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MODERN PENTATHLON AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES: SATO (JPN) AND JUN (KOR) FIRST HOME IN MEN'S SEMI- FINAL B

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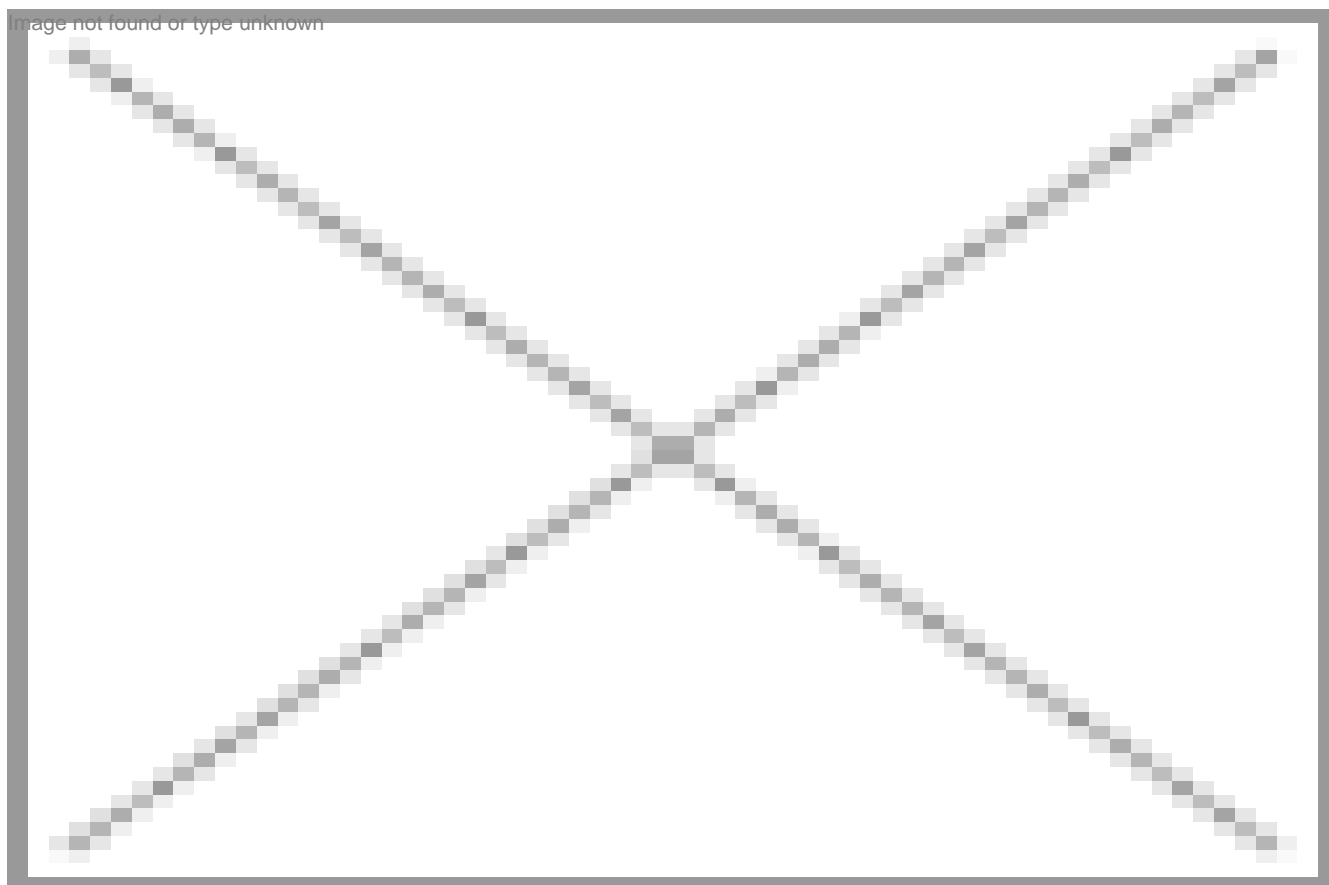
Taishu Sato of **Japan** invited Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallist **Woongtae Jun** of **Korea** to join him in crossing the finish line first at the end of Semi-final B at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

The Asian duo qualified comfortably for the Men's Final, followed by 2023 European champion **Giorgio Malan** of **Italy**. There was continuous drama around 9th place as athletes gave everything to reach the Men's Final, with Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion **Joseph Choong** of **Great Britain** finally among the successful qualifiers having struggled in Fencing yesterday.

In the end, **Mohanad Shaban** of **Egypt** reclaimed the coveted 9th place, denying **Charles Brown** (GBR).

The other successful qualifiers were **Lukasz Gutkowski** of **Poland**, **Changwan Seo** (KOR), **Marvin Dogue**

of **Germany** and **Balazs Szep** of **Hungary**.

