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UIPM 2015 WORLD CUP #4 - VALENTIN BELAUD WINS IN HUNGARY

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KECSKEMET, HUNGARY - Valentin Belaud (France) showed a cool head and a blistering final run to clinch Men's Individual gold in the fourth stage of the 2015 UIPM World Cup Series in Kecskemet, Hungary. The 22-year-old overcame a 22-second gap on Ilia Frolov (Russia) to beat the former World Champion into second place in a dramatic Combined Event. The two athletes were neck-and-neck going into the final shoot, but a nerveless display from Belaud (FRA) saw him race out of the pistol range seconds ahead of his more experienced rival. He then stretched his lead to break the tape nine seconds in front of Frolov (RUS) and claim maximum qualifying points.

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Continuing a good weekend for France, Belaud's compatriot Valentin Prades (FRA) finished 3rd and Christopher Patte (FRA) 6th, following the silver medal won by Elodie Clouvel (FRA) in the women's final yesterday. Jun Woongtae (Korea) finished 4th and Pavlo Tymoshchenko (Ukraine), winner of World Cup #3 in Rome, was 5th. Two other Koreans - Jung Jinhwa and Lee Woo Jin - were 7th and 8th respectively. It was a first individual win for Belaud, a former Junior World Champion, after his fifth-placed finish in the World Cup #2 in Cairo. Today, a poor swim saw him in 33rd spot but a 4th placing in Fencing and 10th place in the Riding put him in 6th overall after three events. His combined run-and-shoot time of 10:38.05 was nine seconds faster than the next competitor. Speaking about his disappointing

swim, Belaud said: "It was not a good place to be."

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he added: "We have a good French team and after today we have a good feeling." Frolov (RUS) remained positive despite the setback of missing out on gold.. "I was third in Sarasota [World Cup #1], and second today, so I must be first in the next race," he said, adding that he was pleased with his winning performance in Fencing. James Cooke (Great Britain) had taken an early lead as he stormed to victory in the 200m freestyle swim with a time of 1:56.82, far ahead of next-fastest Michal Gralewski (POL) in 1:59.36. Maksim Kustov (RUS) was third in a time of 2:00.08. But Cooke would undo his good work in the pool with a disappointing 33rd place in Fencing. He was also 33rd in Riding and finished the day 27th. There was drama elsewhere in the fencing as Jun Woongtae (KOR) took seven bonus points, one of the biggest scores since the bonus round was introduced last year. Jun finished 13th in the final Fencing stakes as Frolov scored 25 wins to take first place. Prades (FRA) was second with 23 wins and Lee Woo Jin (KOR) third, also with 23 wins. In the Riding, only four athletes scored the maximum 300 points, including Jung Jinhwa, as many struggled against a tight time restriction. Frolov (RUS), one of the most experienced athletes in the competition, manoeuvred himself into first place going into the final round with a nerveless display that saw him clear all the fences with only a four-point time penalty. Home favourite Adam Marosi (HUN), 10th going into Riding thanks to a fifth place in the pool, made heavy weather of the course and dropped back into 14th overall. Marosi (HUN) ended the day 15th. As in previous World Cups this year, the biggest drama was saved for the Combined Event as Frolov's nine-second gap on second-placed Jung (KOR) made him firm favourite to take the gold. The Russian led for three of the four shooting stages, with Belaud (FRA) breaking clear from a chasing pack after the second shoot. Frolov (RUS) looked to be stretching his lead but a lightning fast third shoot

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from Belaud (FRA) put him firmly in contention.

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missed shots in the final shoot from Frolov (RUS) allowed Belaud (FRA) to take a lead he never looked like giving up. UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann was thrilled with the excitement of the Men's Final as well as the international spread of the leaderboard. "There were three French athletes in the top six and three Koreans in the top ten," Dr Schormann said. "It sends a big message that things are changing and some of the European countries may be very surprised that we have such strong athletes from Asia competing." Dr Schormann also said Hungary was a "great organiser", adding that the innovative Fencing Bonus Round is becoming more popular with the athletes. "That is what we want to achieve," he said. The elite men will do battle once more at the World Cup Final in Minsk, Belarus from June 11-14. World Cup #4 in Kecskemet ends with the Mix Relay tomorrow, on Monday, May 4. Yesterday, Zsófia Földházi (HUN) delighted the

home crowd with a victory in the Women's Individual Final. Elodie Clouvel (FRA) was second and Margaux Isaksen (USA) third. Follow tomorrow all the action of this UIPM 2015 World Cup #4 with our live results and live streaming of the Mixed-Relay's Competition at www.pentathlon.org, our updates through Facebook at www.facebook.com/modpen and Twitter at https://twitter.com/UIPM_HQ