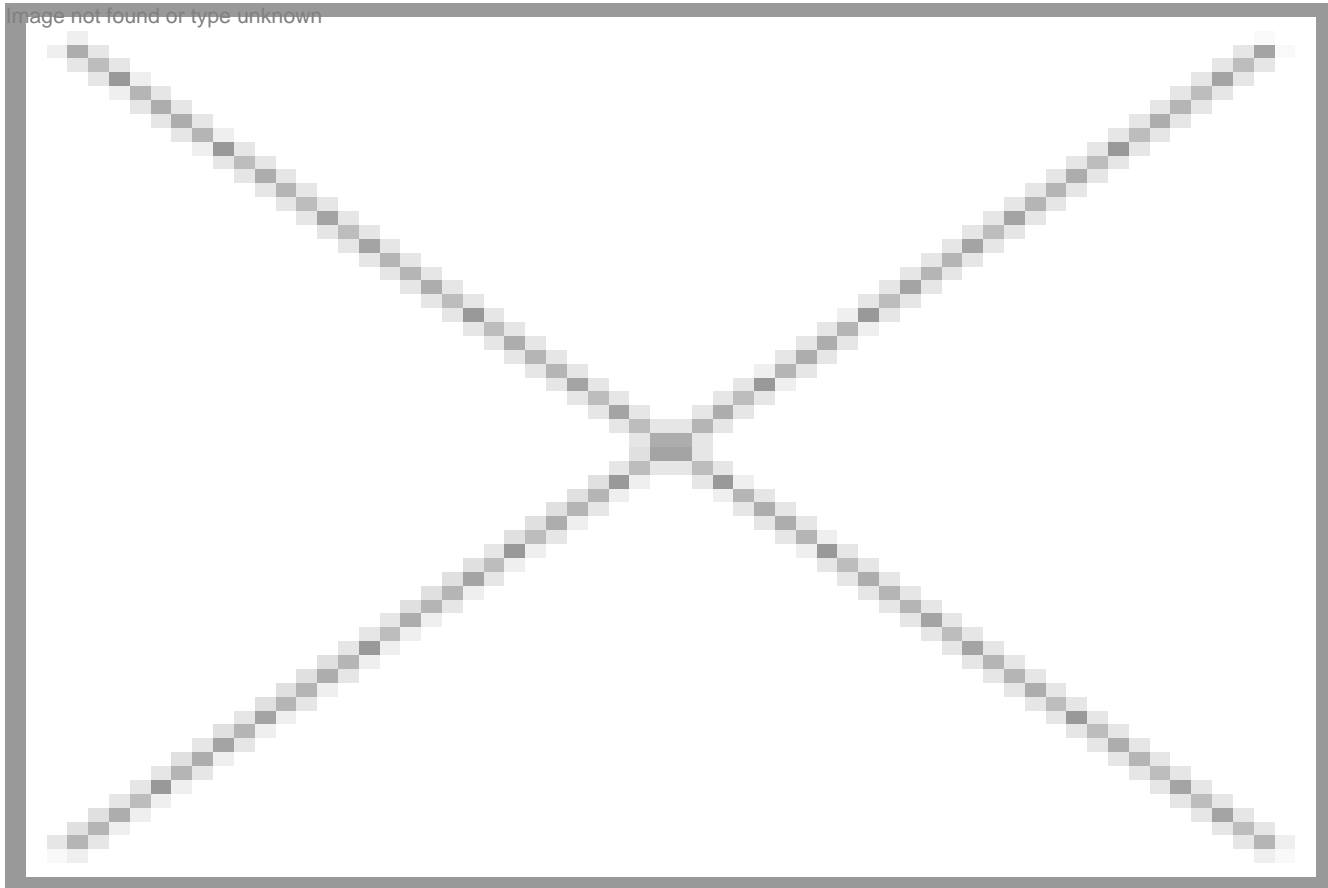
Fencing

After a slow start to the season, Jun (KOR) demonstrated his Fencing prowess with a standout 25V/10D in the Ranking Round, with Svecovs (LAT) in close pursuit with only one touch fewer.

Prades (FRA), Seo (KOR) and Demeter (HUN) refused to let the top two get carried away as they each posted 23 victories.

