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UIPM 2024 PENTATHLON U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: KHALIL'S FANTASTIC FOUR TAKES EGYPT TO NEW HEIGHTS



- Pentathlon phenomenon, 13, enjoys clean sweep in Druskininkai (LTU)
- Lim (KOR) breaks overall world record on way to Men's Final glory
- Hosting Lithuanian Federation sets example for sustainability

The astonishing **Farida Khalil** redefined what it means to be a Modern Pentathlon phenomenon as **Egypt** dominated the podium at yet another global competition.

Six days of action at the UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U19 World Championships saw the North African powerhouse claim six gold medals – four of them thanks largely to an athlete who may just be the most exciting talent the sport has seen.

At the age of just 13, two-time U17 world champion Khalil (EGY) converted her potential to claim the U19 Women's Individual crown but that was only a quarter of the medal yield as she also won

gold in the Women's Relay, Women's Team and Mixed Relay categories for a perfect clean sweep.

The Egyptians also took home the Men's Relay and Men's Team titles for an incredible six golds – and they also managed to fit in an individual silver and bronze. The gold rush was only broken in the Men's Individual event where **Taegyung Lim** of **Korea** stormed to the title with an overall world record.

Besides Egypt and Korea, there were Team medals for European rivals **Italy**, **Hungary** and **France**, while **Czechia**, **Germany**, **Great Britain** and **Kazakhstan** also enjoyed a podium success in the Relays.

In the spa town of Druskininkai, the hosting Lithuanian Modern Pentathlon Federation demonstrated its commitment to environmental sustainability with a tree-planting ceremony at the venue that will be followed by the planting of 1,500 trees next week in an area named 'Modern Pentathlon Forest'.

Local organisers estimated a saving of 19 tons of CO2 from this event, with electric cars and reusable bottles among the initiatives used to reduce the carbon footprint onsite.



Women's Individual Final podium

Photo credit: Aiste Ridikaite



Men's Individual Final podium

Photo credit: Aiste Ridikaite

Medallists' reaction

Women's Individual gold medallist **Farida Khalil** (EGY) said: "I trained a lot to get myself into this position. I worked hard all year, to get the bronze medal at the Junior, then to get the gold medal at U17 and after that this was the last one, so to get this gold medal is to reach the targets.

"God gave me these gifts and I will do my best to get into this position to win prizes in higher categories. I am looking forward to the Seniors next year. I am proud of what I did and now look forward to a gold medal in Seniors and a gold medal at the LA28 Olympics."

Silver medallist **Alia Enayet** (EGY) added: "This is so special to me. I wasn't expecting a medal in the U19 because this was my last year at U17 and I took 6th place overall there.

"I am so proud of myself and all my hard work all season. All of my team too have worked hard. This was most one of the most difficult Laser Runs that I have run. I didn't have time to warm up and my legs were hurting but I am grateful that I got this result."

Men's Individual silver medallist **Denis Agavriiloaie** (ITA) said: "It was a very difficult race, especially after my Fencing where I got 27th place. It was not very good. Then with the Obstacle

and the Swimming I got 6th place and from there it was just all in, all I could do.

“It was very hard to maintain the pace of the run and to shoot well. I got 2nd place. It was very hard to maintain patience especially before the range, you have to concentrate a lot and stay focused. I am very grateful that my parents came here from Italy, this was incredible.”

Bronze medallist **Mohamed Hassan** (EGY) added: “I am good. That race was so hard. I gave it all that I had. The shooting wasn’t good but I gave it all in the running.

“I started in 1st but my first shooting series wasn’t good. Today wasn’t my day in shooting and so I had to give a whole lot in running.”



Photo credit: Aiste Ridikaite



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Women’s Relay

Jana Attia (EGY), 17, teamed up with **Khalil** (EGY) to claim the first gold medal of the competition having come from behind in Laser Run to consign **Cansu Kurt** and **Nadja Farmand** of **Germany** to silver, with bronze going to **Hungary** duo **Dora Krall** and **Reka Nyerges**.

Men’s Relay

In another hotly-contested category – more than 30 teams competed on the first day in Druskininkai (LTU) – **Hassan** (EGY) and **Osama Zaki** (EGY) held off **Matej Kornel** (CZE) and **Tobias Raska** (CZE) to triumph in the Men’s Relay with **Danil Bogdanov** (KAZ) and **Lev Chuvashov** (KAZ) taking the third place on the podium.

Women’s Final

The coronation of **Khalil** (EGY) as U19 as well as U17 world champion proved to be a procession, but behind her the fight for medals was fierce with compatriot **Enayet** (EGY) adding a silver having held off a strong finish by **Coline Flavin** (FRA) with team-mates **Linda Haraszin** (HUN) and European champion **Zora Zeman** (HUN) not far behind.

Khalil (EGY) had started as she meant to continue by topping the leaderboard in the Fencing Ranking Round, scoring 25 victories from her 35 bouts with **Flavin** (FRA), **Enayet** (EGY) and **Anastasija Kancyte** of **Lithuania** in close pursuit. **Khalil** (EGY) then won the final bout in the

Bonus Round to stretch her lead.

As is becoming a trend, German athletes shone brightest in Obstacle. Kurt (GER) was fastest over the course in 27.88sec, followed by compatriot **Charlotte Keister** (GER). Khalil (EGY) finished 9th-fastest to maintain the overall lead.

Wakana Uchiyama of **Japan** had set a new U19 world record in Swimming during qualification and was just 0.08 slower in the Final with a time of 2min 09.09sec. **Martina Rutkauska** (LTU) stoked the home fans with a 2:13 but the consistency of Khalil (EGY) saw her finish 4th-fastest and take a 32sec lead into Laser Run.

