COVID-19: HOW UIPM COMMUNITY IS RESPONDING

Pan American champion Mariana Arceo (MEX) has raised funds to support the fight against COVID-19 Coronavirus after recovering from the virus. See Page 9
New qualification system for Modern Pentathlon at Tokyo 2020

UIPM has published a revised qualification system for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in 2021 after its proposals were ratified by the International Olympic Committee.

The new system sets out a clear pathway for all athletes seeking to qualify for the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Games, which will now take place in 2021 because of the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

The revised document confirms that the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Minsk (BLR) will be the only remaining competition where automatic qualification places can be secured. Up to three quota places per gender will be available in Minsk (BLR) from June 7-13, 2021 – after which the Olympic World Ranking List for Modern Pentathlon will be finalised.

Dates and venues for all other competitions that make up the revised qualification system will be confirmed by UIPM in May 2020. Other main points clarified by the new system (available for download at uipmworld.org/olympic-games) include:

- All existing qualification points, including those earned at the 2020 International Budapest Indoor in Hungary and UIPM 2020 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo in Egypt, will count towards the Olympic World Ranking List (Olympic WRL).
- All places secured at continental championships in 2019 will be protected (already confirmed by IOC President Dr Thomas Bach).
- The results of all competitions in the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup series, including the Final, will count towards the Olympic WRL.
- The Olympic WRL will be finalised on June 14, 2021 – one day after the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Minsk (BLR).
- The new deadline for all Tokyo 2020 sport entries will be July 5, 2021.
- Should the UIPM 2020 Pentathlon World Championships in Cancun (MEX) go ahead, the results will have no bearing on the Tokyo 2020 qualification process.
- UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “I am very pleased that we are able today to provide further clarity to our global pentathlon family about the pathway to the rescheduled Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 taking place in 2021. The UIPM Executive Board discussed the situation at length before agreeing on a proposal that was ratified by the International Olympic Committee. Its proposals were ratified by the IOC President Dr Thomas Bach.”
- Finally I would like to say that my thoughts are with everybody in the world who has been affected by the COVID-19 situation. Our sporting horizons have changed but the main priorities remain the same: stay healthy, stay strong and let us work together to defeat this virus and restore our normal lives as soon as possible.”

Sport Department of the IOC and the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee following excellent and constructive discussions.

“Our new Modern Pentathlon qualification system gives a clear pathway to all athletes who are still aiming to qualify for the Games. It gives them 10 months to prepare for the resumption of the qualification process at the start of the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon World Cup.

“It also ensures that the UIPM 2021 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships in Minsk (BLR) will have even more prestige and importance, as the final opportunity to qualify for the Olympic Games. I visited Minsk earlier this year and I am that this will be a very special competition.

“The Olympic Games will mark the return of the Summer Olympics to Tokyo for the first time since 1964, and the fourth Olympics overall to be held in Japan. We all have the wish to come together as soon as possible for competitions, meetings and social moments. Every day the sun is coming up again to bring energy to our blue planet. Let’s behave like nature – refreshing and growing whatever conditions are given. We never give up on a better future.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann
Shiny Fang
UIPM Secretary General

Message from UIPM President & Secretary General

Dear Modern Pentathlon Family,

Please follow all the advice of the medical experts and take care of you and your family’s health.

Stay in contact with your family, with your friends, with your sport colleagues (athletes, trainers, coaches, doctors etc).

We all have the wish to come together as soon as possible for

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann
Shiny Fang
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The Modern Pentathlon Test Event took place successfully in June 2019 during the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Final in Tokyo (JPN). The Olympic Modern Pentathlon will be contested within a specially constructed Pentathlon Arena inside the 50,000-seat Tokyo Stadium.

The Games will mark the return of the Summer Olympics to Tokyo for the first time since 1964, and the fourth Olympics overall to be held in Japan.
Golden memories: Attila Mizser (HUN)

Modern Pentathlon in Hungary has a wonderful heritage, but it hasn’t always been easy to live up to the stellar success of the Sixties. Attila Mizser recalls how his team handled the burden of expectation in Seoul in 1988.

