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UIPM 2021 PENTATHLON AND LASER RUN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: KOREA END ON A HIGH WITH MIXED RELAY GOLD



- Kim and Seo (KOR) hold their nerve to win gripping Laser Run
- Silver for Belarus as Prokopenko completes full set of medals with Palazkov
- Germany (Langrehr/Dogue) claim bronze after epic photo finish

Korea claimed the final gold medal of a dramatic UIPM Modern Pentathlon season as **Sehee Kim** and **Changwan Seo** surged to Mixed Relay gold at the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships.

Kim and Seo (KOR) were remarkably consistent throughout the afternoon and finished top of the podium ahead of **Belarus**, with **Anastasiya Prokopenko** completing a full set of medals alongside **Ilya Palazkov**. Prokopenko (BLR) had already won Women's Individual gold and a Women's Team bronze medal on Saturday.

The 2021 season has been uniquely challenging but, in spite of hurdles posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been endlessly compelling and dramatic.

There was time for a breathtaking finale as the race for bronze came down to mere millimetres. It was **Germany** who claimed the final spot on the podium with **Patrick Dogue** and **Rebecca Langrehr** finishing just ahead of the **Ukraine** duo of **Iryna Khokhlova** and **Pavlo Tymoshchenko**.



A truly pulsating final Laser Run of the season saw Belarus (Prokopenko/Palazkov) climb from 6th to 2nd and Dogue (GER) desperately dive over the finish line to beat Tymoshchenko (UKR) to bronze.

As for the new world champions, a gold medal was exactly the positive end to the season that Korea would have been seeking with the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in neighbouring Japan now less than six weeks away.



Swimming

Lithuania got off to a stellar start in the pool with **Ieva Serapinaite** and **Dovidas Vaivada** scorching the competition with a time of 1:55:59, well ahead of RMPF (**Alexander Lifanov** and **Gulnaz Gubaydullina**) in 1:58:44.

Hungary (**Blanka Guzi** and **Bence Kardos**) were the only other team to break the two-minute mark at 1:59:17.



Fencing

Korea (Kim/Seo) took a hold of the competition as action moved to the piste, claiming 19V/9D in the Ranking Round and two further points in the Bonus Round.

Italy were not far behind with **Beatrice Mercuri** and **Valerio Grasselli** racking up 18V/10D, while RMPF (Gubaydullina/Lifanov) remained in the mix for podium positions, placing third with 17V/11D.



Riding

At the end of a challenging but rewarding season, there was a high level of consistency in the final Riding competition with four teams scoring the maximum 300 points.

Germany (Langrehr/Dogue) moved into overall medal contention but Korea (Kim/Seo) also had an immaculate round, ensuring they would begin the Laser Run at the head of the pack. Belarus (Prokopenko/Palazkov) and Hungary (Guzi/Kardos) also enjoyed a perfect score to set up a dramatic conclusion.



Laser Run

The leaders needed to hold their nerve in the Laser Run and sure enough, the chasing pack were on the tail of Kim (KOR) from the start. None more so than Prokopenko (BLR), who at 35 had tasted individual World Championship glory for the second time two days earlier.

By the time of the handover, Prokopenko (BLR) had pushed past her rivals from Germany, Italy, Lithuania and Ukraine. But if Seo (KOR) was feeling the pressure with Palazkov (BLR) in hot pursuit, he didn't show it. Dead-eyed at the shooting range, an opening 6sec shoot effectively sealed gold.

As the race reached its climax, it was clear – as so often – that the real fight was for bronze. Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist Tymoshchenko (UKR) looked to have the edge over Dogue (GER) but the latter refused to give up and stretched every sinew as he dived over the line to take bronze by the tiniest of margins.

Lithuania (Serapinaite/Vaivada) secured 5th, one place ahead of Italy (Mercuri/Grasselli).

Medallists' reaction

Seo (KOR) said: "The fencing put us in a good position. Communication was good. The Laser Run was amazing. This makes us so happy."

Kim (KOR) added: "This is the last competition before the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games so today makes us very, very happy. The Korea team is doing very nicely."

Prokopenko (BLR) said: "I am very happy. I won the [Women's Individual] championship and now silver medal to go with [the Women's Team] bronze medal. I have very big baggage to go back home with these medals!"

