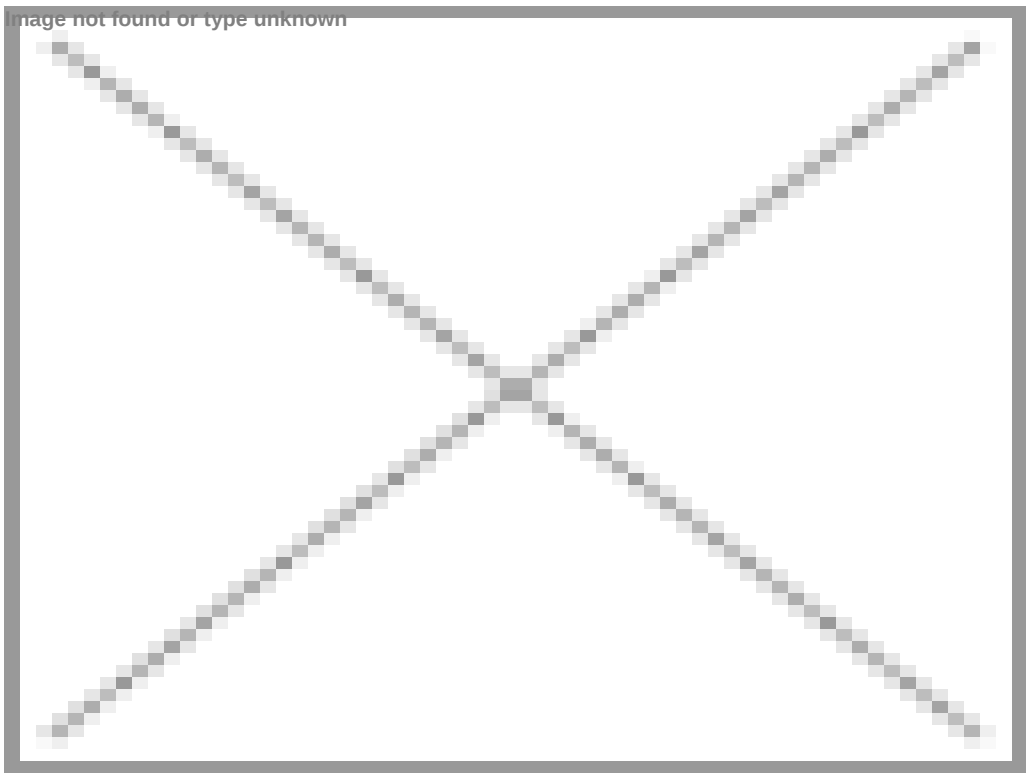


25 JUL 2025

2025 EUROPEAN PENTATHLON SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: GLORY FOR CASTAUDI (FRA) AND KOVALCHUK (UKR)

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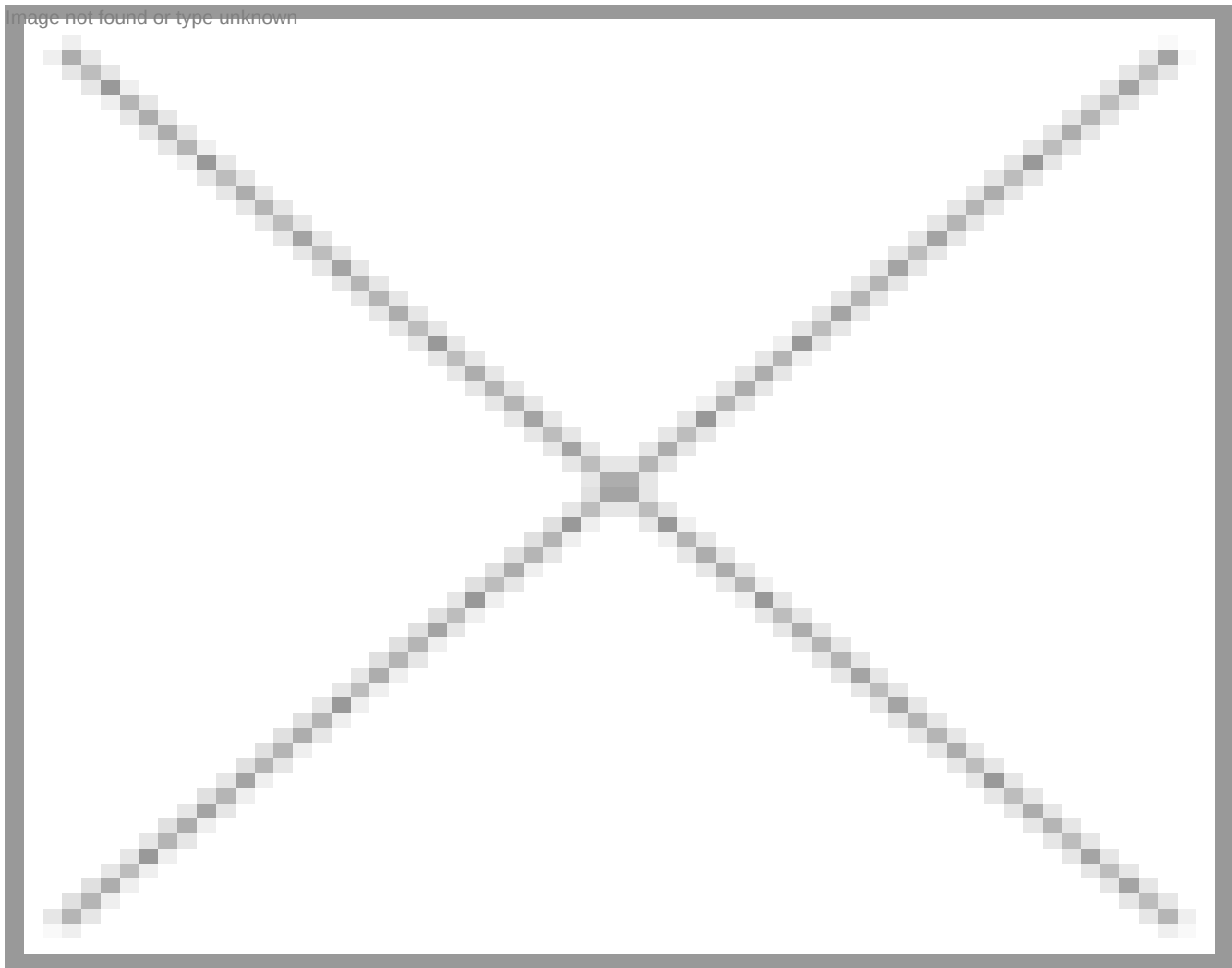
Spain's capital city was the scene for stirring senior breakthroughs as **Rebecca Castaudi** of **France** and **Yuriy Kovalchuk** of **Ukraine** claimed gold at the 2025 European Pentathlon Senior Championships in Madrid (ESP).