Leo Bories (FRA) advanced during the Bonus Round with three victories for six valuable points, and in the top half of the draw the main mover was Demeter (HUN), whose three wins eclipsed two each for Shaban (EGY) and Svecovs (LAT).

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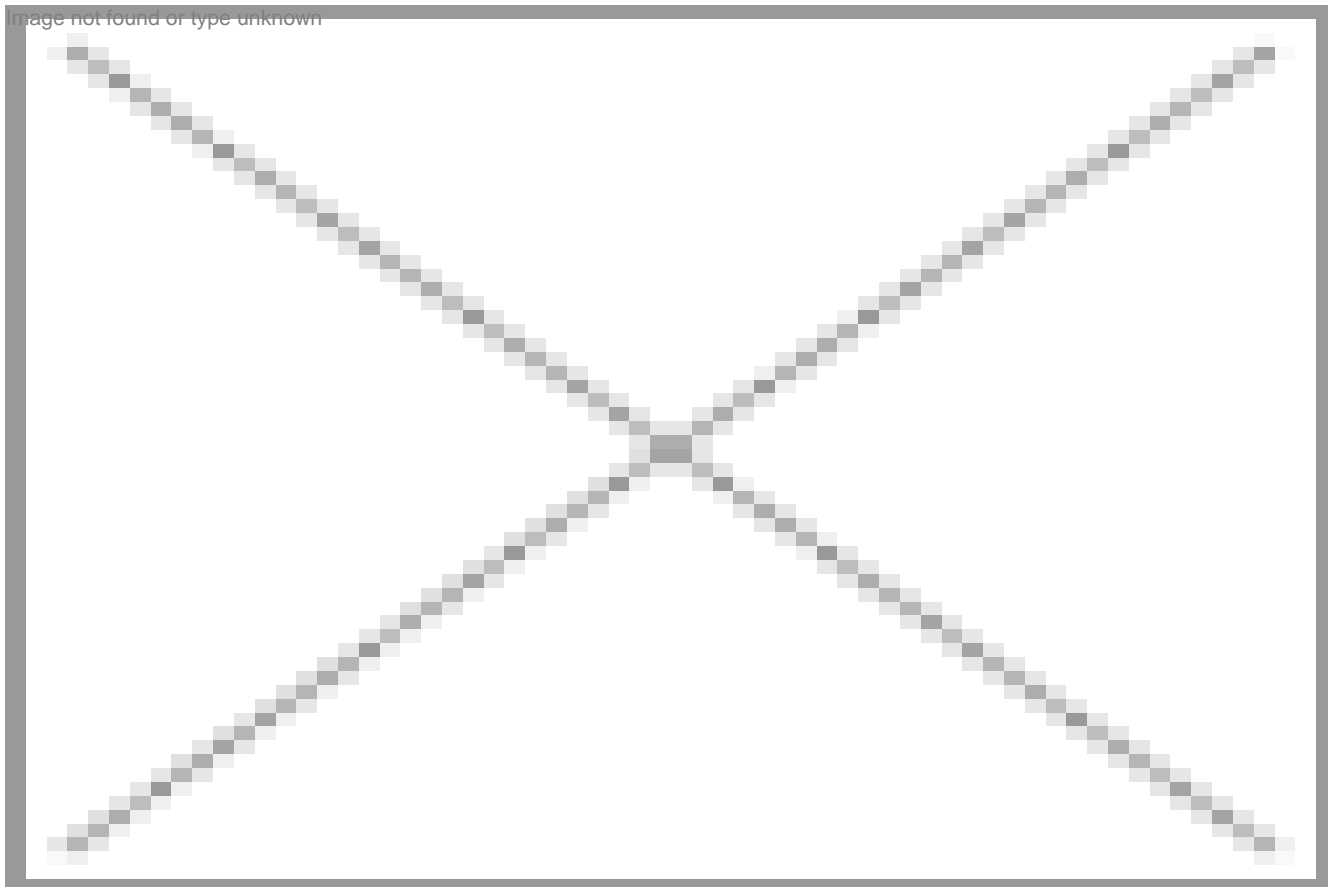


Swimming

European champion **Giorgio Malan** (ITA) set the standard in the pool with an excellent 1:58.74, while **Csaba Bohm** (HUN) and Svecovs (LAT) also crept under the 2min mark while Jun (KOR), Shaban (EGY) and Szep (HUN) made sure they didn't concede too many points to the fastest swimmers.

