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UIPM 2025 PENTATHLON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: KHALIL (EGY) AND CASTAUDI (FRA) EXCEL IN WOMEN'S SEMI-FINALS

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- World No.1 cruises through to Final in bid for historic 'Farida Slam'
- European champion bosses Semi-final after thrilling duels with Karbownik (POL)
- Super Saturday thriller awaits with Seong (KOR) and Guzi (HUN) also in the mix

Farida Khalil of **Egypt** and **Rebecca Castaudi** of **France** looked very much like world title contenders in the Women's Semi-finals at the UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Championships.

The 'Farida Slam' remains on. World No.1 Khalil (EGY), the 14-year-old who is aiming to become the first athlete in history to be a quadruple world champion in one season, won Semi-final A by 19sec from **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Turkiye**, with **Aurora Tognetti** of **Italy** tucking in behind them.

European champion Castaudi (FRA) then led them home in Semi-final B, finishing 3sec clear of

team-mate **Louison Cazaly** (FRA) with **Blanka Guzi** of **Hungary** and **Valentina Martinescu** of **Italy** just 1sec further back.

Semi-final A

There was an immediate upset in Fencing as Tognetti (ITA) was defeated by **Emma Whitaker** of **Great Britain**, who then made it an Italian double by knocking out **Beatrice Mercuri** (ITA). **Yuri Kim** of **Korea** then accounted for world No.1 Khalil (EGY) in the Top 16.

The hooters were sounding as **Elzbieta Adomaityte** of **Lithuania** entered the arena and they kept going for some time as the local favourite moved confidently into the Top 4. Whitaker (GBR) came from behind to stop Kim (KOR) 5-4 and then Adomaityte (LTU) ended the run of Follett (GBR), before settling the Top 2 match with Whitaker (GBR).

The Obstacle course saw some gripping racing, and typically it was Khalil (EGY) who set the standard with an electric 30.69 on the C-shaped course. Tognetti (ITA) came right back into contention with a fluent 33.42.

Adomaityte (LTU) and Whitaker (GBR) faced up again in the final head-to-head, and it was the local who prevailed after Whitaker (GBR) slipped and fell on the Tilting Ladders. It was enough for Adomaityte (LTU) to move into the overall lead, four points ahead of Khalil (EGY) and eight clear of Tognetti (ITA).

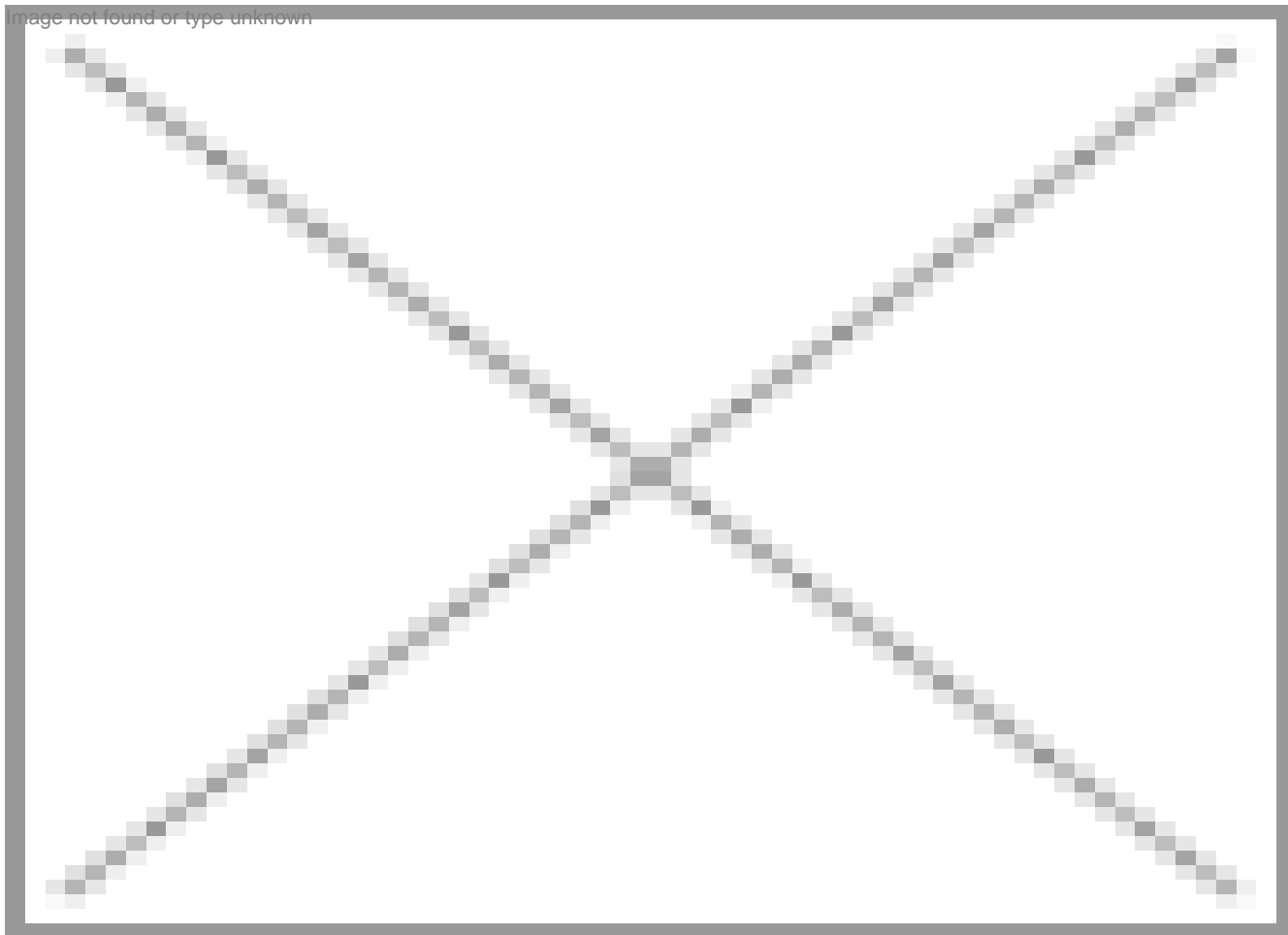
Swimming was dominated by two athletes who swam under 2:17, Mercuri (ITA) and Khalil (EGY), the latter building an overall lead of 15sec for Laser Run. Nobody else was able to break the 2:20 mark but Whitaker (GBR) atoned for her Obstacle mistake with a strong swim.

