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# UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP SOFIA: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW



- Egyptian men aim to continue podium dominance in Bulgaria
- Intriguing Olympic selection battles in France, Great Britain, Hungary and Lithuania
- Three opportunities remain for Paris 2024 qualification points

After a year of intense competition, only three opportunities remain for the world's most versatile athletes to secure their dream ticket to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

While UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia offers no guarantees, it is the last chance to earn the right to join the world's top 72 athletes at the Pentathlon World Cup Final in Ankara (TUR), which in turn becomes another opportunity for Olympic qualification points.

And it's not all about the points – in several national teams, internal competition is so intense that this week's competition in Bulgaria becomes a test of character as well as form. Who can satisfy the selectors that they have what it takes to peak when it matters most, in Versailles (FRA) in three months' time?

### **How it works**

With 28 of the 72 places at Paris 2024 remaining unallocated, and many of those who have secured quota places looking to finetune their form, competition will be fierce and the athlete line-up is once again packed with stardom and podium experience.

All points earned in the six major UIPM competitions this season can potentially count towards the UIPM Olympic Pentathlon World Ranking list, which will be used to finalise the list of qualified athletes on June 17.

Those who perform best in the regular season in Cairo (EGY), Ankara (TUR), Budapest (HUN) and Sofia (BUL) will earn a place in the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Ankara (TUR).

This will be followed by one last opportunity to win direct qualification quota places for Paris 2024 at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Championships in Zhengzhou (CHN).



### **Ones to watch – men**

Is there any stopping **Egypt** in men's Modern Pentathlon this season? So far this extraordinary team has won six of the nine individual medals handed out, with brothers **Ahmed** and **Mohamed Elgendy** claiming golds, **Moutaz Mohamed** managing two silvers and **Mohanad Shaban** contributing a bronze.

Tokyo 2020 silver medallist Ahmed Elgendy, who also won a bronze, sits out this time, leaving the other three and **Ahmed Hamed** – 4th in Budapest (HUN) – to continue their epic internal struggle. World No.3 Shaban (EGY) has a point to prove in Sofia (BUL) as he again lines up against teammates who are in the form of their lives.

In case the Egyptians allow anyone from other countries to enjoy podium time, **Changwan Seo** of **Korea** may be worth a close look after his gold in Ankara (TUR), and there is considerable intrigue around **France** – with two-time world champion **Valentin Belaud** and next-generation athletes **Jean-Baptiste Mourcia** and **Leo Bories** among those competing for the right to become Olympians on home soil.

Similarly, the **Hungary** story is fascinating with 34-year-old **Bence Demeter** competing with athletes a decade his junior, **Csaba Bohm** and **Balazs Szep**, for the coveted two places.

With the Asian challenge also incorporating **China**, **Japan**, **Kazakhstan** and **Thailand**, and South American athletes coming from **Argentina**, **Brazil** and **Chile** to compete with global opposition including a male due from **Australia**, the men's competition is truly a global melting pot.

Visit the UIPM website to see the latest world rankings for men and the latest Olympic world rankings for men.

### Ones to watch – women

Is this the moment for a next-generation female athlete to stamp their authority on the elite scene?

In recent weeks, 20-year-old **Seungmin Seong** (KOR) has won two Pentathlon World Cup silver medals and 18-year-old **Malak Ismail** (EGY) a bronze, with 18-year-old **Lucie Hlavackova** of **Czech Republic** coming very close to her inaugural medal.

Inevitably, some youth athletes will be dealt with a lesson at the hands of their elders, and there are many distinguished athletes in the field including Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion **Kate French** of **Great Britain**, Rio 2016 silver medallist **Elodie Clouvel** (FRA) and world N.4 **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye**.

French (GBR) is far from the only athlete from her team worth watching, with **Olivia Green** and **Jessica Varley** having proved themselves at the highest level. Competition is equally rife in **Lithuania**, with **Ieva Serapinaite**, **Gintare Venckauskaite** and **Elzbieta Adomaityte** effectively competing for one place alongside Pentathlon legend Laura Asadauskaite (who sits this one out).

Visit the UIPM website to see the latest world rankings for women and the latest Olympic world rankings for women.





## Paris 2024 update

The 2024 season will be the last to feature the format introduced in 2022 when the new Modern Pentathlon elimination system – featuring a 90-minute showcase of all five disciplines in the Semi-finals and Finals – was introduced. After Paris 2024, Riding will be replaced by Obstacle at all levels of the sport.

Two days of qualification on May 8/9 will determine the line-up for the Semi-finals (36 male and 36 female athletes) on May 10/11. The Finals will then provide a 'Super Sunday' highlight on May 12 followed by the Mixed Relay on May 13.

## President's welcome

**UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann** said: "Pentathlon World Cup Sofia takes us one step closer to the finish line of qualification for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. It is every pentathlete's dream to become Olympians and compete in front of an audience of billions. But while Paris is their ultimate destination, they will experience a special highlight of the season here in the beautiful capital city of Sofia.

"Bulgaria has become a strong pillar of our global sports movement, typified by the excellent organisation of this annual World Cup. My gratitude goes to the Bulgarian Modern Pentathlon Federation and their partners within Government and the National Olympic Committee, as well as the many volunteers, sponsors, supporters and media representatives who will play a vital role in the success of this competition.

"Competition this week will be intense, but I urge athletes to never forget their responsibility to compete in a spirit of fair play, as our founder Pierre de Coubertin envisaged, and respect the

Olympic values as we together enjoy the glory of our unique multisport. Faster, Stronger, Higher ... Together."

## **Watch and follow**

Live coverage of UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia is available to subscribers on UIPM.TV where annual packages cost €14.99.

Visit the UIPM website or download UIPM Central from your app store to keep track of live results. Follow World Pentathlon on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube for additional content.

## **Competition schedule**

### **UIPM 2024 Pentathlon World Cup Sofia**

*Times denote start of UIPM.TV live coverage (CEST)*

May 8: Women's Qualification

May 9: Men's Qualification | Women's Fencing Ranking Round

May 10: Women's Semi-Final A (10.00am) | Women's Semi-final B (3pm) | Men's Fencing Ranking Round

May 11: Men's Semi-Final A (10am) | Men's Semi-final B (3pm)

May 12: Women's Final (9am) | Men's Final (3pm)

May 13: Mixed Relay (12pm)