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LASER RUN SPOTLIGHT: SPREADING THE WORD IN SOUTH AMERICA



South America has had the special distinction since UIPM 2018 Congress of being the only Modern Pentathlon Confederation with a 100% membership of all countries in the continent.

Major events have been instrumental in the growth in popularity of UIPM Sports in the region in recent years, with the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games at the vanguard.

The unexpected disruptions of 2020 may have put the entire sporting world on pause, but Laser Run will be a catalyst for growth when restrictions on mass-participation sport ease. In the sixth part of the Laser Run Spotlight series, we speak to representatives of National Federations in Argentina and Venezuela to find out more about their Laser Run experiences. Together the two countries have staged 17 instalments of the Global Laser Run City Tour.

Argentina: Simplicity is key for organisers

Guillermo Filipi

Head coach, Argentina Modern Pentathlon Federation (FAPM)

Q: The FAPM has organized so many LR events in Argentina in different parts of the country, and always with a good number of participants. What is the secret of your success?

A: Our experience has been spectacular, as we have been able to bring together many participants and encourage them to join our sport. The diffusion of this event is essential and its organization is simple; that's what has enabled us to cover several events.



Q: How many training sessions do children have before they begin to understand laser shooting technique well, and how often do kids have Laser Run training?

A: It has been observed that in a few sessions the children understand the shooting technique well, it is stipulated that they train twice a week.

Q: Have you been able to organize local Laser Run activities (offline and online) during the time of the pandemic?

A: Unfortunately we have not been able to organize events this year due to the restrictions imposed by our government, but we were able to do events online.



Venezuela: Targeting schools and parents

Cesar Rondon

President, Venezuela Federation of Modern Pentathlon (FVPM)

Q: In recent years Venezuela has been active in UIPM Sports and especially Laser Run. Even during the pandemic Venezuela was actively involved in UIPM online LR activities. How do you attract athletes to our sport?

A: Technology is present every day in all areas of life and our Venezuelan Federation of Modern Pentathlon was not an exception, and we found ourselves with the need to create our own digital tools (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter) to guarantee a better diffusion and dissemination of our sports activities.

The intention was to make the country notice about the methods and mechanisms that we are developing to expand this sport and thus attract each day more children to our clubs. Another way we ensure the motivation of new practitioners is through a programme designed by our technical coordination called the "Modern Pentathlon goes to School".



Q: Do parents like Modern Pentathlon and Laser Run? Do you have any suggestions for how to make parents interested in our sports so they can bring their children in?

A: We believe it fascinates them, and thanks to the perseverance and sacrifice of the parents, our sports federation has been developing a more consolidated approach to teaching athletes. The programme provides us with a series of tools with the aim of training and educating all parents as a connoisseur of Modern Pentathlon, and in this way in future they can be part of the technical group of coaches, starting in their first phase as a sports monitor.

Q: Have you created any special programmes for online laser shooting at home? How has your federation organized training during the pandemic?

A: Rather than creating a programme, the true intention was to reinvent various strategies due to the scarce material and resources available to our federation, one of which is to develop a virtual league online from home.

Using as an example the #LaserHomeRun and #LaserAllStars developed by UIPM, our event was oriented with materials recycling (plastic containers with sand) according to the weight of the pistol, in order that the young people will carry out shooting simulation at a certain moment with technical exercises of the race. Likewise it was used for those youth and adult athletes who simulated competition conditions.

We are truly committed to taking Venezuelan Pentathlon to the top of the podium in the world.

