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UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP FINAL: BOHM (HUN) AND VENCKAUSKAITE (LTU) RISE TO THE TOP

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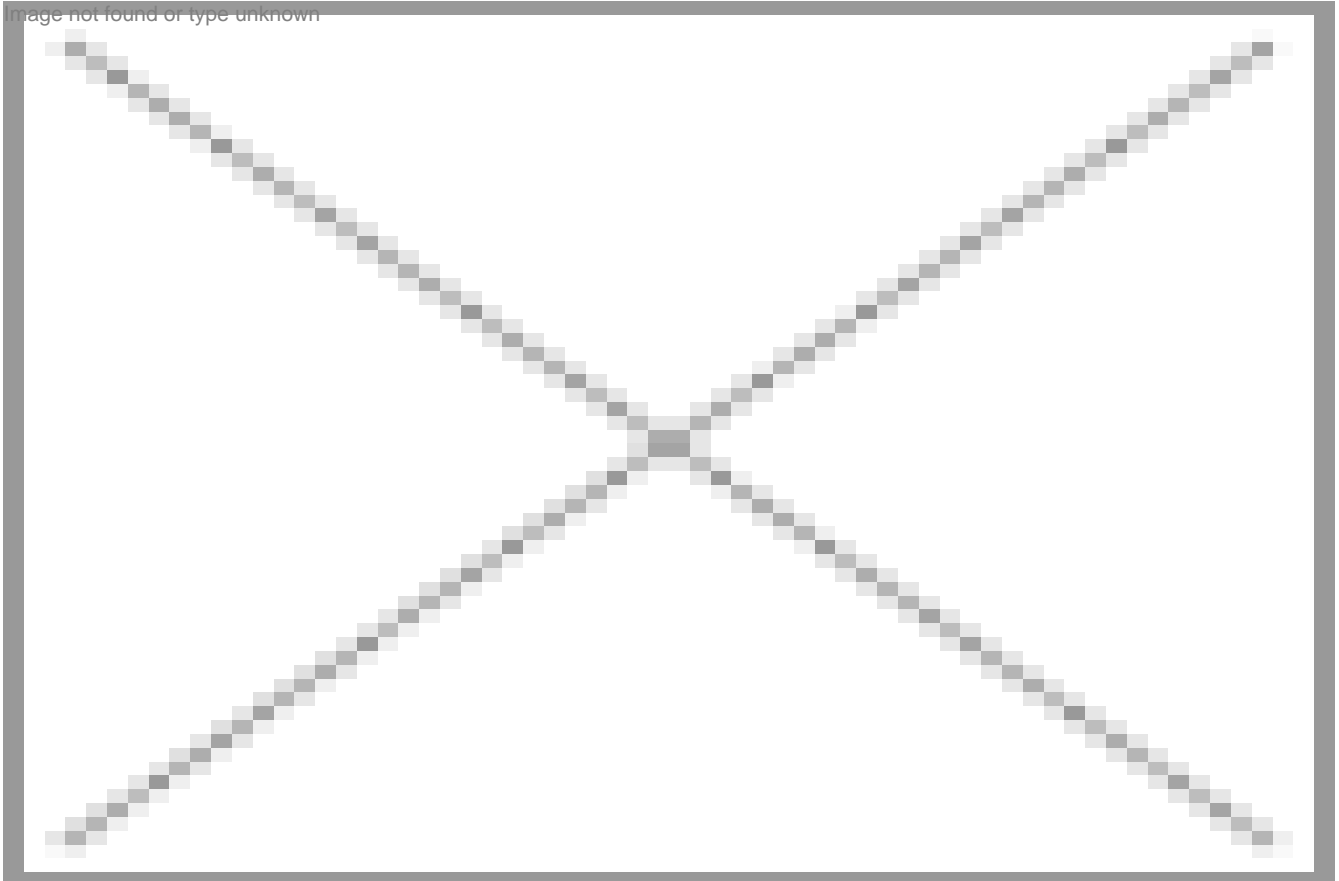


- Hungarian breaks overall men's world record to earn career-high gold medal
- Lithuanian Laser Run specialist excels in multiple disciplines to win Women's Final
- Silvers for Gnedtchik (AIN) and Prades (FRA) as Ozyukse (TUR) and Elgendy (EGY) win bronze

World record-breaker **Csaba Bohm** of **Hungary** and **Gintare Venckauskaite** of **Lithuania** demonstrated their big-match quality in Olympic year by winning individual gold at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Final.

Bohm (HUN) followed in the wake of **Valentin Prades** of **France** for much of the Men's Final, but moved into the lead in Swimming and then ran such a decisive Laser Run to win that he also broke the overall world record by a single point, scoring 1,535.

It was the first major gold medal of the 23-year-old's career, underscoring his Olympic podium potential after a series of medals including silver in the UIPM 2022 Pentathlon World Cup Final. And erasing a world record of 1,534 held jointly by three athletes competing here – **Woongtae Jun** of **Korea**, **Giorgio Malan** of **Italy** and **Emiliano Hernandez** of **Mexico** – was an unexpected bonus.