In the 1960s, Hungary succeeded Sweden as kings of the Olympic Modern Pentathlon. The Magyars owned the podium in Rome (1960), Tokyo (1964) and Mexico City (1968), claiming four of the six gold medals on offer as well as two silvers and a bronze.

Attila Mizser was born in 1961, so this spectacular run of glory passed him by. But when he came into his prime, in the late 1980s, memories of those magical moments had started to fade from the national conscience.

Hungary hadn’t produced an Olympic champion since Andras Balczo in Munich in 1972, and when Mizser and his team-mates made the journey to Seoul in 1988, it was 20 years since the last of their three team gold medals (Helsinki 1952, Rome 1960 and Mexico City 1968). The team crown – the ultimate symbol of Modern Pentathlon prowess – had been worn by Soviet Union, Great Britain and Italy during that time.

Many factors contributed to Hungary losing momentum during this period – not least the Soviet-led boycott of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles – but there must have been a significant degree of pressure on the shoulders of Mizser, Janos Martinek and Laszlo Fabian to make up for lost time in 1988. How well they bore that pressure.

The Olympic team medals, now disbanded, used to be distributed according to the aggregate score of three athletes competing from each nation. Hungary didn’t leave anything to chance over five days that ended with Miszer, Martinek and Fabian all standing prominent and proud in the top seven.

The highest praise was reserved for Martinek, who made sure it was a truly unforgettable event for Hungary by claiming the individual gold, 25 points clear of silver medallist Carlo Massullo (ITA). Fabian finished 7th and Mizser protected the team quotient in 4th.

Not that he has any negative reflections on the result today.

“The way to that medal was pretty long. Actually I started Pentathlon at the age of nine or ten, and I was 27 in Seoul so it was a long way. My father used to be a Pentathlon coach and that’s how I came up with the Modern Pentathlon,” he recalls.

“The Seoul Games were truly fantastic, on the one hand for the gold medal and on the other hand because we had cheering Hungarians all around us.

“The whole Olympic experience, when you have an official Hungarian team of more than 220 athletes and they go and cheer for each other, that created such an incredible atmosphere for us at the running course in Seoul and it was a moment I will never forget.

“It was one of the most important moments of my life, definitely. It was...”
something pretty strong that has stayed with me all of my life.

“I’m proud to be an Olympic champion and I have to say a big thanks to the Hungarian Modern Pentathlon community, to my team-mates Laszlo Fabian and Janos Martinek as it was a team gold medal, and definitely without them it couldn’t have happened.

“I could tell you the story all day long about the Seoul experience, it was amazing.”

Leaving Korea did not mark the end of Attilla’s love story with the Olympics. Four years later he was in even better condition and won a spectacular individual silver medal, albeit without enough support from compatriots to add a team medal.

Hungary has continued to remain highly competitive since then, but only Zsuzsanna Voros (Athens 2004) has taken the ultimate prize of Olympic gold back to Budapest. Today, under the watchful eye of coach Martinek, the country has several female and male athletes with the potential to reprise the great days of the past.

So how does Attilla view the changes that have taken place in the format of Modern Pentathlon since his heyday?

“There were a lot of changes, definitely, and it was practically continuous if you go back to the history and origin and roots of the sport. They were always changing the rules relating to Modern Pentathlon, but I truly think this was necessary,” he affirms.

“Today, all of us Pentathlon lovers have to know that a sport can only exist and live if it’s good for the consumers. Now we live in a consumer society and if it’s not interesting, if it’s not quick, if it’s boring … if it is five days long it cannot be interesting to people.

“The one-day concept and the Laser Run are very strong assets for the future of Pentathlon, I truly believe it.”
Q: How have you been keeping up your physical and mental health during the Coronavirus crisis?
A: Following the regulations in my city, I am able to run every day, and I’ve been able to set up a shooting range in my backyard. Staying active and positive keeps me focused on 2021.

Q: What has been the most challenging part?
A: It is difficult when thinking of all the training that has been lost during this period.

Q: And what positive things have you seen?
A: One positive is seeing how the entire world is standing together. Even if we are physically distant, we are staying connected and are all in this together!

Q: When, and why, did you take up the Modern Pentathlon?

Q: What motivates you in training?
A: Modern Pentathlon has been a huge part of my life for so long now. It is the love of the sport, and the love and support from my family that keeps me motivated.

