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VOYAGE TO PARIS 2024: OLYMPIC GAMES COUNTDOWN PART I



Pulses already racing as the City of Love prepares to welcome the world for a historic Olympic Games.

Paris in the springtime has plenty of romantic notions but as summer rolls into view, something else is appearing on the horizon — the greatest sporting event on the planet.

Next summer the French capital will play host to sport's greatest show when the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad return to Paris to celebrate the centenary of the 1924 Olympic Games there. But the countdown has certainly already begun.

With room for 72 pentathletes to join the 10,000-plus Olympians who will gather in Paris, the first qualification places will be up for grabs just weeks from now at the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Ankara. Every step of the way, UIPM will be counting down to the Games with a monthly look at the key storylines, essential background information and latest qualification news.

From July 26 to August 11, 2024, the entire city of Paris will be a hive of Olympic activity with 30 different venue sites hosting events during the 17 days of competition.

Modern Pentathlon will find itself in a truly iconic venue with the men's and women's Semi-finals and Finals taking place from August 8-11 in the stunning grounds of the Palace of Versailles.

The opening ceremony on Friday, July 26 promises to be unmissable. Organisers have promised the "most spectacular and accessible opening ceremony in Olympic history" with festivities taking place along the banks of the Seine and athletes being transported along the river by boat to a special stadium at The Trocadéro. Organisers are expecting that as many as 600,000 fans will attend the unique opening ceremony.

With qualification fast approaching across many of the 32 sports, the dream of a place in Paris will soon become a reality for many. Watch this space to stay updated!

Paris Pointer: A golden generation is giving Egypt the platform for a rapid repeat of African glory

When Ahmed Elgendi of Egypt crossed the finish line in Tokyo in the summer of 2021, he shattered over a century of history. Elgendi's silver medal in the Men's Final marked the first time an African nation had reached the Olympic podium in Modern Pentathlon.

As we turn our eyes to the next instalment in Paris next summer, there's a growing suspicion that Egypt may not have to wait another 100 years for its next Olympic hardware.

If we look at the first three rounds of the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup in Cairo (EGY), Ankara (TUR) and Budapest (HUN) for form trends and signals of who might be in the mix in the French capital, Egyptian names jump to the fore.

On the men's side, Elgendi has bounced back from a shoulder injury to begin the season on fire, winning gold in Cairo and following up with bronze in Ankara.

However, compatriot Mohanad Shaban has looked even more formidable. A fourth-place finish on home soil in Cairo was followed by gold in Ankara and silver in Budapest last week.

Not to be outdone, Salma Abdelmaksoud has thrived in the women's competition, claiming bronze in both Cairo and Budapest and cementing her place in the top 10 of the world rankings. Abdelmaksoud, like Elgendi, was an individual gold medallist at the Youth Olympic Games in 2018.

Remarkably, Abdelmaksoud, Elgendi and Shaban were all born within six months of one another in 2000. Truly, a golden generation of talent for Africa's Pentathlon powerhouse. With Paris just 14 months away, Elgendi's historic medal may not stand alone for long.



Numbers game

10,500 is estimated number of athletes who will compete at the Paris Olympics, although that total may rise a little once qualifications are complete. By comparison, the Tokyo Games in 2021 featured a final total of 11,656 athletes competing in the Japanese capital.

Qualification latest

We're now just one month away from the first two of 72 total qualification places (36 each for men and women) for Modern Pentathlon at Paris 2024 being secured.

The first places will be confirmed at the UIPM 2023 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Ankara (TUR) where the winners of the Men's and Women's Final on June 3 will seal a quota place at Paris 2024. Full details can be found by [clicking here](#).