Palazkov (BLR) added: "I am so happy. I don't know how many times I have started here and this is my second medal. A Mixed Relay in the World Championship, a silver medal – we are so happy."

Dogue (GER) said: "The day started very well with a very good swim, a PB I would say, for the Mixed Relay. The Fencing was solid. In the Riding we were maybe a little unlucky with the horse draw because we had the horse I had yesterday but Becky did a really good job with it.

"Yeah, we've been in third position for the Laser Run. The Koreans were far away in front and we knew the Belarusians would come from behind but we defended the third place so everything was fine."



President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "We had an exciting Mixed Relay competition on the last day of the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships.

“We had a photo finish between Germany and Ukraine, after many changes in placings between various nations, and it was unbelievable for the athletes to produce such energy after a long week of competitions.

“The Mixed Relay has given us a real highlight and I’m very happy that we had 15 teams competing for this title of world champions. It concluded a very good World Championships and concluded a full season of senior Modern Pentathlon before we go to the Olympic Games, and later in the autumn we will have continental championships.

“In summary, we presented to our national federations and athletes a full programme, as we decided with the IOC Sport Department to prepare for the Olympic Games. We had a great challenge this year after a long time without training and competitions due to COVID-19.

“I wish everybody who has qualified and is now preparing for the Olympics, and all nations, big success for the future. We are looking forward to a great Olympic Games in Tokyo in July/August 2021.”



Laser Run World Championships

Host nation **Egypt** extended their dominance of the UIPM 2021 Laser Run World Championships to the senior category on the final day of Mixed Relay action.

Maya Mohammed & Muhammed Husam (EGY) came out on top in the seniors ahead of silver medallists **Haia Fekry Abdelsamia & Mohamed Gad** (EGY) and bronze medallists **Perihan Edris & Abd El Rahman Hussein** (EGY).

Estonia duo **Maria Johanna Jogisu** and **Robert Carl Kallaste** enjoyed a fine win in the Junior category.

Dr Barbara Oettinger of **Germany** added to her individual title with the help of team-mate **Gregor Olejarz** in the Masters 50+ category, while **Rasha Mahmoud** and **Abo Elhassan Bastawy** (EGY) took the 40+ honours.

At youth level there was more local domination with wins for **Lyly Fathy & Yousef Mohamed** (Under 9), **Farida Khalil & Mohanad Ali** (U11), **Omar Abd El Fattah & Shahid Mostafa** (U13), **Osama Zaki & Gana Walid Elgindy** (U15), **Mohamed Mohamed & Malak Ismail** (U17) and **Seif Elbendary & Nagwa Hussein** (U19).

Watch and follow

The next competition on the UIPM calendar is the UIPM 2021 Junior World Championships in Alexandria (EGY) from July 12-18.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram throughout the season and visit the UIPM website for the latest news. Download the “UIPM Central” app to keep track of competition results.

Rank	Team	Nation	MP Points
1	KIM Sehee	KOR	1432
2	SEO Changwan PROKOPENKO Anastasiya	BLR	1422
3	PALAZKOV Ilya LANGREHR Rebecca	GER	1415
4	DOGUE Patrick KHOKHLOVA Iryna	UKR	1414
5	TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo SERAPINAITE Ieva	LTU	1409
6	VAIVADA Dovidas MERCURI Beatrice	ITA	1401
7	GRASSELLI Valerio GUZI Blanka	HUN	1391
8	KARDOS Bence MATYUKHEVICH Polina	GEO	1377
9	KHIJAKADZE Gaga KOBECKA Marta	POL	1334
10	KASPERCZAK Kamil FAKHRUTDINOVA Alise	UZB	1319
	SAVKIN Alexander		

11	AKSIN Ipek	TUR	1311
	UNAL Bugra		
	RAJNOCH Barbora		
12		CZE	1247
	SVECHOTA Ondrej		
	MORSY Haydy		
13		EGY	762
	ELGENDY Ahmed		
	GUBAYDULLINA Gulnaz		
14		RMPF	541
	LIFANOV Alexander		
	OLIVER Mayan		
15		MEX	449
	SANDOVAL Alvaro		