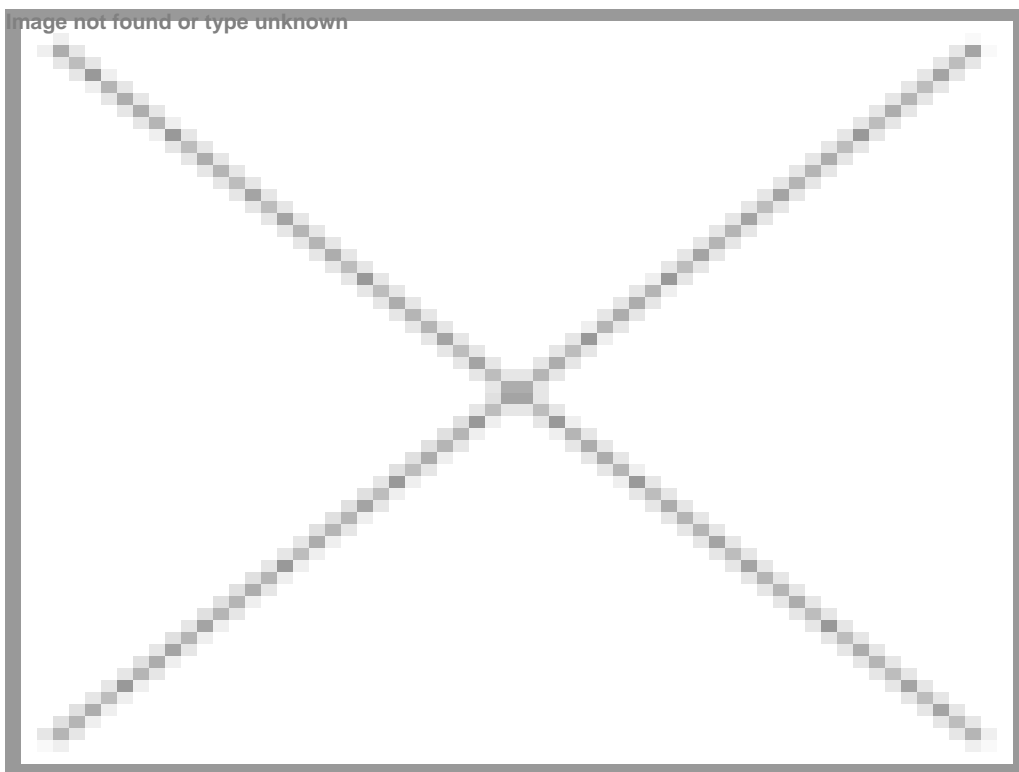


02 APR 2016

UIPM 2016 WORLD CUP #3 - FRENCH MEN CONQUER ROME



It was a day of dominance for France on the UIPM World Cup circuit as Valentin Prades and Christopher Patte finished in first and second place in the Men's Individual Final at World Cup #3 - with Valentin Belaud not far behind in 6th.

Prades, a relay gold medallist for France in the 2014 World Championships, and Patte, who claimed a World Championships gold medal the year before in the team event, enjoyed their first taste of success in this Olympic season by taking gold and silver respectively, ahead of bronze medallist Jan Kuf (CZE).

Prades (FRA) managed to claim top spot despite having started the Combined Event in ninth place, albeit that only 0.17 seconds separated him from pack leader Amro El Geziry (EGY) - the winner of gold at World Cup #1 in Cairo in February.

For Patte (FRA), silver medal allowed him to equal his personal best in the competition after he finished second in 2013. He benefited from a strong showing in the Fencing and Riding and recovered from a disappointing Swimming performance, where he finished in 30th place overall. Like his compatriot he made his way through the pack in the Combined Event, advancing from 8th

to 2nd.

Gold medallist Prades (FRA) said afterwards: "I'm very happy because it's an important season this year. It's Olympic qualification and this is a good performance for getting my ticket to Rio.

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"I am so happy because we have trained hard for this.

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It's like winning the World Cup final; it's the same feeling."

On the composure he showed on the Shooting range, he said: "I don't think it was just my Shooting. Everyone created a lot of pressure and we were very close.

"Today I was good enough but the fight is nice and I hope the next competition will be similar."

Runner-up Patte (FRA) said: "I'm feeling very good because I want to have a season of progress. I want to progress and I want to go to the Olympic Games and I am getting good qualifying points.

"I am very excited to have a medal. I love my French team because we train so hard and we are a good team. I am happy for Valentin Prades that he finished first.

"Both Valentin and I are hard runners. So I said, 'come on, let's go!' I knew we could do it."

