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UIPM 2026 PENTATHLON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: BELARUS AND GREAT BRITAIN OFF TO FLYER WITH RELAY GLORIES



Belarus and **Great Britain** got the great gold rush of Guiyang (CHN) up and running on Monday as the opening day of the UIPM 2026 Pentathlon World Championships witnessed two hugely impressive Relay victories.

With Belarusian athletes competing under their flag at a senior World Championships for the first time since 2022, **Anastasiya Arol** and **Mariya Gnedtchik** (BLR) combined to brilliant effect to top the podium in the Women's Relay.

Respectively ranked seventh and 17th as individuals in the UIPM World Rankings, Arol and Gnedtchik were models of consistency across all disciplines at Huaxi Lake Park as they came out on top, besting 13 other teams from across the world.

Belarus (Arol/Gnedtchik) laid down a marker in Fencing with 16 wins but in a sign of the competition to come had the combination of **Viktoriia Sazonova** and **Yana Soloveva** of **Russia** breathing down their necks. In the Obstacle Racing discipline it was the team of **Amer Zeina** and **Jana Attia** from **Egypt** who blazed a trail, fastest in 53.70sec, followed by **Great Britain (Chloe Johnson & Charlie Follett)**.

A strong swim gave Belarus (Arol/Gnedtchik) a lead going into the Laser Run and they stretched it all the way to a stirring victory, crossing the line 26 seconds ahead of Russia (Sazonova/Soloveva) with Egypt (Zeina/Attia) taking bronze. The top six was rounded out by Great Britain (Johnson/Follett), **Switzerland (Anna Jurt & Vivienne Meyer)** and **Korea (Haeun Jang & Unju Kim)**.

Later in the evening in a place known as China's Forest City, it was perhaps fitting that **Sebastian Forrest** rose highest alongside teammate **Ross Charlton** to give Great Britain the gold in a hard-fought Men's Relay.

With 18 teams from five continents competing and Olympic champions and former world champions among the field, the standard was suitably sky high. One of those big-day performers, two-time UIPM world champion **Valentin Belaud**, helped **France** get off to a strong start as he and **Emilien Maire** put up the top score in Fencing.

Great Britain (Charlton/Forrest) roared back in Obstacle, setting the pace with a rapid 43.43, **Guatemala (Marcos Garcia & Jose Miguel Molina)** the only other team to go sub-45 seconds. In the pool, the duo of **Egor Gromadskii** and **Andrey Bobrov** put Russia firmly into the mix as they led all teams in 50.50sec.

That meant just a single second separated Great Britain (Charlton/Forrest) and Russia (Gromadskii/Bobrov) at the starting line of the Laser Run with France (Maire/Belaud) and **Germany (Marvin Faly Dogue & Moriz Klinkert)** all within 10 seconds of the lead. However Great Britain (Charlton/Forrest) scorched away from their challengers with a 12:18.31 Laser Run time, fastest by over 13 seconds to win with room to spare. A second silver of the day went to Russia (Gromadskii/Bobrov) with Germany (Dogue/Klinkert) claiming bronze. France (Maire/Belaud) settled for fourth with Belarus (**Uladzislau Nestserau & Uladzislau Melkaziorau**) fifth and hosts **China (Bailiang Chen & Shuai Luo)** sixth.

Women's Relay gold medallist Anastasiya Arol (BLR) said: "We feel very good. Fencing for us started brilliantly. We didn't think it was true! Obstacle was also good and put us in the right position. Running, thanks to my partner she made everything. I just had to go after her and everything was great. It was our first relay together. We did everything great."

Her teammate Mariya Gnedtchik (BLR) added: "Today, our team is...wow! Thanks to all of our coaches and to our families."

Men's Relay gold medallist Ross Charlton (GBR) said: "We're both absolutely over the moon. A lot went our way, we put together a good performance to take home the medal for the team. We both worked off of each other's strengths and weaknesses really well. We were able to complement each other during the day."

His teammate Sebastian Forrest (GBR) said: "My shooting was way better than normal and Ross's was amazing and we pulled ahead. It was my first Senior Relay and first time with Ross. My dad has flown out to watch so thanks to everyone who came and watched."

Watch and follow

The UIPM 2026 Pentathlon World Championships take place from August 24-30, with livestream of the Semi-finals and Finals available to watch free on YouTube based on the following schedule (TV start times listed in Central European Summer Time):

Tuesday August 25

- Mixed Relay

Wednesday August 26

- Men's Qualification

Thursday August 27

- Women's Qualification
- Men's Fencing Seeding Round

Friday August 28

- Men's Semi-final A (07:00)
- Men's Semi-final B (10:30)
- Women's Fencing Seeding Round

Saturday August 29

- Women's Semi-final A (07:00)
- Women's Semi-final B (10:30)

Sunday August 30

- Men's Final (07:00)
- Women's Final (10:30)

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