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MODERN PENTATHLON AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES: BRYSON (GBR) WINS WOMEN'S SEMI-FINAL A

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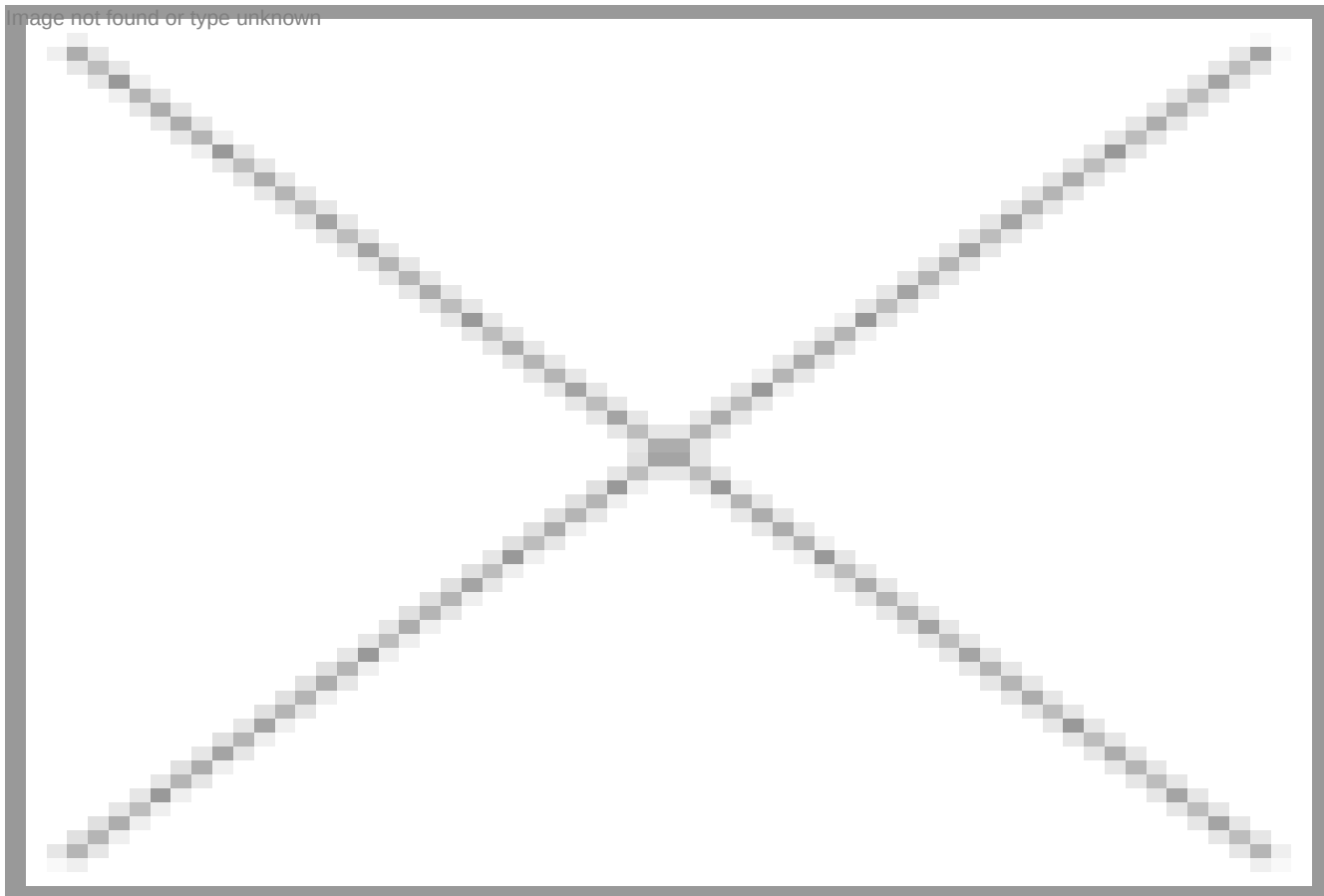


Kerenza Bryson of **Great Britain** set a new Olympic record for overall Modern Pentathlon points as she crossed first to win Semi-final A at Paris 2024.

Bryson (GBR) scored 1,402 points at the vanguard of a pack finish as Italy duo **Elena Micheli** and **Alice Sotero** were joined in reaching the Women's Final by world champion **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea** and Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion **Kate French** (GBR).

Lucie Hlavackova of **Czechia** finished comfortably, as did home favourite **Marie Oteiza** of **France** – to the delight of another near-capacity crowd. In a hugely dramatic battle for 8th and 9th place, **Malak Ismail** of **Egypt** reached the Final of her debut Olympics and the legendary **Laura Asadauskaite** of **Lithuania** dramatically secured the final berth, breaking her own Olympic Laser Run record in the process.

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Riding began with a perfect score of 300 for Sotero (ITA), whose team-mate Micheli (ITA) followed suit later in the round.