Some distance behind him, three-time gold medallist Prades (FRA) showed exceptional tenacity to win a three-way battle for silver and bronze with Tokyo 2020 Olympic silver medallist **Ahmed Elgendy** of **Egypt** and Hernandez (MEX), who finally finished 4th with Jun (KOR) and **Moutaz Mohamed** (EGY) also featuring on the extended podium.

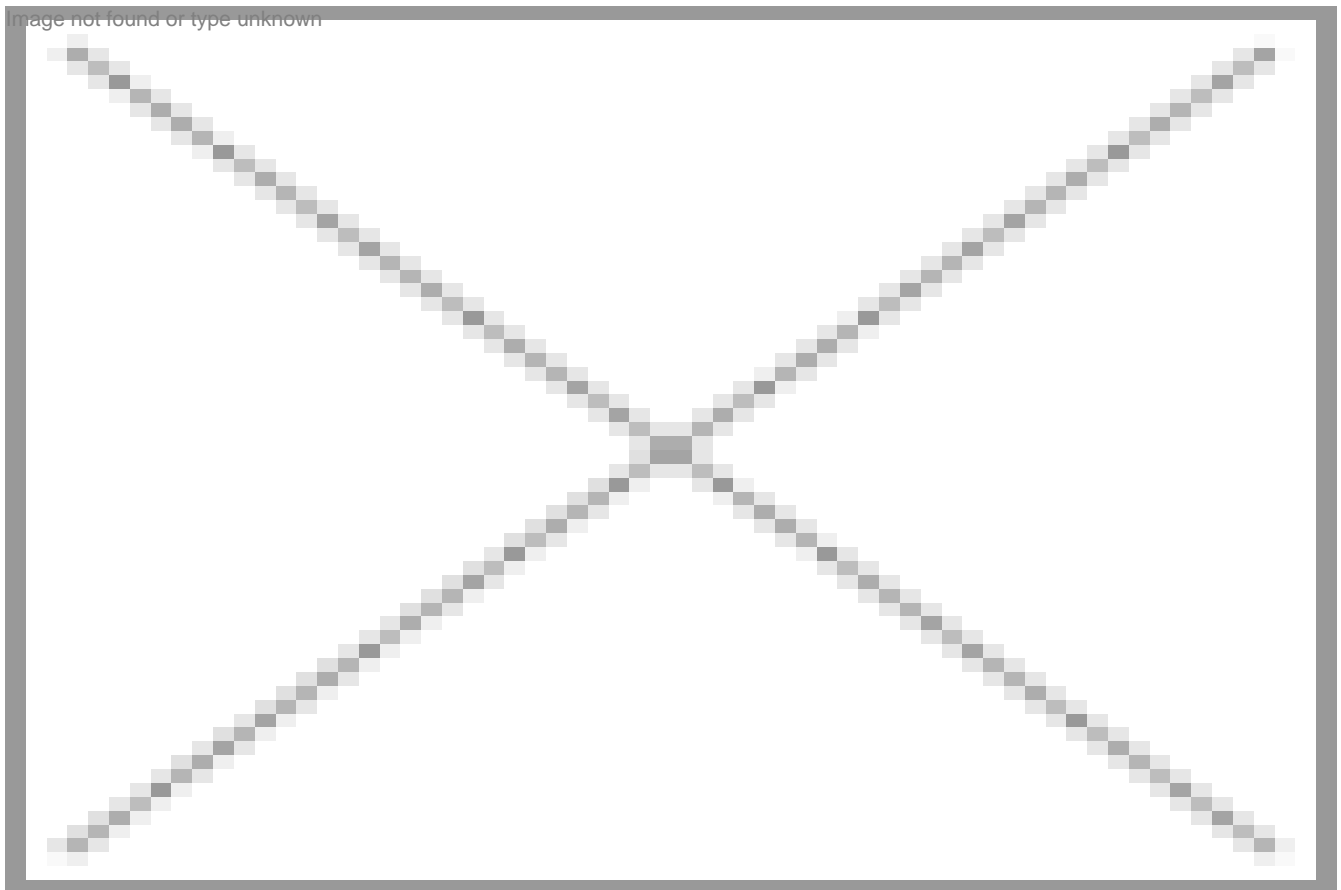
Venckauskaite (LTU) is a Laser Run specialist who normally has to come from a distant place on the leaderboard to be a podium contender, but a strong Fencing performance and a Riding masterclass enabled her to start the Women's Final Laser Run in 3rd, and she moved decisively around the course to win by an impressive 17 seconds.

The gold medal was the highlight of a long career for 31-year-old Venckauskaite (LTU), a two-time Olympian who previously won bronze in the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Astana (KAZ).

Behind her at the end of a gripping Women's Final, there was a hard-earned silver for 2024 breakthrough athlete **Mariya Gnedtchik** (AIN), while **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** sent the home crowd into ecstasy with a late sprint for bronze. **Seungmin Seong** (KOR), **Alice Sotero** of **Italy** and **Salma Abdelmaksoud** (EGY) completed the top six.

This competition provided a penultimate chance for athletes to add points to their Olympic Pentathlon World Ranking in the race to qualify for Paris 2024, with numerous athletes gaining points and internal positioning against national rivals.

The last chance to reach Paris 2024 will come at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Championships in Zhengzhou (CHN) from June 9-16, where up to six direct qualification quota places are also on offer.



