

26 MAY 2019

# UIPM 2019 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP PRAGUE: GOLD FOR FLAWLESS FRENCH (GBR)



**Kate French** tasted gold for the third year in succession on a triumphant day for **Great Britain** at UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Prague.

At a beautiful riverside location in the Czech capital, French (GBR) was unstoppable in the Women's Final having already dominated the qualification round two days earlier. To complete the perfect day, she was joined on the podium by team-mate **Jessica Varley** (GBR), who made up six places in the Laser Run to claim bronze.

Silver went to 2017 world champion **Gulnaz Gubaydullina** of **Russia**, confirming her form at a critical stage of the season. The next competition, UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Final in Tokyo (June 27-30), will offer most of the world's top athletes their first chance to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

It was a good day for **Kim Sunwoo** of **Korea**, too, to remind rivals of her quality. The two-time UIPM junior world champion finished 4th, her best performance since winning bronze at

Pentathlon World Cup Kecskemet 12 months ago.

Behind her, world No.1 **Marie Oteiza** of **France** crossed the line in 5th, ahead of **Germany** duo **Rebecca Langrehr** and **Janine Kohlmann** and world No.3 **Uliana Batashova** (RUS).

## MEDALLISTS' REACTION



As she savoured her third individual gold medal

at this level, after similarly dominant performances in Cairo (EGY) in 2017 and Sofia (BUL) in 2018, French (GBR) said: "I am very, very happy. I needed a good result. It has just been a really good day so I'm super pleased.

"Hopefully this means I will be competing at the Pentathlon World Cup Final and I'm really relieved about that and looking forward to it.

"It has been brilliant to have lots of our parents here, including my mum, who has come out. I could hear them all shouting at the finish line, and it was great to have that support.

"The first few competitions haven't gone to plan, so I'm really pleased I have been able to get it right for this one."

Having already finished 8th in Cairo (EGY) and 5th in Sofia (BUL) in this year's Pentathlon World Cup series, silver medallist Gubaydullina (RUS) said: "I am very happy. All my disciplines were very good today.

"All season this has been normal, and I am happy with this result and I just want to say thank you to my coaches, the administrators and everybody else involved in the competition.

"In the future I want the same – to be in the top 10 and to be winning. It's a lot of work and I'm looking forward to the Olympic Games and the World Championships."

The revelation of the day was the performance of Varley (GBR), who put in a storming Laser Run to earn her first medal. She said: "I'm absolutely over the moon. I've been working for this basically my whole life, and I am so excited it has finally happened.

"This season I have gone from nothing to 7th at World Cup Szekesfehervar and now 3rd here – it has all come together at just the right time.

"Hopefully that will be enough to secure my qualifying spot for Tokyo and I hope to be there.

"I don't think I realised I was in a podium position until the last run. I had a wobbly shoot in the

semi-final and I knew I had to shoot much better, and I'm so happy I did.

“Kate has won, which is absolutely fantastic, and we've got our whole team out here and the support is amazing. I couldn't do it without them.”



## SWIMMING

Not unusually, Gubaydullina (RUS) set the pace in the pool with a time of 2:05.81, winning the final heat from **Alice Sotero** of **Italy**, who timed 2:07.33, and Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist **Elodie Clouvel** (FRA, 2:07.35).

## FENCING



With so many of the world's top 10 in attendance

for this final chance to earn a trip to Tokyo next month, it was no surprise to see fierce competition on the Fencing piste, and French (GBR) emerged on top but only by a narrow margin.

The British woman scored 24V/11D in the Ranking Round, the same score as Langrehr (GER), and edged the final encounter in the Bonus Round to add two important points to her overall score.

Two other medallists from the 2019 season, **Natalya Coyle** of **Ireland** and **Anna Buriak** (RUS), kept the leaders on their toes with 23V/12D while Kim (KOR) and Oteiza (FRA) kept themselves in contention with 22V/13D apiece.

## RIDING



On a low-scoring day, there were no perfect

rounds and the priority for the athletes was to make sure they didn't lose ground to rivals battling either for the podium or for Tokyo qualifying points.

Kohlmann and **Ronja Steinborn** (GER) came out on top with 295 points each, with **Alessandra Frezza** (ITA) scoring 294 and Batashova (RUS) 293.

Gubaydullina (RUS, 290), French (GBR, 289) and Langrehr (GER, 289) all escaped unscathed, while 18 penalty points apiece damaged the medal prospects of Coyle (IRL) and Kim (KOR) and Oteiza (FRA) looked like she had too much to do after scoring 271.



