

28 SEP 2024

UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: BRILLIANT KHALIL (EGY) AND LIM (KOR) STORM TO INDIVIDUAL GOLD



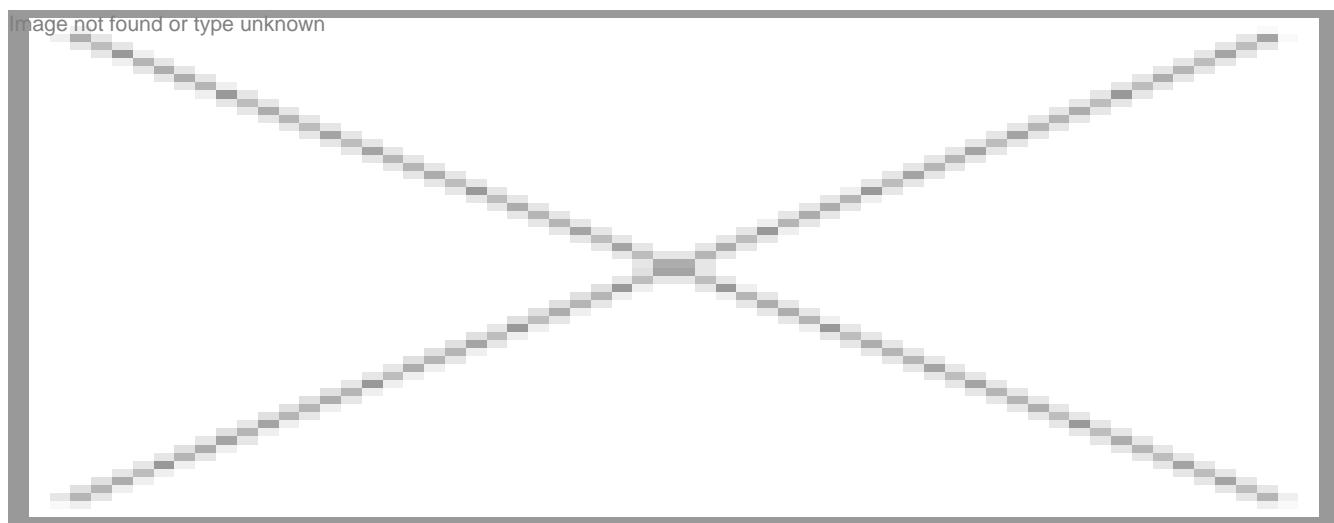
A truly Super Saturday at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U19 World Championships delivered two champions who defied expectations and broke records on their way to individual gold medal glory as the phenomenal **Farida Khalil** of **Egypt** triumphed in the Women's Final before **Taegyung Lim** of **Korea** smashed through in the Men's Final.

The serene surrounds of the spa town of Druskininkai (LTU) turned lively from the very start of proceedings as Khalil (EGY), the 13-year-old wonder talent who has already claimed World Junior bronze and World U17 gold this year, added U19 honours to her remarkable record. When she immediately set her sights on Senior and even Olympic gold at LA 2028 it was hard to argue against her. The coronation of Khalil (EGY) proved to be a procession but behind her the fight for medals was fierce with compatriot **Alia Enayet** (EGY) adding more Egyptian prizes as she held off the strong finish from **Coline Flavin** of **France** with **Hungary** duo **Linda Haraszin** and **Zora Zeman**.

not far behind.

If the Women's Final was a one-horse race to gold, the Men's proved to be a wild rodeo. Two World U19 records fell as a host of contenders vied for all three spots on the podium. It was the sharp shooting of Lim (KOR) which reeled in Laser Run leader **Mohamed Hassan** (EGY). Lim (KOR) set a new U19 World record with his final tally of 1521 points. **Denis Agavriloiae** of **Italy** shook off a slow start to storm to silver ahead of an exhausted Hassan (EGY) who held off compatriot **Sief Soliman** (EGY) in fourth and a quite stunning performance from **Oleg Rybak** of **Ukraine**. Ryback (UKR) started the combined 34th of the 36 finalists but set a new U19 World record in a breathtaking time of 9:48.40 to jump 29 places to fifth.