Athlete reaction

Women's gold medallist Venckauskaite (LTU) said: "I feel very good, I feel on cloud nine. I'm really proud of myself that I was able to fulfil my plan.

"I felt the pressure from the very beginning, because I knew that athletes from Belarus and Hungary were very good runners, so I did all the rounds in 100% and the last round was very hard because I knew that the Belarusian athlete was right behind me, and I was afraid that she would sprint. But I'm very happy that I managed it."

Women's bronze medallist Ozyuksel (TUR) added: "I'm very happy because it was preparation for Olympic Games, and I did it – very good! I'm very successful and very happy to be on the podium in front of my family, my people.

"Through my season I try to be perfect, and now all the results prove that I can trust myself more. I

know myself more now, and I'd like to thank all supporters who believe in me – thank you [kiss].”

Men's gold medallist Bohm (HUN) said: “It's incredible, and I don't know what to say because it was a rollercoaster this week. I really had to change my mentality because I was full of fears, I was full of emotions, and I had to close them out.

“I think it was the key to beating not just myself, but beating others, and finding the trust I lost. It's amazing.

“It means a lot, but I know its value, because the main goal is for sure the Olympics – and it was just a step. It was a huge step for me, but a lot of pressure comes in the World Champs, so I'm staying on the ground.”

Men's silver medallist Prades (FRA) added: “I'm very happy, because step by step I have a better place in each competition. Today it was a big fight, we had a very high level.

“The top five athletes were very close and it was a nice race for the spectators, and now it's raining after the race – perfect. I'm very happy to come back with the silver medal.”

Men's bronze medallist Elgendy (EGY) said: “I'm very happy with this medal, I'm satisfied with the bronze. Actually I was expecting more, but as I said, I'm satisfied.

“My shooting didn't go as well as it should have been, because the gap was 14 seconds between me and the gold medallist, Csaba Bohm, and he's a very good Laser Runner so I had to shoot very well.

“But the first shooting series and the last shooting series were not the best, so I couldn't catch up. It was a battle also for the silver and bronze medals between myself and Prades and Hernandez, another two good Laser Runners.

“In this competition, actually, the hardest thing was that the good Laser Runners were in the top of the Fencing. The Laser Run was so hard in this competition, but as I said, I'm satisfied.

“And now all eyes on the senior World Championships in China in two weeks. I hope we can correct the mistakes that we have done in this competition and we can do better in World Championships.”

