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UIPM 2015 SENIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - CZECH REPUBLIC WINS THE MIXED RELAY



BERLIN, GERMANY, July 5, 2015 -The Czech Republic picked up the final medal of the 55th UIPM Senior World Championships today here in Berlin.

Natalie Dianova and Jan Kuf (CZE) were crowned Mixed Team Relay World Champions after another exciting day of live Modern Pentathlon action.

They overcame a four second handicap heading into the Combined Event to pip Anna Burjak and Maxim Kustov (RUS) and leave the Russians - who had led the Mixed Team Relay for most of the day - with Silver.

The win was all the more special for Jan Kuf as he had overcome a career threatening injury - he broke his right forefinger fencing three months ago and had to undergo major surgery - to win this

title.



He said: "I am really happy as I have never won anything before, so this is just amazing. It is the biggest moment of my career and I hope I can build on this. I think Natalie and I worked really hard as a team today and that is why it worked out so well for us."

His teammate Natalie Dianova added: "For me this is my second world title, but this one is more special as the competition is so much tougher now. It has been an amazing competition for both of us, Jan suffered injury recently and I had two years out and I am not long back competing so this is really special."

After losing out in the Combined Event to the Czech's, Russia's Maxim Kustov said: "We have to say thank you for our Silver medals, but after leading the event for the day we expected to win so we are a bit disappointed. It was very difficult and we felt we did not have enough energy to win, but we worked as hard as we could and we finished with a medal."

Third were the American pairing of Margaux Isaksen and Nathan Schrimsher (USA) who said: "It was a great day and worked way up the ranks as the competition progressed. We had a good ride and a strong run and shoot so we're thrilled. It's our first ever World Championships medals and we have trained together for a very long time so they are very special to us."

"The Mixed Relay is such a great event and we'd love to see it in the Olympic programme."

Of the 20 competing teams, Russia's Anna Burjak and Maxim Kustov (RUS) got off to an impressive start in the pool winning the Swimming in a time of 1.54:70.



They were followed home three seconds later by Irish

duo Nadine Coyle and Arthur Lanigan-O'Keefe (IRL) in 1.57:76 with American's Margaux Isaksen and Nathan Schrimsher (USA) in 1.58:39 just a fraction ahead of the Czech's, Korean's and French.

On to the Fencing and home advantage was the key yet again as Christian Zillekens and Janine Kohlmann (GER) had a strong event with 24 wins and 14 defeats to take first place.

The Chinese Jianli Guo and Qian Chen (CHN) were joint second along with Poland, Russia and Korea all posting 23 wins apiece.

After the first two events it was the Russians Burjak and Kustov (RUS) who still sat top of the overall leaderboard with Korea's Woojin Hwang and Soo jin Yang (KOR) second followed by Zillekens and Kohlmann (GER) in third.

Despite placing sixth in the Riding, Russia were still looking strong going into the Combined Event giving Burjak and Kustov (RUS) a four second lead over Czech pairing Natalie Dianova and Jan Kuf (CZE) who had moved to second overall after taking first in the Riding Arena.

Just five seconds behind were Zillekens and Kohlmann (GER) who with the distinct advantage of the home crowd behind them still had everything to play for.

Americans Isaksen and Schrimsher (USA) were 21 seconds behind leaders Russia, by virtue of a second place finish in the Riding, followed closely by Poland and China respectively.

In a dramatic Combined Event, there was plenty of excitement as the teams made their way between the Shooting Range and the Running Loops, but in the end it was the Czech's Kuf and Dianova who dug deep to make up the time deficit and crossed the line first consigning Russia to

second.



There was a three way battle for bronze between China, USA and Ireland and it took some fantastic skill from Nathan Schrimsher (USA) at the final Shooting Range to secure third for the Americans.

Commenting on another thrilling day of Modern Pentathlon action, UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "This Mixed Relay has given us great drama again, especially after the Riding in to the Combined Event. The lead kept changing and changing and it was fantastic to see the Czech's winning overall with Russia and the USA second and third.

"Today shows how exciting Mixed Relay is as an event and why it must be included in the 2020 Olympic Games.

"Thank you again to the athletes, some of whom have competed in four big finals so they have shown real mental and physical strength to do this. We can see that drama, excitement, tolerance and sporting friendship have been a big part of these World Championships and for that we thank all involved."

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