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UIPM 2023 BIATHLE-TRIATHLE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: A GLOBAL GATHERING OF TALENT IN BLISSFUL BALI (INA)



- All six continents represented in worldwide celebration of beach multi-sport
- South Africa boss medal table as Lithuania and Kazakhstan claim senior titles
- President Schormann salutes 'very important' growth of UIPM Sports in Asia

Athletes from all six continents joined in a global celebration of beach multi-sport as blissful Bali hosted the UIPM 2023 Biathle-Triathle World Championships.

With a mixed running course of sand, grass and asphalt, and ocean currents setting a stern swimming test in hot and humid conditions, the competition served up a highly demanding test of athleticism. It was also a joyous sporting experience for the many families who competed across age categories stretching from Under 9 to Masters 70+.

Two-time Olympian **Gintare Venckauskaite** of **Lithuania** proved her versatility by becoming senior world champion across Triathlon and Biathlon, with elite pentathlete team-mate **Ieva Serapinaite** (LTU) winning silver in both finals.

Titas Purnas (LTU) won the Senior Men's Triathlon before Triathlon silver medallist **Meirlan Iskakov** of **Kazakhstan** broke the run of Lithuania – who also won both Mixed Relay titles – by clinching the Senior Men's Biathlon gold.

Florian Barenthaler of **Austria** claimed an impressive Men's Junior double, while the Women's Junior champions were **Princess Honey Arbilon** of **Philippines** (Triathlon) and **Georgia Lees** of **Great Britain** (Biathlon).

Across the age categories, there was no doubting the dominant force as **South Africa** claimed an incredible haul of almost 50 gold medals. **Thailand** led the Asian challenge with an impressive seven golds, with three staying in the host nation **Indonesia**. World titles were also claimed by **Egypt, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Korea** and **Portugal**.

In total, 450 athletes from 34 nations flocked to one of Indonesia's prime beauty spots to participate in the popular two-format Championships, with Biathlon and Triathlon Mixed Relays and Individual Semi-finals and Finals stretching across four days.

The UIPM Para Biathlon-Triathlon World Championships on November 4/5 was another memorable highlight, with four classifications. Ten athletes from Egypt and **New Zealand** enabled the competition to take place for the first time since 2019.



Champions' reaction

Women's Senior double champion Venckauskaite (LTU) said: "Yesterday I said that the Triathlon was five times harder than Pentathlon, but today with Biathlon I'm saying it's 10 times harder! When

you are swimming, you think maybe you are close to 200m and then you see the buoy and realise it's 100m more, so it's very hard.

"I just thought about getting to the finish; it doesn't matter in what place. It's a fight with myself. I think our Federation will be very happy with the result, and we will have a small party now because yesterday was my birthday. Today we will have the chance to celebrate."

Men's Senior Biathle champion Iskakov (KAZ) said: "Today the Biathle was easier than the Triathle, and it's so good for our team to have the top three places. Kazakhstan was strongest today but congratulations to all teams that competed. We are triathletes and we can run fast, but we are not so good at shooting, that's why today was easier."

Men's Junior double champion Barenthaler (AUT) said: "It's amazing to have two gold medals."

Girls' U9 double gold medallist **Roqia Abd Alsalam** (EGY) said: "I am so happy for this medal. I thank my parents and all of the coaches behind me. I appreciate the efforts that everyone has done for me. I don't ever get tired because I trained well."

After winning an incredible photo finish in the Women's Biathle U17 Final, double champion **Simone Van der Merwe** (RSA) said: "When I went around the bend I was nearly dead and then one of my team-mates was shouting from the side and I just thought with all these people watching, I would give it a try – and I did it. It was so close."

Men's U17 Biathle champion **Guilherme Neves** (POR) said: "I competed with a guy from Great Britain who was really strong. I tried to stay on his feet during the swim and we came out at the same time and I knew I was a little bit better in the running than him. I'm really proud. I worked hard to be able to compete here and my country should be really proud, and I'm really happy."

Men's U19 Biathle champion **Youssef Amer** (EGY) said: "I'm so happy. I came here to take this medal, I was world champion in 2022 in Madeira and now I defend my title. I thank my coaches, the National Bank of Egypt and everyone who supported me. I was a little sad from yesterday when I didn't win, but I came back hard today to get the gold."

Women's Masters 40+ double champion **Andrea Ranger** (RSA) said: "It's amazing. I'm very well pleased with that. I'm happy to pay for the excess luggage for four gold medals! I was happy and confident but it all depends on race day. There are so few ladies, elderly ladies, who do this so I'd just like to encourage more mums. Just participate, it's really fun!"

Masters 70+ Biathle men's champion **Johan Windt** (RSA) said: "It's absolute hard work. Your mind wants to go but your body says no. It's not easy any more. You train hard, you train more cleverly but it's not easy. The children said I have to keep on going. The event was so well organised...except for the sea. The sea wasn't easy this week!"

Women's Masters 70+ Biathle gold medallist and Triathle silver medallist **Emily Lean See Freund** (GER) said: "It was a very hard run. It is really, really hot. I had to put in a lot of energy to get into first place. It's a lot of hard training and energy put into it. Not an easy job. It is very important to encourage the young ones to join in. At this age you need to learn that you can do it to a ripe old age. You just need to stick with it and have discipline."



UIPM reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “First of all, I think it was the right decision from us to accept the offer from the National Federation of Indonesia to host the UIPM 2023 Biathlon-Triathlon World Championships here in Bali. This is a great place for tourism and now more and more for sport. Here we had a wonderful beach and field of play, and it was a big promotion for our future aspirations of being included in the Asian Beach Games.

“In Asia we have the biggest population in the world, and to have more National Federations taking part in all UIPM multi-sports is very important for development – as we saw recently with the Southeast Asian Championships in Pattaya, Thailand. We have great possibilities in Asia for more grassroots development and later to see more young athletes training for Fencing and then being able to compete in a full Pentathlon thanks to the integration of Obstacle. We have a new challenge in front of us and Asia is very important on the commercial side and on the media side.

“The season is one part, in terms of sport, and it was quite successful with many continental multi-sport Games and UIPM Pentathlon World Cups and Pentathlon World Championships all as part of Paris 2024 Olympic qualification, and all our Youth and Junior competitions where we already included Obstacle.

“It was a very heavy year, and so important. We waited for the decision of the IOC Session and all that we prepared with our National Federations was accepted by the IOC, and the statement of the IOC President to all of us around the world was clear: if we had not replaced Riding we would no longer be in the Olympic movement and we would finish and go to the Olympic Museum after Paris.

“Now, the Museum has to wait much longer and we go forward, taking care of the legacy and the heritage of our founder, Baron Pierre de Coubertin.”

Andrew Collings, Chair of the UIPM Para Pentathlon Commission, said: “The successful

UIPM Para Biathlon-Triathlon World Championships in Bali was another step on our journey up the UIPM Sports Pyramid.

“What made the events memorable was both the athletes and the spectators. The feeling was electric with cheering from the crowd as para athletes crossed the finish line.

“While a success, the team is not slowing down. Events are planned for Europe in 2024 as well as in China and Egypt. The team is also connecting with NFs around the world to help continue to grow the UIPM Para Sports movement.

“The end goal of being included in future Paralympic Games is still very much front of mind. Well done to all.”

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2023 competition season has now concluded. Video highlights are available on UIPM.TV with results available at the UIPM website and via the UIPM Central app. Season passes for 2024 will be available to purchase soon.

Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X throughout the season for additional content.