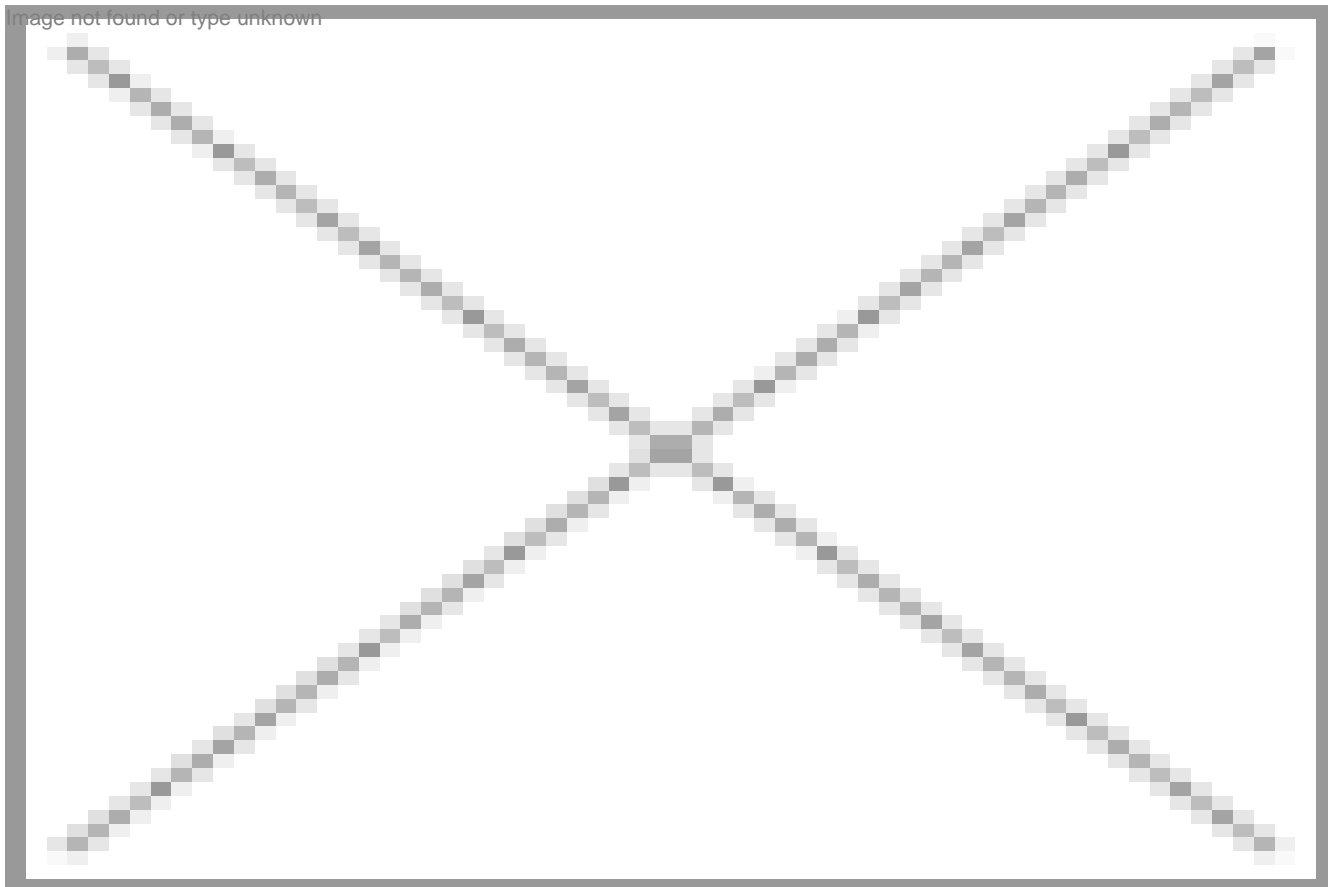
Women's Final - Riding

On a bright and calm morning, conditions were perfect for Riding and the athletes rose to the occasion with a superb standard of horse management.

Eight athletes scored a perfect 300, with Venckauskaite (LTU) moving dangerously into the top three. So high was the standard that **Rebecca Langrehr** of **Germany** dropped six places by conceding just 12 penalty points, and the top two from France, **Marie Oteiza** and **Elodie Clouvel**, saw their leads shrink with scores of 289 and 293 respectively.

Among the clean rounds, big movers in the top half were Ozyuksel (TUR), Gnedtchik (AIN) and Sotero (ITA), while **Michelle Gulyas** (HUN), **Lucie Hlavackova** of **Czechia** and **Malak Ismail** (EGY) made progress further back. Only one athlete was unable to control their horse, and it was two-time Olympic medallist **Laura Asadauskaite** (LTU) who suffered the agony of elimination.

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Fencing

For the second year in succession, Oteiza (FRA) ensured she would start the Women's Final in pole position with an outstanding Fencing Ranking Round, this time scoring 25V/10D to create a 15-point cushion.

Clouvel (FRA) was the next-best Final qualifier with 22V/13D, while Langrehr (GER), Abdelmaksoud (EGY) and Venckauskaite (LTU) each scored 20 touches. A special mention goes to **Unju Kim** (KOR), who scored a remarkable 27V/8D, only to suffer Semi-final elimination in Riding.

Asadauskaite (LTU), 40, may have seen her last chance to become a World Cup Final winner fade away in the Riding arena but she did not let it affect her professionalism in the Fencing Bonus Round, as she won four bouts to deny her rivals extra points.

In the context of the podium, however, the big star of the Bonus Round was Seong (KOR), who fenced her way elegantly to six victories, defeating all the top fencers except Oteiza (FRA) to move from 14th to 10th overall.

The final bout was a big moment for Oteiza (FRA) as she stopped the run of the young pretender and secured two important points to set an overall lead of 13.