Having twice been crowned UIPM World Junior champion, Castaudi (FRA) delivered on so much promise as she won a gripping Women's Final on Friday morning. In energy-sapping heat, the 24-year-old held her nerve in a sprint finish with **Emma Whitaker** of **Great Britain** crossing the line just two seconds behind for silver while **Blanka Bauer** of **Hungary** claimed bronze.

Later in the afternoon, it was the turn of Kovalchuk (UKR) to make his mark as the 2022 European U24 champion produced a great Laser Run performance to climb to the top of the podium. Silver went to **Mihaly Koleszar** (HUN) while World No.4 **Jean-Baptiste Mourcia** (FRA) showed

trademark grit to fight to a superb bronze.

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Women's Final

In the culmination to a week-long gathering of many of the best pentathletes in the world, it was **Aurora Tognetti** of **Italy** who got off to a flying start in the opening Fencing discipline as she claimed maximum points on the piste.

With the Obstacle course proving fertile ground for many of the sport's younger brigade **Malgorzata Karbownik** of **Poland** proved that theory again with the fastest time, a blistering 00:23.78. Just two other finalists cracked the 30-second mark with Castaudi (FRA) second-fastest.

In the pool, **Valentina Martinescu** (ITA) set the mark for the rest to look up to, fastest of the 18 in 02:08.23, fully five seconds clear of the next best, the ever-dangerous **Blanka Guzi** (HUN).

A very even Final would be decided in the exacting environment of the Laser Run and it was Castaudi (FRA) who ran hard and shot with great accuracy but the performances of Whitaker (GBR), Bauer (HUN) and Guzi (HUN) all ensured the destination of all three medals remained up in the air. In the end, just eight seconds separated that leading quartet while Paris 2024 Olympian **Laura Heredia** of **Spain** gave the home crowd something to cheer with a scintillating Laser Run of 10:58.14, fastest by over seven seconds, as she rose to sixth.

As Castaudi (FRA) savoured the most impressive victory of her career to date, there was also a Team silver for France. Gold went to Hungary while Italy winning bronze.

Men's Final

With an equally talented field for the Men's Final, the opening discipline provided more than a hint of how things would pan out. Our eventual gold, silver and bronze medalists placed first, second and fourth in Fencing with Kovalchuk (UKR) taking maximum points.

However Koleszar (HUN) looked a man determined to avenge last year's European Championship near-miss when he finished fourth on home soil in Budapest. He followed his second place in Fencing by storming to the fastest time in Obstacle, clocking 00:21.80.

In the pool, **Mathis Rochat** (FRA) continued an impressive day for the French contingent, fastest of all in 02:01.15 but Koleszar (HUN) would stay at the front of proceedings going into a decisive Laser Run.

With 30 second separating the leader and the list of challengers all the way down to Mourcia (FRA) in ninth, the crowd hoped they were in for a frenetic finale. So it would prove as Kovalchuk (UKR) ate into his 10-second deficit with a superb combined performance. Koleszar (HUN) handled a couple of nervy moments at the range impressively as he withstood a spirited challenge from Mourcia (FRA) who rose all the way from ninth to a place on the podium with a Laser Run time of 10:03.93. That was only bettered by **Andras Gall** (HUN) who ran a rapid 09:56.98 to rise from 13th to fourth, just five seconds off a medal.

Gall (HUN) could console himself with a Team gold alongside his Hungarian compatriots with silver going to France and bronze to **Czechia**.