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OKTAWIA NOWACKA SENSATIONAL ON WAY TO GOLD AT WORLD CUP #4



23-year-old Oktawia Nowacka confirmed her fine early season form as she claimed the winner's medal at World Cup #4 in Kecskemet, Hungary. After back-to-back silvers in her last two World Cup Series appearances, the Polish star went one better as she capped an incredible day with her best ever performance to win the honour that has so far eluded her in her fledgling career.

After placing third in the fence, with 24 victories from 35 bouts, **Nowacka** placed 8th in the pool to move top of the leaderboard before the ride to put herself in a commanding position with 2 events to go.

The equestrian event was interrupted by a passing storm but that did derail Nowacka's bid for glory as on the difficult course, with jumps as high as 1.23m, she struck up a great understanding with her horse Bobi and scored a perfect 300 points to start the combined with a 20sec head start over her nearest rival.

From there, she controlled the run/shoot. Her speed was evident around the slippery course and she was never troubled by her pursuers. A minor wobble at her third passage at the range saw her need 7 shots to clear the last two shots but at her last passage she had five green light in as many shots before running clear to cross the finish line and win gold.

Nowacka told us, "Everything was perfect. My horse was great and thanks to him I had a perfect ride. From there I knew my speed would help me to victory. I am so happy to get this gold." When asked if she had felt any pressure, she replied, "I am pretty laid-back so I knew I could handle it".

On expectations for the rest of the season, she added, "I take every competition as it comes so we will see, I do not think about it too much, I just concentrate on my training".

In the combined, there was an exciting four-way battle for silver between **Soojin Yang** of Korea, **Melanie McCann** of Canada, **Sarolta Kovacs** of Hungary and Chinese fencing sensation **Xiaonan Zhang**. It was neck and neck until the last round at the range where Zhang was the first to clear her target to speed off towards a second place finish.

2008 Beijing Olympic gold medallist **Lena Schoneborn** from Germany made her way up from ninth to claim a classy bronze as her return to form was rubber stamped. Yang finished fourth as McCann and the day's fastest swimmer Kovacs ended their campaign fifth and sixth respectively.

Lithuania's **Karolina Guzauskaite** and **Viktoria Tereshuk** from Ukraine were the two fastest around the combined and finished 7th and 8th. Rena Shimazu of Japan was 9th as China's **Wei Wang** made up the top 10. Italy's **Gloria Tocchi**, who had shared top spot in the fence with Zhang, came in in 11th position with her compatriot **Alice Sotero** finishing just behind her in 12th.

There were plenty of positives for the British team as **Kate French** produced a strong run/shoot, clocking the fourth fastest time, to finish 18th overall and London 2012 Olympian and former world champion **Mhairi Spence** came through her first international competition unscathed since undergoing ankle surgery.

Sunday 4 May sees the Men take centre stage for their Final. Keep up to date with all the LIVE scores on the www.pentathlon.org homepage. The Riding and combined events will be broadcast LIVE on the UIPM youtube channel. Subscribe [HERE](#).

Women's Final overall results

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