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UIPM 2018 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP LOS ANGELES: ITALY MAKE IT TWO IN A ROW IN MIXED RELAY



- Frezza and De Luca ensure back-to-back World Cup success for Azzurri
- Isaksen and Elgeziry (USA) savour fairytale silver after first joint outing
- Mexico secure bronze ahead of China, Guatemala and Great Britain



Italy have become the team to beat in the

Mixed Relay after securing back-to-back victories with their gold medal at UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Cup Los Angeles today.

Alessandra Frezza and **Riccardo de Luca** repeated the success enjoyed by **Gloria Tocchi** and **Gianluca Micozzi** at Pentathlon World Cup Cairo as **Italy** held off a strong challenge from **USA** and **Mexico** to secure victory on a hot day in Pomona, Los Angeles County.

It was a satisfying day for **Isabella Isaksen** and **Amro Elgeziry** as the husband-and-wife team were competing in unison for **USA** for the first time and made it on to the podium with an impressive silver medal.

Elgeziry (USA) has already enjoyed a strong career in the colours of his native Egypt and now he is able to compete alongside his spouse thanks to the popular Mixed Relay format. He and **Isaksen (USA)** were in contention throughout the day and came within 16secs of gold.

There was no stopping the Azzurri relay machine, however, as **Frezza (ITA)** conceded only minimal ground to **Isaksen (USA)** and then the experienced **De Luca (ITA)** made light work of the final two laps of the sandy Fairplex cross-country course.



De Luca (ITA) said: "After a bad feeling from the

individual competition I'm so happy that I did my job and this victory gives us a great feeling for the next World Cup.

"We have big smiles on our faces we are proud of ourselves that we did our job."

The USA were smiling, too, inevitably, after their podium success.

Elgeziry (USA) said: "I think we did really well. I'm so pleased with the whole day and running-wise I felt great, but Riccardo is one of the best runners and pretty tough to beat."

"We're pleased with second place. We enjoyed today, our first time to compete together for USA. It was like a dream for us to do this and hopefully we will do it again."

Mariana Arceo and **Manuel Padilla** fought hard to take the bronze medal home to **Mexico**, while battle raged behind them in a dramatic Laser-Run conclusion.

Swimming



Such is the power of **Elgeziry** in the pool, it was

always likely to be a strong start to the day for the home favourites, and **USA** duly obliged with a time of 1:59.32, creating daylight between themselves and nearest contenders **Poland** (**Natalia Dominiak** and **Lukasz Gutkowski**; 2:01.02) and **Korea** (**Choung Minji** and **Seo Changwan**; 2:01.39).

Fencing



It was on the piste that **Italy** (**Frezza/De Luca**)

asserted themselves on the competition, with their clear superiority resulting in 25V/11D, four more successes than nearest rivals **China** (**Bian Yufei** and **Zhang Linbin**) who scored 21V/15D. However, **USA** (**Isaksen/Elgeziry**) kept in touch with the new overall leaders after recording a solid 20V/16D.

Riding



A remarkable parity existed between the top

three contenders during the final show-jumping competition of Pentathlon World Cup Los Angeles, as **Italy (Frezza/De Luca)**, **USA (Isaksen/Elgeziry)** and **Mexico (Arceo/Padilla)** each conceded just one penalty and scored 293.

Great Britain (Zoe Davison and Samuel Curry) were the only country to achieve a maximum score of 300, enabling them to start Laser-Run in 4th place with each of the top three (**Italy, USA** and **Mexico**) separated by a good 20secs.

Laser-Run



Isaksen (USA) immediately made ground on

Frezza (ITA) at the first visit to the shooting range, but the leader refused to yield on the running course and her performance was matched by **De Luca (ITA)**, whose composure after taking over responsibility ensured that one of his old sparring partners from the individual circuit, **Elgeziry (USA)**, never got a sniff of victory.

With **Mexico (Arceo/Padilla)** running too strongly to give anyone else a chance of reaching the podium, there was an intriguing fight for 4th. First **Guatemala** moved up from 6th to 4th thanks to the speed of **Sofia Cabrera**, but ultimately it was **China** who won this mini-battle with the collective efforts of **Bian** and **Zhang**.



Janusz Peciak, 1976 Olympic champion and

UIPM Executive Board Member for Sport, said: "I think it was a very exciting day. The Italian team fenced great and that helped them to win the competition by a big margin, but I am very happy also for the USA team because I was coach of these athletes before and they have come back well after a long break."

"Also congratulations to Mexico on their 3rd place and it's good to see different countries winning medals. I hope the Mixed Relay will have more and more countries competing. We had 10 today but I hope in the future there will be 20 or more."

"I was at Pentathlon Cairo and also here so happy to see so many new faces taking part and winning medals. The new faces challenge the established stars of our sport and it's important to have this competition."

UIPM 2018 Pentathlon World Cup Los Angeles has now concluded and the next competition on the elite calendar is Pentathlon World Cup Kecskemet in Hungary from May 3-7.

Before that, the best teenage pentathletes in the world will take part in the UIPM Tetrathlon Under 19 World Championships in Caldas da Rainha (POR) from April 7-16.

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