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UIPM 2021 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP BUDAPEST: SVECOVS (LAT) SETTLES CLASSIC DUEL



- Hamed (EGY) comes within a whisker of snatching gold
- First-time medallists in thrilling sprint finish
- In-form Patrick Dogue (GER) claims bronze

A breath-taking finish to the Men's Final at UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup Budapest saw two first-time medallists engage in a lung-bursting dash to the line.

Pavels Svecovs of **Latvia** had led the competition for much of the day, but he was made to strain

every sinew to win the gold medal under pressure from **Ahmed Hamed** of **Egypt**, who came so close to overcoming a 19sec deficit during a thrilling Laser Run.

Neither athlete had won a Pentathlon World Cup medal before but their high-quality performances boosted their chances of qualifying for the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Another athlete who did just that was **Patrick Dogue** of **Germany**, who is one of four top 20-ranked athletes battling for two places at the Games. A hard-earned bronze medal confirmed his form after the gold medal he won in the recent Hungarian Open Indoor Championships.



Behind them, Egypt had two more high finishes to celebrate as 2018 Youth Olympic Games champion **Ahmed Elgendy** (EGY) finished 4th, three places ahead of **Eslam Hamad** (EGY). **France** performed well with **Pierre Dejardin** and **Valentin Prades** in 5th and 6th respectively, while host nation **Hungary** cheered **Richard Bereczki** across the line in 8th.

It was a coming-of-age result for both athletes. Svecovs (LAT) had previously finished only as high as 8th in UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia, while Hamed (EGY) had finished 7th in the UIPM 2017 Pentathlon World Championships in Cairo (EGY) and two places higher in 2018 in Mexico City (MEX).



Swimming

Having watched their female team-mates dominate the Women's Final with three of the top six places including gold and silver, **Great Britain** set the standard in the pool with **Joseph Choong** (1:55.19) and **James Cooke** (1:55.39) engaging in a memorable duel and recording the fastest times.

Behind them, **Gustav Gustenau** of Austria (1:57.32) and Elgendy (EGY, 1:57.38) each kicked off their day with an impressive 316 points.



Fencing

Throughout the Ranking Round and Bonus Round, the standard of Fencing was high with no athlete able to stand out as Kate French (GBR) had 24 hours earlier in setting a new world record.

Hamed (EGY) and Svecovs (LAT) topped the standings, each scoring 24V/11D. With three points in the Bonus Round making him the last man standing, **Jinhwa Jung** of **Korea** eclipsed **Alexander Lifanov** of **Russia** after both had registered 23V/12D in the Ranking Round.



Riding

A remarkably high standard was evident in the Riding arena with 16 athletes recording a score of 290 or more and only two scoring beneath 250, with no eliminations.

Svecovs (LAT) put himself in pole position for gold with an immaculate round, with Pan American Games champion **Charles Fernandez** of **Guatemala** and Dejardin (FRA) also notching 300 points.

With 297 points Hamed (EGY) refused to let his rival stretch away at the top of the leaderboard, ensuring that he would start the Laser Run 19secs and 1sec behind Lifanov (RUS), who also rode beautifully for 296.



Laser Run

Sharp-shooting Svecovs (LAT) did enough to win gold – just enough. The pain was evident on his face throughout the last two laps as he strained to keep the smooth-running Hamed (EGY) at bay, and the last 800m became a dramatic test of stamina, endurance and grit.

Behind them, as so often there was a thrilling tussle for bronze, and Dogue (GER) used all his experience to make his way up from a starting place of 9th. On the third lap he moved clear of Elgendy (EGY) and Hamad (EGY) and kept an eye on his rivals throughout the last 800m to secure his prize.

Medallists' reaction

Svecovs (LAT) said: "I think it was in my mind [that the race was won] - it was very good.?All disciplines were good for me and I did my best.

"I saw all of my competitors coming after me, but I just ran. I need to qualify for the Olympics so it's a very good start for me to get the 1st place."

Hamed (EGY) said: "I'm over the moon to get my first medal.?It's a good step in the Olympic qualification and I'm so proud and satisfied.?"

"From the beginning of the Laser Run I was looking forward and I tried to catch [Svecovs] but my shooting was not as good as I wanted. At the end, in the last 800m I tried to catch him and I did my best."??

Dogue (GER) added: "It was amazing. I started [the Laser Run] 9th and from the first lap it was so fast. I wasn't sure I could catch up but my shooting was good and in the end I finished 3rd in a very

strong field.

"The Olympic season is always tough, and this is my second podium in back-to-back competitions [after the Hungarian Open Indoor Championships] and it feels good.

"For me it's very important because the German team is so strong. We fight for two places at the Olympics and making the podium has put a lot of pressure on the other guys, so I feel very happy."

UIPM President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "After a very successful Women's Final, the men produced the same high levels of performance and again it's such a big surprise to see how strong and motivated these athletes are after a long time without elite competition.

"Based on the conditions the Hungarian organisers have prepared for this Pentathlon World Cup, the whole Modern Pentathlon family can be so happy and proud to have had such a good start to the Olympic year 2021.

"Again I want to thank the organising committee for the great horses they presented to the athletes, enabling them to compete in absolutely fair and equal conditions – high-quality horses are a key element in our sport of five disciplines.

"In the Laser Run today we saw how hard the athletes are working to get better and better places because all places count in qualification for the Pentathlon World Cup Final and the Olympic Games.

"Tomorrow we will have the Mixed Relay, which is a very special part of our movement. I wish all the athletes good health and I hope their governments will continue to support them and also to provide COVID-19 vaccination. This is very important so that all our athletes can compete and be in the best health condition going to the Olympic Games."

Watch and follow

UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup Budapest concludes tomorrow (March 28) with the Mixed Relay. Live streaming will be available on? UIPM TV, while results of all competitions are available at the UIPM website and the 'UIPM Central' app.

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Rank	Name	Nation	MP Points
1	SVECOVS Pavels	LAT	1478
2	HAMED Ahmed	EGY	1478
3	DOGUE Patrick	GER	1464
4	ELGENDY Ahmed	EGY	1458
5	DEJARDIN Pierre	FRA	1456
6	PRADES Valentin	FRA	1451
7	HAMAD Eslam	EGY	1451
8	BERECZKI Richard	HUN	1449
9	CURRY Samuel	GBR	1446

10	FERNANDEZ Charles	GUA	1444
11	LIEBIG Fabian	GER	1443
12	ZILLEKENS Christian	GER	1441
13	MAROSI Adam	HUN	1440
14	KUF Jan	CZE	1437
15	PALAZKOV Ilya	BLR	1436
16	COOKE James	GBR	1434
17	VLACH Martin	CZE	1434
18	TOOLIS Thomas	GBR	1432
19	LIFANOV Alexander	RUS	1429
20	BELAUD Valentin	FRA	1426
21	DE LUCA Riccardo	ITA	1422
22	MALAN Giorgio	ITA	1417
23	KINDERIS Justinas	LTU	1413
24	HEREDIA VIVES Aleix	ESP	1411
25	CARRILLO Duilio	MEX	1411
26	DALLENBACH Alexandre	SUI	1409
27	SEWILAM Alyeldin	EGY	1408
28	DEMETER Bence	HUN	1404
29	JUNG Jinhwa	KOR	1404
30	FLEUROT Ugo	FRA	1403
31	TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo	UKR	1403
32	CHOONG Joseph	GBR	1397
33	GRYCZ Marek	CZE	1396
34	KARDOS Bence	HUN	1394
35	GUSTENAU Gustav	AUT	1382
36	DOGUE Marvin Faly	GER	1339