

11 AUG 2024

MODERN PENTATHLON AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES: GOLDEN GULYAS (HUN) ADDS NAME TO HISTORY BOOKS IN WOMEN'S FINAL



- World record-breaker joins pentathlon's longest list of champions
- Clouvel (FRA) overcomes her demons with astonishing second Olympic silver
- World champion Seong (KOR) adds Olympic bronze to her medal collection

Michelle Gulyas has entered the pantheon of Olympic champions from **Hungary**, the most prolific nation in the history of Modern Pentathlon at the Games.

As an eight-time Pentathlon World Cup and two-time Pentathlon World Championships medallist, Gulyas (HUN) was destined to claim the top prizes in the sport one day. Aged only 23, she already stands at the pinnacle having won Olympic gold in the Women's Final at Paris 2024 – with a new

overall world record in her name.

Gulyas finished comfortably in the end, easing up to win by 9sec for a total of 1,461 points. Hungary had not won an Olympic title since Zsuzsanna Voros at Athens 2004, but now it has 10 gold medals, one more than the pioneering Sweden.

Nine seconds after the champion broke the tape with that unforgettable moment of joy, there was an almighty noise that must have shaken the window panes of the 17th-century Palace facing the stadium.

It happened because **Elodie Clouvel** of **France** crossed the line to consummate her career-defining goal of a medal at a home Olympics. The 35-year-old now has two Olympic silvers having already achieved the feat at Rio 2016 – and 16,000 people in the tribunes did not try to contain their delight.

The new generation is coming through strongly. Two months ago she became world champion, and now **Seungmin Seong** of **Korea** is an Olympic bronze medallist. The Olympic debutante is only 21 and has the world at her feet after a consistently excellent performance across the five disciplines.

Nobody was catching these three athletes today, but it was painful for **Elena Micheli** of **Italy** that she could not, as her shooting let her down for a final position of 5th. World silver medallist **Blanka Guzi** (HUN) ran a typically electric Laser Run to finish 4th and the prolific **Ilke Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** completed the top six.

Determination to finish as high as possible was evident among the next finishers too. **Gintare Venckauskaite** of **Lithuania** and Sunwoo Kim (KOR) came next, followed by **Kerenza Bryson** of **Great Britain** and **Lucie Hlavackova** of **Czechia**.

At the back end of the field, other heroes were roared across the line: 40-year-old **Laura Asadauskaite** (LTU) completing her fifth Olympic adventure and finally **Marie Oteiza** (FRA), who was cruelly eliminated after a fall in Riding.



Medallists' reaction

Gold medallist Gulyas (HUN) said: "I cannot even describe how happy I am about this medal. Starting into the competition, I felt very strong, but I didn't even think about winning, and I thought, 'Okay, I will have a good competition [in Hungary]'".

"This year wasn't so strong for me, so I will do my best from all the disciplines, and then who knows what will be enough for pentathlon gold medal?"

I got my Olympic quota last year at the European Games and since then, for my physical disciplines, it was all about the Olympics. So, we were trying to put the best form until the Olympics.

"It was tough to feel so bad in the competitions, because I was always a little bit tired. I never really had that rest before the competition. So, this is the first competition where I came and I was very fit, I was relaxed, and I can do the competition.

"I had a very, very good horse. So, I can thank him a lot for making me 300 points today. It was my last riding, so it was really emotional. It was nice finishing my horse-riding career with 300 points. So, I enjoyed it.

"During shooting, I was trying to focus only on myself. I was like '15,000 people, who cares?'. But of course, I cared about it because during running, it was helping me a lot. And because of the crowd, I always knew where Elodie was, because depending on which side she was running on, the crowd was so, so loud there, so I didn't even have to look back.

"I hope more little kids [in Hungary] will try Modern Pentathlon. Kids who are training at home, they

see me struggling all year and now winning a gold medal it will give them a little hope that even if they have tough times, they can still make very nice things at the end.”

Silver medallist Clouvel (FRA) said: “It’s incredible, amazing, all my family is here, so many French people in the crowd.

“It’s engraved in my heart for life. I will forever remember this moment.

“Finishing in second place, winning silver, it’s my place today. Congratulations to Michelle Gulyas for the amazing shooting today.”

“It’s amazing. You know what I have been through this season. When I told you we would write a beautiful story in Paris, now it’s true. And it’s the story I wanted to tell, a story of resilience, courage, and that we should never give up even when we hit the bottom.