Both team gold medals went to Egypt with Korea and Italy taking Men's silver and bronze respectively, Hungary and France doing likewise in the Women's event.



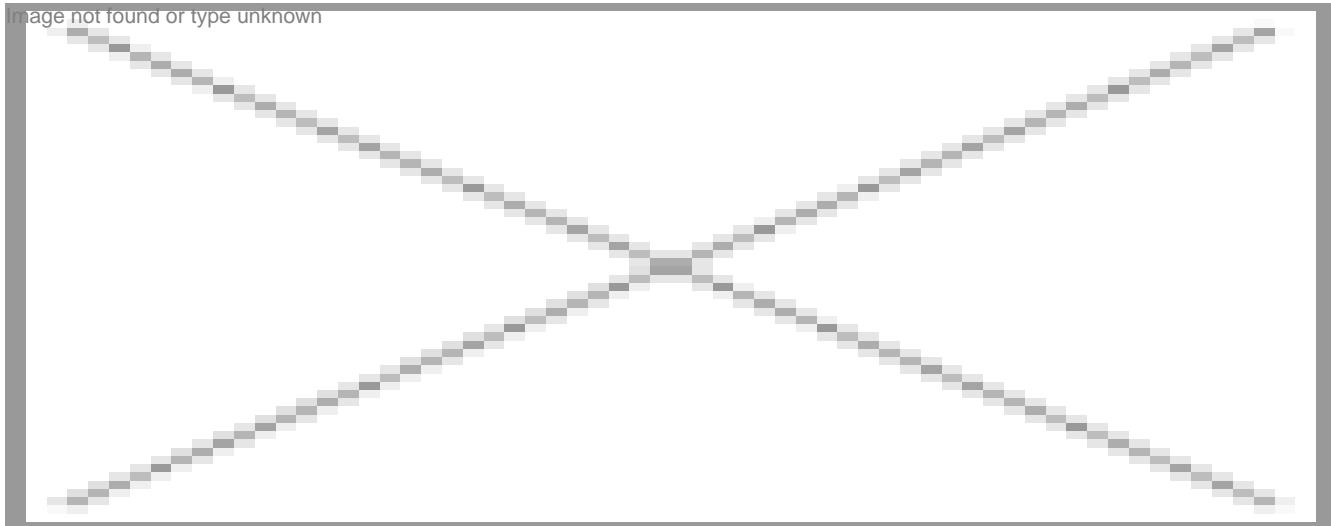
Medallists' reaction

Women's gold medallist Khalil (EGY) said: "I trained a lot to get myself into this position. I worked hard all year, to get the bronze medal at the Junior, then to get the gold medal at U17 and after that this was the last one, so to get this gold medal is to reach the targets. God gave me these gifts and I do my best to get into this position to win prizes in higher categories. I am looking forward to the Seniors next year. I am proud of what I did and now look forward to a gold medal in Seniors and a gold medal at the LA2028 Olympics."

Women's silver medallist Enayet (EGY) said: "This is so special to me. I wasn't expecting a medal in the U19 because this was my last year at U17 and I took sixth place overall there. I am so proud of myself and all my hard work all season. All of my team too have worked hard. This was most one of the most difficult Laser Runs that I have ran. I didn't have time to warm up and my legs were hurting but I am grateful that I got this result."

Men's silver medallist Agavriloiae (ITA) said: "It was a very difficult race, especially after my Fencing where I got 27th place. It was not very good. Then with the Obstacle and the Swimming I got to sixth place and from there it was just all in, all I could do. It was very hard to maintain the pace of the run and to shoot well. I got second place. It was very hard to maintain patience especially before the range, you have to concentrate a lot and stay focused. I am very grateful that my parents came here from Italy, this was incredible."