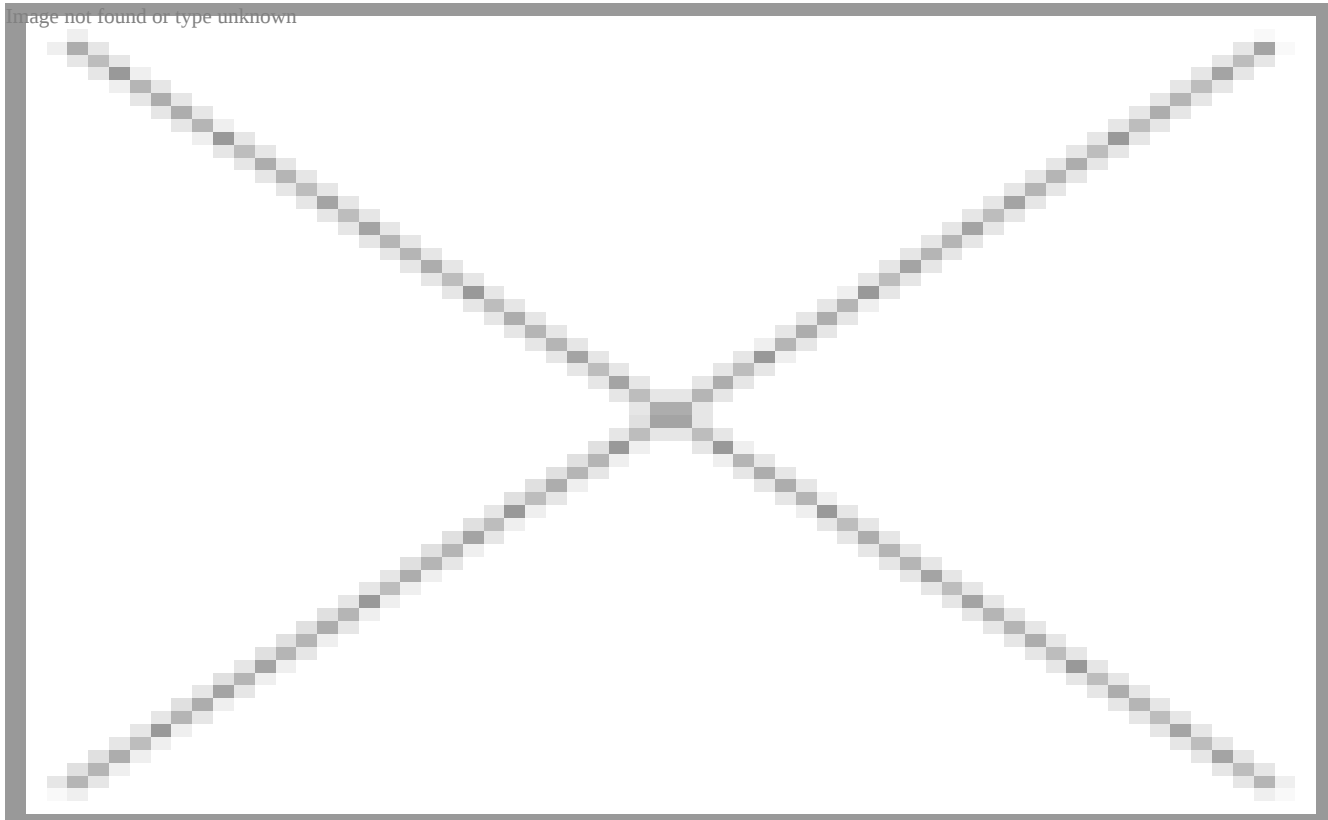
Hlavackova (CZE) and **Mayan Oliver** of **Mexico** also enjoyed unblemished rounds, and then the crowd got their champagne moment as Oteiza (FRA) rode clear, to huge applause. Bryson (GBR) matched her in the penultimate ride and French (GBR) escaped a nervous ride with only seven penalties.

Sadly, two riders saw their chances of reaching the Final come to an end as **Salma Abdelmaksoud** (EGY) crashed into fence four and was unable to stay in the saddle, and **Rebecca Langrehr** of **Germany** was eliminated after an accident in the warm-up area.

Having struggled in the Fencing Ranking Round on Thursday, world record-holder Sotero (ITA) continued her ascent in the Bonus Round by winning the first four bouts for an additional eight points that took her up to 13th overall.

Ismail (EGY) also improved her position with three successful touches, followed by two each for **Genevieve Janse van Rensburg** of **Australia** and Micheli (ITA). Oteiza (FRA) gave the crowd another lift with a single win before Bryson (GBR) closed out proceedings by defeating the home hero and French (GBR).

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For the third successive discipline, 2023 European champion Sotero (ITA) came out on top as she set the fastest Swimming time of 2min 10.24sec. Micheli (ITA) was only marginally slower on 2:10.63, while Van Rensburg (AUS) also broke the 2:12 barrier.

Bryson (GBR) dropped down the leaderboard in Swimming but despite starting Laser Run 10secs behind leader Micheli (ITA), she performed the best of the leading pack and finished just 1sec of the rest to become Olympic record-holder.

After a strong Laser Run by Hlavackova (CZE), all the drama surrounded the battle for 9th and Ismail (EGY) did well to hold on to 8th given the calibre of athlete chasing her down.

Initially Oliver (MEX) took the precious final place from Van Rensburg (AUS), but then **Annika Zillekens** (GER) held it for a couple of laps as Asaduskaite (LTU) struggled with her shooting. Finally the laser pistol clicked for the 40-year-old pentathlon legend and she gave everything on the final 600m to hold off Zillekens (GER) by 2sec and earn the right to compete for Olympic glory for a fifth time.