“One year ago I wanted to quit, today I am an Olympic medallist with two incredible athletes at the top level, with Michelle Gulyas and Seungmin Seong who is reigning world champion. It was really high level. I knew it was coming back behind me but I didn’t let it go in the Laser Run, I was flying and it lifted me and the whole crowd lifted me. It was crazy.

“In the first shoot, my old demons came back. I was quite alone at the stand, I was slow to get into it, there was a bit of wind it distracted me, I was on emotions. Afterwards I stopped thinking and just ran. I thought about Ahmed Elgendy [men’s gold medallist], I watched his Laser Run again, and I thought go now, do the same, go in the front. But Michelle was exceptional today, I want to congratulate her. I’m already super happy.

“It’s crazy. I was with my horse on the last jump, I literally flew with him through the whole course, he was amazing. I thank him, his name is “Fly”. He’s a horse from Garde Républicaine. I thank him because today he was with him, he handled the pressure and there was a lot of pressure because I was going last. It was completely silent.

“Marie fell before so I was in emotion, we got scared. Then I reconnected to my horse and when we entered the arena, it was amazing. I didn’t even feel I knocked a bar off, I was so much in the moment, with my horse. It was my last course, it was magic. I will never forget that horse.

“I cannot compare Olympic medals from Rio and Paris, but this one definitely has a special feel. It is the medal of resilience, perseverance, showing that you shouldn’t give up. Today I felt like a queen in the Versailles Palace, cheered by the audience, I didn’t get the French anthem but there were many flags around, the public cheering us.

“This is silver. But it’s much more than a medal.

“I would have wanted the Olympic gold of course. I started for that, going first. Ahmed Elgendy started first too. But in the shooting he was excellent. For me it was already incredible what I did in shooting today. I am so grateful for the road I walked, with little confidence in that discipline and all I went through this year. But I managed. And the girls didn’t come back behind.

“I didn’t say no, I will continue. I want to try the new Obstacle discipline, it is important to me. I will probably take a pause right now. I would like to build a family, have a baby. So expected. And we will have four years to prepare for next Olympics in 2028.

“This time it was only three, so it makes a big difference. But yes, I didn’t say stop. I feel good in my body and in my mind. As I said, the old Elodie is back, and I still want more. So what’s coming will be beautiful.”

Bronze medallist Seong (KOR) said: “It was my first time at the Olympics. It feels really great to have this bronze medal, but I still want to get the gold so I am looking forward to the next Games.

“I am very excited. I thought that I would cry but I am not sad at all, I am really happy now. It was my first time competing in a Games in such a big venue with a large crowd. I am glad that enjoyed it and was able to finish it with this first medal.

“Obviously I am the bronze medal and first medallist for Korea for women. But I am looking to the future to get the gold medal. That’s my plan!

“All my friends and family cheered for me before coming to Paris. I promised them to get a medal so I am really glad to have achieved it. I will go home and buy them as much food as they want!”

More reaction from medallists who competed in the Women’s Final can be found [here](#).

Riding

It was poetic that the last-ever horse ride in the Olympic Modern Pentathlon should be undertaken by one of the sport’s enduring champions in her home city in front of 16,000 people.

And Clouvel (FRA) managed the situation in the most composed and dignified way, steering Fly De Resquerie around the course and only striking one barrier at fence eight, before clearing the last two and raising her hand to the sky.

The joy of the crowd was unmissable but it was mixed with relief, because they had already witnessed the cruelty of elimination. When **Marie Oteiza** (FRA) entered the arena, her mount started to jerk nervously and even though the rider managed to get to the first fence, there was no attempt to jump and the rider was ejected painfully on top of the barrier.

Oteiza (FRA) managed to walk out of the arena, devastated having seen numerous athletes go clear with perfectly uneventful rides. The first to do so was Sotero (ITA), followed immediately by Guzi (HUN) and Venckauskaite (LTU) and later by **Anna Jurt** of **Switzerland**.

Following the elimination of **Laura Heredia** of **Spain** after three refusals, the tension increased but it was calmed by an immaculate career-ending ride by **Annika Zillekens** of **Germany**, who only arrived at the competition venue 20 minutes before the start having been informed that Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion **Kate French** (GBR) had withdrawn due to sickness.

At the business end of the leaderboard, there were 300 scores for **Mingyu Zhang** of **China** and Seong (KOR), and then it came down to a test of nerve for Gulyas (HUN) and Clouvel (FRA). They combined to end the 112-year chapter of horse riding in Modern Pentathlon in the most beautiful way, Gulyas (HUN) going clear and Clouvel (FRA) scoring a 293 that kept her firmly in control of the competition.