The Fencing Ranking Round featured excellent performances from Chinese duo Jianli Guo and Jiahao Han, with Christian Zillekens (GER), Jan Kuf (CZE) and Pierpaolo Petroni (ITA) also managing to secure 22 victories from their 35 bouts.

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In the Swimming, a large crowd filled out the poolside spectator area and offered fantastic support, with local children offering high fives to the Pentathletes.

James Cooke (GBR) and Amro El Geziry (EGY) enjoyed a thrilling race with the Egyptian managing to pass his British rival in the final metres to secure top points.

Guo (CHN) then secured maximum extra points by coming out on top in the Fencing Bonus Round, defeating Han (CHN) in the final bout.

In the Riding arena, six competitors had a clean round and the maximum 300 points, while Patte (FRA) and Kuf (CZE) put themselves in medal contention with scores of 293.

Unlike 24 hours earlier when Laura Asadauskaite (LTU) led for much of the day, the lack of a clear leader meant it was destined to be an incredibly open Combined Event and so it proved as Amro El Geziry (EGY) failed to capitalise on the slender advantage he held by starting first.

For the French, it was a classic case of hunting in packs as Prades, Patte and Belaud saw each other taking prominent positions and collectively took charge of a world-class field.

Kuf (CZE) was satisfied with his first World Cup medal of the season while Joseph Choong (GBR) in 4th and Zillekens (GER) in 5th could be very pleased with their high placings.

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For the second day in succession was no home

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success for Italy, with Petroni the highest finisher in 10th place. Defending World Cup champion Riccardo de Luca finished third from last, and compatriots Fabio Poddighe and Giuseppe Parisi fared only marginally better. The hosts have one more chance in tomorrow's Mixed Relay to give their spectators something to cheer.

The UIPM President, Dr Klaus Schormann, said: "Today, the Men's Individual Final was so exciting and it was no surprise that we had three French athletes in the best six.

"This competition shows, with a German finishing in fifth place and a Czech athlete finishing third, how close they started and the drama we had on show for the spectators here today.

"We have made great movements with this sport and we can see again with this competition, the World Cup in Rome, it was an exciting moment and it will give us motivation for the next competitions.

"Congratulations to all the athletes who fought for the points and the rankings. No one here gave

up, they all want to look forward and qualify for the Olympic Games."

The Combined Event of each final at World Cup #3 is available to watch on live stream at UIPM's online TV channel uipmtv.org, where coverage resumes at 1715 CEST tomorrow (April 3) with the Mixed Relay. For up-to-date results of all competitions go to pentathlon.org.

2016 UIPM World Cup #3, Rome

Men's Individual Final Final Standings

- 1 PRADES Valentin FRA 1492
- 2 PATTE Christopher FRA 1489
- 3 KUF Jan CZE 1485
- 4 CHOONG Joseph GBR 1480
- 5 ZILLEKENS Christian GER 1478
- 6 BELAUD Valentin FRA 1476
- 7 SANDOVAL Alvaro MEX 1473
- 8 HEFNY Yasser EGY 1468
- 9 GUO Jianli CHN 1466
- 10 PETRONI Pierpaolo ITA 1464
- 11 EL GEZIRY Omar EGY 1460
- 12 FRANCESCHINI Auro ITA 1453
- 13 EL GEZIRY Amro EGY 1445
- 14 DEMETER Bence HUN 1444
- 15 KUSTOV Maksim RUS 1443
- 16 FERNANDEZ Charles GUA 1442
- 17 PAVLYUK Denys UKR 1438
- 18 FEDECHKO Yuriy UKR 1429
- 19 NAKONECHNYI Ruslan LAT 1428
- 20 HAYANOUSKI Mikalai BLR 1426
- 21 KINDERIS Justinas LTU 1421
- 22 NAUMOV Oleg RUS 1420
- 23 JUNG Jinhwa KOR 1419
- 24 COOKE James GBR 1416
- 25 HAN Jiahao CHN 1415
- 26 SWIDERSKI Jaroslaw POL 1408
- 27 DOGUE Patrick GER 1399
- 28 INZUNZA Jorge MEX 1398
- 29 STASIAK Sebastian POL 1397
- 30 MALITS Istvan HUN 1396
- 31 POLIVKA Ondrej CZE 1393
- 32 PODDIGHE Fabio ITA 1393
- 33 PARISI Giuseppe ITA 1388
- 34 DE LUCA Riccardo ITA 1379
- 35 SANDTEN Matthias GER 1350
- 36 CURRY Samuel GBR 1339