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UIPM 2021 PENTATHLON JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: FERNANDEZ & SCHNEIDER (GER) SCOOP WOMEN'S RELAY



Two weeks after becoming European junior champions, **Esther Donda Fernandez and Annika Schneider** of **Germany** won a thrilling Women's Relay to secure the first UIPM world title for under-age athletes in two years.

The opening day of the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon Junior World Championships in Alexandria (EGY) featured a captivating race with the top four teams separated by less than 40sec in the final reckoning.

Beatrice Mercuri and **Alice Rinaudo** of **Italy** ended up with the silver medal while bronze went to **Maria Samoilova** and **Kseniia Saneva** of **Russia**, ahead of **Rebecca Castaudi** and **Jessye Gomesse** of **France**.

More than 250 athletes aged 21 and under are taking part in the last global competition before the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



Winners' reaction

In the wake of their success in the European Junior Championships in Bern (SUI), Germany (Fernandez/Schneider) had gold medals around their necks again as they reflected on the day.

Fernandez (GER), 18, said: "I feel very good; today was very nice. I don't have words to describe my happiness. I gave my all today and it's amazing when you cross the line first – wow!

"I hope I will return for the Women's Individual Final, but there will be very strong competition and I am very young. My dream is the Final.

"I was born in 2003 and this year the Under 19 World Championships will be important for me."

Schneider (GER), 19, said: "The weather is really hot, but in the evening it's better. Our Fencing was good for both us, and I think our Laser Run was the best.

"I'd like to reach the Final and maybe we also have a chance in the team event; we will try."



Swimming

In the wake of their senior compatriots winning multiple world titles in recent years, a blistering pace was set in the pool by **Katsiaryna Etsina** and **Katjarina Sukora** of **Belarus**, who were the only team to touch the wall in under 2mins (1:59.93).

Topping the billing for the host nation, **Amira Kandil** and **Salma Abdelmaksoud** of **Egypt** were second-fastest in 2:02.13 while Italy (Mercuri/Rinaudo) timed 2:03.85.



Fencing

Another nation enjoyed clear dominance on the Fencing piste and it was **Melissa Mireles** and **Cecilia Meza** of **Mexico** who soared into the overall lead, scoring an impressive 32V/12D in the Ranking Round and adding two points in the Bonus Round.

Egypt (Kandil/Abdelmaksoud) scored 27 victories to stay firmly in contention, while there were 26 apiece for Germany (Fernandez/Schneider) and Russia (Samoilova/Saneva).



Riding

A hush befell the Riding arena at the Arab Academy for Science Technology & Maritime Transport as the local favourites' quest for the world title came to a sudden halt.

Egypt (Kandil/Abdelmaksoud) suffered elimination from Riding, opening the door to other medal aspirants in the field who took full advantage. Russia (Samoilova/Saneva) topped the scoring with 293 as Italy (Mercuri/Rinaudo) and Germany (Fernandez/Schneider) also completed the course with only one transgression.



Laser Run

Mexico (Mireles/Meza) started the Laser Run in pole position and continued to lead until they suffered a major loss of momentum at the shooting range.

Behind them, Italy (Mercuri/Rinaudo) were locked in what seemed like a private battle with Russia (Samoilova/Saneva) for silver, but Fernandez (GER) turned the race on its head after taking the handover in 4th place. She seized on the error by Mexico (Mireles/Meza) and shot with remarkable accuracy to overtake all the incumbent medallists and take control of the race.

A superb Laser Run time of 12:58.00 enabled Germany (Fernandez/Schneider) to cross the line 16sec ahead of Italy (Mercuri/Rinaudo) with Russia (Samoilova/Saneva) a further 9sec behind.

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2021 Pentathlon Junior World Championships in Alexandria (EGY) runs from July 12-18 and continues on Tuesday, July 13 with the Men's Relay.

Visit the UIPM website or download "UIPM Central" from your app store to keep track of live results throughout the competition.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, VK or Weibo throughout the season for additional content.

Competition schedule

July 13: Men's Relay

July 14: Women's Qualification

July 15: Men's Qualification

July 16: Women's Final

July 17: Men's Final

July 18: Mixed Relay