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UIPM 2018 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP KECSKEMÉT: MIXED RELAY GLORY FOR HUNGARY



The third Pentathlon World Cup of the season came to a fairytale conclusion for the host nation as **Sarolta Kovacs** and **Bence Demeter** won Mixed Relay gold for **Hungary**.

Kovacs, the 2016 individual world champion, teamed up with **Demeter** to dominate the final day of action with a commanding performance that brought delight to the home crowd ... and gave the other 16 competing nations no chance.



Ireland served a reminder of their Mixed Relay prowess as **Kate Coleman Lenehan** and **Michael Healy**, neither of whom had ever won a senior medal at a UIPM competition, secured silver.

They were joined on the podium by **Zhong Xiuting** and **Zhang Linbin** of **China**, who held off tough competition from 4th-placed **Belarus** (Tatsiana Khaldoba/Pavel Tsikhanau), 5th-placed **Germany** (Ronja Steinborn/Fabian Liebig) and 6th-placed **Egypt** (Haydy Morsy/Eslam Hamad).

Kovacs (HUN) said: “Our Fencing was great and after such a huge performance we were able to manage our lead during the Laser-Run and take care of the battle in the back.

“The Mixed Relay is really important because we really want to compete in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

“We are looking forward to competing at the European Championships in Szekesfehervar and also at Budapest 2019, because this will be a World Championships in our own country and also the beginning of the qualification for Tokyo 2020.”



It

was also a day of joy for Ireland, who demonstrated their depth of talent in the absence of two-time World Cup Final winners Natalya Coyle and Arthur Lanigan-O'Keeffe.

Healy (IRL) said: "I'm very happy, it's my first senior medal and we've exceeded expectations today to get up there, and this is all good experience.

Coleman Lenehan (IRL) added: "To be honest, we weren't even supposed to do the Mixed Relay – it was a last-minute thing and we changed our flights at the last minute.

"You take it by event, and as each event went well, we realised we had a chance and we knew that anything that happened in the Laser-Run would be a bonus. It's a special moment."

Swimming

Hungary (Kovacs/Demeter) started this Mixed Relay with a powerful statement of intent. With a time of 1:57.52 they took a significant lead ahead of two other nations that broke the 120sec mark: **Korea** (Yang Joosin/Jun Woongtae) in 1:59.70 and **Ireland** (Coleman Lenehan/Healy) in 1:59.91.



Fencing

Once again it was the local duo that dominated, with **Hungary** (Kovacs/Demeter) scoring an exceptional 23V/7D. The nearest contenders were **Korea** (Yang/Jun) with 19V/11D and **Great Britain** (Charlie Follett/Bradley Sutton) with 18V/12D.

Riding

There were no clear rounds in the arena but it was **Ireland** (Coleman Lenehan/Healy) who mastered the conditions best, scoring 295. With 11 points fewer, **Belarus** (Khalidoba/Tsikhanau) and **Great Britain** (Follett/Sutton) were the next-best performers while **Hungary** (Kovacs/Demeter) made sure they would retain their large overall lead by dropping just 23 penalties.

Laser-Run

For the second successive day, **Great Britain** (Follett/Sutton) and **Ireland** (Coleman Lenehan/Healy) went into the decisive Laser-Run in two of the medal positions, albeit with different athletes.

They were both a long way (35sec / 36sec respectively) behind the leaders, **Hungary** (Kovacs/Demeter), who had no difficulty in protecting their advantage with a final score of 1410.

Ireland (Coleman Lenehan/Healy) also managed to make their day's work pay off, taking ownership of 2nd position and holding on to win silver, 15sec behind the champions but a comfortable 11sec ahead of the bronze medallists.



The

battle for the last podium place was where the intrigue developed, and it was **China** (Zhong/Zhang) who ultimately prevailed thanks to the 3rd-fastest Laser-Run of the day (11:52.04), behind **Russia** (Anastasiya Vasileva / Alexander Savkin) in 11:26.00 and **France** (Julie Belhamri / Christopher Patte) in 11:45.54.

The victory by **Hungary** (Kovacs/Demeter) brought to a close another successful championships in the country, where the strong pentathlon community has a lot more high-level UIPM Sports action to look forward to in the next 15 months.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: “Here in Hungary we will have the first-ever FISU University Modern Pentathlon World Championships later this year and also the Senior European Championships.

“A very special highlight will come next year when we have the 2019 UIPM Pentathlon World Championships, which will be a qualification event for the Olympic Games. We will also have the Laser-Run World Championships during the qualification days.

“Every 10 years Hungary organises a World Championships and the whole pentathlon community knows this is a glorious highlight and we are looking forward next year to seeing a great World Championships in Budapest on the way to Tokyo.”

The 2018 UIPM Pentathlon World Cup season resumes later this month with Pentathlon World Cup Sofia (BUL) from May 23-27.