

28 SEP 2018

UIPM 2018 LASER RUN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: COYLE AND LANIGAN-O'KEEFFE (IRL) WELCOME WORLD TO DUBLIN



- First UIPM event in Dublin (IRL) attracts 400+ athletes from 28 nations
- UIPM President Schormann hails growing popularity of Laser Run
- Defending champion Eevi Bengs (FIN) determined to retain title

Two of the world's leading pentathletes joined the UIPM President and the Lord Mayor of Dublin at a special reception to mark the beginning of the UIPM 2018 Laser Run World Championships.

More than 400 athletes of all ages from 28 countries have arrived in Dublin, capital of the Republic of Ireland, ahead of the start of two days of action in the sports grounds of the historic Trinity College.

Ireland's Natalya Coyle and Arthur Lanigan-O'Keeffe, ranked No.6 and No.3 respectively in the

world, will not be competing this weekend but in an ambassadorial capacity they promoted the benefits of hosting UIPM a major competition in Ireland.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann hailed the growth in popularity of Laser Run as the sport continues to surge thanks to the Global Laser Run City Tour and the World Championships and numerous other development events across the world. In 2019, Laser Run will be part of the programme of the 1st Urban Games.



Coyle (IRL) said: "I think it's really important to

host any event in Ireland. It's nice because we've worked really hard across the years to put Ireland on the map as a pentathlon nation.

"When we were younger we didn't have any events like this to compete in here in Ireland, especially when we were starting out. Normally it's a little bit costly to travel abroad, whereas you've got this happening right in the centre of Dublin.

"It's really interesting because Laser Run and things like the Urban Games can open up the sport to a totally different audience, so it can only be a positive thing.

"It used to be more of a minority sport, but the awareness of pentathlon in Ireland is definitely on the increase and hopefully it can keep growing."

Lanigan-O'Keeffe (IRL) added: "Laser Run has been held in over 100 cities around the world this year and that general exposure, not just for Laser Run but the sport of Modern Pentathlon, is huge.

"It helps us put the sport on the map, and the involvement with the Urban Games in 2019 will also be brilliant for the sport.

"I think it's great to have the chance to compete in front of friends and family – I would have killed

for that when I was younger. It's a huge thing to have coming to your home country and an amazing opportunity."

One of the athletes in attendance at the Lord Mayor's reception was Laser Run specialist and defending world champion Eevi Bengs of Finland, who recalled her joy of winning gold in Cape Town, South Africa in 2017.

Bengs (FIN) said: "It was amazing – to become a world champion was something I had dreamed of since I was a small kid. It was a nice feeling.

"Of course I'm here to defend my title, but I think I would be really happy with a medal. I think it will be a really tight race.

"I think Laser Run getting more and more popular and more athletes are coming, so it gets harder. But it doesn't matter who is on the start line – if I shoot well I know I will have a really good chance."

UIPM President Schormann said: "On behalf of our Union I would like to thank Pentathlon Ireland for hosting the 2018 UIPM Laser Run World Championships.

"Our movement is developing strongly in Ireland and there are athletes here who are excellent ambassadors for the sport and always competing well in World Cups and World Championships.

"It's the fourth time we are running this very important event and I was very happy when I saw the number of participants who have come from around the world.

"The sport is becoming more and more popular around the world and this year we had more than 100 cities around the world hosting the Global Laser Run City Tour.

"We have also had the honour of being selected to be part of the 1st Urban Games, which will take place next year with Laser Run on the programme."

Pentathlon Ireland CEO Paddy Boyd said: "We are delighted to be welcoming the world to Ireland and giving Laser Run and the pentathlon movement the exposure it deserves.

"We are looking forward to two days of thrilling competition at Trinity College and I would urge anyone who enjoys sport to come down and witness the spectacle of Laser Run and cheer on our Irish participants."

Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring, added: "It's absolutely fantastic to have an international event of this nature here and it's a great boost to the city.

"As Lord Mayor of Dublin and somebody who is very interested in sport and still participates when I can, I'm delighted to see the Laser Run World Championships coming to Dublin and to have athletes from almost 30 countries here, it's an opportunity for us to show off Dublin and for them to showcase their magnificent talents."

The UIPM 2018 Laser Run World Championships takes place on September 29 and 30. Results and reports will be available at the UIPM website.

Fans can join the conversation on social media with the hashtags #LRWCH18 and #LaserRun.

Have you liked the UIPM Laser-Run Facebook page yet?