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PENTATHLON GB TO HOST 2015 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AT UNIVERSITY OF BATH



Europe's top modern pentathletes will begin the battle for Olympic selection in the UK when the University of Bath hosts the 2015 European Modern Pentathlon Championships – the first senior international modern pentathlon competition held in the UK since the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The event, one of more than 26 World and European Championships targeted to be hosted in the UK as part of UK Sport's £27 million Gold Event Series, will be held in Bath, home to Pentathlon GB's National Training Centre, from 17 to 23 August.

More than 100 top pentathletes from around Europe will compete at the championships, which will be their first opportunity to try to achieve the qualifying standard for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

Samantha Murray, London 2012 Olympic silver medallist and University of Bath graduate, said she was excited by the prospect of competing in an Olympic qualifier at her training base. "It will be a fantastic opportunity for our sport to harness the interest generated by the Olympics and by the

performance of the British men and women at the Games.

"It will be a fabulous occasion for British athletes to compete on home soil in front of friends, families and supporters. That's always an advantage," she added. "The Sports Training Village at the University of Bath is a world-class facility and I'm sure it will deliver an outstanding modern pentathlon competition for Europe's best pentathletes."

Simon Morton, Director of Major Events & International Relations at UK Sport, said: "The Senior European Modern Pentathlon Championships will be the first of UK Sport's Gold Event Series Championships to be held in Bath and is a great example of UK Sport's commitment to staging world class sport throughout the UK to help build a strong legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

"I am delighted that through the National Lottery funded Gold Event Series we continue to attract prestigious events to the UK. The combination of outstanding venues, technical know-how, passionate fans and thousands of experienced volunteers mean the UK is recognised as one of the best places in the world to stage international sport."

The 2015 European Championships will be a key competition for pentathletes aiming to compete at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, and with only two athletes per gender per nation able to compete at the Olympics and further qualification events in 2016, the competition is sure to be fierce. Jon Austin, Pentathlon GB CEO, said: "We're delighted to bring the European Championships back to the UK in 2015. It's good news for the sport and good news for Britain's modern pentathletes.

"Because of the way Olympic qualification works, the European Championships the year before an Olympic Games traditionally provide the earliest and best opportunity for Britain's pentathletes to try to achieve the Olympic qualifying standard. Our athletes will have the opportunity to do that with British supporters cheering them on, and that's got to be good news.

"We look forward to working closely with UK Sport and the University of Bath to help make the event a big success," he added. "It's also great news for our volunteers. Our events wouldn't come together without them so it's great that they will have the opportunity to support such a high profile and exciting competition."

Stephen Baddeley, Director of Sport at the University of Bath said: "The University of Bath is proud to be chosen to host the 2015 Modern Pentathlon European Championships. We have a terrific track record of hosting major sporting events, training camps and teams. The world-leading sports facilities at the Sports Training Village, along with both accommodation and catering on campus, is a winning combination. All this in the city of Bath, a World Heritage Site that combines some of the nation's finest heritage with a vibrant city centre."

Tatiana Ardabyeva, Secretary General of the European Confederation of Modern Pentathlon (ECMP) said: "The 2015 European Championships will be the first qualification for the Olympic Games in Rio and we're sure athletes, coaches and officials are looking forward to having it in Great Britain. The 2011 championships were in Medway and we still remember it as one of the best European events. We know there is a very professional group of organisers in the UK and we're looking forward to working with them again."

Modern pentathlon is one of the most demanding Olympic sports and sees athletes tackle fencing, swimming, riding and a run/shoot all in the space of one day.