With progressive shooting times of 16-12-9.3-7.3, Khalil (EGY) warmed to the task of protecting her advantage and she finally sealed gold by a margin of 22sec.

Behind her, the fight for silver and bronze took its time to develop but turned into a gripping battle on the final lap as Enayet (EGY) managed to hold off Flavin (FRA) and Haraszin (HUN), who jumped from 10th to 4th. Fastest across the course was **Agathe Chastagner** (FRA), who scorched to a 11:31.72 to finish 7th.

Men's Final

Could all-conquering Egypt execute a clean sweep of the gold medals? Hassan (EGY) suggested that such a feat might be within reach as he led in Laser Run, only to be reeled in by the sharp shooting of Lim (KOR), who proved to be the only athlete who could stand in the way of the dominant team. Agavrioloaie (ITA) shook off a slow start to storm to silver ahead of an exhausted Hassan (EGY).

Jack Murray (GBR) joined Hassan (EGY) and **Osama Zaki** (EGY) at the apex of a very competitive Fencing Ranking Round, scoring 23V/12D before taking four bonus points. **Jhon De Lima Xavier** of **Brazil** was the star of the Bonus Round with a superb run of eight victories.

In Obstacle, German prowess was again evident as **Platon Iefremenko** (GER) led the way with a new U19 world record of 22.15. Agavrioloaie (ITA) was another to take advantage, 3rd-fastest in 23.98 with Hassan (EGY) in close pursuit on 24.06.

Making up for what looked to be a debilitating performance in Fencing, when he was 27th overall, Agavrioloaie (ITA) powered through the pool in the day's fastest time of 2:01.05 to bring himself back into contention. The Korean contingent crept further up too with Lim (KOR) 13th-fastest in 2:06.38, split second behind teammate **Minjin Heo** (KOR).

Hassan (EGY) started 9sec clear of Murray (GBR) but with 30sec separating the top 13 starters, Laser Run was destined to be tight. Lim (KOR) and Heo (KOR) made their move at the second shoot, only for Hassan (EGY) to retain his lead on the third 600m run. A 6.86sec shoot at the third visit to the range proved decisive for Lim (KOR) and he finally prevailed by 6sec from Agavrioloaie (ITA).

Hassan (EGY) held off compatriot **Sief Soliman** (EGY) and a quite stunning performance from **Oleg Rybak** of **Ukraine**, who set a new U19 world record in a breathtaking time of 9:48.40 to jump 29 places to 5th, to seal a hard-earned bronze.

Mixed Relay

The blindingly bright future of Egypt's next generation of pentathletes was again all too clear as Khalil (EGY) and Hassan (EGY) combined to deliver yet a sixth gold medal for their team on the final day.

The second step on the podium was taken by Flavin (FRA) and **Karl Furderer** (FRA), who fought hard to reel in the unstoppable champions. Behind them, **Chloe Johnson** (GBR) and **Sebastian Forrest** (GBR) earned their team a first medal of the week.



Photo credit: Aiste Ridikaite



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World record progression

This was the second year U19 athletes have taken part in a full Pentathlon, thanks to the introduction of Obstacle alongside Fencing, Swimming and Laser Run. The following eight world records were broken during the competition in Druskininkai (LTU):

Women's Overall

- 1,395 points – Farida Khalil (EGY), Qualification
- 1,427 points – Farida Khalil (EGY), Final

Women's Obstacle

- 27.62sec – Alexandra Fernandes (CZE), Qualification

Women's Swimming

- 2min 09.01sec – Wakana Uchiyama (JPN), Qualification

Men's Overall

- 1,521 points – Taegyung Lim (KOR), Final

Men's Obstacle

- 23.23sec – Lukas Lagunavicius (LTU), Qualification
- 22.15sec – Platon Iefremenko (GER), Final

Men's Laser Run

- 9min 48.40sec – Oleg Rybak (UKR), Final

UIPM reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "This UIPM Pentathlon U19 World Championships hosted by the Lithuanian Modern Pentathlon Federation under the leadership of President Aistis Baronas and Secretary General Justinas Kinderis (former world-class athletes over many years) were a great success.

"This competition underlined that our athletes love the new format of Modern Pentathlon as a multisport with the new Obstacle discipline. Great Lithuanian hospitality and a championship defined by harmony and peace.

"Thanks to the National Federation to follow the philosophy of UIPM to plant a tree, together with athletes and officials, in memory of our founder Pierre de Coubertin. In this action they followed UIPM's 'water and green environment' project."

"I thank everyone involved in a World Championships in Druskininkai that gives a clear message about strong future development of Modern Pentathlon on the way to LA28."

UIPM Executive Board Member for Media, Andrejus Zadneprovskis OLY, added: "I am delighted with the success of the UIPM Pentathlon U19 World Championships in beautiful Druskininkai, where we witnessed many memorable performances.

"Congratulations to the prolific Egypt team, as well as the athletes from Korea and Kazakhstan and several European countries that showed how well they have adapted to the new format of Fencing, Obstacle, Swimming and Laser Run in two seasons.

"The competition was held in a friendly spirit as we look ahead to a sustainable future for Modern Pentathlon – a point underlined by the hosting National Federation in its commitment to environmental sustainability. We congratulate all athletes, coaches, judges and volunteers who combined to make this a very special week in Lithuania."

Follow the action

The UIPM 2024 Pentathlon U19 World Championships has now concluded and the next competition on the calendar is the UIPM 2024 Biathle-Triathle World Championships in Port Said (EGY) from October 10-13.

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