

07 AUG 2021

TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES MODERN PENTATHLON: CHOONG (GBR) COMPLETES UNIQUE GOLDEN DOUBLE



- Dream team finish the job as men's gold medallist emulates French (GBR)
- Egypt idol Elgendy becomes first Modern Pentathlon medallist from Africa
- Korea join the Olympic medal table as Jun fulfils star potential

It takes a team to win an Olympic gold medal. It takes a dream team – with a supercharged commitment to excellence – to win two in one Games.

Joseph Choong of **Great Britain** became the first men's Olympic medallist in Modern Pentathlon with a superb performance at the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

In the process he enabled his team to become the first to win any medals across the two genders. Choong (GBR) set a new Olympic record of 1,482 points as he held off the chasing pack to complete a double started by **Kate French** (GBR) 24 hours earlier.



Nothing about the victory of either athlete was easy, and a truly captivating race developed during the climax of the Men's Final with Dr Thomas Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee, among the audience.

Ahmed Elgendy of **Egypt** wrote his own fairytale in Tokyo (JPN), winning Olympic silver aged 21. Not only is Elgendy (EGY) the first pentathlete from his country to stand on the highest podium – he is the first from Africa.

The bronze award was a landmark moment for the sport, too. **Korea** have been one of the top-tier pentathlon nations for several years and **Woongtae Jun** has won numerous titles. Now he has given his country their first Olympic medal – completing a tri-continental podium that speaks to the exciting future of the sport.

Swimming

Four-time Olympian **Amro Elgeziry** of **United States** marked his comeback to the Games by setting the first Olympic Modern Pentathlon world record in a 25m pool.

Racing the owner of the 50m record, **James Cooke** (GBR), the touch went to Elgeziry (USA) in 1min 52.96sec in the short-course pool temporarily constructed inside Tokyo Stadium. Cooke (GBR) timed 1:53.80 and Chong (GBR) made it a three-way thriller as he hit the wall in 1:54.87.



Fencing

There was little to separate the top fencers in the Fencing Ranking Round on August 5 and the Bonus Round was no different. Only **Aleix Heredia** of **Spain** and **Valentin Belaud** of **France** managed four victories.



Riding

After all the drama of the Women's Final, there was a welcome serenity about the 36 rides that took place in the centre of the repurposed Tokyo Stadium. But the challenge was equally demanding and only three riders – **Patrick Dogue** of **Germany**, Martin Vlach of **Czech Republic** and **Gustav Gustenau** of **Austria** – attained a maximum score of 300.

Jan Kuf (CZE), riding fifth from last, rode smoothly and moved into a strong position and then watched as **Justinas Kinderis** of **Lithuania** and **Ilya Palazkov** of **Belarus** struggled to complete the course.

Medals could have been won and lost in this moment but **Jinhwa Jung** (KOR) and Choong (GBR) both kept their heads and escaped any damage to remain the top two.

The final bout had a special significance because the winner of Choong (GBR) versus Alexander Lifanov (ROC) – who tied on Friday – would be named winner of Fencing. Choong (GBR) had the final say, securing the two points needed to top the standings.



Laser Run

Starting with a 12sec cushion over Jung (KOR) with Kuf (CZE) and the dangerous Jun (KOR) within half a minute, and other threats such as **Adam Marosi** of **Hungary** and Elgendy (EGY) lurking further back, Choong (GBR) shot superbly and paced his four laps carefully.

At times the leader tactically took his foot off the pedal to conserve energy, which gave the others hope – especially Elgendy (EGY) who had galloped through the field in the same way as Laura Asadauskaite (LTU) the day before.

Kuf (CZE) ran an aggressive third lap to move into 2nd and appeared to have put some distance between the Korea duo and the rest, but he froze at the final shoot and lost all momentum.

The last lap was everything that Laser Run should be. A leader defending his position under fire from a fast assailant; two team-mates jostling for a podium place and others frantically sprinting to catch them. Four athletes were in contention for the coveted prizes and finally it was 2017 world champion Jung (KOR) who missed out, watching his younger team-mate cross the line to make history along with the two men who beat him to the tape.

A special mention must go to Vlach (CZE), who set a new Olympic Laser Run record in making his way through the field to finish 5th ahead of the legendary Marosi (HUN), who raised his hands at the finish line.



Medallists' reaction

Asked about the team's historic double success, gold medallist Choong (GBR) said: "I think it goes to show that some of the staff we got have been absolutely fantastic. Specifically, the performance team.

