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UIPM 2019 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP SZEKESFEHERVAR: CHINA REIGN IN THE RAIN IN MIXED RELAY



- Bian and Han overcome adverse conditions to win gold by 24sec
- Second medal for hosts Hungary as Guzi and Kardos storm back for silver
- Experience counts as Venckauskaite and Kinderis claim bronze for Lithuania

SZEKESFEHERVAR, HUNGARY: May 5, 2019 – **Bian Yufei** and **Han Jiahao** defied adverse weather conditions to win a rare gold for **China** in the Mixed Relay at UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Szekesfehervar.



On a day when high winds and rain meant the

showpiece Fencing Bonus Round had to take place indoors, China (Bian/Han) overcame the elements during Riding and Laser Run in impressive style to protect the lead they had amassed in Swimming and Fencing.

Supporters from the host nation, **Hungary**, were celebrating again as **Blanka Guzi** and **Bence Kardos** came from nowhere to win silver, thanks largely to an exceptional Laser Run by Guzi (HUN).

With a record 22 nations competing in the mixed event, the race for bronze was wide open but it was settled by experience as **Gintare Venckauskaite** and **Justinas Kinderis** came home 3rd for Lithuania.

The standard was so high in spite of the conditions that world champions **Germany (Rebecca Langrehr & Fabian Liebig)** could only finish 4th, just ahead of **Great Britain (Joseph Choong & Olivia Green)** in 5th and **Korea (Jeong Mina & Seo Changwan)** in 6th.

MEDALLISTS' REACTION

Han (CHN) said: "In Fencing we were the leaders and it was very difficult because everybody is good at Fencing and we didn't do so well in the individual competition.

"In Riding it was very difficult because the weather was bad, with big wind and big rain.

"The last event, Laser Run, was also difficult because the pistol is not good on a rainy day. But we are very happy to win this championship."

His partner Bian (CHN) added: "Because the wind was very big, it was difficult for everybody to control the pistol. We have to solve this problem to be good athletes."



The star individual performer of the Laser Run

was Guzi (HUN), who made her way from 11th to 2nd in the space of two circuits. She said: “I just wanted to concentrate on myself. I completed the task that was in my mind. It’s one of the best things that’s happened to me, and I am very glad.

“Today is Mother’s Day and so this is a present for my mother.”

Her partner Kardos (HUN) added: “It was hard, because Blanka came from 11th to 2nd position and I heard the speaker and the crowd and the Hungarians supporting us, and it was hrd to be in that situation.

“My shooting was not the best but running was good, and Blanka was very, very good.”

SWIMMING



China (Bian/Han) started the day as they meant

to go on, setting the pace in the pool with 1:56.70. Great Britain (Green/Choong) were next quickest with 1:59.00, just ahead of Korea (Jeong/Seo).

FENCING

China (Bian/Han) did not have everything their own way in the Ranking Round, as **Valeriya Permykina** and **Pavlo Zvedeniuk** of **Ukraine** joined them in top-scoring on 29V/13D.

Korea (Jeong/Seo) were only one victory behind, scoring 28V/14D, keeping at bay more established athletes from **France (Elodie Clouvel & Valentin Belaud)** and **Hungary (Tamara Alekszejev & Gergely Regos)**, each of whom managed 26V/16D.

The Bonus Round belonged to France (Clouvel/Belaud), who added five points to their score.



RIDING

With the rain cascading down, the ground underfoot soon deteriorated and this may have been a disadvantage for the overall leaders, who went out last. Two potential champions lost their way as France (Clouvel/Belaud) conceded 79 penalty points, Ukraine (Permykina/Zvedeniuk) 76 and the top-ranked Hungarian duo (Alekszejev/Regos) 44.

In contrast, China (Bian/Han) kept their nerve with a score of 284, as did top-scoring Germany (Langrehr/Liebig) with 292 and Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Kinderis) with 291.

The champions of Pentathlon World Cup Sofia, **Marta Kobecka** and **Szymon Staskiewicz** of **Poland**, matched that score to stay in the hunt for a medal.



LASER RUN

China (Bian/Han) started with a 25sec lead from Korea (Jeong/Seo) and 32sec from Poland (Kobecka/Staskiewicz), and Bian (CHN) defended her position as other challengers capitulated. An opportunity presented itself for an unexpected contender to emerge, and it was Guzi (HUN) who took her chance with an exceptional run/shoot, overtaking nine rivals.

When she handed over to Kardos (HUN), their possession of silver briefly came under threat as

Kinderis (LTU) profited from a great shoot, but Kardos (HUN) immediately overtook his rival to make sure the crowd would have another medal to celebrate after the gold that was claimed by Alekszejev (HUN) in the Women's Final.

Hungary (Guzi/Kardos) recorded a time of 11:16.00 that was exceptional in the circumstances, 13sec ahead of Great Britain (Green/Choong) and 23sec quicker than third-fastest Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Kinderis).

UIPM REACTION

Martin Dawe, UIPM Executive Board Member for Marketing, said: "Today has been a great Mixed Relay. We've had 22 teams – the most we've ever had in a World Cup event – and it has demonstrated what a great event it is.

"The concept of Mixed Relay was created by UIPM and today I think has proven that it is an event that should be part of the Olympic programme.

"There have been some great performances, although the weather has not been with us today, with lots of rain and gales, which clearly did affect the Laser Run event. But I'd like to congratulate both the athletes and the organisers for adapting to these conditions.

"They've done a wonderful job and we are looking forward to coming back to Hungary for the first-ever dual UIPM Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Budapest in September."

WATCH AND FOLLOW

Pentathlon World Cup Szekesfehervar has now concluded but the next event on the UIPM calendar is only three weeks away.

UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Prague takes place from May 21-26, with athletes aiming to qualify for the Pentathlon World Cup Final in Tokyo (June 27-30).

Live stream of all finals will be available on UIPM TV while up-to-date results are available at the UIPM website.