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UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON U17 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: FIVE-STAR EGYPT MAKE MORE HISTORY IN PORTUGAL



- Khalil (EGY) and Gnedtchik (AIN) savour individual glory
- North Africans top another medal table after plundering five golds
- Eight world records broken by athletes from four continents

Six days of action at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U17 World Championships provided a stunning glimpse of tomorrow's world as two pentathletes aged 13 and 15 won the gold medals by staggering margins.

Once again, **Egypt** led the way throughout the week with another haul of medals displaying the might of the country's development programme, leaving Portugal with five gold medals and a silver.

Aged 13 years and seven months, **Farida Khalil** (EGY) is now a two-time U17 world champion, having secured the crown for the first time in 2023 when she was only 12.

Khalil (EGY) won the Women's Final by a clear margin, finishing 20sec ahead of silver medallist **Diana Rajncsak**

of **Hungary** as **Charlotte Keister** of **Germany** pipped **Lily Farag** (EGY) for bronze. None of the top four athletes has yet turned 16.

The Men's Final was similarly dominated by **Akim Gnedtchik** (AIN), another 15-year-old who seems to have the world at his feet as Modern Pentathlon enters the Obstacle era. Gnedtchik, younger brother to senior world No.6 Mariya Gnedtchik, turns 16 only next week but he was 19 points too good for the competition in Portugal.

Omar Abdelkader (EGY) added a second individual medal for the North African powerhouse as he held on to the silver medal under pressure from bronze medallist **Maksym Kovalchuk** of **Ukraine** and **Nemere Szecsi** (HUN), who missed out by 1sec.

Both Team gold medals were won by Egypt, with Hungary and **Poland** winning silver and bronze on the women's side and Ukraine and **Italy** respectively doing likewise in the men's event.

Relay success also went the way of Egypt (mixed and men), after the Italian women had claimed the first title of the week. The competition attracted more than 150 athletes from 30 nations – an increase of four on 2023.

Joao Almeida, President of the Portuguese Modern Pentathlon Federation and former long-time UIPM Medical Committee Member, received the UIPM Medal of Honour from UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann on the final evening.



Women's Individual Final podium

Photo credit: Nuno Gonçalves



Men's Individual Final podium

Photo credit: Nuno Gonçalves

Champions' reaction

Women's Individual gold medallist Khalil (EGY) said: "I am very, very happy that I got the gold medal, because I worked a lot for this moment. I found it a very tough competition, but I worked so hard to get this medal and these good scores.

"My target is a gold medal at the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028."

Men's Individual champion Gnedtchik (AIN) said: "I am very happy. My Fencing was very good, and every other discipline was so-so. In the Laser Run I had a big advantage over 2nd place.

"My target is gold in the LA28 Olympics. I would like to say hello to my sister Mariya, who is a very good pentathlete, and I am thankful to my coaches and my mother. We are a team."

Women's Relay

Annachiara Allara and **Sara Beggio** (ITA) excelled in Obstacle to take an impressive gold in the Women's Relay, finishing 11sec ahead of silver medallists Germany (Charlotte Keister & **Hannah Dicks**) as Hungary (**Emese Bagyi** & **Zora Daranyi**) claimed the bronze.

Men's Relay

In the Men's Relay, Egypt triumphed for the second consecutive year as **Aly Aboelfetouh** and **Ahmed Abdelhamed** built on a fine Fencing performance to win by 10sec from Türkiye duo **Muhammet Emir Kurtulan** and **Arda Meric**. A thrilling sprint for the medals saw **Lukas Lagunavicius** and **Valeika Liutauras** (LTU) snatch bronze from their Hungarian rivals.



Photo credit: Nuno Gonçalves



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Women's Final

The greatest threat to Khalil (EGY) was expected to be her team-mate **Ritage Ramadan** (EGY), who had upstaged the champion in the Fencing Ranking Round with 28 wins to her rival's 27.

But Ramadan (EGY) made a decisive error in the Obstacle discipline, failing to obey the instructions of a technical official and suffering elimination. She was the only athlete eliminated out of 36 in the round, as Keister (GER) set the standard with an impressive 26.88sec, closely followed by Beggio (ITA) on 27.78. Khalil (EGY) showed her all-round mastery by also completing the course in less than 30sec.

There were six wins in the Fencing Bonus Round for **Wakana Uchiyama** of **Japan** and five for **Juliette Barnades** of **France**, and while Khalil (EGY) lost the final bout to Ramadan (EGY), she rebounded in Swimming with the second-fastest time of the day – 2min 15.16sec. Only Uchiyama (JPN) went faster than that, delivering an outstanding 2min 12.13.

