

04 DEC 2020

MEET THE COMPETITION WINNERS: UIPM SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE



UIPM Secretary General's message - November 2020

We asked you to look deep in your hearts, in your memories and in your imagination to tell us what Modern Pentathlon means to you.

I was expecting some interesting ideas, but the results of this competition exceeded all my expectations. And now it's time to introduce the winners, to celebrate their storytelling skills and to give you all the chance to read these stories for yourself.

In no particular order, here are the three winners of the Pentathlon Stories competition and one author who receives a special commendation for use of imagination.

Kristina Ryabova (KAZ) – ‘The Modern Pentathlon Learned by Heart’

You don't need to have met the late Timur Dossymbetov, a legend of Modern Pentathlon and Kazakh Olympic sport who was still a member of the UIPM Executive Board when he died in 2015, to be touched by this story.

It's even more powerful for those of us who knew Timur, but I think anybody would be moved when reading this emotive testimony of his lifelong love affair with pentathlon.

The story illustrates vividly how he discovered the five disciplines as a young boy and worked selflessly throughout his life to provide opportunities for others to get involved in the sport and fulfil their dreams.

So who is Kristina, and why did she write about this tale about Timur Dossymbetov?

She is his grand-daughter, and a proud one too.



Emiliano Hernandez (MEX) – ‘Walking with giants’

One of the things I love about pentathletes is the way they remain humble even when they progress to competing at a high level.

They are true giants of sport, and that’s what makes this story by Emiliano Hernandez so powerful.

He examines his place in the pecking order by focusing on his ‘last dance’ as a junior in the UIPM 2019 Junior World Championships in Drzonkow (POL), when he travelled to the competition alone.

Emiliano, younger brother of the Rio 2016 bronze medallist Ismael, describes in detail his

emotional rollercoaster during the competition, capturing the essence of this wonderful sport. And he ends with some really interesting conclusions – the three ‘morals’ of his story.

We hope to see great things from this intelligent athlete during his senior career. Go Emiliano!



Michelle Matson (GBR)

As head coach of Wessex Wyvern Modern Pentathlon Club, Michelle has a key role in developing the stars of tomorrow but she didn't set out to achieve this high responsibility – she only got involved in coaching after becoming a swimming lifeguard at the club.

Michelle's story charts her 25 years in the sport, including her role in the London 2012 Olympic Games as a volunteer – which gave her unforgettable memories. We all appreciate the volunteers who often work on the sidelines of the Games, but Michelle struck gold!

Our sport wouldn't be the same without people like Michelle, and the young athletes she coaches wouldn't have the same wonderful experiences without her dedication. They must learn so much from her values and her passion!

Michelle is a true fan of Modern Pentathlon, of her country and its athletes, and this shines through in her personal story.



Maria Olshanskaya (RUS) – Fairy Tale ‘Five in One’ Once Upon a Time

When I read the opening line of Maria’s story – ‘There was a wolf in the forest’ – and saw her colourful illustrations, I immediately knew we were looking at something very unique.

Maria, 11, wins a special commendation for her use of imagination. Her story is deeply evocative and funny, with strong Pentathlon storylines woven into the narrative.

We can all see parallels with our sport and pentathletes in this powerful folk story, which culminates in a Laser Run between a hare and a wolf, with a magpie, bear and fox all playing different roles!



Apart from the four authors mentioned above, I want to thank everybody who participated in this competition. You are truly inspirational to us all.

I also want to thank everyone who has contributed to those people's individual Pentathlon journeys. Without your support, we wouldn't have such dedicated, passionate people within our community.