Q: Describe yourself as an athlete in three words.

Q: Who are your role models in sport, and in life?
A: My role model is anyone who works hard and chases their dreams. I have been blessed to have an amazing family. My wife, my parents, and my siblings. They motivate me and I always look up to them in whatever I do.

Q: What is your ultimate ambition in Modern Pentathlon?
A: To keep improving on my past results. I always strive to be better today than the day before. My ultimate ambition would be winning an Olympic medal in Tokyo.

Mariana Arceo (MEX) shows support for her team-mate on the way to Women’s Relay gold at the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Championships

Mariana Arceo (MEX) uses her foundation to support medics after COVID-19 Coronavirus ordeal

The 2019 Pan American Games gold medallist, Mariana Arceo of Mexico, has launched a campaign to help people affected by COVID-19 – after recovering from the Coronavirus herself.

Mariana, 26, contracted the virus in February and her story attracted a lot of publicity as she was one of the first people in Mexico – and one of the first members of the global UIPM community – to be directly affected by the pandemic.

Now the athlete, who also won gold at the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Championships alongside Mayan Oliver (MEX) in the Women’s Relay, is seeking to create something positive...
against COVID-19. Arceo (MEX) is now using her foundation raising money for sports development, originally conceived as a means of had set up shortly before falling ill. Mariana Arceo Foundation, which she out of the publicity through the Arceo (MEX) sets off from the shooting range during the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Championships.

In this interview with UIPM she explains more about this wonderful initiative. Q: Do you have partners working with you on this project? A: Yes. Right now I am working with a group of entrepreneurs making donations, they are named Dale un respiro a México (“Give a breath to Mexico”). They have provided 50,000 masks to support hospitals in need. I am also working with Tirjo Promotion Team, a group working specifically on the NASCAR Cup Series. They will help the foundation through promotion and donations during all their events. The purpose of this is to bring support to fund projects.

Q: Is it possible to make donations with international currencies? How many donations have you received so far? A: Donations can be made from $1 MXN, and people can donate with international currencies too, from €1 and $1 US. Up to now the foundation has collected a total of $20,000 MXN in donations. In terms of equipment, we received 50,000 face masks which is equivalent to $2.5m (€90,000; $100,000 US). In January the foundation had received a total of 23 hectares of land in San Ignacio Municipality (San Ignacio Cerro Gordo) in the Mexican State of Jalisco, dedicated to sports facilities.

Q: How do you measure the situation in Mexico? Do you feel a sense of panic? Is there great solidity between individuals? A: Mexico suffered an increase in cases and deaths linked to the Coronavirus pandemic. A lot of people started to worry and panic, mostly because people don’t understand the consequences of being into stage 3. But of course many have been very supportive to each other, especially to the ones who struggle with unemployment.

Q: Through your Foundation do you hope to encourage similar actions in other countries? A: Yes, for sure. Nobody expected to endure a virus of this scale, hospitals were not able to be ready in time upon receiving so many cases simultaneously, which brought a lot of them to face a difficult situation in which they could not provide equipment even for their own people’s safety. And in all countries many individuals have been stuck without job opportunities. This kind of projects is meant to support people who are facing these situations.

Q: What will be your next move? Something linked to this project? A: We are already working on the construction of a sports complex, which will be built up step by step. The first step will be to provide a swimming pool, then a running track, followed by a total of $2.5m (€90,000; $100,000 US). In January the foundation had received a total of 23 hectares of land in San Ignacio Municipality (San Ignacio Cerro Gordo) in the Mexican State of Jalisco, dedicated to sports facilities.

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other projects so that the complex can host most sporting disciplines.

Q: How are you preparing for Tokyo 2020 in summer 2021?
A: I will start preparing myself from home. Until Stage 3 ends it will be difficult to train, and health is the most important thing to bear in mind right now. Since I got the COVID-19 and recovered, I understood that many people would find themselves in challenging situations, this experience opened my eyes even more.

The CONADE National Commission for Physical Culture and sports will help me to get the necessary equipment at home so that I can train as best as possible.

Q: What did it mean to you when you won gold at the Pan American Games 2019 in Lima?
A: It was an unforgettable moment, an opportunity to stay connected with and getting closer to the top of the world.