Fencing

The Fencing Bonus Round belonged to the Italians. First **Alice Sotero** (ITA) made some amends for her below-par performance in the Ranking Round by winning the first three bouts, before Hlavackova (CZE) claimed two scalps. But the undoubted star of the round was Micheli (ITA), who went on the march in pursuit of an Olympic medal that seemed very much within her grasp.

Six wins later, having taken the scalp of her friend and rival Gulyas (HUN), the two-time world champion had a 12-point boost to her score. The only athlete she failed to defeat was Clouvel (FRA), who stood her ground and added four points to the glee of the crowd.



Swimming

Sotero (ITA) has a habit of coming strongly from behind on big Finals days, and she duly won the Swimming event by a clear margin in 2:09.93. Seong (KOR) proved her all-round ability by surprising the European superstars with the next fastest time of 2:11.47, with Clouvel (FRA) edging one further point ahead of Gulyas (HUN).

It meant that the home favourite started the final discipline with a 13sec lead over Gulyas (HUN), whose Laser Run reputation made her an obvious gold-medal favourite.



Laser Run

The ordeal of Clouvel (FRA) with her challenges in shooting was vividly documented in the docuseries *A Passion For Paris* this season. Somehow she had to compose herself for a second time this week to get the 20 green lights that threatened to deny her this dream career finale.

It did not bode well at the first visit to the range, where Clouvel (FRA) took 35sec to register her five shots, enabling the more accurate Gulyas (HUN) to surge into the lead. It was a masterclass from the brilliant Hungarian, a quintessential all-round athlete who burst on to the scene during the pandemic and now reaps the rewards of many years training and winning without full acclaim.

Back to the race, Seong (KOR) also moved past Clouvel (FRA) in this visit, but the taller home favourite refused to be overcome and she ran past the world champion on the second 600m circuit. And that was the way it stayed, as Clouvel (FRA) retrieved control of her nerves and improved her shooting on each visit, as she did in the Semi-final.

In the end there was no drama on the finish line, only the internal drama within Elodie Clouvel herself. An extraordinary redemption story was told here in Versailles.



President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "We had a fantastic Final here in Versailles with very exciting moments. We finished our history with horse riding and spectators supported our athletes right to the end.

"We are very thankful and pleased at how this has been arranged and how our athletes have performed at the highest level.

"We say bye bye to the horses, but we are looking forward now to Los Angeles, and we will fully concentrate on our new Obstacle discipline and the format that has been in place for youths and juniors for two years. Now the seniors know in which way they have to focus for the next Olympic cycle.

"From the very beginning when we had the Semi-finals, I was speaking with athletes and coaches to get the feedback about this Olympic Games, and we focused on making a big showcase of our sport with the new format. As Ahmed Elgendy said yesterday, he has been Youth Olympic Games and Olympic Games champion and now he wants to be the champion of another new format in Los Angeles.

"That is our direction now, towards a more urban format for the future, and we are looking with great optimism to Los Angeles 2028 and as well to Brisbane 2032."

Follow the action

The Olympic Games Modern Pentathlon has now concluded but you can follow World Pentathlon on your favourite platform to catch up on all competition content:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [TikTok](#)
- [VK](#)
- [Weibo](#)
- [X](#)
- [YouTube](#)

If you are a fan of elite athletes such as Clouvel (FRA), Micheli (ITA), **Mohanad Shaban** (EGY) and **Emiliano Hernandez** of **Mexico**, you will love *A Passion For Paris*, a six-part docuseries available to watch free on YouTube.

Need more biographical information about the athletes or want a recap on the sport's glorious history? The UIPM 2024 Media Guide: Olympic Edition is [available for download](#).

All results are available at the Paris 2024 [website](#).

Women's Final results

Rank	Name	Nation	Points
1	GULYAS Michelle	HUN	1461
2	CLOUVEL Elodie	FRA	1452
3	SEONG Seungmin	KOR	1441
4	GUZI Blanka	HUN	1433
5	MICHELI Elena	ITA	1424
6	OZYUKSEL Ilke	TUR	1420
7	VENCKAUSKAITE Gintare	LTU	1419
8	KIM Sunwoo	KOR	1410
9	BRYSON Kerenza	GBR	1404
10	HLAVACKOVA Lucie	CZE	1403
11	JURT Anna	SUI	1403
12	ISMAIL Malak	EGY	1395
13	SOTERO Alice	ITA	1389
14	ZHANG Mingyu	CHN	1386
15	ZILLEKENS Annika	GER	1376
16	ASADAUSKAITE Laura	LTU	1369
17	HEREDIA Laura	ESP	1124
18	OTEIZA Marie	FRA	1077