

02 SEP 2014

WARSAW 2014 - CHINA TAKES THE GOLD IN THE WOMEN'S TEAM-RELAY



The 2014 Modern Pentathlon World Championships in Warsaw burst in to life today with China taking Gold in the Women's Relay.

Qian Chen and Wanxia Liang (CHINA) topped the podium after an exciting and exhilarating first day of competition in front of an enthralled crowd at the Józef Piłsudski University of Physical Education in Warsaw.

Gold medal winner, Qian Chen, said: "Today with my teammate we tried our best and we're really really happy with our performance and the result. In a few days we will compete in the Individual competitions so we are looking forward to that and will also be trying our best to pick up another medal."

Chen and Liang (CHN) may have taken the Gold medal in the Women's Relay after a dominant display in the Combined Event, but they faced fierce competition across the other three disciplines.

Silver medallists Katsiaryna Arol and Anastasiya Prokopenko (BELARUS) were the early leaders in first place after a very close fencing competition which saw Chen and Liang (CHN) finish in joint

second with eventual Bronze medallists Lavinia Bonessio and Camilla Lontano (ITALY).

The atmosphere inside the swimming venue was electric with Samantha Murray and Alice Fitton (GREAT BRITAIN) finishing fastest and taking first place in the pool.

However, despite only being fourth fastest, Chen and Liang (CHN) moved into the overall lead after the swimming event with previous leaders Arol and Prokopenko (BLR) only managing to finish way down the placings in tenth.

Once they had the lead, the Chinese pairing of Chen and Liang (CHN) never relinquished it taking first spot in the Riding event giving them a 10 second lead going into the final Combined Event, which they controlled from start to finish.

The spotlight then turned to the Belarusian and Italian pairings as they battled it out for silver and bronze.

Their fate, however, was decided in the first leg of the relay when Arol (BLR) ran away from Lontano (ITA) in the shooting and after the changeover Bonessio (ITA) couldn't catch Prokopenko (BLR).

Indeed, Italian Bonessio (ITA) had to dig deep with a sprint finish in the last few metres to avoid being overtaken by Beijing 2008 Olympic Champion Lena Schoneborn (GERMANY) who finished fourth overall with her teammate Annika Schleu (GER) recording the fastest time for the Combined Event.

The home pairing of Aleksandra Skarzynska and Oktawia Nowacka (POLAND) finished the competition in seventh place.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann was delighted with the first day of competition and is excited at what lies ahead as the World Championships unfold and Modern Pentathlon is presented to a Polish and truly global audience.

He said: "I think we have had a great first day of competition and also the weather was with us, which helps greatly. I can only say it was a wonderful start after yesterday's brilliant Opening Ceremony.

"Today the athletes performed to the highest level and I am delighted to see the winners revelling in their achievements.

"It has been a great start to these World Championships and I wish all of our athletes the best of luck going into their individual competitions and the Mixed Relay. It is an on-going week of big competition here, but again congratulations to all of today's winners in the Women's Relay."

Warsaw is the host city of the 54th Senior World Championship in Modern Pentathlon.

Accompany all the action of the Men's Team-Relay Competition today, 2nd September, on this website and with on the hour updates through Facebook at www.facebook.com/modpen.