Into the Laser Run and Khalil (EGY) proved well able to protect what looked like an unassailable lead, finally retaining her title by a 20sec margin as team-mates Farag (EGY) and **Alia Enayet** (EGY) joined her in the top six. The day's best Laser Run time was recorded by **Andrea Flores** of **Mexico**, whose 9:11.64 eclipsed the 9:11.99 of Allara (ITA) by a tiny margin.

Men's Final

Unlike Khalil (EGY), Gnedtchik (AIN) had nobody for company at the top of the Fencing leaderboard, and he added the maximum four points to his overnight score of 270 as **Yerafeyeu Yahor** (AIN) upped his tally by 10 points with five Bonus Round touches and **Tsimafei Prakopchyk** (AIN) won four.

Gnedtchik (AIN) made the top five in Obstacle, in a cluster of athletes around the 25sec mark, but there was no doubting the dominant racer. Lagunavicius (LTU) blew away the competition with a blistering time of 21.13.

Prakopchyk (AIN) stood out in Swimming, timing 2:02.84 ahead of **Tomas Grigorov** of **Bulgaria** and **Maksymilian Dobosz** (POL), but nobody was able to make a gain on the leader as Kurtulan (TUR) started Laser Run in 2nd place, 25sec off the pace.

As Gnedtchik (AIN) completed the victory procession, Kovalchuk (UKR) refused to give up his starting position of 3rd but the big move came from Abdelkader (EGY), who vaulted from 8th to 2nd to claim silver. But even that wasn't the best Laser Run of the day – that honour went to Aboelfetouh (EGY), who shot round the course in 8:06.22.

Mixed Relay

Egypt picked up their fifth gold medal of the week as superstar Khalil (EGY) claimed her third gold medal of the weekend alongside **Ahmed Abdelhamed**.

Twenty nations participated in this year's Mixed Relay event, a 25% increase on the number of teams that took part in 2023.

Thanks to strong starts in the Fencing and Obstacle, 13-year-old sensation Khalil (EGY) completed a gold medal sweep following successes in the Women's individual and Women's Team, amassing 1640 points along with teammate Abdelhamed (EGY) who won his second medal of the competition after Men's Team gold.

Hanna Jakubowska and Dobosz (POL) came close to pipping their Egyptian counterparts in the Laser Run having completed the circuit nearly 40 seconds faster, but it was not enough to close the demonstrable gap and they finished the week with silver.

Hungary athletes Szecsi and **Ivola Turbucz** were faster still in the Laser Run, salvaging a bronze medal, a repeat result of last year's U17 World Championships albeit with a different team.

World record progression

This was the second year U17 athletes have taken part in a full Pentathlon, thanks to the introduction of Obstacle alongside Fencing, Swimming and Laser Run. Eight world records were broken by athletes from Africa, Asia, Europe and North America during the competition in Caldas da Rainha (POR), based on the following progression from Qualification to Finals:

Women's Overall

- 1,349 points – Diana Rajncsak (HUN) and Alia Enayet (EGY)
- 1,391 points – Farida Khalil (EGY)

Women's Obstacle

- 27.92sec – Charlotte Keister (GER)
- 26.88sec – Charlotte Keister (GER)

Women's Swimming

- 2:12.00 – Wakana Uchiyama (JPN)

Women's Laser Run

- 9:11.64 – Andrea Flores (MEX)

Men's Overall

- 1,499 points – Akim Gnedtchik (AIN)

Men's Fencing

- 274 points (28V/6D) – Akim Gnedtchik (AIN)

Men's Obstacle

- 24.04sec – Lukas Lagunavicius (LTU)
- 21.13sec – Lukas Lagunavicius (LTU)

Men's Laser Run

- 8:37.30 – Gordon Ballantyne (GBR)
- 8:32.44 – Fernando Cavillo (MEX)
- 8:26.65 – Kanta Abe (JPN)
- 8:06.22 – Aly Aboelfetouh (EGY)



Photo credit: Nuno Gonçalves



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President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Here in the historical city of Caldas da Rainha we already organised a lot of competitions with wonderful facilities. The Portuguese Modern Pentathlon Federation is celebrating its 75th anniversary and they have delivered a fantastic competition for our youth society coming from more than 30 countries.

"Throughout the week we saw a new generation of great athletes competing at a high level. The new combination with Obstacles gives more athletes from more countries the possibility to compete in a full Pentathlon, and that is what we want to achieve in the future across age levels. Here in this U17 World Championships we had youth athletes from Peru competing overseas for the first time.

"After a very successful Olympic Games in Paris, where we delivered one of our best Olympic presentations in the history of Modern Pentathlon, we can see through the quality of competition at youth level that we are developing in the right direction for Los Angeles 2028."

Follow the action

The UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U17 World Championships has now concluded and today (September 16) also marks the final day of the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon and Tetrathlon Masters World Championships. The next competition on the UIPM calendar is the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U19 World Championships in Druskininkai (LTU) from September 23-29.

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