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UIPM 2024 BIATHLE/TRIATHLE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: AFRICAN NATIONS DOMINATE ON HOT SANDS OF PORT SAID (EGY)

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- Egypt and South Africa stockpile medals across 12 age categories
- Senior success for Kazakhstan and Mexico as 600 athletes shine
- Para community combines for Laser Run and Biathle-Triathle World Championships

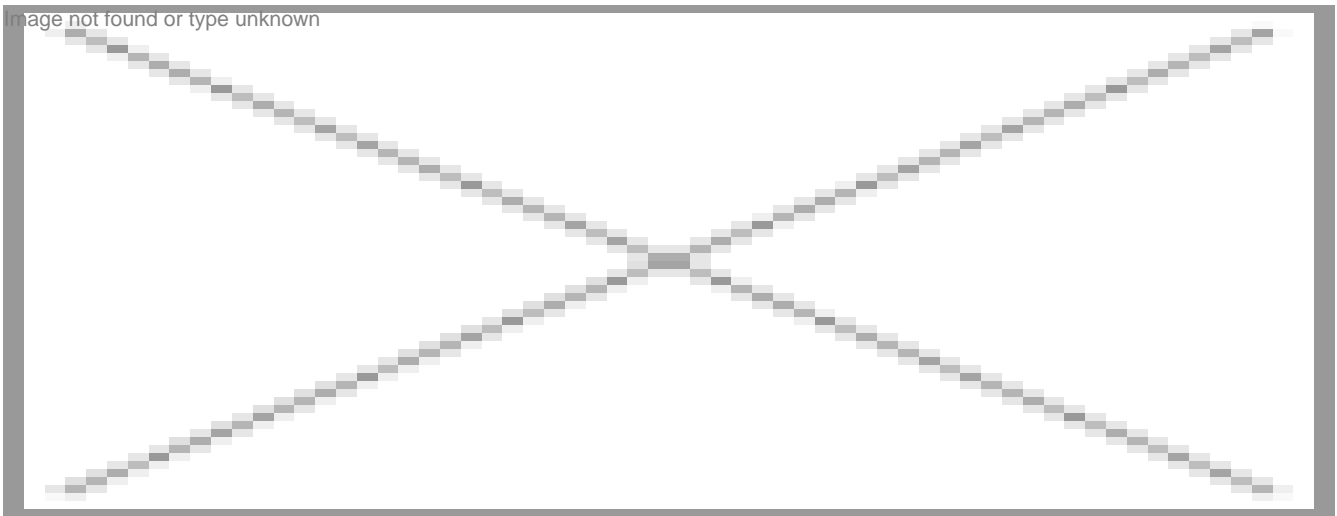
Spectacular Mediterranean sunshine, gripping competition and friendship were a constant feature of the UIPM 2024 Biathle/Triathle World Championships on the hot sands of Port Fouad City.

Six hundred athletes from 28 countries made their way to the Egyptian resort, competing in Mixed Relay and Individual categories from Under 9 to Masters 70+ at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport.

Competitors showed tenacity to overcome the soft, hot sand of the running course while mastering the sea swim and laser shooting elements.

Host nation **Egypt**, continental rivals **South Africa** and **Japan** enjoyed considerable success in the youth categories, while South Africa also led the way alongside **Spain** and **Germany** in Masters, while **Kazakhstan** and **Mexico** enjoyed notable successes at senior level.

The competition in Port Said (EGY) also incorporated a combined UIPM Para Sports World Championships, with more than 40 athletes competing in Para Laser Run, Para Biathle and Para Triathle.



Biathle Mixed Relay

On day one there was a familiar look to the medal rush as **South Africa** dominated proceedings in the Biathle Mixed Relay.

Across all age grades from U11 up to Masters 60+, the South African flag was raised early and often. However, the first gold medal of the day went to the host nation when the youngest competitors of all went toe to toe and **Asia Abdo** (EGY) **Ammar Fawzy** (EGY) teamed up to top the podium.

In the Senior competition there were heart-warming scenes on the finishing line as siblings **Tauset** and **Marco Lopez** (MEX) combined to secure a gold medal that became an instant family treasure.

There was a major upset in the U15 race where the hottest young talent in Modern Pentathlon, **Farida Khalil** (EGY), was carrying home hopes. However, the reigning U17 and U19 individual world champion had to settle for bronze as the Japanese stunned both of the African powers with **Wakana Uchiyama** (JPN) and **Rian Suzuki** (JPN) sprinting to a dramatic gold in the finishing straight.

