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UIPM NEW 5TH DISCIPLINE WORKING GROUP ENJOY HUGELY PRODUCTIVE FIRST MEETING



- Historic 21-person group of stakeholders and experts meet by video conference
- Marketing and media experts point to huge opportunities presented by new discipline
- Input and proposals of athletes praised as UIPM unites in pivotal endeavour

The Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) is pleased to update that the working group formed to lead the consultation process to identify the historic New 5th Discipline has begun its work with a hugely productive first meeting.

The working group, made up of 21 of the foremost stakeholders and experts in the Modern Pentathlon and Olympic community, met via video conference on January 13th in order to look at

reforming Modern Pentathlon for inclusion in the Los Angeles 2028 programme.

The process aims to identify a new discipline which will replace Riding after the Paris 2024 Games, reducing the cost and complexity of Modern Pentathlon and making the whole sport more accessible to the global community. All aspects of the presentation of the sport are being considered by the group.

The working group includes senior UIPM leadership, committee chairs, athletes representatives and leading marketing and media experts and TV partners, collected specific suggestions of all of the stakeholders' groups. It also discussed the 13 decisive criteria for the selection of the new discipline.

The timeline for the year ahead was also set up including tests to be conducted.

With fully 10 Olympic pentathletes among the group, athlete representation and voice is at the forefront of all efforts and there is unity across the UIPM community around this pivotal endeavour for the future of the sport.

A number of the athletes were present during the meeting and **James Cooke (GBR)** made a presentation to the wider group outlining proposals which were praised particularly by the sports industry specialists involved.

Yasser Hefnny (EGY), the Athletes Committee chairman, said: "The proposal presented here by the athletes is compliant with UIPM requests, and it is attractive in terms of legacy, adaptability to the new format and the key athletes' skills involved."

James Cooke (GBR), also on the Athlete Committee, added: "Since the creation of the working group, the athletes' representatives are fully involved and working hard with the community to contribute with solid and relevant ideas to the process."

The world-leading media and marketing experts underlined the huge opportunities presented by a new 5th Discipline, as well as the challenges.

"I think it's important to also broaden the whole discussion and review that one is not just looking at

the replacement discipline, but at the overall presentation of your sport,” said **Michael Payne** (GBR), former IOC Marketing/Broadcast Rights Director.

“Don't just look at what sport you're adding but how it's all integrated to create the best possible narrative presentation structure to the broadcaster.”

He suggested a continuous format with included live in-competition data.

Terrence Burns (USA), an expert in Olympic Games sponsorship strategies and a consultant on both Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup bidding processes, told the group “You have an opportunity to “move your sport from niche to mass” and pointed to key overarching points.

“It's important to transform the sport to make it more relevant (for fans), more accessible (for youth), and more promotable (for organizers, broadcasters, and commercial partners). This means reviewing every aspect of the sport and its presentation, not just a single discipline.”

Peter Hutton (GBR), Head of Sports at Meta (previously known as Facebook) and former CEO of Eurosport said: “We have to respect the traditions of the sport, but also look to widen the popularity and appeal to a watching audience with clearer storytelling and an understanding of viewing trends”

The group also discussed internal tasks which will be conducted by smaller dedicated focus groups, including further consultation to be done with athletes and the Pentathlon community.

The UIPM New 5th Discipline Working Group will now work remotely until the first physical meeting of involved participants which is planned for April.

UIPM President **Dr. Klaus Schormann** said: “I am so very happy with the collaboration, productivity and unity in this first meeting of the New 5th Discipline Working Group. This is an historic moment for our great sport and to have such collective determination from our athletes in this vital endeavour is hugely important.

I want to also thank our esteemed experts from the Media and Marketing industries. Their insights into this New 5th Discipline and the overall future of our sport have been invaluable. There is much progress to be made but there is now a great energy among the entire group to get to work.”

