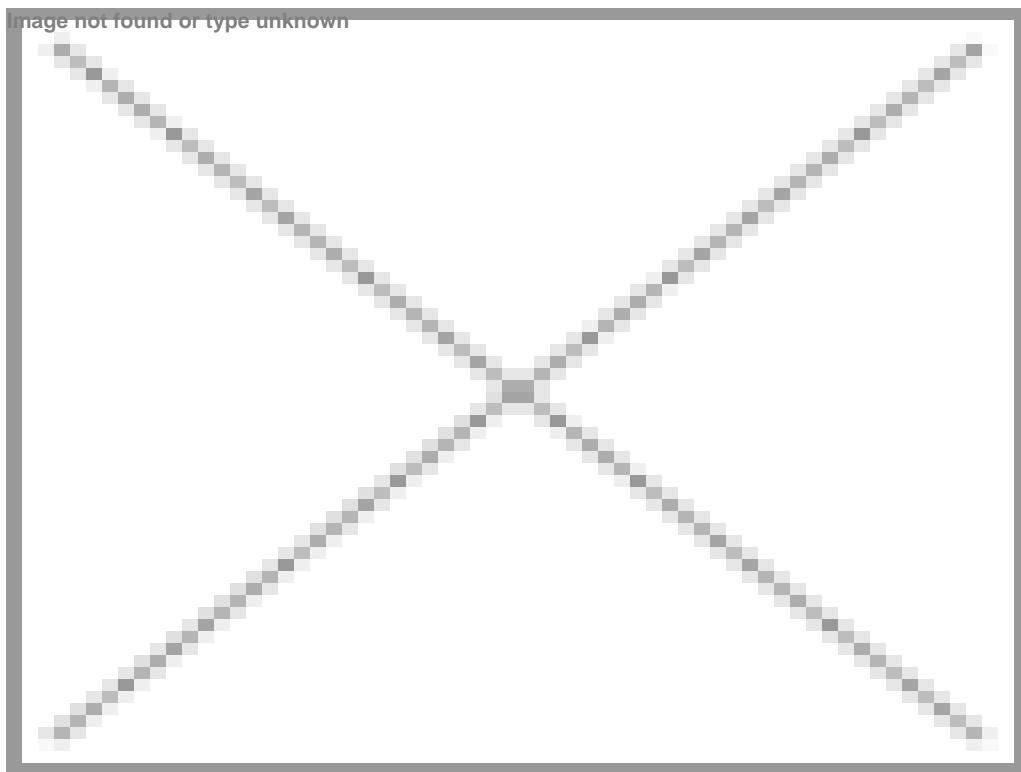


14 SEP 2024

UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON U17 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: KHALIL (EGY) AND GNEDTCHIK (AIN) SAVOUR INDIVIDUAL GLORY



The individual finals at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U17 World Championships in Caldas da Rainha (POR) provided a stunning glimpse of tomorrow's world as two pentathletes aged 13 and 15 won the gold medals by staggering margins.

Aged 13 years and seven months, **Farida Khalil** of **Egypt** is now a two-time champion at this level having already secured the U17 crown in 2023 – aged 12.

Khalil (EGY) won by a clear margin in Caldas da Rainha (POR), finishing 20sec ahead of silver medallist **Diana Rajnicsak** of **Hungary** in the Women's Final, as **Charlotte Keister** of **Germany** pipped **Lily Farag** (EGY) for bronze. None of the top four athletes has yet turned 16.

The Men's Final was similarly dominated by **Akim Gneditchik** (AIN), another 15-year-old who

seems to have the world at his feet as Modern Pentathlon enters the Obstacle era. Gnedtchik, younger brother to senior world No.6 Mariya Gnedtchik, turns 16 only next week but he was 19 points too good for the competition in Portugal.

Omar Abdelkader (EGY) added a second individual medal for the North African powerhouse as he held on to the silver medal under pressure from bronze medallist **Maksym Kovalchuk** of **Ukraine** and **Nemere Szecsi** (HUN), who missed out by 1sec.

Both Team gold medals were won by Egypt, with Hungary and **Poland** winning silver and bronze on the women's side and Ukraine and **Italy** respectively doing likewise in the men's event.