Triathle Mixed Relay

The Egyptians were typically dominant in the youngest age groups, winning comfortably at U9 and U11, but there was a fierce race at U13 where **Keyla Douglas** (RSA) and **Wanru Hassbroek** (RSA) prevailed by 4sec over **Hagar Mohamed** (EGY) and **Malek Ibrahim** (EGY), with the **Türkiye** duo of **Melis Tusem Erim** and **Ugur Ucar** not far back in bronze.

On to U15 and for the second consecutive day, Japan (Uchiyama/Suzuki) demonstrated their prowess, with Uchiyama (JPN) particularly strong in her Swimming and Suzuki (JPN) showing all-round ability as they clinched another mixed gold.

Egypt added another crown in the U17 race but **Kazakhstan** proved very dominant at U19, where **Alexandra Sharayeva** and **Nikita Dubinskiy** left their rivals trailing. The host nation took revenge with the Junior crown thanks to **Habiba Ramadan** (EGY) and **Youssef Amer** (EGY), only for the Central Asian powerhouse to strike back, claiming senior gold with a brilliant victory for **Anel Issabayeva** (KAZ) and **Ayan Beisenbayev** (KAZ) holding off Team Lopez (MEX).

For the second day in a row, **Spain** secured success in the oldest age category (Masters 60+) thanks to the evergreen **Eva Granda** and **Francisco Carnero Alonso**.

Triathle Individual

Tara Schwulst (RSA) and Beisenbayev (KAZ) became senior Triathle world champions at the climax of a gripping third day as the athletes strained every sinew for individual recognition.

Schwultz (RSA) fought off the challenge of Issabayeva (KAZ) and **Julia Dale** of **Monaco** to win the women's title, before Beisenbayev (KAZ) proved too good for team-mate **Temirlan Temirov** (KAZ) and Marco Lopez (MEX).

One of the highlights of day three was a captivating U15 race between **Megan Kleynhans** (RSA), **Zoe Morgado** (RSA) and the home favourite, 13-year-old Khalil (EGY).

Khalil (EGY) was impeded by an Egyptian athlete who strayed off course in the second swim, effectively ending her title chances, but she hung on to bronze as Kleynhans (RSA) used her long legs to good effect on the sand to fend off the challenge of Morgado (RSA).

At U9, U11, U13 and U17, Egypt won seven of the eight titles on offer, while **Berker Deveci** (TUR) and **Linda Haraszin** of **Hungary** broke the African dominance at U15 and U19 level respectively.

Corne Lotz (RSA) led a South African 1-2-3 at Masters 50+ while the joy of lifelong participation was beautifully expressed by the elders of the field, Masters 70+ winners **Emily Lean See Freund** (GER) and **Johan Windt** (RSA). The Spanish team enjoyed more success at Masters 60+ thanks to Granda (ESP) and Carnero Alonso (ESP).

Biathle Individual

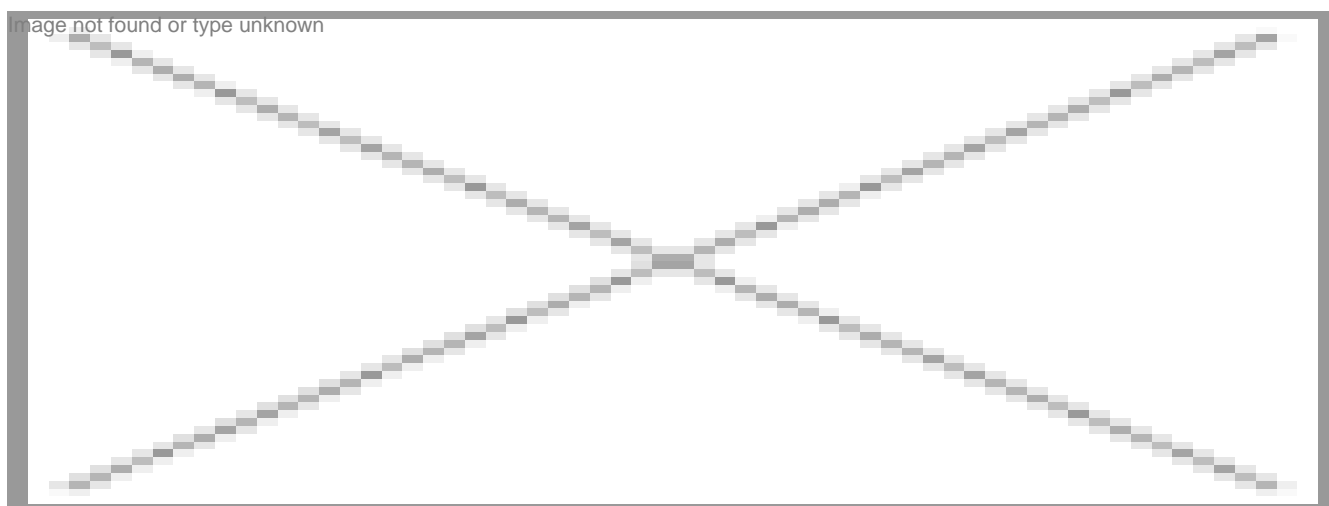
On day four, the female U15 conquest came down to the same three protagonists and it went almost the same way, with Kleynhans (RSA) claiming another gold and this time Khalil (EGY) taking silver ahead of Morgado (RSA).