COVID-19: How UIPM's global community is responding

A spokesperson for MPA said: “The April time trial was part of our long-term aim of staying connected and coming out of this together, stronger.

The events were conducted within the athlete’s home environment, adhering to government rules and restrictions relating to self-isolation, and results were submitted, collated and distributed at the conclusion of the weekend.

“We will be conducting regional time trials every month, so athletes have an opportunity to stay connected with their sport and fellow athletes whilst in isolation.”

In Caldas da Rainha (POR), which hosted the UIPM 2018 Under 19 World Championships, the Portuguese Modern Pentathlon Federation showed solidarity with five other organisations to jointly donate eight cardiac monitors to a local hospital.

The donation, worth €40,000, was warmly welcomed by the Mayor, Tinta Ferreira, who said it showed “hope and solidarity... that these six entities would join together to provide this equipment that will help improve the medical response”.

Some members of the UIPM Sports community have been working on the medical front line to combat the virus, including two well-known Masters athletes - Bob Noble (CAN) and Denise Silk (GBR).

Pentathlon Canada tweeted: “We want to thank our very own #brave pentathletes like Masters World Champion Bob Noble, a Flight Paramedic with the Infant Transport Team working in efforts against the COVID-19 virus. WE APPRECIATE YOU”

Pentathlon GB East Region posted on Instagram: “Denise Silk has been a Masters world champion in Modern Pentathlon disciplines since 2014. She had a very successful 2019 and 2020 is a new challenge. Doing her job, front line against Covid-19. Helping to keep people safe! We are very proud of you Denise.”

Pentathlon GB has also led the way with its ‘Power Of Five’ campaign encouraging the UIPM Sports community to continue home training inspired by high-profile athletes.

Kelly Fitzsimmons (CAN): ‘COVID-19 is forcing all of us to be resourceful and resilient’

– This article, written by pentathlete Kelly Fitzsimmons, first appeared as part of CBC Sports’ Player’s Own Voice essay series.

Athletes, coaches and teams around the world are grappling with uncertainty as I write this. From Olympic variables to training in self isolation, changing qualification dates, lost funding, lost jobs, lost travel opportunities. The challenges seem insurmountable for Olympic and Paralympic athletes during this pandemic. But the passion in the sporting community burns on. Why is that? We have all faced adversity. Events that push our boundaries can define who we are. The current situation has me thinking about performance, not necessarily in the sporting arena, but amidst fear of the unknown...

“Hey Mom and Dad. So… I’ve had a horse jumping accident and I’m in the Guelph General hospital. I don’t know what the status is … but I can’t move without pain.”
I was trying to sound as calm as possible, knowing full well how such a call would terrify any parent.

It was June 2012. Two weeks earlier, I left my life in Calgary – family, friends, condo, stable job, and flew across the country to Toronto to try to take my professional and athletic careers to new levels. As a modern pentathlete in Canada, working full-time is pretty much a necessity. Even for national team members, all training and competition costs are the responsibility of the athlete. In a five-discipline sport, those costs add up.

Relocating to Toronto was both exciting and scary, which is the perfect mix for pushing boundaries. But here I was in a hospital bed, unable to move, alone in a strange place, without money, one contact lens in my eye, having lost the other, in the ordeal, and unsure what was going to happen next.

“Just breathe,” I told myself. “One step at a time, and let’s see (with the one good eye) what’s the smallest thing I can do today, to make a difference?”

This become my mantra as I learned to move again.

After multiple X-rays and CT scans, the orthopaedic surgeon was speechless. I’d escaped without a fracture. Both of my hips, he said, “should have been shattered”. I have above average bone density, so my luck was genetic. But the result was still a nearly severed hip flexor and a long road back to sport.

Since I was still an Alberta resident, I returned to Calgary to rehab. I was immediately flooded with concerns from family and friends. “Clearly you aren’t going to do pentathlon anymore!” and, “I guess that’s it for Toronto?” With each well-meaning remark, my heart sank further. But I didn’t want other people’s fear of the unknown to sway my embrace of new challenges. My heart sank further. But I didn’t want other people’s fear of the unknown to sway my embrace of new challenges. From family and friends. “Clearly you aren’t going to do pentathlon anymore!” and, “I guess that’s it for Toronto?”