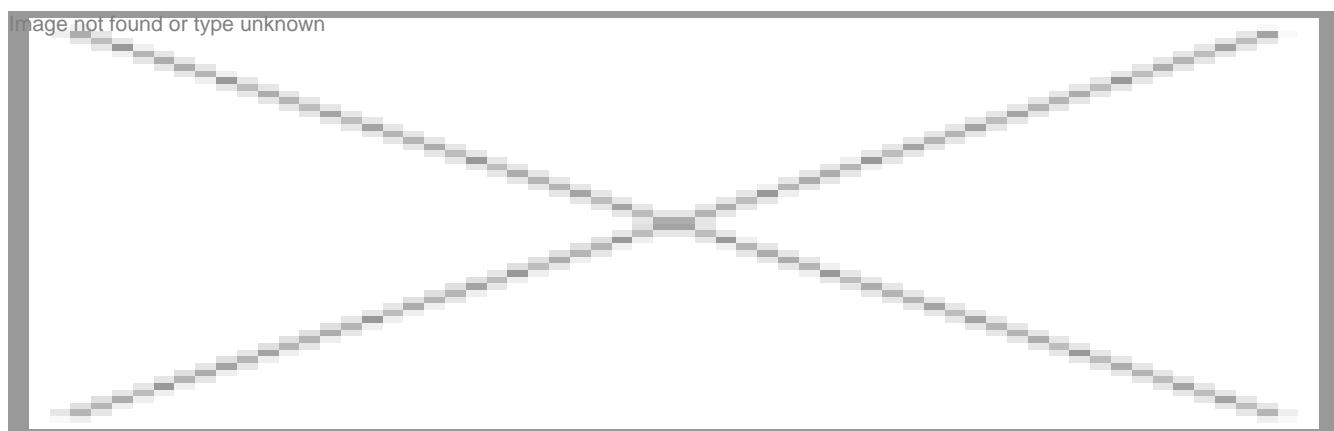
Champions' reaction

Women's gold medallist Khalil (EGY) said: "I am very, very happy that I got the gold medal, because I worked a lot for this moment. I found it a very tough competition, but I worked so hard to get this medal and these good scores.

"My target is a gold medal at the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028."

Men's champion Gnedtchik (AIN) said: "I am very happy. My Fencing was very good, and every other discipline was so-so. In the Laser Run I had a big advantage over 2nd place.

"My target is gold in the LA28 Olympics. I would like to say hello to my sister Mariya, who is a very good pentathlete, and I am thankful to my coaches and my mother. We are a team."



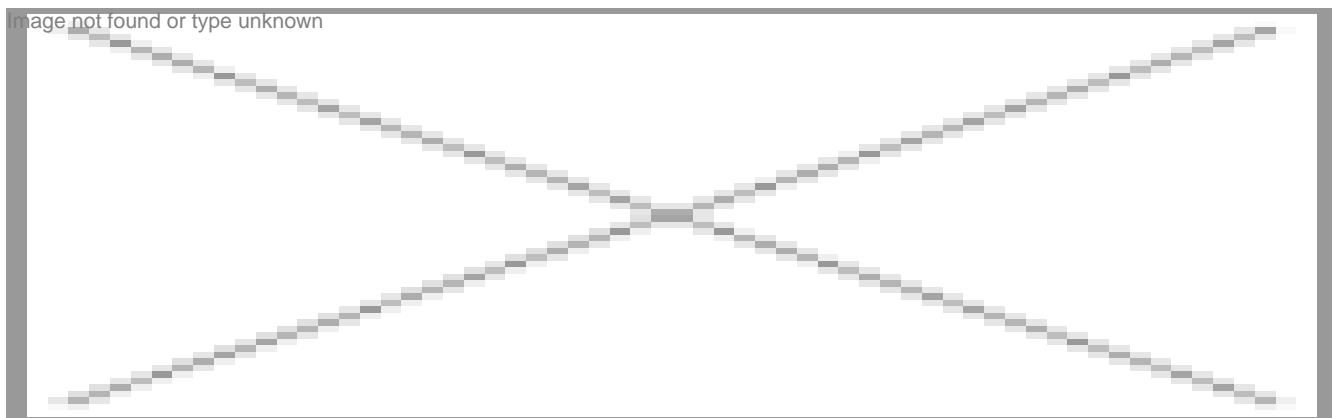
Women's Final

The greatest threat to Khalil (EGY) was expected to be her team-mate **Ritage Ramadan**, who had upstaged the champion in the Fencing Ranking Round with 28 wins to her rival's 27.