LASER RU

N

French (GBR) is an athlete with rock-solid temperament who knows how to protect a lead, and she defended her 9sec advantage with aplomb from the first shoot to the final metres of the run, eventually winning by 14sec.

Behind her there was a fascinating exchange of places, which began with Langrehr (GER) and Coyle (IRL) losing the initiative to Kim (KOR) and **Ipek Aksin** of **Turkey**. The other early mover was Gubaydullina (RUS), who showed her class by moving into 2nd place during the second 800m lap.

As the intrigue continued into the third lap, Kim (KOR) took an apparently firm hold on the bronze medal position, only to lose some precious seconds at the final shoot and find her position stolen by a marauding Varley (GBR), who had made her way impressively through the pack from a starting place of 9th.

As the chasing pack strained every sinew in a bid to get to Tokyo – the final line-up for which will be announced by UIPM in June – there were a number of impressive Laser Runs, led by three athletes who broke the 12min barrier: **Ilike Ozyuksel** (TUR, 11:49.63), **Annika Schleu** (GER, 11:54.71) and **Mayan Oliver of Mexico** (11:58.46).

## **PRESIDENT’S REACTION**

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “This is an important competition in the season, with a final opportunity to qualify for the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Final and Olympic Test Event in Tokyo.

“It was an exciting day in a beautiful new arena here at the riverside in Prague. When we see what has been prepared by the organising committee I am really happy to see that this old tradition here in Prague has been continued.

“The athletes gave a lot of great performances and it was good to see the competition for positions six, seven, eight and so on – they were running hard to get points to qualify for the Pentathlon World Cup Final and I’m sure we will see the same again tomorrow in the Men’s Final.

“I also want to compliment the organisers for the horses – the Riding was a big success today again and congratulations to the athletes, the coaches and trainers. We had a great day here in Prague.”

## **WATCH AND FOLLOW**

Pentathlon World Cup Prague continues tomorrow (May 26) with the Men's Final, followed by the Mixed Relay on Monday, May 27.

Live stream is available on UIPM TV and up-to-date results of all competitions are available at the UIPM website.

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>Name</b>         | <b>Nation</b> | <b>MP Points</b> |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1           | FRENCH Kate         | GBR           | 1391             |
| 2           | GUBAYDULLINA Gulnaz | RUS           | 1377             |
| 3           | VARLEY Jessica      | GBR           | 1356             |
| 4           | KIM Sunwoo          | KOR           | 1353             |
| 5           | OTEIZA Marie        | FRA           | 1352             |
| 6           | LANGREHR Rebecca    | GER           | 1352             |
| 7           | KOHLMANN Janine     | GER           | 1349             |
| 8           | BATASHOVA Uliana    | RUS           | 1345             |
| 9           | COYLE Natalya       | IRL           | 1342             |
| 10          | OZYUKSEL Ilke       | TUR           | 1339             |
| 11          | MICHELI Elena       | ITA           | 1338             |
| 12          | OLIVER Mayan        | MEX           | 1337             |
| 13          | SCHLEU Annika       | GER           | 1335             |
| 14          | BRASSIL Sive        | IRL           | 1333             |
| 15          | FREZZA Alessandra   | ITA           | 1330             |
| 16          | BURIAK Anna         | RUS           | 1328             |
| 17          | ARCEO Mariana       | MEX           | 1327             |

|    |                     |     |      |
|----|---------------------|-----|------|
| 18 | SUMMERS Francesca   | GBR | 1325 |
| 19 | SOTERO Alice        | ITA | 1322 |
| 20 | CLOUVEL Elodie      | FRA | 1320 |
| 21 | AKSIN Ipek          | TUR | 1318 |
| 22 | MUIR Joanna         | GBR | 1314 |
| 23 | SHIMAZU Rena        | JPN | 1313 |
| 24 | STEINBORN Ronja     | GER | 1308 |
| 25 | NOWACKA Oktawia     | POL | 1300 |
| 26 | PRISE Eilidh        | IRL | 1290 |
| 27 | WEI Danni           | CHN | 1288 |
| 28 | ACHTERBERG Samantha | USA | 1287 |
| 29 | IBATULLINA Adelina  | RUS | 1285 |
| 30 | VEGA Tamara         | MEX | 1262 |
| 31 | PRIBYLOVA Eliska    | CZE | 1222 |
| 32 | YAMANAKA Shino      | JPN | 1221 |
| 33 | KIM Unju            | KOR | 1186 |
| 34 | SERAPINAITE Ieva    | LTU | 1063 |
| 35 | BELHAMRI Julie      | FRA | 1026 |
| 36 | ZHANG Mingyu        | CHN | 977  |