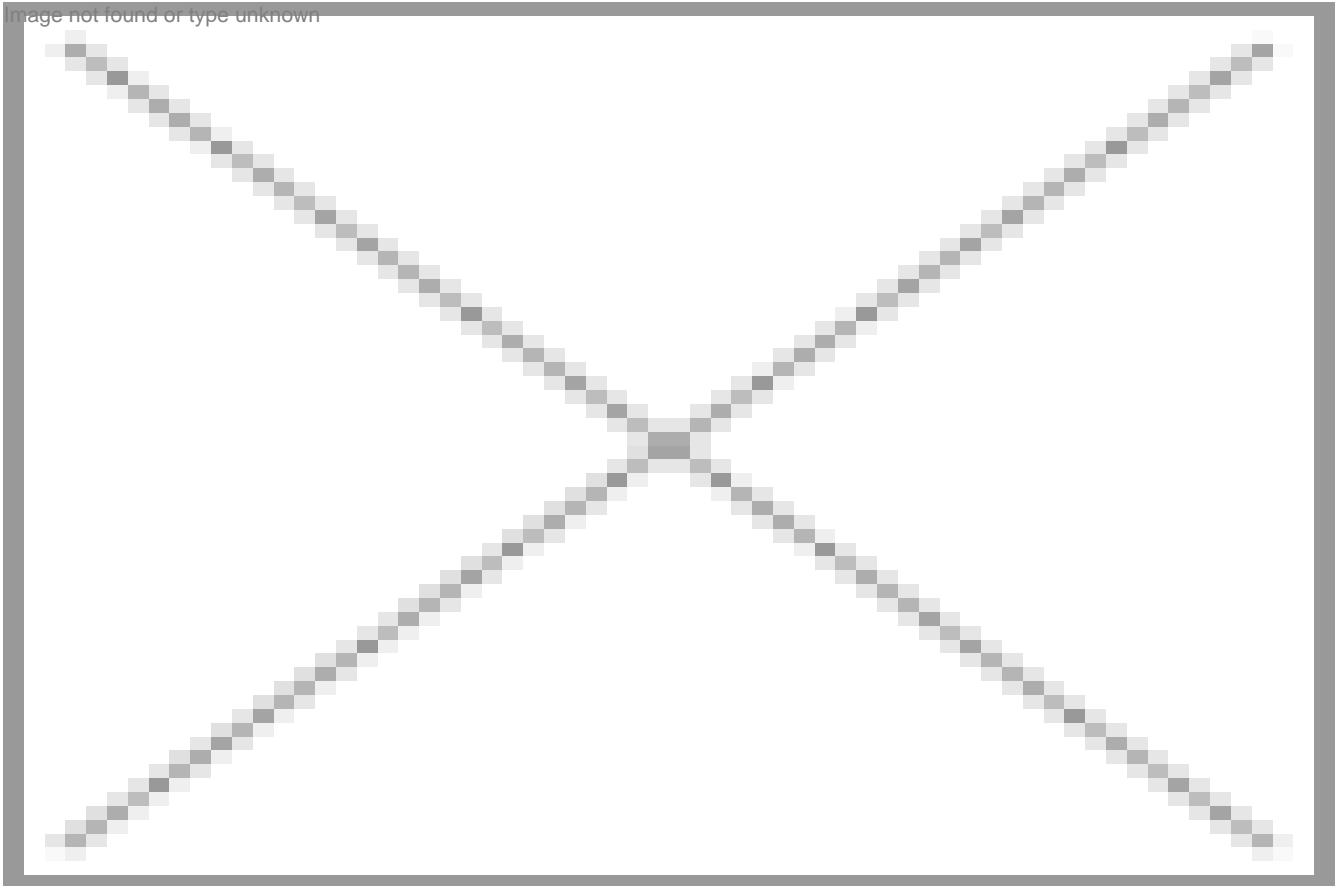
Swimming

Sotero (ITA) typically advanced up the overall standings with the finest performance in the pool, a time of 2min 12.07sec and 286 points enabling her to interrupt the top four.

Four points adrift on 2:14 were Gulyas (HUN) and Clouvel (FRA), whose aquatic superiority over

her team-mate Oteiza (FRA) enabled her to cut the overall gap to just a single second.

Behind the top two, a good swim from Abdelmaksoud (EGY) kept her in the podium mix in 3rd overall, while Ozyuksel (TUR) and Venckauskaite (LTU) remained in the top six, both less than 20sec off the lead and looking ominous.



Laser Run

As expected, Clouvel (FRA) attacked team-mate Oteiza (FRA) on the opening lap, but after improving her shooting in the Semi-final, the 2022 champion came unstuck again at the first shoot, where a 32sec delivery dropped her to 7th.

Venckauskaite (LTU) immediately took her chance, getting her shots in 10sec to move up to 2nd and then ritually overtaking Oteiza (FRA) on the second lap. There were nine women in contention but it was clear which one had the best prospects of gold.

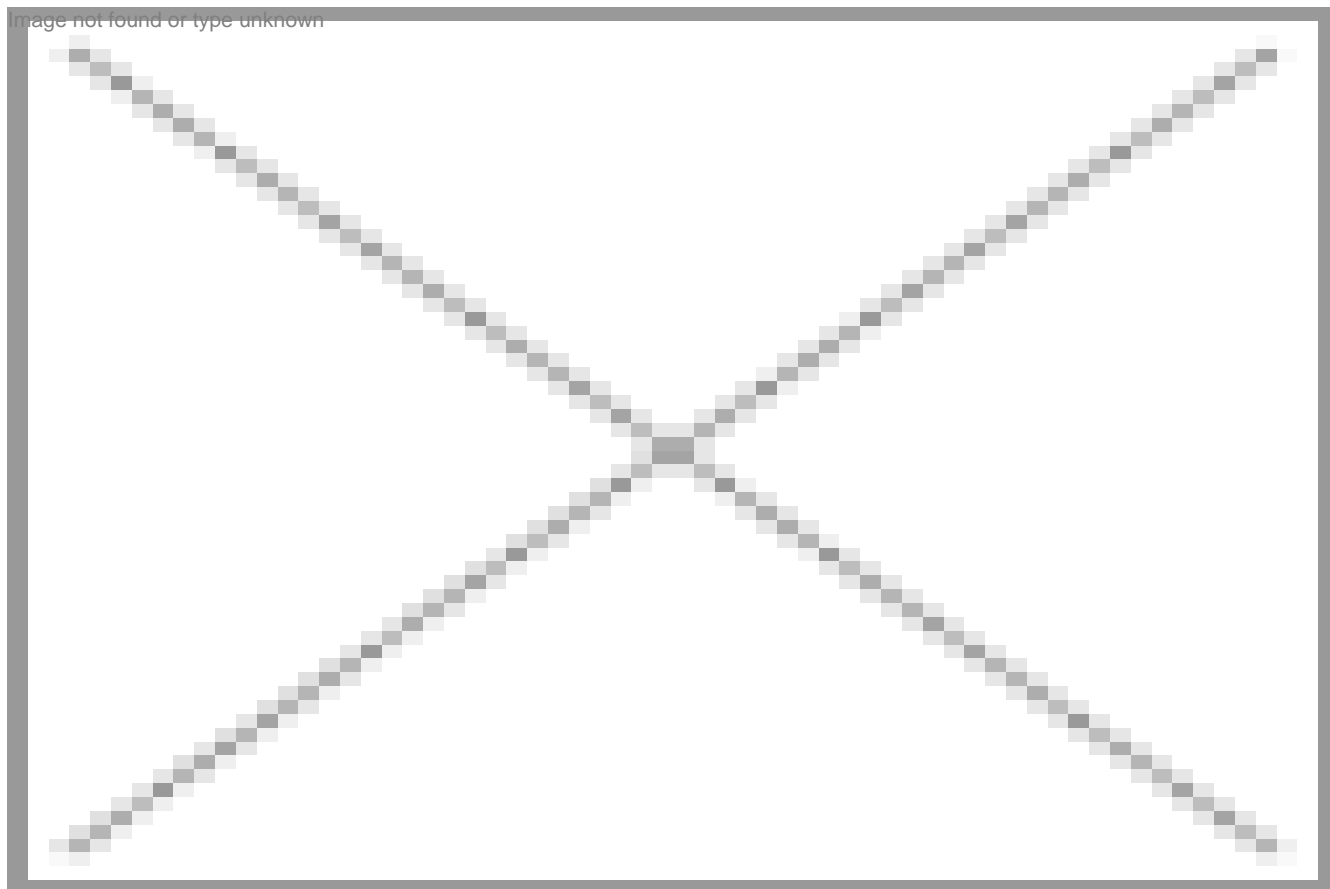
The next shoot for Venckauskaite (LTU) was slower at 14sec, but then she nailed an 8sec third series to discourage the pack. By the time she returned for the final shoot, she could afford to take 14sec before dashing around the track one more time to seal her career-high gold medal.