There was another intriguing race at U19 as **Loghan Alexandra Gray** (RSA) held off a strong

challenge from silver medallist Petrova (KAZ) and bronze medallist Haraszin (HUN). And the South Africans totally dominated the senior event with **Bianca Strydom** (RSA) defeating **Annika Strydom** (RSA) by just 3sec with Schwulst (RSA) picking up bronze and **Melissa Meyer** (RSA) finishing 4th.

There was success for Japan and Mexico in the male under-age categories, as well as Egypt and South Africa, but the senior men's Biathle was controlled by Kazakhstan as Beisenbayev (KAZ) led a 1-2-3 ahead of Temirov (KAZ) and **Meirlan Iskakov** (KAZ).

This confirmed Beisenbayev (KAZ) as a double individual world champion for the second time, two years after he claimed both titles in Machico (POR). He also won Biathle gold and Triathle silver in 2021 in Weiden (GER) and now can be considered one of the all-time Biathle/Triathle greats with five individual gold medals.



Para World Championships

Port Said (EGY) provided a stunning backdrop for the second UIPM Para Biathle/Triathle World Championships. This year, the host country also incorporated the UIPM Para Laser Run World Championships, adding to the excitement.

Egypt showcased a strong and diverse para team with more than 40 athletes competing against participants from **France** and South Africa. **Aya Abbas** (EGY) enjoyed an impressive clean sweep of gold medals in the PMP1 category across Triathle, Biathle and Laser Run – where her victory came with just a 1.4sec margin over **Hanin Eikhouly** (EGY) and 1.7sec margin over **Hassiba Bouyoucef** (FRA).

In conjunction with the World Championships, the UIPM Para Pentathlon Commission hosted a comprehensive para classification training session led by Dr Roberto Nahon. Several classifiers from various countries, including Egypt, Türkiye and South Africa, became UIPM International Classifiers.

Champions' reaction:

Loghan Alexandra Gray (RSA) said after the Biathle U19 Mixed Relay: "I think before the race, mentally, running on the sand was not feeling good in my head. During the race the sand was so tough but then I got to the front and mentally I was so much better."

Teammate **WJ Kruger (RSA)** added: "Especially when I saw how big of a lead she had gotten me,

I knew that I could not let her down. If I let her down, it's basically throwing away all of her hard work."

Tauset Lopez (MEX) said after the Biathlon Senior Mixed Relay: "I am very happy for this result and for competing with my brother."

Teammate **Marco Lopez (MEX)** added: "It feels really good to compete with my sister. I want to thank our family and everyone who has helped us."

Ghazi Mahmoud (EGY) said after the Triathlon U13 Individual: "I had a lot of obstacles throughout the season and I'm very proud that I overcame them. I want to thank God and I'm really blessed, I want to thank my family and friends and all my coaches who were really committed throughout the season. I proved myself to everyone who was doubting me."

