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# UIPM 2023 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP CAIRO: VENCKAUSKAITE AND PURONAS (LTU) DIG DEEP FOR MIXED RELAY GLORY



- Pulsating Laser Run decided by sharp shooting of Lithuania (Venckauskaite & Purnas)
- Mexico (Arceo & Padilla) take silver while Korea (Jang & Kim) hold on for deserved bronze
- Teams from five continents compete in hugely entertaining end to exciting week

**Gintare Venckauskaite** and **Titas Purnas** dug deep and served up an exhibition of sharp shooting to take Mixed Relay gold for **Lithuania** to bring the curtain down on UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo.

In a breathtaking culmination to a great week of competition in the Egyptian capital, Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Puronas) clawed back a 25-second deficit in the Laser Run to take top honours.

**Mexico** had been long-time leaders but for a time it looked as though **Mariana Arceo** and **Manuel Padilla** would miss out on a medal until an incredible sprint finish from Padilla earned silver.

**Korea's** team of **Haeun Jang** and **Soengjin Kim** took a deserved bronze narrowly ahead of home favourites **Egypt (Haydy Morsy & Mohanad Shaban)** in fourth. **Great Britain (Emma Whitaker & Myles Pillage)** battled to fifth with **Poland (Ewa Pydyszewska & Lukasz Gutkowski)** sixth.

It was a fittingly competitive and international end to the first World Cup of the 2023 season with a total of 12 teams from five continents vying for the first Mixed Relay honours of the campaign.



## MEDALLISTS' REACTION

Gold medalist Puronas (LTU) said: "Our Fencing wasn't so strong so we had to run fast. It's our favourite discipline so we did our best!" His teammate Venckauskaite (LTU) added: "I came into this competition after a one and a half-year [absence] and I'm really happy that I could compete."

Silver medalist Arceo (MEX) said: "My team is really fast in our running and I am really so happy with this medal." Her teammate Padilla (MEX) added: "The running is my strength. We had worked a lot for this competition. We were really focused for the relays and we are really happy with that result."

Bronze medalist Jang (KOR) said: "In the Laser Run we had great shooting and the running was good. We are very happy with a bronze medal." Her teammate Kim (KOR) said: "Korea's name is Team Korea, you know that, and coaches and athletes we are all a team, not personal. It's important that we think this way. We are a strong team and a nice team."



## RIDING

While there were some mixed fortunes in the Riding round, it was the leaders who held their nerve to both separate themselves from the chasing pack and ensure things would remain tight at the top.

Three teams recorded perfect scores with Poland (Pydyszewska/Gutkowski) the first to do so as they jumped up the leaderboard. Korea (Jang/Kim) were also faultless with **Germany (Cicelle Leh & Marc Spletzer)** next to rack up a maximum score. Egypt (Morsy/Shaban) recorded an obstacle fault leaving Mexico (Arceo/Padilla) with a chance to extend their lead. However a refusal during Arceo's ride saw them drop down into second place. Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Puronas) claimed 293 points to stay where they needed to be — within striking distance.

A couple of unfortunate struggles from Great Britain (Whitaker/Pillage) saw their chances of a medal dim. Earlier, the team of **Panalee Palasri** and **Natthaphon Kesornphrom** representing **Thailand** and **Devan Wiebe** and **Robert Bonomo** from **Canada** cut their teeth over fences with both countries welcome additions and adding even more of a global outlook to the event.



## FENCING

Mexico (Arceo/Padilla) got their challenge off to formidable start as they dominated proceedings on the piste, coming out on top in the Fencing Ranking Round with 32 Victories followed by Egypt (Morsy/Shaban) who combined perfectly with 15 Victories each. Germany (Leh/Spletzer) were third with 26 Victories.

In the Bonus Round, Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Puronas) were red-hot, picking up an additional 10 points to move into striking distance of the top four. Their run was only ended by Mexico (Arceo/Padilla) who picked up four bonus points to move back into first place.



