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NEW 5TH DISCIPLINE UPDATE: OBSTACLE DISCIPLINE SELECTED FOR TESTING



Two variations of Obstacle Discipline have been selected for testing after leading over 60 proposals in the race to replace the Riding discipline in Modern Pentathlon.

Introduced in the 1912 Stockholm Olympic Games by the founder of the Modern Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin, the Modern Pentathlon was created to identify the most complete athlete.

As times have changed, the Olympic programme has evolved over the years to attract greater audiences around the world. The Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) is undertaking an unprecedented review of every aspect of the sport. One of the outcomes of this effort is that the Riding portion of the event has proven no longer viable.

In reaching its decision, the New 5th Discipline Working Group rigorously followed the 13 established criteria. The selection considered athletes' views, medical aspects (including workload, injuries and anti-doping), TV, media and marketing opportunities.

Taking into account the IOC requirements for the programme of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, the Obstacle Discipline was selected for the following reasons including:

- compatible with the DNA of Modern Pentathlon, which examines the complete athlete as created by Pierre de Coubertin
- reduction in cost and complexity
- universal participation with great accessibility around the world
- popularity among all age groups especially youth
- dynamic and attractive to global audiences
- simple and safe infrastructure for training and sustainable for organisers worldwide

The exciting news follows two days of intense meetings in Budapest (HUN) that continued the Q2 phase of the New 5th Discipline project, launched in collaboration with the decision-making timelines of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The UIPM Executive Board decided to test the combination of the Obstacle Discipline alongside Fencing, Swimming and the Laser Run. Testing will begin immediately after the UIPM 2022 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Ankara (TUR) in late June. Following comprehensive testing, the final decision will be taken by the UIPM Congress.



UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “The New 5th Discipline Working Group has conducted its work with clear direction and a commitment to expertise, resulting in thought-provoking discussions and strong conclusions.

“The guidance provided by the IOC around the selection of an alternative discipline for Modern Pentathlon has been closely followed, with athletes playing a central role in this process.

“I would like to thank all stakeholders and especially the outside experts, Michael Payne, Terrence Burns, David Hill, Ursula Romero and Peter Hutton for their exceptional contribution.”

Yasser Hefny, Chairman of the UIPM Athletes Committee, led a Focus Group composed of 26 athletes from 22 countries.

He said: “After many months of detailed talks we are on the brink of a landmark decision that would change the history of Modern Pentathlon, the sport we all love, forever.

“When the mandate to explore the possibility to replace Riding from our sport was first announced, my fellow athletes worldwide had a lot of questions and concerns. I believe the New 5th Discipline Working Group has been very thorough in evaluating the options put forward by our community, using internal and external expertise to good effect.

“While we still have specifics to finalize, we have a new and exceptional opportunity to grow and give visibility to our sport for the benefit of many generations to come, and that’s very exciting.”

The introduction of the new discipline to Modern Pentathlon after Paris 2024, along with the complete reassessment of the sport, is designed to ensure the future of a sport that has been a core part of the Olympic Games for over 100 years.