Men's bronze medallist Hassan (EGY) said: "I am good. That race was so hard. I gave it all that I had. The shooting wasn't good but I gave it all in the running. I started in first but my first shooting series wasn't good. Today wasn't my day in shooting and so I must give a whole lot in running."



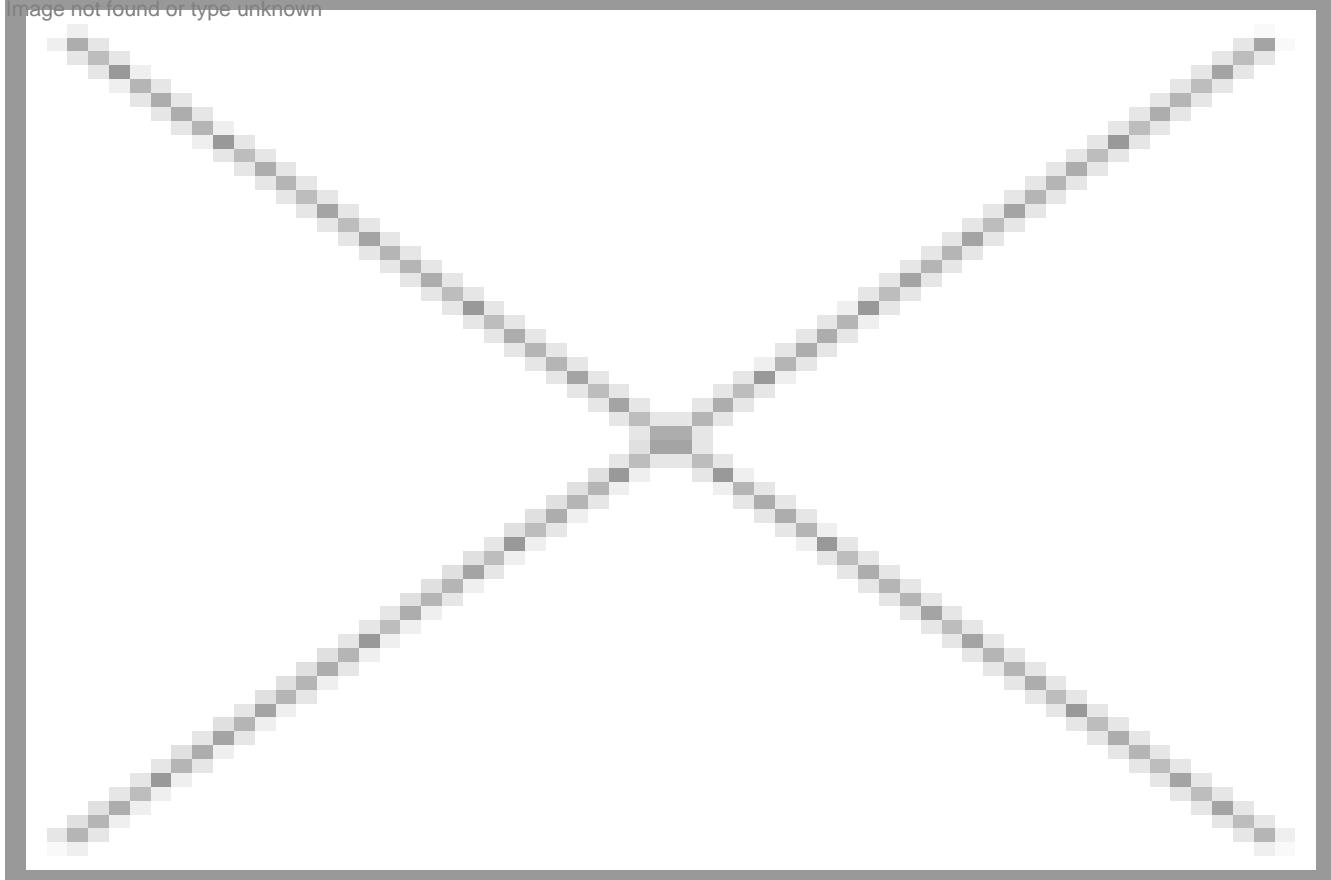
Women's Final

With Khalil (EGY) having laid down marker in Friday's Fencing Ranking Round by immediately jumping to the front of proceedings, her rivals' chase began in the Bonus Round. Zeman (HUN) managed to add six points to her tally, as did **Ganah Elgindy** (EGY) but Khalil (EGY) also tacked on four bonus points.