## SWIMMING

The pool pedigree of Great Britain (Whitaker/Pillage) was more than evident as they tried to claw their way up the leaderboard, clocking the fastest time in the Swimming round as they were the only team to go sub-two minutes in a blistering 1:58.49.

Things tightened up further again at the top as Kim's super anchor leg helped Korea (Jang/Kim) close the gap in a time of 2:01.14 with Germany (Leh/Spletzer) third fastest in 2:02.83.



## LASER RUN

In a Laser Run that shaped to be truly climatic just 10 seconds separated first and fourth. Mexico (Arceo/Padilla) had the narrowest of leads, just a second head start on Egypt (Morsy/Shaban) with Germany (Leh/Spletzer) and Korea (Jang/Kim) hot on their heels. Lithuania (Venckauskaite/Puronas) were also firmly in the mix, 25 seconds back.

As is so often the case in such a tight fight the ultimate destination of the medals would be decided at the range and Jang (KOR) served up an exhibition of sharp shooting to catapult Korea into the lead after the first shoot. Morsy had Egypt in hot pursuit as Arceo (MEX) slipped back.

When Jang (KOR) repeated the trick at the second shoot, Korea found themselves with a little breathing room courtesy of a 12-second lead at the changeover. However Venckauskaite's (LTU) dodged running had moved Lithuania all the way up to second ahead of Egypt and it was shaping up to be a barnstorming finish.

With Padilla (MEX) trying to get back into things, there was more exemplary shooting from the front two as Kim (KOR) and Puronas (LTU) both hit five from five. It would all come down to the final shoot and Puranas (LTU) picked his moment as he took the lead just as they approached the

range. Despite struggling on his fifth target Puranas (LTU) got away first with Kim (KOR) faltering a little on the final shoot. That opened the door for silver and Padilla (MEX) dug deep and sprinted through.

Shaban (EGY) almost claimed another medal for the host nation as he hunted down Kim (KOR) but had to settle for fourth. Great Britain (Whitaker/Pillage) finished an admirable fifth with Poland (Pydyszewska/Gutkowski) sixth.

## **PRESIDENT'S REACTION**

UIPM President Dr. Klaus Schormann said: "The Mixed Relay is always a very special highlight way to end a World Cup. More younger athletes were involved against some more experienced, world-class teams and I think it's so good to see more athletes having that possibility: to come together and learn and perform with the highest level of athletes. It really was a Mixed Relay in that sense.

"It was such an exciting moment at the end in the Laser Run. I said to my Korean colleagues that if the Korean athletes had been stronger runners they would easily win but in our sport you have to be strong at every aspect of the competition. We had a very good finish and the Mixed Relay remains a highlight in our movement."

## **WATCH AND FOLLOW**

UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo has now concluded but video highlights can be viewed at UIPM.TV and results can be found at the UIPM website and via the UIPM Central app.

The next competition on the calendar is UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Ankara, taking place in the capital city of Turkey from April 11-16.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Nation</b>	<b>MP Points</b>
1	VENCKAUSKAITE Gintare	LTU	1373
2	PURONAS Titas ARCEO Mariana	MEX	1364
3	PADILLA Manuel JANG Haeun	KOR	1361
4	KIM Soengjin MORSY Haydy	EGY	1358
5	SHABAN Mohanad WHITAKER Emma	GBR	1333
	PILLAGE Myles		

6	PYDYSZEWSKA Ewa	POL	1298
	GUTKOWSKI Lukasz		
	LEH Cicelle		
7		GER	1293
	SPLETZER Marc		
	FRENCH Phaelen		
8		USA	1023
	EVANS Tyler		
	FUENZALIDA Camila		
9		ARG	967
	LIMA Vicente		
	PALASRI Panalee		
10		THA	741
	KESORNPHROM Natthaphon		
	WIEBE Devan		
11		CAN	700
	BONOMO Robert		
	ISMAIL Malak		
12		EGY	0
	MOHAMED Moutaz		