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OLYMPIC MEDALLIST KOVACS (HUN) ATTENDS U17 ATHLETE FORUM IN ALEXANDRIA (EGY)



Sarolta Kovacs OLY of Hungary, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallist, shared insights with the next generation of pentathletes during a forum that took place during the UIPM 2023 U17 World Championships in Alexandria (EGY).

Now working as a laser shooting coach with the Hungary national team, Kovacs (HUN) was joined at the forum by UIPM Athletes Committee Chair Yasser Hefny OLY, his fellow coaches Florence Dinichert OLY and Dr Walid Sayed, and former athlete Cristobal Rodriguez of Spain, now UIPM Events Operations Officer.

The panel appearance was part of a week-long programme of educational activities delivered on site by UIPM Education & Projects Manager Anfisa Kasyanova, following the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recommendation that International Federations arrange events during competitions to inspire, motivate and educate the next generation of Olympians.



Sarolta Kovacs OLY (HUN) said: “The educational activities and pentathletes forum were very important. It was my first time participating in such activities and I really liked it.

“The youth athletes from Hungary who participated in the forum told me it was very nice evening where they heard other nations’ opinions. Such activities are good for all athletes because there they know each other better and can be inspired by each other.

“I think this is so important. We talked about motivation and this is the key for success as well as mental health. I fully enjoyed our conversations at the forum. Such activities are important for coaches, too, because we learn from other coaches and we learn how we can assist our athletes. I hope UIPM will continue such activities.”

The educational topics covered during the week included mental health, competition manipulation, safe sport, performance nutrition, anti-doping, personal brand and social media, educational and career opportunities and Olympic values.

Athletes were asked about their motivations to practise sport and meet the challenges of Modern Pentathlon, and they mentioned the dream of winning Olympic gold, the opportunity to travel the world and discover new countries, to meet friends, to see a process of improvement in performance and results in competitions, and to win prize money.

Abdel Jalil Pitrioipa of Burkina Faso said: “I love Modern Pentathlon, and what motivates me to continue to be an athlete in the sport is that my country is not famous in the world, it’s very poor and I noticed that Modern Pentathlon is not considered a popular sport.

“I want to prove to everyone that it’s a very good sport and it has a lot of benefits for everyone. Also I want to improve the delivery of Modern Pentathlon in my country. I competed here with all these athletes who are wonderful and it was very interesting for me. Also I want to represent my country around the world.”

Furkhat Saipullaev of **Kazakhstan** said: “I liked it, this was interesting and I’m very excited. We had fun and I met new friends here.”

Jacob Li of **Canada**, who finished 10th and completed all activities of the programme, said: “As an athlete, the education, opportunities and resources offered by the UIPM educational activities are vital in laying the foundation for a successful athletic career.

“With these programmes and the tools they provide, athletes can develop and strengthen their skills, benefiting not only from educational support but also from networking opportunities and the chance to connect with other athletes. Moreover, the interactive nature of these programmes fosters athlete engagement and incentivises a focus on education.”



Natia Matchavariani, Georgia youth coach, added: “We participated in extraordinary courses under the Athlete Certification Programme (ACP). When I was an athlete we didn’t have such activities and it is great that we have it now. It was very interesting, fun and adapted for all athletes.

“I and my athletes from Georgia will be happy if similar events are held both online and in our country. Thanks for everything.”

Juliet Thomatos, mother of 13-year-old South Africa athlete Tatiana Thomatos, said: “The workshops held were so informative. It gave the athletes a chance to learn about the sport that

they are performing. The athletes were eager to go and this was also a great way to make friends from other countries.

“In the future I will encourage the athletes to attend more as they add so much value to their development and growth in the sport. Thank you!”

One of the youngest participants in the World Championships, **Tatiana Thomatos** (RSA) added: “I found the workshops so much fun and I wanted to do them all. It was a nice distraction from racing.”

The activities were delivered in hybrid format and besides learning at the campus in Alexandria (EGY) through games, Q&A and workbooks, athletes could test their knowledge through quizzes on the same themes at the UIPM Educational Platform.

All attendees receive a UIPM Shop voucher and a certificate of participation by email. Anyone interested in future educational opportunities for athletes can contact Anfisa.