

04 NOV 2021

OPEN LETTER TO PENTATHLETES



Dear Modern Pentathlon athletes,

We wanted to write you a special letter to accompany today's news about an historic change in our beloved sport. The news is that a consultation process will soon begin work on identifying a suitable replacement for Riding.

First, we know that this information will be surprising and even shocking to you. It is not very long since we made a commitment to review and protect the Riding discipline in the wake of the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. But life within the Olympic movement changes fast. While our sport is confirmed for Paris 2024 with our exciting new format in place (including Riding), Los Angeles 2028 is a different matter and we must be flexible and embrace change once again.

The decision to replace Riding comes after our UIPM Executive Board endorsed a series of recommendations made by the UIPM Innovation Commission after a two-day meeting in Monaco last week.

In case you don't know a lot about the Innovation Commission, it was set up in 2018 to continuously monitor the composition of Modern Pentathlon and review its suitability for the Olympic Games in the context of Olympic Agenda 2020 and Olympic Agenda 2020+5 – the

strategic roadmap of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which was represented at the meeting in Monaco.

The EB then met virtually on October 31 to consider the Commission's recommendation that Riding be replaced with another discipline that enhances the popularity and credibility of Modern Pentathlon, while preserving its status as the ultimate physical and mental sporting challenge – as envisaged by Baron Pierre de Coubertin.

Today we communicate the EB's decision to you, with an assurance that you will be centrally involved in this consultation. Without our athletes, our movement would be nothing – and your voices must be heard.

You may have already spent some time wondering which discipline will be the best to accompany Fencing, Swimming and Laser Run to ensure that our sport is an essential, compelling and unmissable part of LA2028 and future Olympics beyond.

Here is the list of criteria that will form the basis of the selection of a new discipline. It must:

- Follow the Coubertin narrative of the most complete athlete
- Not fall under the governance of another IOC-recognised International Federation.
- Allow for global accessibility and universality
- Be attractive and relevant for global youth and future generations
- Provide for gender equality and fairness
- Meet sustainability and legacy requirements of IOC Olympic Agenda 2020+5
- Be exciting and easily understandable for TV / digital audiences and all sports fans
- Be low-cost for both athletes and organisers (lower equipment costs and fewer officials)
- Result in minimal injury rates and be easy to learn and train based on athletes' existing skills
- Not cause transportation and logistical complications
- Fit inside new Pentathlon Stadium and urban settings
- Be compatible with new 90-minute elimination format
- Be compatible with current handicap start and continuous event concept

Once again, we find ourselves writing to ask for your support, your patience, your cooperation and collaboration – because we cannot implement the changes needed without athletes forming a strong backbone in our community.

This is a very important moment for Modern Pentathlon – and for the wider Olympic programme.

We would be making a mistake if we were to take our place in the Olympic programme for granted past Paris 2024. It is not granted for us, it is not granted for anybody.

We really need to make sure that in that new environment, with all of these new sports that have demonstrated strength and a lot of traction with people and media, we have to make sure that our sport is flawless.

The transition will be hard, of course, but we ask you not only to see the difficulties in front of you, but also the opportunity awaiting you at the finish line. A sport with a unique heritage redeveloped for the 21st century and beyond. A sport that is sustainable and safe. A sport that anyone in the world can take part in – powered by the dream of becoming gold medallist in the Olympic Games' most demanding sport.

With our best personal regards,