Obstacle would provide an opportunity to really gain some ground. As is becoming a trend, it was athletes from **Germany** who shone brightest, **Cansu Kurt** (GER) fastest over the course in 0:27.88, followed by compatriot **Charlotte Keister** (GER). Khalil (EGY) was slightly off her best times but still finished ninth-fastest to maintain that cushion atop the leaderboard.

As action moved to the pool, it was understandable that eyes shifted briefly away from Khalil (EGY) to **Wakana Uchiyama** of **Japan** who had set a new U19 world record in Swimming during qualification. Remarkably, Uchiyama (JPN) nearly lowered that mark, blistering to a 2:09.09 time, just 8 split seconds off her record. **Martina Rutkauska** of **Lithuania** pleased the home fans, second-fastest in 2:13.30 but the remarkable consistency of Khalil (EGY) saw her finish fourth-fastest and ensure a whopping 32-second lead on the field.

With such a huge cushion, it would have taken a serious slip-up in the Laser Run for Khalil (EGY) to be caught. Instead she put on a clinic. Her shooting times summed up her ability to meet the moment: 16 seconds on the first shoot, 12 seconds on the second, 9.3 seconds on the third and 7.3 on the fourth. It was a procession. Behind her, the fight for silver and bronze took its time to warm up but turned into a gripping battle on the final lap as Enayet (EGY) managed to hold off Flavin (FRA) and Haraszin (HUN) who jumped from 10th to 4th.



