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UIPM 2023 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP ANKARA: TÜRKIYE CLOSE ON A HIGH WITH MIXED RELAY GLORY



Ilke Ozyuksel and **Bugra Unal** delivered Mixed Relay glory for host nation **Türkiye** on the final day at UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Ankara.

After a tough week in the individual events, the two team leaders came together for a dynamic victory to end the competition on a high note for the local spectators, organisers and sponsors.

With 15 nations from five continents taking part, the Turkish duo led from the front in the Laser Run having earned a 6sec lead, but the other medallists had to work their way through the pack.

Mariana Arceo of **Mexico** earned her second medal in consecutive days as **Manuel Padilla** powered home for silver, while **Myles Pillage** came from nowhere in the final stages of the Laser Run to secure a first medal of the season for **Great Britain** alongside **Jessica Varley**.

Medallists' reaction

Gold medallist Ozyuksel (TUR) said: "We are very happy and it's unforgettable for us to get our first gold medal in Ankara – it's perfect and I can't say anything else! I'm very happy."

Silver medallist Padilla (MEX) said: "It was a really exciting competition. Mariana did really well to give me the relay in 2nd place, and I just finished it."

"We are really happy. Mariana and I have spent many years working together, so we know how to be a team and it's a brilliant feeling."

His partner, Arceo (MEX), added: "I am really happy, yesterday was such a hard competition but now I feel better and I like it so much, doing the Mixed Relay with Padilla. It's our second medal this season in the Mixed Relay, after a silver in Pentathlon World Cup Cairo."

Bronze medallist Varley (GBR) said: "The Relay is always so close and we started 45sec behind so I knew I had to go for it, but it was all Myles in the Laser Run – he smashed it."

Pillage (GBR) added: "It is a team effort, really – whatever I did in the Laser Run balanced out across Riding, Fencing and Swimming. It's about what we did the whole day, not just in one event."



Riding

With Türkiye (Ozyuksel/Unal) dropping 18 points during Riding, opportunities opened up for the rest of the field and two nations in particular took advantage.

With supreme horse management, **Anna Waltermann** and **Fernand Mitterrand** of **Germany** performed almost flawlessly with only one time penalty incurred. **Yufei Bian** and **Linbin Zhang** of **China** also stood out with only one transgression giving them a total of 293 to put pressure on the host nation.

Two teams suffered elimination: **Lyudmila Yakovleva** and **Giorgiy Boroda-Dudochkin** of **Kazakhstan** and **Phaelen French** and **Caleb Allen** of **United States**.



Fencing

To the delight of the hosting delegation and spectators, the Fencing Ranking Round was dominated by Türkiye (Ozyuksel/Unal) as their score of 19V/9D delivered a 14-point lift over the nearest competition.

Kristina Tchitadze and **Gaga Khijakadze** of **Georgia** scored 17V11D, one more victory than both Mexico (Arceo/Padilla) and China (Zhang/Bian).

The Bonus Round was dominated by Kazakhstan (Yakovleva/Boroda-Dudochkin), who responded in fine style to their Riding elimination to win the last five bouts.



Swimming

With five nations completing their relay swim in under 2mins, it was Great Britain (Varley/Pillage) who set the standard with a time of 1:56.22.

Paula Valencia Franco and **Juan Ochoa** of **Guatemala** were next-fastest on 1:57.54, narrowly ahead of **Korea** duo **Sunwoo Kim** and **Jinhwa Jung**, who otherwise struggled to make an impact on the competition.



Laser Run

With multiple threats lurking in the pack, Ozyuksel (TUR) knew she would have to be at her best to give Unal (TUR) a platform for gold and she ran her three 600m laps with great fluency, taking her time with the laser pistol and keeping an eye on the chasing pack.

The race for silver seemed to be between Germany (Waltermann/Mitterand) and China (Zhang/Bian) but Arceo (MEX) was in the mood to shake things up and, despite a slow first shoot, managed to catch Waltermann (GER) just before handing over to Padilla (MEX).

In the second half of the race, Mitterand (GER) ran well and looked a solid bet for bronze, despite the attentions of Ochoa (GUA). But when he froze at the final shoot, it created a clamour and Ochoa (GUA) and Zhang (CHN) burst out of the range ahead of him.

They all reckoned without the bespectacled, muscular figure of Pillage (GBR), who had made up huge ground on the first 1200m to set up a classic sting. Flying past his rivals one by one, he finally caught Ochoa (GUA) in the woodland section of the course and came down the hill to complete the journey from 8th to 3rd.

By now, Unal (TUR) had done just enough to keep Padilla (MEX) at bay, winning by 6sec despite some sticky shooting, and the host nation was enjoying its moment in the sun.



President's remarks

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "When we look across the individual competitions and now the Mixed Relay, this second Pentathlon World Cup raised the bar again with top-level athletes well prepared and aiming to qualify for the Pentathlon World Cup Final back here in Ankara.

"I am so impressed by their determination, and you could see not only in the individual competitions but also today: they never give up. In all disciplines they are wanting to have a great result and a high performance – and all the time competing in fairness. You could see the Olympic champion staying at the finish line to congratulate others – this is how pentathletes behave.

"The local organising committee have again given us a great facility. Sorry that we couldn't have the right weather conditions for Swimming outdoors, which was a little handicap for everybody. But it did not destroy the competition.

"Today's success for Türkiye gave the organisers a perfect reward for their efforts, and I thank all sponsors and government partners. And we don't forget that Türkiye recently suffered a terrible earthquake – we have huge respect for them.

"I'm sure it will be an ongoing super season, and altogether the Pentathlon Family is very proud in how National Federations are investing in athletes, coaches and trainers who work together to produce such high performances in a team spirit.

"Outside of the Pentathlon World Cup, I am excited that we will come back to Türkiye in July for the UIPM U19 World Championships in Istanbul, where we will see the integration of Obstacle in Modern Pentathlon.

"This will be a very big opportunity for us to show the IOC and the international sports movement

how we will combine the disciplines to provide a new and very exciting Modern Pentathlon format. Already we are seeing countries creating new federations, which is a clear sign that we made the right decision for the benefit of the whole Olympic movement.”

Watch and follow

UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Ankara 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 Budapest, taking place in the capital city of Hungary from April 25-30.

Rank	Team	Nation	Points
1	OZYUKSEL Ilke	TUR	1347
2	UNAL Bugra ARCEO Mariana	MEX	1341
3	PADILLA Manuel VARLEY Jessica	GBR	1317
4	PILLAGE Myles VALENCIA FRANCO Paula Sophia	GUA	1314
5	OCHOA Juan COSTE Elise	FRA	1311
6	BORIES Léo WALTERMANN Anna	GER	1311
7	MITTERRAND Fernand BIAN Yufei	CHN	1310
8	ZHANG Linbin DOMINIAK Natalia	POL	1298
9	KASPERCZAK Kamil FUENZALIDA Camila	ARG	1298
10	SERRANO Franco TCHITADZE Kristina	GEO	1260
11	KHIJAKADZE Gaga KIM Sunwoo	KOR	1256
12	JUNG Jinhwa UMEMURA Kanae	JPN	1246
	MATSUMOTO Ryo		

13	YAKOVLEVA Lyudmila	KAZ	1008
	BORODA-DUDUCHKIN Giorgiy		
	FRENCH Phaelen		
14		USA	935
	ALLEN Caleb		
	ABDELMAKSOUUD Salma		
15		EGY	0
	ELGENDY Mohamed		