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The result was still a nearly severed hip flexor and a long road back to sport.

I began working with companies and start-ups on foresight projects. Working on big questions like, “what is the future of X?” and prototyping ideas that could eventually go to market. Oddly, business and athletic choices were often based on the same challenges. What can we do today? How do we build this? How do we fund this? Will this work? Will this fail? What is the risk? What if this happens? What do we do next?

As a working athlete, I split my time between training facilities and offices, delighting in the cultures of both worlds. I began working with Peter Whiteside, who competed in Modern Pentathlon for Great Britain at the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games, has died aged 67. Peter’s career spanned the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and he became British champion in 1985 and won numerous national team titles. Originally in the Royal Air Force, he transferred to the Army and served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers for many years at Arborfield Garrison.

Dominic Mahony OLY, the Vice President of Pentathlon GB who competed against and alongside Peter, wrote: “Peter set the standard for hard work and commitment and was a vital example to those young athletes who had the opportunity to train with him.”
Pentathlon stars and Laser Runners gather online for #LaserHomeRun

Twenty of the world’s leading pentathletes signed up to take part in the world’s first virtual Laser Run. More than 800 people from 52 countries registered for #LaserHomeRun, which began on May 4 with the finals to be broadcast live on UIPM TV on May 7. Entire families signed up to compete and the ages of entrants ranged from six to 83 – thanks to legendary Masters athlete Erik Pock (DEN).

The start list included Olympic and world medallists such as Elodie Clouvel of France, Joseph Choong of Great Britain and Anastasiya Prokopenko of Belarus, as well as Youth Olympic Games champion Ahmed Elgendy of Egypt and a superstar from the past - Moscow 1980 Olympic champion Anatoly Starostin (RUS).

Elite athletes from Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Poland, Switzerland and Uzbekistan also joined hundreds of Laser Run, Biathle and Triathle competitors from around the world for a concept that aims to unite the global UIPM Sports community during the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

There are female and male categories across six age groups – from Under 11 to Masters 60+. Qualification rounds featuring up to 15 competitors were due to take place on May 4-5 with the finals following on May 7 – streamed live on UIPM TV.

UIPM Executive Board Member for Media, two-time Olympic medallist Andrejus Zadneprovskis, said: “The aim of #LaserHomeRun is to keep the global UIPM Sports community united, motivated and active during this difficult time in their lives.

“At a time when all UIPM Sports activity has been suspended, social media is playing an important role in enabling people to meet online, compare their home training activities with each other and have fun. We hope that #LaserHomeRun will be a nice extension of this.”

More information about #LaserHomeRun can be found at www.uipmworld.org/laserhomerun-information-page

Impact across Africa

The second instalment of a new series looking at the growth of UIPM’s most popular development sport since its launch in 2015.

It’s a global phenomenon, but in many ways the continent of Africa has come to symbolise the impact of Laser Run in the five years since its introduction as a standalone UIPM Sport.

The number of developing economies across Africa – where UIPM has 28 active National Federations with several more in the pipeline – means it is inevitably the part of the world where sport development can be hardest to accelerate.

In the case of Modern Pentathlon, the challenge of introducing Swimming, Riding and Fencing into the sporting infrastructure is truly acute in some cases.

Laser Run, with its simple plug-and-play format, has given much-needed momentum to the UIPM Sports movement in Africa, where the Global Laser Run City Tour (GLRCT) has been welcomed with open arms in dozens of cities and urban townships.

Pentathlon was already strongly embedded in Egypt and South Africa, giving UIPM Sports a rich presence at the north and south of the continent. But where in between has the movement been cultivated with the rich fertiliser of Laser Run?

We invited five countries – Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali, Uganda and Ivory Coast – to shine the spotlight on their own experiences of UIPM’s fastest-growing development sport.