The progress of Gnedtchik (AIN) was equally impressive, given that she had started in 11th place with a 15sec deficit to Venckauskaite (LTU) and 33sec behind Oteiza (FRA). After her victory in Budapest (HUN), the Pentathlon elite had been forewarned, and she duly passed nine athletes to clinch silver.

The battle for bronze was full of intrigue, a seesaw affair between Seong (KOR) and Abdelmaksoud (EGY) with Sotero (ITA) never out of it. When Ozyuksel (TUR) took an unusually long 20sec in the final shooting series, her chance of repeating last year's silver medal was gone but bronze was still up for grabs – and she took that chance with glee, using all her leftover

stamina to attack the pack in the woods and burst clear, crossing the line in 3rd to a din of glee from her supporters.

The best Laser Run time of the day was owned by **Blanka Guzi** (HUN), 11:09.10 reinforcing her reputation as she finished 7th overall.



Men's Final – Riding

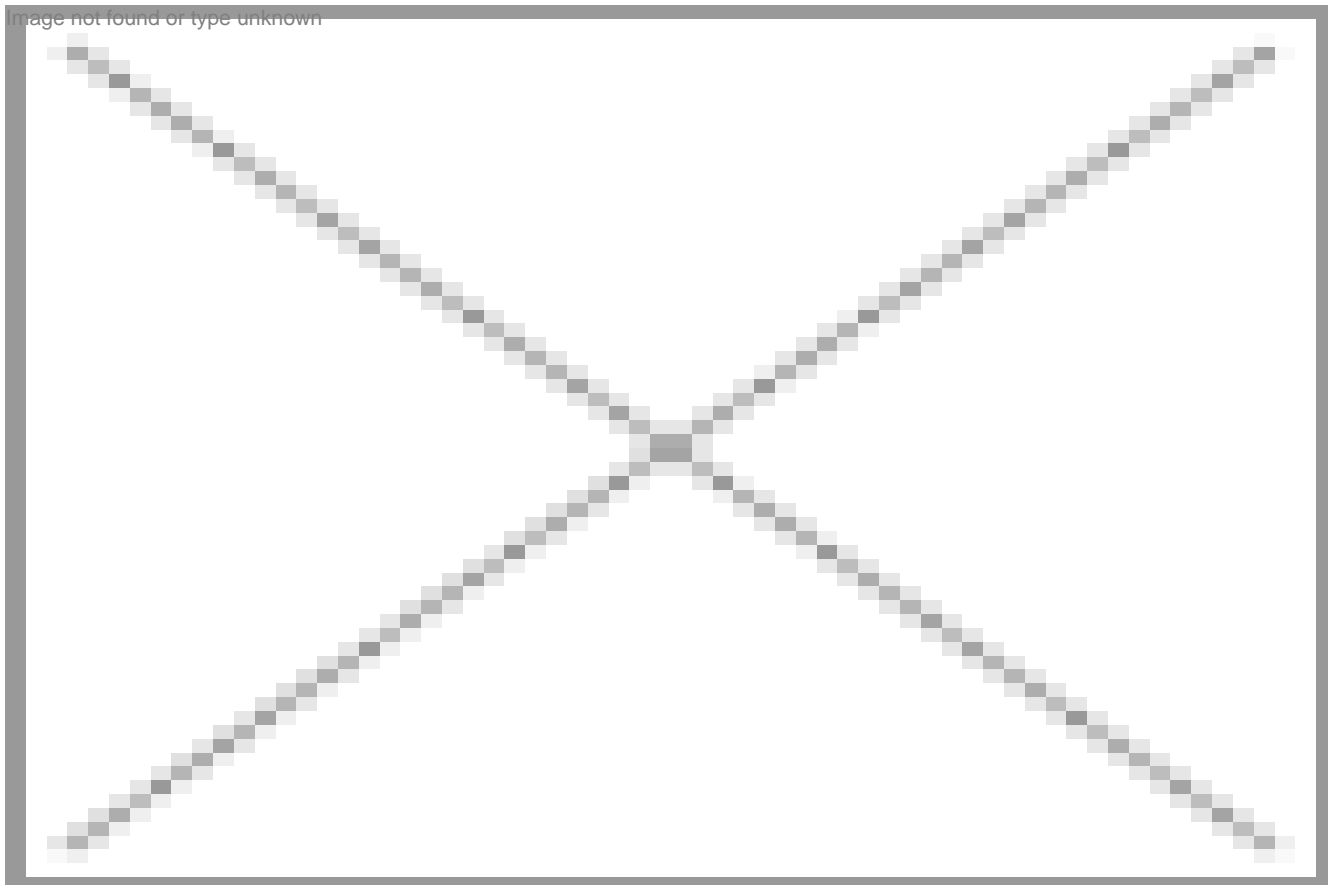
With the sky darkening, there was an ominous feel about the weather and the tension was reflected in the Arena, where the men found the going harder than the women earlier in the day.

