

11 OCT 2022

NEW PENTATHLON DISCIPLINE TEST EVENT IV: JUNIORS GIVE OBSTACLE DISCIPLINE THUMBS-UP



- Last of four successful tests takes place indoors in Zielona Gora (POL)
- Dozens of participants express views with overwhelmingly positive message
- Feedback from all four events to inform next steps ahead of UIPM Congress

The testing phase of a new discipline proposed for integration into Modern Pentathlon after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games has come to a successful conclusion.

New Pentathlon Discipline Test Event IV was held on October 7/8 in Zielona Gora (POL), where almost 100 athletes competed on a bespoke indoor course at the WOSiR Drzonkow training centre.

The two-day event, which was attended by 76 pentathletes drawn mainly from the Under 22 teams competing in the UIPM 2022 Pentathlon Junior World Championships at the same venue, followed previous similar tests in Ankara (TUR), Manila (PHI) and Lignano Sabbiadoro (ITA).

Now that the testing programme for 2022 is complete, the results of event-specific surveys completed by participants (and observers) will be evaluated in detail to inform next steps. A summary of the feedback will be published in the next fortnight.

More than 20 pentathletes and two obstacle specialists were interviewed about their experience immediately after participating. The response was overwhelmingly positive with many athletes providing balanced and constructive feedback.

The most extensive interview was given by **Yaroslava Poner (KAZ)**, who said: “Today we participated in the 5th New Discipline competitions and, having already tried obstacle racing, this was much harder than previous courses. We had to work hard on it.

“I hope that in the future when the discipline will be added officially, people will start to train for this seriously and we will be able to pass it without injuries, fast and easily.

“I won the test event ... to be honest, I have mixed feelings because this is a very new type of activity for us. Luckily for me, I was very fast to adapt and adjust to it. The only difficulty is that the stress from exercises is accumulated on hand load and coordination.

“Generally speaking, this sport is very much improved and it will fit any country that is able to provide athletes with such equipment and constructions.”



Athlete reaction

“It’s definitely a new experience – it’s tough, it’s hard the first time we are trying it. But it’s fun and enjoyable, and hopefully we get used to it.” - **Zeina Amer (EGY)**

“I’m a French pentathlete and today I tested the new discipline scheduled for the LA28 Olympic Games. I think it is attractive, pretty fun. I really love horse riding but I think it is a good new

formula to bring more people to our sport and for media attractiveness. I think it's a good discipline, it was really nice to do it with Finals because there is a lot more adrenaline. There was a good atmosphere and it was fun.” - **Louison Cazaly (FRA)**

“I always liked this type of obstacle race like *Ninja Warrior* because I was watching them on TV and I always wanted to perform in this type of race. I’m really excited about this race because I competed in Lignano and I had the silver, and I became more and more experienced and I start to enjoy this new format. I’m really proud of my bronze medal.” - **Milan Csak (HUN)**

“I really enjoyed this course. It’s really challenging but that’s what I like about it.” - **Isabela Pondaven (GUA)**

“I think it’s very good for Pentathlon to have this kind of sport. It’s a little bit complicated because we don’t have this kind of agility in our sport, so I think we need more practice to really be strong. But it’s a lot of fun and it’s very good to have this competition with all the athletes.” - **Jessye Gomesse (FRA)**

“I think it’s fun and challenging. The OCR format is better, I think, but I tried this and it’s going OK.” - **Zsombor Mohl (HUN)**

“We think this new discipline is really good and fun, but also hard. I’m really sad that we quit Riding, but I think this new discipline is also really good. Post-competition, I think it was really hard and I also have to improve in this new discipline. But I’m looking forward to doing it.” - **Orsolya Varga (HUN)**

“I tried this for the first time and it was really hard, and I think I need more muscle for this – the wall was really hard! But we did it, and we are really happy because of it. I really enjoyed the race and I’m happy that I came 1st. I raced against my team-mate who was in 3rd position on the first day, so I was really surprised that I could beat her. But we both enjoyed it and it was like a play for us – I’m really glad that we could try it.” - **Laura Walthier (HUN)**

“I really enjoyed this competition but I would prefer horse riding. I could get used to this event, too. It was quite hard but I think with a lot of practice, we could get used to it. But I hope we can keep horse riding in Pentathlon.” - **Dorottya Tatar (HUN)**