Burkina Faso: At the heart of a Brotherhood

It was a demonstration of the status of UIPM Sports in Burkina Faso that the nation hosted the Brotherhood Tournament for neighbouring countries in August 2019. Athletes aged from eight to 18 from Mali, Niger, Togo and the host nation competed in the historic competition, which had its origins in a memorandum of understanding signed by seven...
A Laser Run youth athlete shows great poise as she takes aim on the shooting range in Bamako (MLI)

with good structures and equipment

athletes and educators together

“This centre would help us to bring support. We would like to create a national centre that can be self-sufficient without government help. We would like to create a national centre that can be self-sufficient without government support.

“This centre would help us to bring athletes and educators together with good structures and equipment and the ability to host camps and competitions.”

Burkina Faso’s development has been helped by the mobility of some of its top athletes. Two competitors travelled to Lisbon (POR) for the UIPM 2016 Laser Run World Championships and a female athlete from the Reo club competed in 2017 in Cape Town (RSA) and in 2018 in Dublin (IRL).

Since 2017 Burkina Faso has organized a national championships, while organizing Laser Run exhibitions alongside popular mass-participation events such as marathons.

President Zare added: “GLRCT is at the centre of our development because swimming pools are difficult and expensive to access. Young athletes now want to go to schools that offer Laser Run.

“Thanks to Laser Run, six of our 13 regions have provided athletes for the Nationals, which have drawn more and more participants, crowd and VIPS such as politicians.

“GLRCT has also taught people that laser pistols are not dangerous, so this sport can be organized everywhere.”

Togo: Development without boundaries

One idea of the GLRCT, underlined by the new #LaserHomeRun concept, is that all participants feel part of a global movement, with the possibility of international competitions.

Laser Run enthusiasts in Togo benefited greatly from travelling to Burkina Faso for the Brotherhood Tournament in 2019. Abalo Komlan, President of the Togolese Modern Pentathlon Federation, said: “This experience was a great chance for our youth athletes to travel and discover more about other cultures.

“They realised that if they can progress in the disciplines of Modern Pentathlon they will be able to travel for more events worldwide. They also realised that the notions of group, team, brotherhood and solidarity are very important. Some of them realised that they were confident and strong because they won their races very easily, especially two girls and two boys at Under 15 level.”

In fact, it’s not only international travel that has opened the eyes of Togolese youths. President Komlan added: “During our second GLRCT, we included a visit of the sport facilities as the youth athletes were there for the first time and they visited the Lomé Port around 5km away from the venue so that kids could see boats for the first time. It was an emotional moment.”

The federation aims to create six regional development centres and to make Lomé an epicentre for UIPM Sports in the West Africa region. So why do people in Togo love Laser Run?

President Komlan said: “People love shooting because it requires precision, dexterity, focus and self-control. For kids it’s more like a game, they challenge between themselves to see who will have the best shooting during training or events. Thanks to Laser Run we have the attention of kids, who became very interested so they could evolve towards Biathle and Triathle.

“Our biggest issue is a lack of funding and materials to initiate more kids to Fencing and Swimming. But we are ready to fight by any means the fact that the sport is expensive to develop, and to attract the government towards multi-discipline sports and the benefits for youth development in Togo.”

Mali: Spreading the word

A good communication plan has been pivotal to the growth in popularity of Laser Run in Mali.

Ismaïla Lingany, President of the Malian Modern Pentathlon Federation, said: “We contacted newspapers, TV and radio before, during and after competitions. We have created an account on Facebook, a WhatsApp group and a website for the federation.

“I assure you in two years of activities the Modern Pentathlon is known more than federations that have existed for more than 15 years in Mali. Before and after the competitions, people called us from everywhere to congratulate us. We had many comments on social networks.”

Laser Run has created a buzz in schools in Mali, and laser shooting parties have become a popular extra-curricular activity. The GLRCT has enabled coaches to identify talent, looking particularly for good shooters and endurance athletes who might be suited to Biathle and Triathle. The next step is to formalize this development.

President Lingany said: “Our objective is to develop the GLRCT across the extent of Mali territory. We want to train sports teachers and provide schools with competition equipment.

“In the coming days we will organize a national GLRCT championships that we can use to implement our Modern Pentathlon development programme. It has been a great experience to prepare for competitions in harmony with neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Ghana. This happened first on an organisational level, in the planning of training and activities during the season. And now we know our level of performance compared to others.”

