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UIPM 2015 WORLD CUP #1 - SAMANTHA MURRAY WINS THE GOLD

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Great Britain's Samantha Murray has been crowned the Women's Individual Champion at the UIPM 2015 World Cup #1 in Sarasota-Bradenton, USA, after a breath-taking day of live sporting action.

The British dominance of the Women's Individual Final didn't end there as Murray's countrywoman Kate French took third place with a strong finish in a thrilling Combined Event.

Margaux Isaksen (USA) split the Brit pair taking silver in front of a large, enthusiastic audience that was captivated and enthralled from the first moment to the last.

Jubilant winner Samantha Murray said: "I am really proud of myself because in the semi-final I was really shaky and felt like I wasn't in the right place mentally to do a competition, but I took the time yesterday to think about everything and try and find that feeling I had at the World Championships and bring it to the World Cup.

"The thing with pentathlon is that you should be really happy when you make the podium because with five diverse events you never know what's going to happen. I'm just really grateful for

everytime I stand on a podium because I see that as a massive achievement."

Second placed Margaux Isaksen was delighted with the backing of her home crowd. She said: "Hearing their cheers definitely helped push me on. I know I have a lot of work to do on the shooting range, but overall I'm happy."

The UIPM President, Dr Klaus Schormann, paid tribute to the hard work of the athletes and of those working behind the scenes: "We have witnessed a wonderful competition full of excitement, skill and passion from the athletes who are to be congratulated, one and all.

"From the success and excitement of the Fencing Bonus Round all the way to the atmosphere of the pool, the grace of human and horse working together in the Riding and the thrill of the Combined Event - we experienced every emotion today.

"As well as the skill and dedication of the athletes, we must also thank the tremendous work of the Local Organising Committee, our friends and colleagues in the National Federation, the tireless efforts of the volunteers and last, but not least, the amazing spectators who turned out in their numbers to support these wonderful pentathletes."

Thirty six of the world's leading female pentathletes lined up for the Women's Individual Final and it was China's Xiaonan Zhang (CHN) who was the early leader with an impressive start in the Fencing. She was closely tailed by Poland's Anna Maliszewska (POL) and Margaux Isaksen (USA).

First place in the 200m Swim was shared by Samantha Murray (GBR) in 2:09:84 and her French counterpart Elodie Clouvell in 2:09:71 leaving them placed second and third respectively heading into the Riding Event. However, despite coming only 6th in the pool, Margaux Isaksen shot to the top of the leaderboard after 2 events.

But there was some change in terms of placings after the Riding Event. Previous leader Margaux Isaksen (USA) didn't have a strong round finishing 24th in the competition, which saw her drop down to third place and with an 11 second handicap.

She was overtaken by both Murray (GBR), who moved into first, and Clouvell (FRA) who jumped up to second overall, with a five second handicap, heading in to the Combined Event of running and shooting.

It was German Janine Kohlmann who rode to glory and first place in the Riding Event, leaving her 11th going into the final discipline.

There was everything to play for when the starters pistol went off but, despite some intense competition from the rest of the field, Murray (GBR) dug deep and stayed strong to hold on to first place and take Gold. Fellow Brit Kate French put in a strong display in the final discipline to pass a number of her fellow athletes in the field finishing in Bronze medal position. Margaux Isaksen (USA) secured the Silver medal in front of an ecstatic home crowd.

Fastest time overall in the Combined Event was Russian Donata Rimsaite in a time of 13:05:48.