

27 JUN 2022

NEW PENTATHLON DISCIPLINE TEST EVENT I: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW



- Athletes from 19 countries poised to trial Obstacle Discipline in Ankara (TUR)
- Tokyo 2020 Olympic medallist Jun (KOR) savours new challenge
- Former Olympic gymnast and *Ninja Warrior* champion Vivian (AUS) adds stardust

Today is the day that two global athlete communities have been waiting for.

The historic first New Pentathlon Discipline Test Event in Ankara (TUR) will bring Obstacle Discipline to life, giving Modern Pentathlon and Obstacle athletes the chance to train and race together for the first time.

Obstacle Discipline was selected in May 2022 for testing as UIPM explores the possibility of integrating the globally popular racing concept into Modern Pentathlon after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. At the end of the testing and evaluation phase, UIPM 2022 Congress will vote on proposals for the Los Angeles 2028 Modern Pentathlon format to be submitted to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Briefing notes

This afternoon in the capital city of Turkey, elite and youth athletes from both sports will practise on a bespoke Obstacle Discipline course after a technical demonstration and briefing.

Tomorrow they will all have the chance to race over the course, built on site in collaboration with World Obstacle (FISO) and Tokyo Broadcasting System Television (TBS), which owns the rights to the hugely popular *SASUKE / Ninja Warrior* TV show, and Spartan Race, the world's largest obstacle event producer with over 5 million finishers.

The course will be comprised of the following nine obstacles:

1. Rope Swing
2. A-Frame
3. Beater
4. Over-Under-Through
5. Wheels
6. Wall Flip
7. Rings
8. Balance Beams
9. Tsunami Wall

Ones to watch – Pentathlon

One of Modern Pentathlon's leading nations, **Korea**, has selected a star-studded team for the Test Event including Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallist **Woongtae Jun** and 2017 world champion **Jinhwa Jung**, as well as top-20-ranked women **Sunwoo Kim** and **Sehee Kim**.

Other leading pentathletes on the women's entry list include world No.2 **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Turkey**, **Amira Kandil** of **Egypt**, **Natalia Dominiak** of **Poland** and **Guatemala** duo **Sophia Hernandez** and **Sofia Cabrera**.

On the men's side, team-mates **Eslam Hamad**, **Mohanad Shaban** and **Mohamed Elgendy** have signed up to take part along with peers such as **Daniel Lawryniewicz** (POL) and **Bugra Unal** (TUR).

Across Senior, Junior and Under 19 categories, there will also be pentathletes from **Ecuador**, **France**, **Germany**, **Great Britain**, **Italy**, **Moldova**, **South Africa**, **Switzerland** and **United States** participating. In total, 16 Modern Pentathlon nations from five continents will be represented – with another three countries providing Obstacle athletes.

Ones to watch – Obstacle

Olivia Vivian of **Australia** is a standout name on the list of participating Obstacle athletes.

A gymnast who became an Olympian at Beijing 2008 and won Commonwealth Games silver at Glasgow 2014, Vivian (AUS) retired in 2016 and reinvented herself as a *Cirque de Soleil* performer and Obstacle athlete. She has attracted a huge following while winning gold at the 2019 Ninja World Championships in Moscow (RUS) and reaching the Grand Final of *Ninja Warrior Australia* – alongside male athletes – twice.

Great Britain is represented by three leading figures from the Obstacle scene. **Harvey Mitchell-Divers** was Spartan M14-17 world champion in Abu Dhabi (UAE) in 2021 and was named UK OCR Junior Athlete of the Year. **Louise Ferriman** was also a Spartan world champion in 2021 at the F40-44 grade. And **James Burton** is currently leading the UKOCR Series 2022 after three races.

There is also strong representation from the host nation, led by **Efe Tunay** (TUR) who finished 8th overall in the 2021 Spartan World Championships and 2nd in his age group.



Athlete comments

Jun (KOR) said: "This will be the first time pentathletes and obstacle athletes have competed together and it will be very interesting to learn more about the Obstacle Discipline that could define the future of our sport."

"I'm really looking forward to trying the obstacle course in Ankara along with my team-mates. I know this sport is really popular around the world and I'm looking forward to the challenge."

Hernandez (GUA) said: "I'm feeling excited to try the Obstacle Discipline and hoping it will be fun"

and cool to do. I'm also a bit nervous about the difficulty of it. But I think it will be interesting and a good opportunity for everyone taking part.

"I have watched *Ninja Warrior*, I love seeing how they race and it's always fun. It's impressive to see how some people manage to get through really tough courses."

Gergo Salga of **Hungary**, who took part in a recent practice session in Budapest, said: "The training we had was really exciting and hard in some ways, because we had to use a lot of arm and back muscles we have not used before."

"I am looking forward to this test in Ankara, because I can see what I can do in this new discipline. It will be really interesting and fun to train and compete with obstacle athletes. They can teach us a lot of new things and give us tips for the event and for the trainings too."

President's welcome

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "UIPM has undertaken a comprehensive and transparent process to transform Modern Pentathlon into one of the most popular, accessible and exciting sports on the Olympic programme."

"The first Obstacle Discipline Test Event in Ankara will be an important step and we look forward to watching pentathletes and obstacle athletes test themselves on the obstacles provided in collaboration with TBS and FISO."

"On behalf of the UIPM Executive Board I extend a warm welcome to all athletes, coaches and observers and other interested parties gathering here in Turkey for this historic moment, which is so important to the future of Modern Pentathlon in the Olympic Games."