Uganda: Doors are open

Three instalments of the GLRCT have been held in Uganda, in the cities of Kampala and Gulu, and the invitation was extended to other countries in the

A group of athletes demonstrate the camaraderie of Laser Run in Lome (TGO)
East/Central African region.
Simon Peter Komakech, President of the Uganda Modern Pentathlon Federation, said: “Athletes came from Kenya to join in our event, and we also had some students from South Sudan who trained and participated in Uganda. It was a great experience for them and us.

“People in Uganda like the fun in Laser Run, the power it has in bringing different people together and the challenge of the laser beam shooting.”

Like many nations in Africa, a lot of the activities in Uganda are self-funded by the National Federation, with support from UIPM. But there are plans to change that.

President Komakech added: “In the short term we will continue to promote and expand Laser Run in Uganda. This should pave the way for the development of the other disciplines: Swimming, Fencing and Riding. And we will try to create pathways to Biathlon and Triathlon.

“The other disciplines require finance – for example, swimming pools are not commonplace in other areas in Uganda, so one needs money to use hotel pools. The same applies to Fencing and Riding.

“In the long term, we plan to get sponsors and I am also in talks with government to officially recognize our Modern Pentathlon Federation so that we can benefit from their support. All in all, the future looks great for modern pentathlon in Uganda.”

Ivory Coast: Huge growth in participation

The extensive impact of the GLRCT is laid bare in numbers alone. In Ivory Coast, 1500 athletes have participated in each event and bringing friends and family along.

Francois-Xavier Akonde, President of the Ivory Coast Modern Pentathlon Federation, said: “We have taken the opportunity provided by the Global Laser Run City Tour to develop everywhere, and we have seen more and more participants and athletes as a result.

‘Attracting more attention from the public has attracted media coverage as a consequence, and now we want to attract sponsors. We will be able to secure funding from the Government if we can achieve certain goals linked to sport and the mobilisation of youth in our country.”

Now that there is a bedrock of interest in Laser Run, the federation wants to start exploring the other Modern Pentathlon disciplines in 2021 as a step towards full participation.

President Akonde added: “More and more we are willing to do Modern Pentathlon but we want to move steadily, step by step. We are going to a lot of schools and we plan to create regional associations for teaching coaches and judges.”

This enabled 12 Laser Run events to be scheduled for 2020, which are currently on hold because of the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

01-30.04.2020: Darmstadt, GER

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann has issued a personal statement in support of athletes and National Federation members during the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

Dear athletes and National Federations,

We sincerely hope you and all of your families are in good health and that you are finding ways to make the best use of your time.

The whole world is currently in a difficult state and during this time it is necessary to hold together as never before. Sticking together for the weak, for all those who can’t benefit from a good health system like many of us, but also sticking together as a show of strength, to win together and to be able to experience our sport together again the way we love it!

To our athletes, we hope that you can use the free time as well as possible to train and to challenge yourselves. We know it’s not easy, and we know it is hard to keep focusing on something that is far away. But you need to keep going. If you can overcome this challenge – and you will – you can overcome anything. Just keep strong and optimistic!

For all National Federations, we know this is a tough time and sometimes you might feel desperate. The locked training venues are a financial burden; however, life must continue, even when the most significant thing in our lives – our sport – is on hold.

Many of you are worried about where this will lead and if you have the necessary resources to get through this challenging time. But you must not give up, life will always go on! Try making the best of it, for the sport and for everyone out there who is supporting us, but especially for our athletes.

They deserve most of all to be back on the field and doing what we all love so much. Because what is a sporting world without athletes?”

UIPM President and Secretary General Shiny Fang are also in final discussions with the IOC about the qualification system for the Youth Olympic Games 2022 in Dakar (SEN) and preparing a draft of the field of play for the New Tetrathlon format.
Medical and Anti-Doping Corner

World Anti-Doping Agency releases COVID-19 athlete Q&A

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has responded to athlete queries concerning anti-doping in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic by publishing a Question and Answer (Q&A) article that it developed in consultation with its Athlete Committee. This article is reproduced by UIPM with permission from WADA.

Q. Can I still be tested during the COVID-19 pandemic given the many restrictions in place, especially as it relates to social distancing and self-isolation?