Enter two Tokyo 2020 Olympic medallists to raise the bar.

First Jun (KOR) went clear with only three time penalties, and then Ahmed Elgendy (EGY) scored a perfect 300 to set the standard. His brother Mohamed (EGY) had a lot more problems on a tearaway horse, scoring 271 as the leaderboard took a shuffle.

With moderate scoring, the top three knew they had a chance to cement their podium claims and Hernandez (MEX) responded with a 293, Bohm (HUN) went one better with a superb 300 and then Prades (FRA) repeated the trick, to whoops of delight from his coaching team.

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Fencing

Two athletes stood clear from the pack in the Fencing Ranking Round, with Prades (FRA) scoring 23 victories from the 34 available bouts and Bohm (HUN) only one touch behind him. Hernandez (MEX) and Seo (KOR) stayed in contention with 20V/14D with all of the Egyptians and Jun (KOR) winning more than they lost.

A modest 15 victories in the Ranking Round did not promote **Jean-Baptiste Mourcia** (FRA) as one of the leading fencers in the field, but the 2019 junior world champion summoned all of his skills and his spirit to completely dominate the Bonus Round.

Starting in 17th place overall, Mourcia (FRA) won a remarkable 11 consecutive bouts to move all the way up to 7th with an additional 22 points.

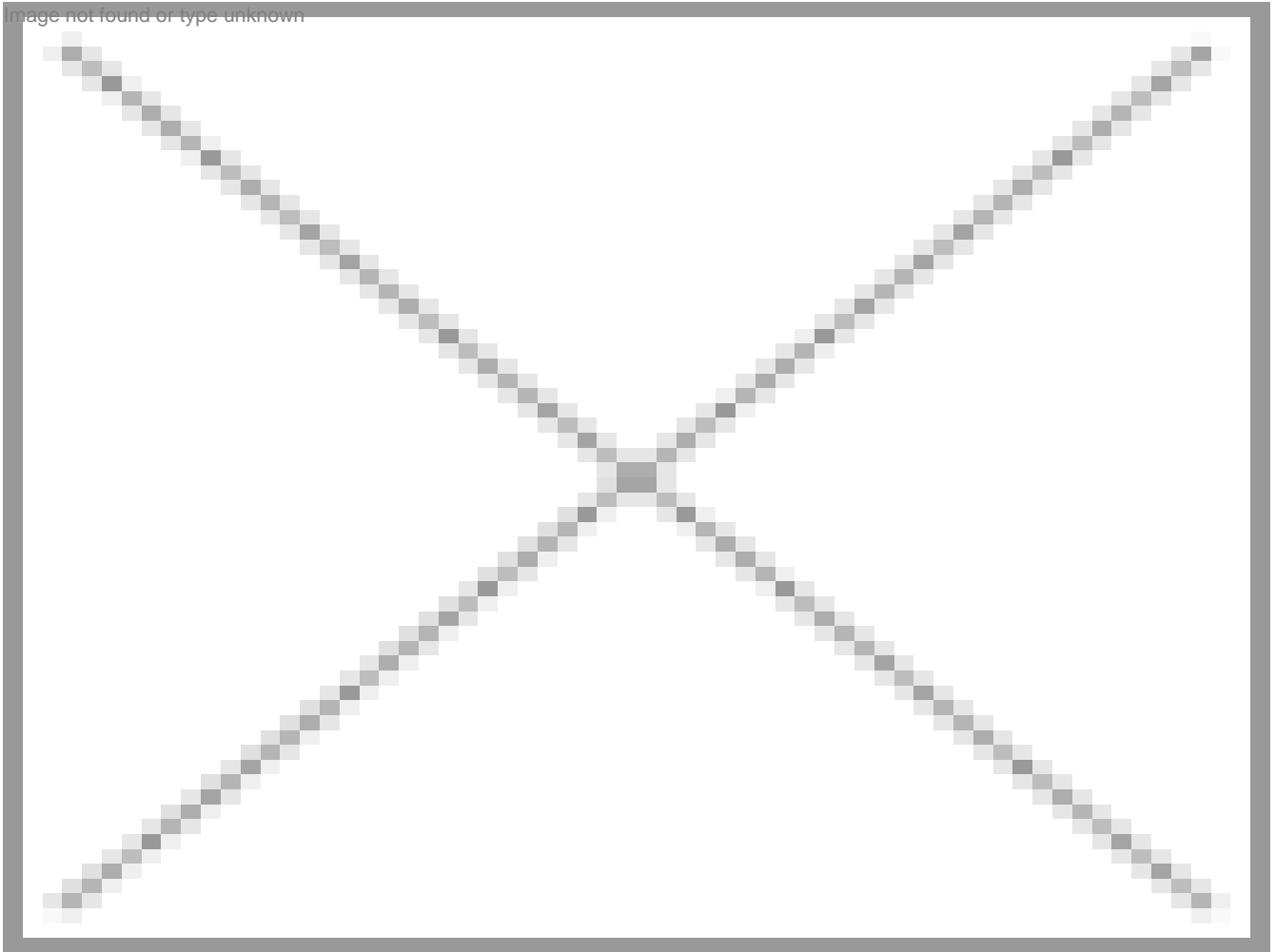
Finally Mohamed Elgendy (EGY) stopped him, and then defeated **Changwan Seo** (KOR), before Hernandez (MEX) took over and claimed four points until Prades (FRA) prevailed in the final bout, adding four points of his own.

