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UIPM 2016 WORLD CUP #1 - STRONG START TO THE OLYMPIC YEAR FOR SCHONEBORN



CAIRO - Lena Schoneborn (GER) has set the standard at the opening event of the elite Modern Pentathlon season by winning Women's Individual gold at UIPM World Cup 1. Schoneborn, the reigning World Champion, led a German 1-2 as she took the title ahead of compatriot Annika Schleu. Elodie Clouvel (FRA) completed an all-European podium as she finished 3rd, with Zsofia Foldhazi (HUN) 4th, Margaux Isaksen (USA) 5th and Natsumi Tomonaga (JPN) 6th. Lena Schoneborn (GER) said after receiving her gold medal: "I am relieved that I managed through the day because it did not start well. The technique did not work and I was really frustrated after the Swim. "But as I always do in Pentathlon I stayed focused on the next discipline and Fencing went well, and Riding was OK. I was glad it all worked out. My shooting wasn't very good, I think, but it still was enough. It was good to collect some points and I hope I can keep going. "Internally, this season is important - I have to be better than the others and keep collecting points. After the third World Cup I will see. Maybe do an extra training camp, and then hopefully I can focus on August." Annika Schleu (GER) said after receiving her silver medal: "It was really important for me to have a good competition here. We already have two girls qualified and I have to get a lot of points to beat

Janine... so this was so good. "Everything is about my fencing, and that works again so I am just happy." A captivating day of action between 36 of the world's top elite and emerging pentathletes began with Clouvel (FRA) topping the standings after the opening Swimming discipline. She timed 2:10.74 ahead of Foldhazi (HUN) in 2nd and Alice Sotero (ITA) 3rd. After languishing in the pool, it was on the Fencing piste that the World Champion began to take a hold of proceedings.

Schoneborn (GER) enjoyed a 27-8 record in the Ranking Round to nearly break the world record she set at the 2015 UIPM World Championships in Berlin and march to the top of the overall standings with 264 points. On horseback the leader found herself under renewed pressure from Clouvel (FRA), whose clear Riding round allowed her to get within three points of Schoneborn (GER) in the overall standings. Nineteen athletes enjoyed clear Riding rounds with Iryna Khokhlova (ARG) emerging with the top score. The tension was palpable as the athletes lined up for the Combined Event with the top five separated by only 12 seconds. But Schoneborn called on all of her composure and experience to make sure nobody was able to catch her. UIPM 1st Vice-President Ivar Sisneiga said afterwards: "We are very happy with the way the competition was organised. These are beautiful venues. I spoke with many of the athletes and they are very happy with the conditions they have here. "Particularly the horses were very good - there were many clean rounds so that speaks of the high quality of the horses - and it was a very interesting competition. "What we have seen here is all those athletes that have not qualified for the Olympic Games are fighting for their lives, they are going with everything. So even though it's the first World Cup of the season they are truly prepared. "A lot of the athletes I have seen are very fit, in very good condition, so this is making for a very interesting competition. We saw a tremendous fight in the Combined Event, because every place could mean that they are in the Olympic Games or they are not. It was nice to see that intensity, and it was just a very good event for UIPM and all the athletes." Eng. Khaled Abdel Aziz, Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports, during the opening press conference: "This sport is the sport that finds the most complete athlete and we would like to praise the efforts of the Egyptian Modern Pentathlon Federation and UIPM in making Egypt one of the key venues for this Olympic sport. "This event is providing 2,000 touristic nights for Egyptian tourism. These kind of events are what we need in our country and offer proof that Egypt can organise world-class events." Tomorrow sees the Men's Individual Final with the Mixed Relay to follow on Sunday. The Combined Event of all finals sessions at the 2016 UIPM World Cup is available on live stream at uipmtv.org with up-to-date results available at pentathlon.org.