“It was tough, but after a few times it gets so exciting and you just feel the adrenaline and energy rushing through you. After the first few times it’s really exciting to get everything right. Thank you!” - **Alida van der Merwe (RSA)**

“I thought it was very cool, although without special preparations and training it is very difficult to pass the course. Especially for athletes with short height. But emotions are running high!” - **Kristina Ryabova (KAZ)**

“I really enjoyed the new discipline. Everything is very good. Thank you to UIPM and Modern Pentathlon for giving us the chance to try it out today and test the new discipline.” - **Tomas Lima (ARG)**

“I’ve just done obstacle course racing and it’s really good fun, a different challenge – just different and really good.” - **Sam Cobb (GBR)**

“I just tried the new discipline and I think it’s very fun. I need to improve more – good luck!” - **Carlos Hernandez (ESP)**

“The race was fine – it was my first time. It’s getting harder and harder on the track. In the end, the

wall was quite hard.” - **Feher Bogdan Holeczy (HUN)**

“Obstacle Discipline is very fun – a new experience. We had a lot of fun on these obstacles. It’s a good change.” - **Maciej Klimek (POL)**

“I think it’s good for the future of Modern Pentathlon and I hope this will be the new discipline. I won the obstacle race in Drzonkow and I’m feeling amazing. I think obstacle is a really good choice to change the five disciplines in Modern Pentathlon.” - **Adam Pierzchala (POL)**

“Obstacle racing is, for me, 100 per cent better than horses. What can I say more? It’s just better.” - **Borys Sawasciuk (POL)**

“This is the new discipline in Modern Pentathlon and I think it’s very good because you can do this anywhere. Outside, if it’s good weather, or inside. Underground, maybe, in summer. But horse riding is a very good discipline and I miss it very much.” - **Jan Sikora (POL)**

“I won the silver medal and I feel very good, it’s amazing. It’s a very good competition. To do this workout, we must have lots of power.” - **Pawel Miluch (POL)**

“I just competed in the obstacle test event and it was a really good experience. I’m pleased to have got silver and looking forward to doing a bit more.” - **Toby Price (GBR)**



Obstacle specialist reaction

“It was very great to have the second place in this competition and I would be very happy if it would be part of the [Modern Pentathlon] competition.” - **Vitali Orichowski (POL)**

“I really enjoyed the course, it was fantastic and I really enjoyed the experience. It was fun to be part of this historical moment.” - **Grzegorz Niecko (POL)**

How it worked

The obstacle arrangement in Zielona Gora (POL) closely resembled the sequences made popular worldwide by the *SASUKE/Ninja Warrior* TV phenomenon, as the course was constructed in collaboration with the rights holder, Tokyo Broadcasting System Television (TBS).

The course was comprised of the following eight obstacles:

1. Sonic steps
2. Double swing
3. Tilting ladders
4. Floating steps
5. Globe grasper
6. Single cat grab
7. Ring toss
8. Warped wall

Many of the current U22 generation will be maturing into senior pentathletes during the Los Angeles 2028 cycle – when a new-look Modern Pentathlon will be introduced to the Olympic Games, pending approval by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Both days of the Test Event consisted of a demonstration and warm-up led by obstacle specialists, followed by a free training session and then a competition, after which all athletes, coaches and observers were invited to provide official feedback.



UIPM reaction

Dr Klaus Schormann, UIPM President, said: “The juniors showed after only an hour of training what they could do and how they could compete on the obstacle course.

“We have had four tests – in Ankara for senior athletes, in Manila for nations from Asia and Oceania, and now in Italy and Poland – and everyone who has observed the test events has seen how much the athletes enjoyed the experience. They wanted to repeat and achieve a better time.

“The fourth test has completed the testing phase, and now our UIPM Working Group will analyse all the results of the questionnaires from the athletes and coaches, and then we will see what will be presented to UIPM Congress on November 12/13.

“It is clear for us that this is the way forward for the future.

“We can create a great integration of Obstacle Discipline with the other four disciplines, to open the door worldwide to all of our Member Federations and other nations that don’t currently have the resources to develop full pentathletes.

“We want to have a fully accessible multi-sport for the Olympic Games, and we are quite happy that we could test Obstacle Discipline for all age levels and performance levels.

“Now we can analyse the results together with our stakeholders to create a proposal for the IOC to get the green light from the IOC, adding excitement and accessibility and bringing new generations of youth audience to the Olympic Games.”