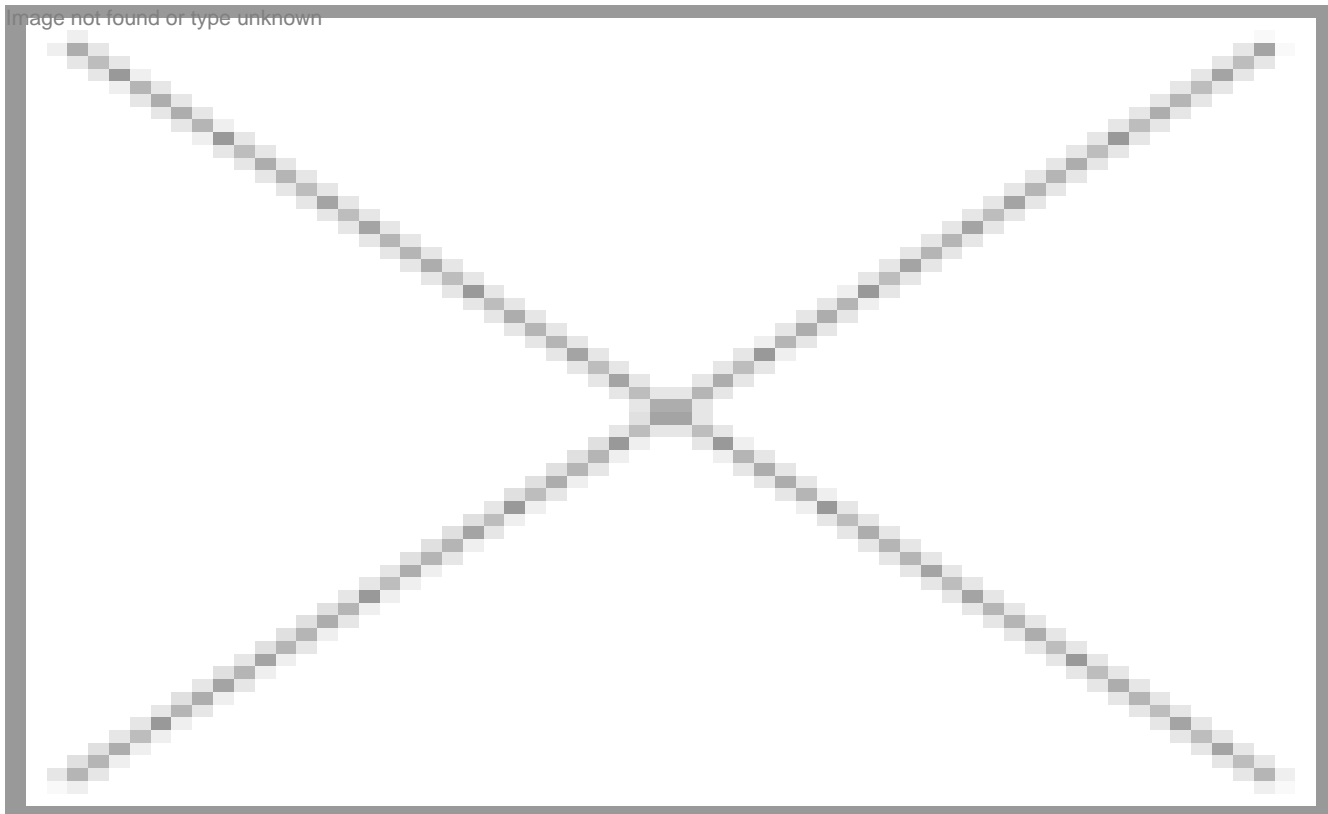


Riding was less eventful than the earlier Semi-final, with most athletes incurring one or two knockdowns. There were perfect scores of 300 for five athletes – **Charles Brown** (GBR), Sato (JPN), Gutkowski (POL), **Vladyslav Chekan** of **Ukraine** and Seo (KOR).

Just when it seemed like there would be no eliminations on the first day of Riding, European champion **Oleksandr Tovkai** (UKR) suffered two refusals at fence three and, having done the hard work in reassuring his horse, had one final refusal that brought his Olympic challenge to an end.

Having seemed despondent after a disappointing Fencing Ranking Round yesterday, Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion Choong (GBR) made the most of the Bonus Round by chalking up four victories to add points to his overall score.

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The other big mover was Dogue (GER), who also scored four wins. Tovkai (UKR) defeated Jun (KOR) in the final bout to add four points to his total.

Choong (GBR) continued to perform well by winning his Swimming heat in the best time of the Semi-final, 1:58.71. **Andres Fernandez** of **Guatemala**, Malan (ITA) and Jun (KOR) also broke the 2min barrier.

It meant that team-mates Jun (KOR) and Seo (KOR) started Laser Run jointly in the lead, with Sato (JPN) just 1sec behind. There was a high calibre of athlete throughout the top nine, but Choong (GBR), **Kamil Kaspercak** (POL) and **Shuhuan Li** of **China** were only 2sec behind 9th-placed Chekan (UKR).

On the first two laps of an intriguing, Choong (GBR) made no major gains but a lightning second shoot enabled him to move from 11th to 8th and push Chekan (UKR) into the elimination zone.

At the third shoot it was Shaban (EGY) who fell back to 10th as Li (CHN) moved up, but Shaban (EGY) didn't make any further mistakes and grabbed 9th place back before holding off a brave final lap from Brown (GBR).

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