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TAKE FIVE: UIPM 2026 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP CAIRO



The waiting is finally over as the 2026 UIPM season kicks off with five fascinating days of action on deck at UIPM Pentathlon World Cup Cairo. Here's a look at some of the most compelling storylines to watch...

1) Champion Gulyas (HUN) excited to get back in the routine

Last season opened with Paris 2024 Olympic champion **Michelle Gulyas** of **Hungary** showing that the transition to Pentathlon's new Obstacle era might not prove much of a challenge at all.

She narrowly missed out on a medal, finishing 4th, before then claiming gold on home soil in Budapest (HUN). But that would prove to be the last we saw of the Hungarian wonder as injury issues ruled her out of the remainder of a season that would be dominated and defined by Egyptian wunderkind Farida Khalil.

An off-season of recovery and reset was highlighted by warm-weather training camps in Los Angeles, the city where Gulyas hopes to defend her Olympic crown in two years, and Spain.



The re-emergence of the 25-year-old last month at the Hungarian Indoor Open Championships should have struck fear into rivals old and new. Gulyas looked superb. Now she's back in the capital of Egypt looking to ignite a 2026 campaign that promises to be endlessly fascinating.

"Last year, due to an arm injury, I missed most competitions, resulting in not being able to compete for almost a year. I was worried about the lack of routine in the technical disciplines," Gulyas told UIPM News this week.

"But having a good recent competition makes me wonder where I am currently compared to the best competitors. This is why I am looking forward to the World Cup in Cairo. The goal is to continue improving in all disciplines and to optimise overall performance in light of recent changes to the rules."

Gulyas will not go toe to toe with world champion Khalil (EGY), who is in Rio de Janeiro (BRA) competing in the 2026 Junior & Cadet Fencing World Championships. Does this give Gulyas (HUN) a better chance to reassert her authority atop the sport? She probably would have been aiming to do just that anyway.

2) A season of returning stars begins

The re-appearance of Hungary's leading lady is not an exception but instead a signal of what's to come. **Mariya Gnedtchik** (AIN) is another huge talent returning from a serious arm injury this week. Across the World Cups and World Championships to come, viewers will be looking with anticipation to see if the likes of Elodie Clouvel of France, Elena Micheli of Italy and Kerenza Bryson of Great Britain return to elite Pentathlon.



On the men's side, Gulyas's fellow Olympic champion Ahmed Elgendy (EGY) is continuing his own journey back to fitness and form, but Cairo will see the famous family name back on the start list as younger brother **Mohamed Elgendy** makes his return. A former world silver medalist in his own right, the 23-year-old is coming back after a lengthy injury break.

Former World No.1 **Csaba Bohm** (HUN) knows what it takes to claim medals in Cairo and will be a very welcome sight for viewers tuning into the live coverage as he gets back to World Cup duty for the first time since 2024. Traditionally a strong season-starter, Bohm (HUN) has happy memories of winning back-to-back silvers here in 2022 and 2023.

3) Top dog Mohamed (EGY) followed by a strong chasing pack

While the extended absence of Olympic hero Elgendy (EGY) has left the men's competition in something of an extended flux, 2025 saw a host of impressive performers stake their claims. In Cairo, almost all of them are back to prove their point – nine of the top 10 in the current UIPM world rankings taking part.

Of course, it is **Moutaz Mohamed** (EGY) who will carry both the weight of the host nation and the favouritism tag. He was simply exceptional last season, conquering almost every competition he entered with his trademark lethal Laser Run kick.



Back on home soil, he will head up a daunting Egyptian challenge with **Mohanad Shaban** and **Mohamed El Ashqar** both well capable of handling pressure and home fans' expectations.

A richly talented French delegation – **Mathis Rochat**, **Jean-Baptiste Mourcia** and **Ugo Fleurot** heading an eight-strong group – will come with an expectation of medals. As will last year's World Cup Final and World Championship medallist, **Matej Lukes** of **Czechia**.

While Korea's leading lights are absent for the season-opener there are Asian contenders. **China** 21-year-old **Liuchang Li** started 2026 right where he left off in 2025. Having claimed double gold at November's Asian Senior Championships, he joined Gulyas (HUN) on the top of the podium at the Hungarian Indoor Open Championships and is a man on the rise.

4) Neutral trio look to repeat their capital gains

A star of the Independent Neutral Athlete galaxy, Gnedtchik (AIN) was a gold and silver medallist during the 2024 Pentathlon World Cup, impressing with her shock of red hair and rapid run. A horrible arm break suffered in Budapest (HUN) brought the season to a shuddering halt.

A richly talent AIN crew lit up the Egyptian capital this time last year, with **Viyaleta Hureyeva** and **Anastasiya Malashenoka** finishing 2nd and 3rd respectively. Both are back for more and it would be wise to expect them to contend.

Nine of the top 15 in the women's world rankings will be in situ, the likes of **Laura Heredia** of **Spain**, **Anna Jurt** of **Switzerland** and **Ilike Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** (Pentathlon Personality) all proven performers, the latter recently crowned Military Sports Athlete of the Year by CISM.

Blanka Guzi (HUN) and rising star **Malgorzata Karbownik** of **Poland** will look to build on 2025 campaigns which pushed them into third and fifth respectively in the global leaderboard.



5) Langrehr's fresh start

The most intriguing entry among the 195 athletes making their way to the city on the Nile? Not a name specifically but a new designation. Rebecca Langrehr is back in elite Pentathlon but no longer with the letters GER after her name.

German-born Langrehr has long established herself as a classy competitor with the calibre to contend, a formidable fencer who claimed World Cup silver in Ankara (TUR) three years ago. At the Paris 2024 Olympic Games her challenge came to an unfortunate early end when an accident in the warm-up area ruled her out of Riding.



Her grit was all too evident as she completed the rest of the disciplines, the image of her closest competitors and friends waiting to console her at the finish line of the Laser Run in Versailles defining the spirit of the sport.

Now she has switched nationalities, which brings a significant Olympic return into view. While she will compete under the UIPM flag in 2026, Langrehr is currently training in the United States and aiming to gain citizenship with a view to potentially representing the host nation at LA28. The start of a Hollywood comeback? Let's see.

- Watch the Semi-finals and Finals of UIPM 2026 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo live on UIPM YouTube from April 10-12.

By Joe Callaghan