Laser Run was a typical Khalil masterclass as she paced herself and made the most of her cushion. The only athlete to threaten her supremacy was **Ilike Ozyuksel** (TUR), who conserved energy on the last lap knowing she was safe along with Tognetti (ITA).

Adomaityte (LTU) rode the support of the crowd to perform strongly throughout, with the exception of one slow shoot, finishing 4th to set up an exciting Final for the Kaunas crowd.

Whitaker (GBR) moved past **Esther Donda Fernandez** of **Spain** to claim 9th spot but had a scare at the final shoot when 2024 bronze medallist **Rita Erdos** (HUN) appeared on her shoulder. Whitaker (GBR) showed considerable stamina to fight off the challenge of a rival who finally had too much ground to make up.

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Semi-final B

Castaudi (FRA) started Fencing as 14th seed but soon found herself in the Top 4 with two excellent victories. No.2 seed **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea** meanwhile progressed through the bottom half of the draw. **Catherine Mayran Oliver** of **Mexico** enjoyed an incredible 5-4 victory over **Jana Attia** (EGY) in the last Top 8 bout.

Into the Top 4, Oliver (MEX) found her run come to an end at the hands of **Malgorzata Karbownik** of **Poland**, who controlled the match for a 5-3 success. Castaudi (FRA) suffered a snapped blade before outwitting Seong (KOR) by a 4-1 margin, leaving the reigning champion bemused by the non-awarding of a point early on. Finally Castaudi (FRA) met an immovable object in Karbownik (POL), who prevailed 5-3 in the Top 2 decider.

One of the features of the first two disciplines is that the two athletes who fence last meet again in an Obstacle head-to-head. And what a battle it was between Castaudi (FRA) and Karbownik (POL), the leader finally prevailing by a 10th of a second in 35.93 before being engulfed in a huge hug from an ecstatic rival.

The only two athletes to better those times were Guzi (HUN), soaring up the leaderboard with a 34.34, and Cazaly (FRA, 35.61).

The Swimming pool has been the domain of Martinescu (ITA) this week and she duly propelled herself out in front of the final heat with a 2min 11.42sec that took her joint-top of the overall leaderboard. Guzi (HUN) and Seong (KOR) were the only others to break 2:19, leaving both in the top six overall.

The Laser Run was destined to be a Swiss story – could **Vivienne Meyer** and **Anna Jurt** of **Switzerland**

force their way into the top nine from 10th and 11th respectively?

Inri Choi (KOR) in 4th always looked vulnerable with so many Laser Run experts around her, as with Attia (EGY) in 8th. But it was Seong (KOR) who slipped back to 9th after a very rusty first shoot, with Jurt (SUI) the first to threaten – and at the second shoot she got onto the shoulder of Attia (EGY) and soon moved past her.

Olivia Green (GBR) now became the prime chaser and at the final visit to the range she edged ahead of Choi (KOR) for the precious last qualifying place.

- UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Championships: All you need to know
- Competition results

The UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Championships reaches a climax tomorrow (August 30) with the Men's Final at 13:00 CEST followed by the Women's Final at 17:00 CEST. Live stream is available free on UIPM YouTube and UIPM TV and all competition results are available at the UIPM website.