Swimming

There was a change at the top of the leaderboard during Swimming, as Bohm (HUN) edged in front of Prades (FRA) with the 6th-fastest time of the day. But the big movers were Egypt and Italy, with four athletes going under 2min 03sec.

Ahmed Elgendy (EGY) top-scored with 308 points as he went two-tenths of a second faster than Mohamed (EGY), but there was little to split them from **Matteo Cicinelli** (ITA), **Giorgio Malan** (ITA), Jun (KOR) and Bohm (HUN).

It all meant that Bohm (HUN) would start the Laser Run 2sec ahead of Prades (FRA), with Ahmed Elgendy (EGY), Hernandez (MEX) and Jun (KOR) leading the pack – all within 21sec of the leader.



Laser Run

Bohm (HUN) is not used to starting in pole position but, on this evidence, it suits him well.

He was not quite metronomic on the range, but consistent, with shoots of 12sec, 14sec and 12sec. Meanwhile he ran with such effortless class that only a major freeze would have stopped him. In the final series he scored five green lights in 10sec, which enabled him to run without fear on the final lap, although he kept enough forward motion to break the overall world record by a single second.

All the intrigue surrounded the race for silver and bronze, with an epic struggle between three athletes who all have exciting Olympic podium credentials. Hernandez (MEX) was the early mover, reining in Prades (FRA) and then bursting into the silver position at the second shoot.

Prades (FRA) did not like that, and responded superbly, using his long stride to pass Hernandez (MEX) in the woods on the third lap as Elgendy (EGY) kept him company.

It was tight on the fourth lap but again Prades (FRA) attached under the cover of trees, and this time Hernandez (MEX) lost some ground that would prove decisive. A final 10sec shoot by Prades (FRA) confirmed his determination to seize the day, even if gold was long gone, and he gave every last joule to prevent Elgendy (EGY) from catching him on the line.

In terms of timings, Ahmed Elgendy (EGY) may have been disappointed with his shooting but he

was quickest among the field on the day with 10:04.80 ahead of Bohm (HUN) completing the course in 10:07.30.

President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "The UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final here in Ankara is like a rehearsal for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games Modern Pentathlon. And you could see in the high standard of performances what we can expect in Paris later in the summer.

"It was clear that the athletes in the best form qualified for both the Women's and Men's Finals, and we see how they have prepared in a high level for this Olympic format. The preparation of the World Cup Final itself always depends on the quality of the facility, the horses and the whole surrounding, and this has been delivered perfectly like last year.

"Therefore we say thanks to the organisers and all their supporters, the City Government and the Turkish Modern Pentathlon Federation with their volunteers and technical officials – together this compact group escorted the athletes in their performance.

"In the Women's Final there were a few athletes ahead, but in all of those chasing you could see a huge determination to be in the top six, to pick up points to qualify for the Olympics. It was a high-quality final and congratulations to all who achieved fantastic places.

"In the Men's final we had another fantastic competition where the top athletes were so close together throughout the day. In these circumstances, if you make any small mistake you lose the possibility to win, and once again we saw the very high standard of our athletes in this Olympic year. Now we look forward to another exciting Mixed Relay tomorrow."

Watch and follow

Live coverage of the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Final is available to subscribers on UIPM.TV where annual packages cost €14.99.

The competition concludes on May 26 with the Mixed Relay, where UIPM TV coverage starts at 12.30pm CEST.

Visit the UIPM website or download UIPM Central from your app store to keep track of live results. Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube for additional content.

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