It all meant that Svecovs (LAT) started the Laser Run 5sec ahead of Demeter (HUN), with Shaban (EGY) a further 13sec adrift.

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Laser Run

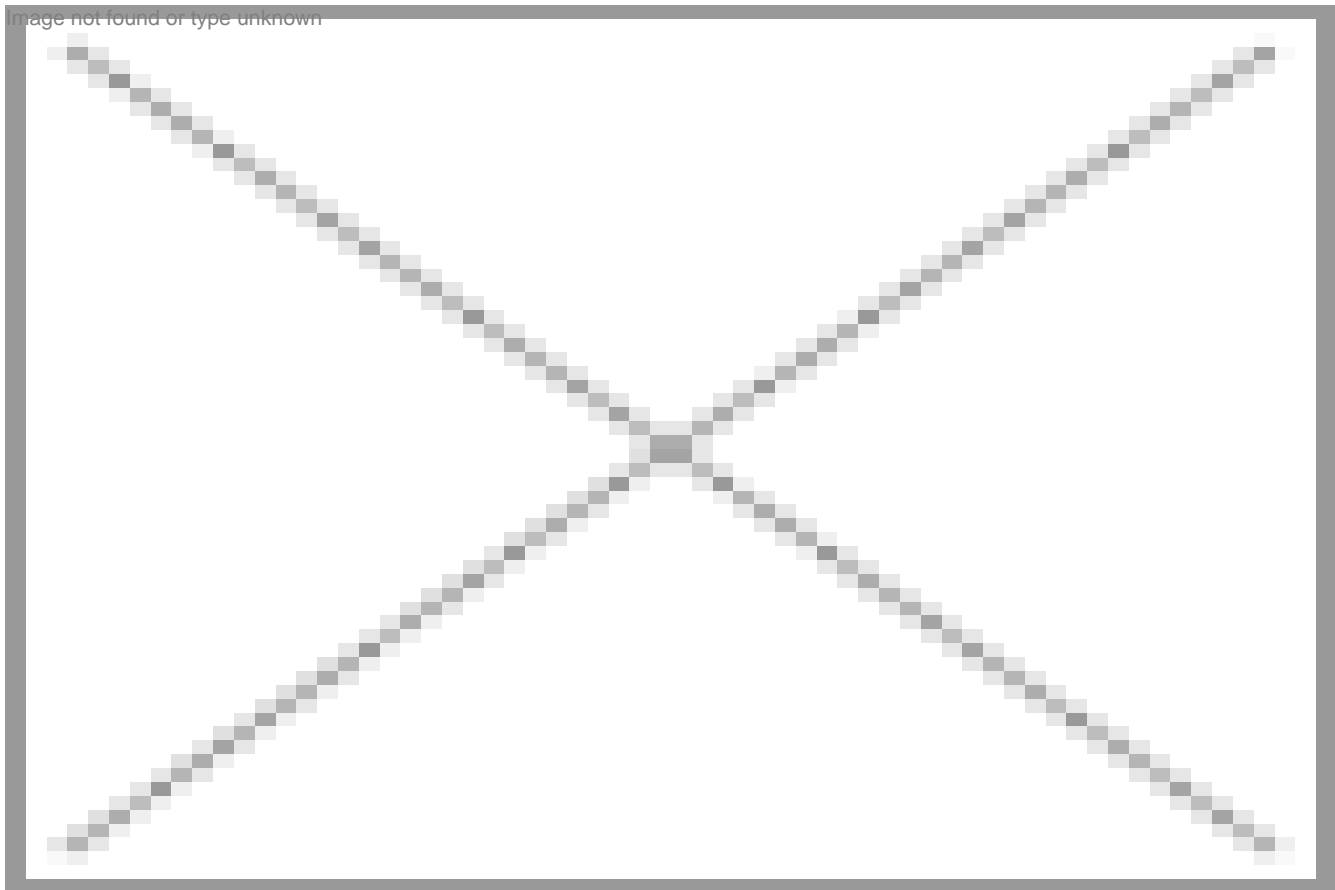
For most of the race it appeared that Demeter (HUN) was, if not dominant, at least in control of the podium storyline. He shot smoothly and carefully paced his laps, moving past Svecovs (LAT) on the second 600m run and keeping Shaban (EGY) at bay as Malan (ITA) made a move into 4th.

