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SCINTILLATING MEN'S QUALIFICATION IN PROSPECT AT WORLD CUP #4

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Friday 2 May will see 89 of the very best male pentathletes from around the globe fighting tooth and nail to make the cut for Sunday's Final here at World Cup #4. Those who fail will most probably miss out on booking a place to the showpiece World Cup Final in June so the pressure is really on. 3 Qualification groups and only 36 make it through. Any mistake or any lapse in concentration can be fateful at this level. These guys will have to be at their very best to have any chance of moving into the Final. The neutrals are in for a treat.

Proceeding will get underway with the fence in Group A where France's **Christopher Patte** and World No.1 **Justinas Kinderis** from Lithuania are favourites to progress. It will be far from easy for these two with Jiahao Han of China and his compatriot Zhaohong Cai a real threat.

Patte's teammate **Valentin Belaud**, one the fastest athletes in the world around the combined course, will need a good result on the pistes to stand a chance of getting out of this group whilst Hungarian hopes lie firmly on the shoulders of **Peter Tibolya** and **Bence Demeter**. The Korean duo **Jinhwa Jun** and **Woojin Lee** are very strong both in the fence and in the water so will be

jostling for those top positions as well.

In Group B, which starts with the 200m freestyle swim, there will be an interesting battle between World No.2 **Valentin Prades** from France, the in-form Hungarian **Robert Kasza** and World Cup #2 winner **Riccardo de Luca** from Italy. These three tactically astute and technically superb athletes always perform on the big stage so it will be intriguing to see who comes out on top.

They are joined in the mix by the experienced Ukrainian pair of **Pavlo Tymoshchenko** and **Dmytro Kirpulyanskyy** and new Czech sensation **Jan Kuf**. Russia's **Ilya Shugarov** looked a top prospect at Junior level so it will be interesting to see how he fares at this level whilst USA's **Logan Storie**, one the fastest swimmers around, is another to keep an eye out for. 16-year-old **Max Esposito** from Australia has qualified for this summer's Youth Olympic Games and will be getting his first taste of World Cup Series action in Kecskemet.

Adam Marosi

In the third and final group, all eyes will be on Hungarian star **Adam Marosi**

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(pictured, left). A real entertainer with a ferocious will to win, he will not want to disappoint his expectant fans on home soil. His main rival in this tough Group C will be World No.6 **Aleksander Lesun** from Russia, another top class competitor.

Austria's **Thomas Daniel** will be one who looking to carry on the form he has shown of late to make the final, as will **Jianli Guo** of China, who was class at World Cup #2 in Cairo last month. There is also a real threat from quality Belarusian fencer **Stanislau Zhurauliou** and Junior World Champion **Denys Pavlyuk** from Ukraine.

Veteran **Deniss Cerkovskis** will look to make his experience count here whilst Mexico's **Ismael Hernandez** has the speed around the combined but the question remains if he can amass enough points before the run/shoot to put himself in a position to qualify.

One thing is for sure, in each and every single group will be tight. The pressure will be on from the very beginning and only the toughest will survive and make the final 36. A test of both physical and mental strength, these pentathletes will have to give everything they have to make it through.

Men's Qualification schedule:

- Group A 09:00 fence – 13:00 swim – 16:00 combined
- Group B 10:30 swim – 12:00 fence – 17:00 combined
- Group C 11:30 swim – 15:00 fence – 18:00 combined

Full Competition schedule

- Thursday 1 May: Women's Qualification
- Friday 2 May: Men's Qualification
- Saturday 3 May: Women's Final
- Sunday 4 May: Men's Final
- Monday 5 May: Mixed Relay

Keep up to date with all the LIVE scores as they unfold on the www.pentathlon.org homepage