Men's Final

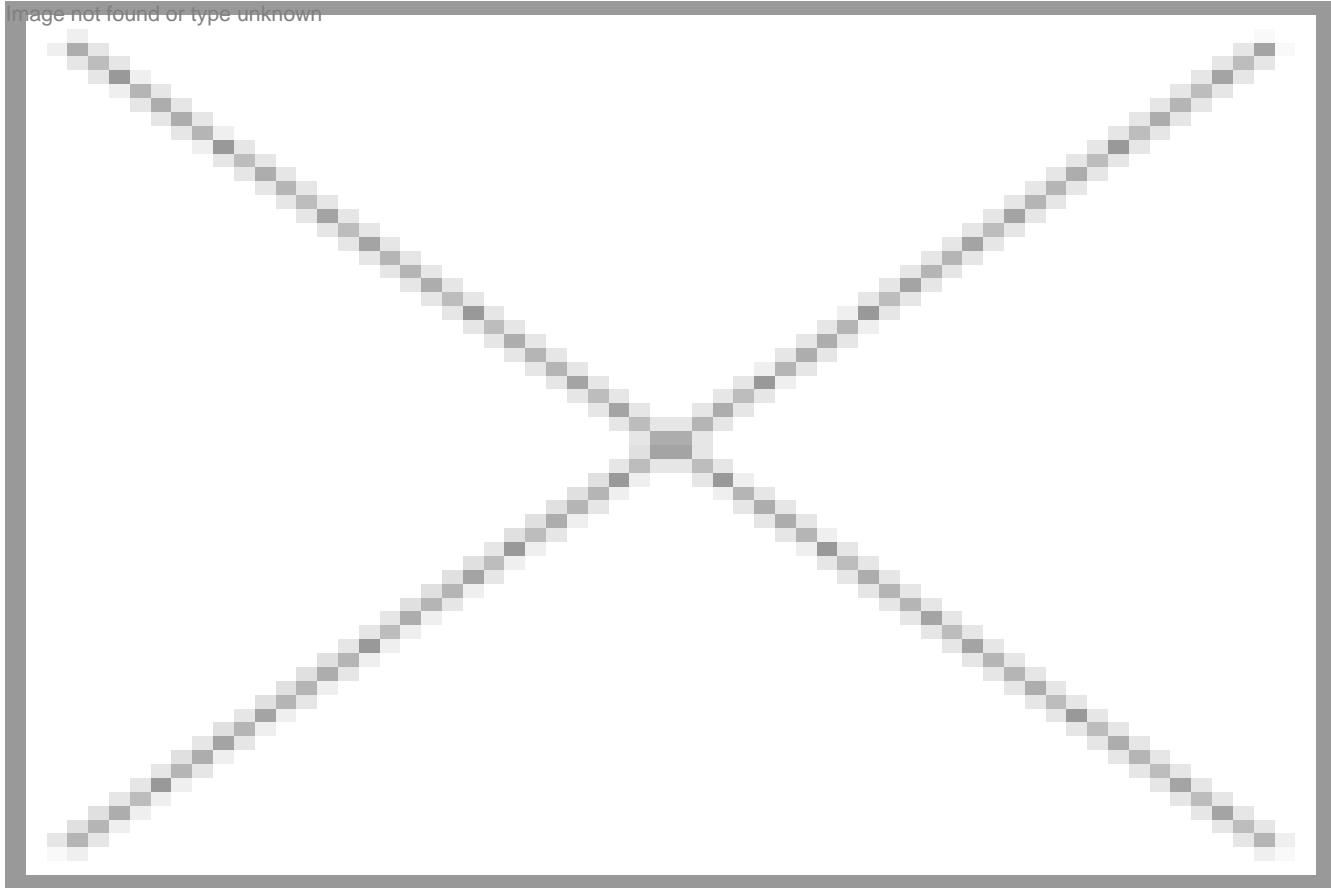
With Friday's Fencing Ranking Round having given us a signal of what was to come with a packed leaderboard, the Bonus Round offered a chance for crucial points. It was **Jhon De Lima Xavier** of **Brazil** who surely made the most of it, racking up a whopping 16 additional points. **Jack Murray** of **Great Britain**, one of three atop the leaderboard starting Saturday, moved out in front with four bonus points.

In Obstacle, German prowess was again evident as **Platon Iefremenko** (GER) led all 36 Finalists across the course finishing in 0:22.15, setting a new U19 world record in the process. Agavriloaie (ITA) was another to take advantage, third-fastest in 0:23.98 with Hassan (EGY) not far behind in 0:24.06.

Making up for what looked to be a debilitating performance in Fencing, when he was 27th overall, Agavriloaie (ITA) powered through the pool in the day's fastest time of 2:01.05 to bring himself back into contention. The Korean contingent crept further up too with Lim (KOR) 13th-fastest in 2:06.38, split second behind teammate **Minjin Heo** (KOR).

Hassan (EGY) retained a narrow lead at the head of the field, nine seconds clear of Murray (GBR) but with 30 seconds separating the top 13 in the Laser Run it was a wide open affair. The first visit to the range showed pressure would play its part as Hassan (EGY) took 21.75 seconds to find five green lights and his rivals scented an opening. On the second shoot, Lim (KOR) and Heo (KOR) made their move. Yet the hard running of Hassan (EGY) saw him claw back the lead in between shoots. It would take something special to clinch victory and Lim (KOR) delivered it with a rapid third shoot and a final range visit of just 6.86 seconds. Soliman (EGY) and Rybak (UKR) both shot well to leave it a four-way fight for the final two medals but Agavriloaie (ITA) dug in for silver and Hassan (EGY) emptied himself to claim bronze, the finishing line a sea of bodies on the track after a gripping fight.

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Follow the action

The UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U19 World Championships concludes tomorrow (Sunday 29 September) with the Mixed Relay.

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