But Ramadan (EGY) made a decisive error in the Obstacle discipline, failing to obey the instructions of a technical official and suffering elimination. She was the only athlete eliminated out of 36 in the round, as Keister (GER) set the standard with an impressive 26.88sec, closely followed by **Sara Beggio** (ITA) on 27.78. Khalil (EGY) showed her all-round mastery by also completing the course in less than 30sec.

There were six wins in the Fencing Bonus Round for **Wakana Uchiyama** of Japan and five for **Juliette Barnades** of France, and while Khalil (EGY) lost the final bout to Ramadan (EGY), she rebounded in Swimming with the second-fastest time of the day – 2min 15.16sec. Only Uchiyama (JPN) went faster than that, delivering an outstanding 2min 12.13.

Into the Laser Run and Khalil (EGY) proved well able to protect what looked like an unassailable lead, finally retaining her title by a 20sec margin as team-mates Farag (EGY) and **Alia Enayet** (EGY) joined her in the top six. The day's best Laser Run time was recorded by **Andrea Flores** of Mexico, whose 9:11.64 eclipsed the 9:11.99 of **Annachiara Allara** (ITA) by a tiny margin.



Men's Final

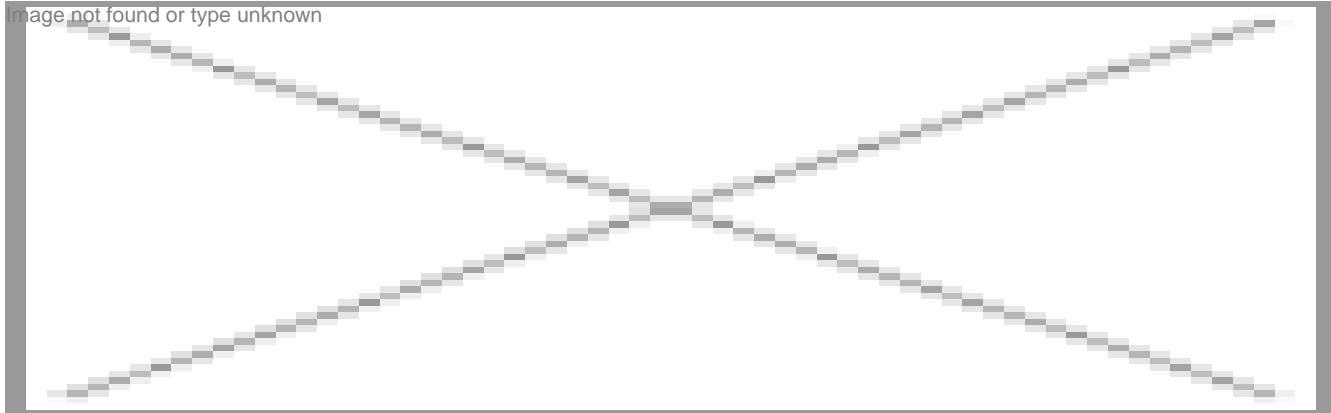
Unlike Khalil (EGY), Gneditchik (AIN) had nobody for company at the top of the Fencing leaderboard, and he added the maximum four points to his overnight score of 270 as **Yerafeyeu Yahor** (AIN) upped his tally by 10 points with five Bonus Round touches and **Prakopchyk Tsimafei** (AIN) won four.

Gneditchik (AIN) made the top five in Obstacle, in a cluster of athletes around the 25sec mark, but there was no doubting the dominant racer. **Lukas Lagunavicius** of Lithuania blew away the competition with a blistering time of 21.13.

Tsimafei (AIN) stood out in Swimming, timing 2:02.84 ahead of **Tomas Grigorov** of Bulgaria and **Maksymilian Dobosz** (POL), but nobody was able to make a gain on the leader as **Muhammet Emir Kurtulan** of **Türkiye** started Laser Run in 2nd place, 25sec off the pace.

As Gneditchik (AIN) completed the victory procession, Kovalchuk (UKR) refused to give up his starting position of 3rd but the big move came from Abdelkader (EGY), who vaulted from 8th to 2nd to claim silver. But even that wasn't the best Laser Run of the day – that honour went to **Aly Aboelfetouh** (EGY), who shot round the course in 8:06.22.

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Follow the action

The UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U17 World Championships concludes tomorrow (Sunday 15 September) with the Mixed Relay.

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