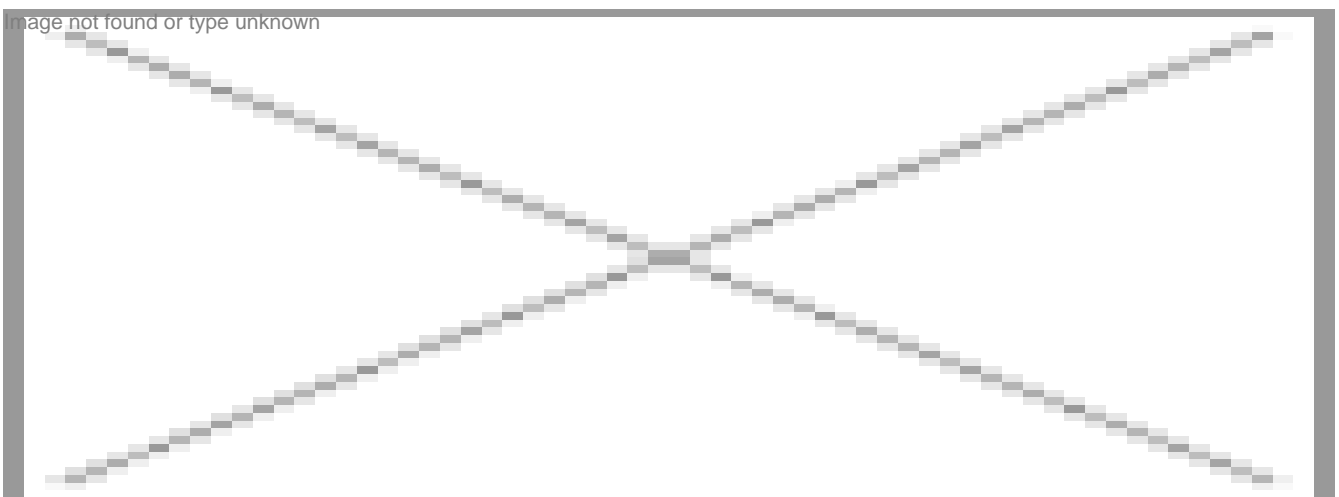
Oday Teailab (EGY) said after the Triathlon Individual U13: "I want to thank God for everything. Last year I had an injury the whole season. I want to thank my mother, my coaches and my friends, and I am thankful that I finished first."

Megan Kleynhans (RSA) said after the Triathlon Individual U15: "The sand here is quite hard to run on, and in this heat, but it's the same for everyone – everyone is in the same boat. It's about who has the strongest mindset out here. I want to get into the Modern Pentathlon circuit, it looks fun and joyful."

Linda Haraszin (HUN) said after the Triathlon Individual U19: "It was a pleasure being here and I enjoyed it so much. Everyone has been great and I'm so happy. I think my shooting was good because in the warm-up it wasn't the same. We are so proud of Michelle being an Olympic gold medallist, and it's really motivating being a Hungarian pentathlete right now."

Ayan Beisenbayev (KAZ) said after the Biathlon Individual Senior: "It's an amazing feeling to become a triple winner, so I'm very, very happy. Today our team won gold, silver and bronze – we trained so long for this event and our coach said before we started: we can win if we work together like a team. So we did it. Thank you for this event – I'm very happy to be part of it."

Corne Lotz (RSA) said after the Triathlon Individual Masters 50+: "I'm really happy because it's my first individual gold in Triathlon. I was a bit worried about my legs this morning, and the nerves, and also the fresh athletes I participated against, but I prayed to the Lord to give me fresh legs and He pulled me through. It feels great. I try to keep the body young, which is why we get the niggles. We're in it to try to win it. I'm glad that we are still able to do it."



UIPM reaction

UIPM Executive Board Member and Athletes Committee Chair, Yasser Hefny OLY, said: “The UIPM 2024 Biathle/Triathle World Championships started with a press conference attended by the Minister of Youth and Sports, Dr Ashraf Sobhy, and the Governor of Port Said, Mr Adel El Ghadban, followed by a grand opening ceremony featuring folkloric shows and a flag parade.

“The event included exciting competitions for different age groups, characterised by fearless and fair competition. The exceptionally high level of racing and the participation of nations from around the world showcased the bright future of UIPM Sports.

“It was a remarkable and spirited event, and I am immensely proud of all the participants. Let's continue to strive for excellence, and we look forward to further advancement and growth in the Biathle, Triathle and Para Sport categories, as these are the grassroots for our future pentathletes.”

UIPM Para Pentathlon Commission Chair, Andrew Collings, said: “This was the largest competitor start line of any Para World Championship in UIPM's history. The host country and event organisers should be proud of a successful event that marks a significant step towards the future growth of the para movement in World Pentathlon.”

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2024 Biathle/Triathle World Championships has now concluded but you can visit UIPM TV to watch the action on playback.

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