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UIPM MAKES FURTHER STRIDES TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY ACROSS COACHING AND JUDGING



Although the sport itself has been entirely gender neutral since female athletes were admitted to the Olympic Modern Pentathlon at Sydney 2000, progression towards equality has been harder to achieve in the fields of coaching and judging.

The UIPM Women's Commission was created in 2022 with the aim of addressing such inequalities, and recent developments appear to provide encouraging signs that the male dominance in these areas may be receding.

Two coaches graduated recently from the Women in Sport High-Performance (WISH) Pathway Programme, developed by IOC Olympic Solidarity and the University of Hertfordshire in Great Britain.



Maria Elena Panetti (ITA) and Rosario Gajardo (CAN) participated in the second cohort of the programme, which started in August 2022 and ended with their graduation in May 2024. The programme consisted of combination of a residential week in the UK in October 2022 and online sessions until the end of the programme.

Three months after the completion of her studies, Maria Elena Panetti had another reason to celebrate when her athlete Giorgio Malan (ITA) won bronze at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

UIPM assisted the coaches in their successful completion of the Coaches Certification Programme (CCP) Level 2 course in Spain in November/December 2023.

Additionally, UIPM Coaches Committee Chair and CCP Educator Christian Roudaut (FRA) and Level 4 coach Pedro Pérez (ESP) fulfilled their roles as sport-specific mentors, running four mentoring sessions for the coaches and providing sport-specific advice and networking.



Rosario Gajardo (CAN) said: “The WISH Pathway Programme was a transformative experience that significantly broadened my perspective on leadership in sports. Engaging with diverse coaches from around the world was incredibly empowering.

“The mentorship sessions provided invaluable guidance and personalized support, enhancing both my professional and personal growth. I am grateful for the opportunity and highly recommend this programme to aspiring leaders in sports.”

The WISH Programme has been developed collaboratively between the IOC, the Associations of Summer and Winter Olympic International Federations (ASOIF and AIOWF respectively) and several International Federations already engaged in projects to increase opportunities and pathways for female high-performance coaches.

The programme runs over 21 months and allows women who are involved, or have the potential to be involved, in elite coaching, to access leadership training and mentoring.



The University of Hertfordshire published an Impact Report & Future Delivery Framework that contains feedback from the two pentathlon coaches, along with further information about the programme.

On the other side of the world, under the auspices of Cassandra Choh (UIPM Women’s Commission Chair), female officials and time-keepers made up 60% of the judges at two UIPM Sports events in Singapore.

One was an Obstacle Laser Run competition (part of Singapore Urban Sports & Fitness Festivals

2024) on August 24, and the other was a UIPM Global Laser Run City Tour 2024 at the Arena Park, National Stadium, Singapore on 14 July.



On August 3, Singapore's National Federation held a Play Inclusive event alongside various other sports, with a special focus on persons with disabilities. The assistant team and volunteers for Ms Choh during this competition were all female, except for one male.

Ms Choh, also Vice President of the Asian Modern Pentathlon Confederation and President of the Singapore Modern Pentathlon Association, said: "The participation of women in events as technical officials is empowering, helping to break down barriers, promote equality, and inspire more women to take on leadership roles."



UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann added: “In the year that the Olympic Games became fully gender-neutral for the first time, at Paris 2024, it was very pleasing to hear examples of the strong progression of women as coaches and technical officials in the UIPM Sports movement, where athletes have enjoyed full parity since 2000, Olympic Games Sydney.”

“I commend Ms Panetti and Ms Gajardo on their successful completion of the WISH Pathway Programme, and for their ongoing success as Modern Pentathlon coaches, and I congratulate all the women who contributed to the success of the two competitions in Singapore as officials and time-keepers.”