A. Yes. Where no mobility or physical contact restrictions have been put in place by local authorities, testing may still occur anytime and anywhere.

Q. If I am tested, what will be done to minimize the chances of infection?

A. If a testing program can continue, ADOs need to put enhanced measures in place, consistent with the recommendations from health care authorities, to protect your health and that of sample collection personnel. More information can be found in WADA’s ADO Guidance of 20 March 2020.

Q. What specific measures will ADOs take to minimize the chances of transmission?

A. Firstly, ADOs have been advised to conduct only the most critical doping controls. When conducting these tests, sample collection personnel must wash their hands regularly, and sanitize their hands or put on new gloves upon arriving at the testing location. Athletes and sample collection personnel must also, as far as possible, maintain the recommended social distance (two meters).

Q. What should I do if I have symptoms that indicate I may have COVID-19?

A. You should prioritize your health and the health of those around you. If you are concerned that you may have contracted the virus, the priority is to self-isolate and follow other precautions (hand washing, etc.) as recommended by international health organizations. You should also contact your local health authorities to ensure that you are following proper procedures in your region. In an antidoping context, you should advise your ADO of your situation with your whereabouts submission or when doping control personnel notify you for testing so that they can adjust their plans accordingly.

Q. Do I still need a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) if I have a medical condition requiring a prohibited substance or method?

A. As long as you remain subject to testing, you remain responsible for ensuring you have a valid TUE. If you have difficulty accessing a physician during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to access the necessary documentation to support your TUE application, you should document all actions and impediments to comply with the relevant requirements, and this will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Q. If athletes are not being tested regularly or less than usual, what is WADA doing to ensure clean competition when the situation returns to normal?

A. WADA is closely monitoring where levels of testing have been reduced or cancelled altogether. When the sporting landscape returns to normal, these ‘gaps’ in testing may be addressed through additional targeted testing.

Q. Do I still need to provide my whereabouts information?

A. Unless your ADO tells you otherwise, you should continue to provide whereabouts information as you remain subject to testing. If you wish to share information about your health, self-isolation, mobility restrictions, etc. which may impact doping controls, please share this information with your whereabouts submission.

Q. Can I refuse to be tested if I am self-isolating, in quarantine, or do not feel that adequate precautions are being taken by sample collection personnel?

A. No. Unless there is a mandatory isolation/lockdown, you are advised to comply with testing while following the preventative measures put in place by your ADO. If you refuse to be tested or if you do not complete the sample collection process after notification, or if you are not able (or willing) to provide a sample due to a lack of protective measures, your refusal will follow the normal results management process which affords you due process and the opportunity to justify your action. Keeping in mind that little testing is taking place, where appropriate, athletes are encouraged to comply with testing. If you rely on the assistance of a representative to assist with the doping control process (especially for minors or athletes with an impairment), and a representative is unavailable due to the impact of COVID-19, this too should be taken into account in the results management process.

Q. With reduction in testing, how can I have confidence in the future that I will be competing in a doping-free environment?

A. Placing public health above the needs of the anti-doping system means that there will be impacts on the fight against doping in sport. However, there is significantly less training being carried out and significantly fewer competitions taking place. It is also important for athletes to remember that doping control samples continue to be stored for future analysis and that with the Athlete Biological Passport, some samples collected post-COVID-19 may reveal indications of doping that occurred during the period. Finally, while testing may be reduced worldwide during this period, you can contribute to anti-doping efforts by ensuring you are up to date on the latest information and education and encourage your peers and teammates to do the same. You can familiarize yourself with WADA’s anti-doping education resources (adel.wada-ama.org).
The PWR is updated live on www.pentathlon.org after each competition. PWR as at 30 April 2020:

The full New Balance World Rankings are available at www.pentathlon.org

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Baron Pierre de Coubertin

“The Modern Pentathlon event would test a man’s moral qualities as much as his physical resources and skills, producing thereby the ideal, complete athlete.”

UIPM HEADQUARTERS
Stade Louis II – Entrée E
13 avenue des Castelans, MC-98000 Monaco
Tel. +377 97 77 85 55 | Fax +377 97 77 85 50
E-mail: uipm@pentathlon.org

WEB
www.pentathlon.org

SOCIAL MEDIA
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