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UIPM 2025 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP PAZARDZHİK: KHALIL (EGY) REINFORCES HER CLASS WITH SECOND GOLD OF SEASON AND TWO WORLD RECORDS

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Fourteen-year-old sensation **Farida Khalil** of **Egypt** continued to redefine Modern Pentathlon at UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Cup Pazardzhik, setting two new world records on the way to gold in the Women's Final.

Khalil (EGY) was in irresistible form after winning gold and silver in the first two Pentathlon World Cups of the season, and she held off the challenge of Paris 2024 Olympic bronze medallist **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea** to cross the line 19sec ahead of her nearest rival.

A new Obstacle world record of 27.70sec was key to her success and the posting of an Overall world record of 1,485 points, nine more than Michelle Gulyas of Hungary managed two weeks ago

in Pentathlon World Cup Budapest. And there was more good news for the Egyptian team as **Malak Ismail** (EGY) claimed bronze and her first medal of 2025.

France finished with two athletes on the extended podium after an exceptional Laser Run by **Rebecca Castaudi**, with **Emma Whitaker** of **Great Britain** sandwiched between her and 6th-placed **Louison Cazaly**.

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Fencing

As the only Olympic medallist in the field, Seong (KOR) stepped on to the piste determined to impose her status and she delivered a stunning run of results to earn the maximum 250 points.

Seeded 8th, Seong (KOR) won all four of her bouts by a three-point margin and ended the run of all three Egyptians with a controlled display of counter-thrusting aggression. **Alia Enayet** (EGY) had already caused a major upset by defeating top seed **Emma Whitaker** of **Great Britain**, but she couldn't find a way past Seong and the same fate befell Khalil (EGY) in the last four and Ismail (EGY) in the final bout.

Elsewhere, there was a notable success for **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** in gaining 226 points by reaching the last eight, while **Malgorzata Karbownik** of **Poland** stood out by reaching the last four for 238 points.

Obstacle

All eyes were on Khalil (EGY) on the Obstacle course to see if she could extend her world record. She didn't just extend it, she shattered it, showing progression from 30.86 in Qualification to 29.30 in the Semi-finals to an incredible 27.70 in the Final.

It wasn't a one-horse race, however, as Karbownik (POL) showed great tenacity in the head-to-head with Khalil (EGY) to achieve the second-best time of 31.51 and achieve 351 points (11 fewer than the leader), and Castaudi (FRA) vaulted up to 7th overall with an excellent 33.18.

Among the Obstacle 'newcomers' who only started competing in the discipline this year, Ozyuksel (TUR) struggled badly, slipping off two of the early obstacles and taking almost 90 seconds to complete the course, while Seong (KOR) stuck to her task as a 12th-ranked 42.06 kept her in the top four overall.

Swimming

The top six athletes met in a truly intriguing final heat, with Seong (KOR) staying in touch with Khalil (EGY) until the last 30m when the youngster moved up a gear to touch first and extend her overall lead.

A time of 2min 17.10sec enabled the starlet to move 23 points clear of Karbownik (POL), 24 clear of Ismail (EGY) and 33 clear of Seong (KOR), who joined **Beatrice Mercuri** of **Italy** and **Anastasiya Malashenoka** (AIN) in a group of athletes who swam sub-2:20.

Laser Run

Seong (KOR) made a major early gain on the first running lap and Ismail (EGY) briefly edged ahead of Karbownik (POL) into 2nd place, but soon Seong (KOR) took possession of silver and never looked like relinquishing it. Ismail (EGY) also overpowered Karbownik (POL), whose running could not live up to her excellent shooting.

Could the world champion possibly overturn a 33sec deficit and go all the way? Her shooting began to improve and a 7sec third visit to the range suggested that Seong (KOR) might be able to

something incredible – but that would have required Khalil (EGY) to falter, which never happened.

Showing the maturity of a seasoned competitor, the young teenager put aside an opening 15sec shoot to fire with tremendous accuracy, and ran so smoothly that her victory was never in any real doubt. An 8sec third shoot followed by a final delivery of 10sec was enough to allow her a release of joy as she embarked on the fifth 600m, knowing she was not going to be caught.

Behind the dominant top three, Castaudi (FRA) moved all the way up from 12th (after a struggle in Swimming) to 4th with a superb time of 11:05.28, fractionally quicker than **Blanka Bauer** of **Hungary** on her way to finishing 7th.