As early as the second shoot it was apparent that Elgendy (EGY) and Szep (HUN) – having started 38sec and 50sec respectively behind Demeter (HUN) – were going to have a say, as they led a pack in pursuit of the top three.

As Svecovs (LAT) dropped back, Demeter (HUN) continued to look unflappable, leaving Shaban (EGY) and Elgendy (EGY) to take turns in 2nd position on the 4th run. But the final shoot, as so often, was where the race was won and lost.

Demeter (HUN) missed his first two shots and suddenly the pack was upon him, green lights flashing as he sank into a blur of red. Szep (HUN) nailed his five shots in less than 7sec and Elgendy (HUN) was barely a second slower as the race for gold became a new duel.

And what a duel it was, the crowd switching their emotion from Demeter (HUN) to Szep (HUN) as they realised a home winner was still very much a possibility. Having kept his younger rival company for 500m of the final 600m, the extremity of a 9:48 Laser Run finally caught up with the home favourite and Elgendy (EGY), timing 9:58, screamed in delight as he took the tape at the finish line.



President’s reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “Once again in the individual finals of UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Budapest we saw that Modern Pentathlon is a truly global competition with medallists coming once again from Korea and Egypt, as well as Italy and Hungary and the neutral flag.

“With 44 nations taking part in Budapest, we saw some exceptional performances from those on the podium and it was also incredible to see the commitment of athletes finishing 4th, 5th, 6th and also further back – they know they can raise points to support their qualification for the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

“The whole atmosphere between the athletes is really impressive to me. They are acting strongly against each other in competition but then afterwards giving each other a hug and congratulating each other. It’s very special, and now we look forward to the Mixed Relay tomorrow.”

Watch and follow

UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Budapest concludes tomorrow (April 28) with the Mixed Relay.

Live stream is available on UIPM TV and all competition results are available at the UIPM website and via the UIPM Central app.

| RankName | | NationPoints | | RankName | | NationPoints | |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------------|------|
| 1 | GNEDTCHIK Mariya | AIN | 1435 | 1 | ELGENDY Mohamed | EGY | 1511 |
| 2 | SEONG Seungmin | KOR | 1427 | 2 | SZEP Balazs | HUN | 1509 |
| 3 | MICHEL I Elena | ITA | 1417 | 3 | SHABAN Mohanad | EGY | 1503 |
| 4 | PERMYKINA Valeriya | UKR | 1412 | 4 | HAMED Ahmed | EGY | 1501 |
| 5 | OZYUKSEL Ilke | TUR | 1401 | 5 | DEMETER Bence | HUN | 1500 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|-----|------|----|-----------------------|-----|------|
| 6 | BAUER Blanka | HUN | 1399 | 6 | BOHM Csaba | HUN | 1499 |
| 7 | CLOUVEL Elodie | FRA | 1396 | 7 | MALAN Giorgio | ITA | 1498 |
| 8 | NOVOTNA Veronika | CZE | 1392 | 8 | JUN Woongtae | KOR | 1493 |
| 9 | KIM Sunwoo | KOR | 1391 | 9 | KUF Jan | CZE | 1487 |
| 10 | GULYAS Michelle | HUN | 1384 | 10 | MOURCIA Jean-Baptiste | FRA | 1484 |
| 11 | LANGREHR Rebecca | GER | 1383 | 11 | KOLESZAR Mihaly | HUN | 1483 |
| 12 | GREEN Olivia | GBR | 1375 | 12 | SEO Changwan | KOR | 1483 |
| 13 | ASADAUSKAITE Laura | LTU | 1370 | 13 | PRADES Valentin | FRA | 1476 |
| 14 | KOHLMANN Janine | GER | 1364 | 14 | SVECOVS Pavels | LAT | 1472 |
| 15 | MORSY Haydy | EGY | 1355 | 15 | BORIES Leo | FRA | 1471 |
| 16 | ZILLEKENS Annika | GER | 1338 | 16 | LUO Shuai | CHN | 1453 |
| 17 | MEDINA GONZALEZ Andrea | ESP | 1333 | 17 | STASIAK Sebastian | POL | 1413 |
| 18 | HLAVACKOVA Lucie | CZE | 1055 | 18 | KOVALCHUK Yuriy | UKR | 220 |