"It shows how well the coaches understand the athletes. It's a two-way relationship that breeds a culture of performance.

"I think anyone who has followed the sport since 2019 knew there was only one person winning that last 100m. I was confident that even if [Elgendy] came hard at that stage I could put more effort in and beat him to the line.

“The German girl Annika [Schleu] was unlucky yesterday, it’s always difficult because you have to rely on the rider before you – if they have a bit of difficulty with the horse it can really upset them for the second ride.

“That’s what happened to her, and I was really upset for Annika. I was hoping I wouldn’t get one of the difficult horses, but I got the same one as Kate and obviously it’s a bit of a lucky charm.”

Silver medallist Elgendy (EGY), who is a two-time UIPM world junior champion and won gold at the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games, said: “I am very happy and very proud to win this medal – the first for Egypt in Modern Pentathlon. The race with Joe was hard. I was catching up to him in the final lap. I know that Joe has a great finish in all races and competitions.

“I am very happy with the silver medal. I hope this medal can make a difference in the continent, in Africa. In Egypt we have had a great upgrade in Modern Pentathlon. The results in the World Championships and Youth Olympic Games have brought more athletes to Modern Pentathlon. I hope more athletes will come.

“After the Youth Olympic Games I started to dream about Tokyo. My mother was there in Argentina. She told me ‘this will not be the last medal you achieve. You will have a medal in Tokyo’. My mother, father, and all my family supported me. I want to thank them for the motivation they gave me.”

Bronze medallist Jun (KOR) said: “I was 4th before the laser run. I thought I could have a chance for silver but Ahmed Elgendy was too fast. I tried my best but I want to show you a better performance next time around.

“[Jung] and I were talking to each other. We said whoever takes the medal it is good. He is older than me and he finished fourth. He was crying but he was grateful. It is not just a medal for me but our whole team.”



President's statement

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann, who presented the medals along with IOC Member and Lithuanian Olympic Committee President Daina Gudzinėvičiūtė (LTU), said: "All the athletes have performed so well at this Olympic Games and they deserve their success – they also deserve perfect presentation and the Men's Final couldn't have been better.

"I would like to congratulate Great Britain, who have produced two worthy Olympic champions. It is unbelievable that our Youth Olympic Games champion from Egypt has shown up with all his energy and his aesthetic running style and been close to even winning the gold medal.

"Egypt have been investing in Modern Pentathlon for many years and they deserve to win a medal, and I must say congratulations to Africa and to Egypt and Sharif Elerian, President of the Egyptian Modern Pentathlon Federation, and to the athlete and his family.

"This shows to other African countries what is possible and it shows that we are a global level in development, especially with the Korean athlete also winning a medal. They have already had a lot of success in World Cups and World Championships."



Rank	Name	Nation	MP Points
1	CHOONG Joseph	GBR	1482
2	ELGENDY Ahmed	EGY	1477
3	JUN Woongtae	KOR	1470
4	JUNG Jinhwa	KOR	1466
5	VLACH Martin	CZE	1462
6	MAROSI Adam	HUN	1461
7	PRADES Valentin	FRA	1458
8	KUF Jan	CZE	1455

9	COOKE James	GBR	1452
10	LIFANOV Alexander	ROC	1450
11	BELAUD Valentin	FRA	1442
12	GUTKOWSKI Lukasz	POL	1440
13	STASIAK Sebastian	POL	1440
14	SVECOVS Pavels	LAT	1430
15	TYMOSHCHENKO Pavlo	UKR	1427
16	GUSTENAU Gustav	AUT	1420
17	PALAZKOV Ilya	BLR	1419
18	KINDERIS Justinas	LTU	1416
19	LIEBIG Fabian	GER	1411
20	DOGUE Patrick	GER	1409
21	LUO Shuai	CHN	1405
22	LI Shuhuan	CHN	1404
23	HEREDIA VIVES Aleix	ESP	1387
24	HAMED Ahmed	EGY	1387
25	ELGEZIRY Amro	USA	1358
26	KASZA Robert	HUN	1354
27	FERNANDEZ Charles	GUA	1346
28	IWAMOTO Shohei	JPN	1343
29	ILYASHENKO Pavel	KAZ	1328
30	VILLAMAYOR Sergio	ARG	1324
31	FERNON Edward	AUS	1309
32	SAVKIN Alexander	UZB	1303
33	CARRILLO Duilio	MEX	1113
34	BUSTOS Esteban	CHI	1096
35	SANDOVAL Alvaro	MEX	1086
36	DERS Lester	CUB	1062