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LASER RUN SPOTLIGHT: EIGHT NEW CITIES ACROSS EUROPE SAVOUR GLRCT



The first half of 2021 saw the resumption of the Global Laser Run City Tour in New Zealand and Egypt, with 15 events organised across four continents.

The Olympic Games took prominence during the northern-hemisphere summer but the GLRCT has bounced back with a bang since then, with eight new cities in Latvia, Germany, Ukraine, France and Russia enjoying their first experience of the urban sports phenomenon.



Riga (LAT) opens doors to Baltic neighbours

After successful GLRCTs in 2018 and 2019, Latvia got back on track with a successful event on August 15 that gave young athletes, active pentathletes and Masters the opportunity to test their running-shooting skills.

Aleksandra Malasenoka, a Triathlon winner at the UIPM Biathlon-Triathlon World Championships and European Laser Run bronze medallist, won the Under 19 girls category.

Andra Novicka, a coach and Masters champion who claimed Triathlon gold in the UIPM 2021 Biathlon-Triathlon World Championships, took the gold in the Masters 40+ age group.

Latvian pentathletes were not alone in participating in the competitions – they were joined by athletes from neighbouring Baltic countries Estonia and Lithuania. Estonia's UIPM 2021 Laser Run World Championships silver medalist Johanna Maria Jogisu was among the winners.

A spokesperson for the local organising committee said: "The competitions were organized in a friendly and family atmosphere and aimed to make Modern Pentathlon more popular in Latvia."

Weiden (GER) offers Laser Run bonus day for Biathlon and Triathlon athletes

Organizers of the UIPM 2021 Biathle-Triathle World Championships in Weiden (GER) invited all participating nations to compete on August 30 in a Global Laser Run City Tour to gain valuable points for their Laser Run World Ranking.

Among the countries who came to start line the day after the conclusion of the World Championships were Germany, Austria, Estonia, Latvia and Spain. Coaches, organisers and volunteers were also invited to race the World Championships course during fun runs.

A spokesperson for the local organising committee said: "It was a nice addition to the World Championships and one more medal for athletes to count in their overall success."



Darmstadt (GER) welcomes athletes of all ages

The Hesse Federation of Modern Pentathlon (HVMF) partnered with the City Government of Darmstadt to host another GLRCT in the city that Dr Klaus Schormann (President of UIPM and the HVMF) calls home.

Martin Westermann, Director of the Sports Department of the City of Darmstadt, attended the competition and handed out medals together with President Dr Schormann.

The number of participants was relatively modest due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus circumstances but a spokesperson for the local organising committee said: "We are pleased we had perfect weather and a good rivalry and atmosphere for the 2021 Global Laser Run City Tour in Darmstadt. We are already looking forward to a bigger Laser Run Event next year."

The youngest participant was six-year-old Moritz Gebhardt and the oldest was Leo Grosser (69). The international athlete contingent included Manuel Soriano (ESP), a regular competitor and medalist in Biathlon, Triathlon and Laser Run competitions who won the men's Masters 40+ race.



Donetsk hosts major regional gathering in Sloviansk (UKR)...

On September 10 the host city Sloviansk welcomed 252 athletes from all regions of Ukraine to a GLRCT taking place in a new stadium situated in the heart of the city.

Volodimir Mitsik, head of the Donetsk regional sport department, opened the competition and said: "Modern Pentathlon has a very strong tradition in our region and it is very pleasant to see so many athletes and coaches. I hope this competition will open to you the road to the Olympics!"

Former international pentathlete Dmytro Sidorov, now head coach of the regional Modern Pentathlon Federation of Donetsk, thanked the Ukrainian National Modern Pentathlon Federation and UIPM for their support and development of the Laser Run competition format, which enabled so many young athletes and veterans to come together.

All participants received certificates, T-shirts and souvenirs and the medalists received special prizes from the regional department of the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine.

A spokesperson for the local organising committee said: "Perfect weather, perfect facility, experienced judges and a lot of positive emotions made this Laser Run day unforgettable to all athletes, coaches and visitors."



... and Lviv (UKR) follows suit

Two days after the GLRCT in Sloviansk (UKR), it was the turn of Lviv (UKR) to shine with 263 athletes from six Ukrainian regions competing in the western city. Competitions were held very close to the historical centre at the SKA aquatic sport club.

Andriy Kovalchuk, President of the Lviv Regional Modern Pentathlon Federation, said: “This competition format offers an additional possibility to attract more children to sport and a good opportunity to start a new school year in a sporting way. Now we are trying to open additional Laser Run groups at the schools in order to develop Modern Pentathlon in our region.”

He also congratulated the Modern Pentathlon family on the celebrations that marked the 4th Pierre de Coubertin Pentathlon Day the day before.

A spokesperson for the local organising committee said: “Coaches observed that athletes from all age groups showed good performance and motivation. Many times the fight for the medals continued until the finish line!

“At the closing ceremony Andriy thanked all participants for coming and to the UIPM and UMPF for their great support. An impressive location, sunny weather and a lot of positive emotions left all participants, their coaches, families and friends with a lot of remarkable memories.”



Siberian Running Festival adds context to gathering in Novosibirsk (RUS)

Plans for the city of Novosibirsk (RUS) to host a Global Laser Run City Tour in the framework of the Siberian Running Festival were in doubt – like the entire Festival – due to COVID-19 restrictions and protocol. In addition, the weather forecast was showing 80-100% of rain and strong gusts of wind for the competition day.

Nevertheless, on September 11 the competitions traditionally took place in the city's central square and the terrible weather forecast, to the great delight of organisers, participants and judges, did not come true.

About 300 athletes, amateurs and veterans took part in the Tour with the youngest participants two girls born in 2015, Siebert Dasha and Krokhina Anya.

The competitions were officially held without spectators – nevertheless, the number of residents and guests of Novosibirsk who competed in the Tour and in the entire Running Festival was impressive, with more than 5000 people amassing.



Musketeers rise to the challenge in Corbas (FRA)

The French club “Les Mousquetaires de Corbas” staged on September 25 a Global Laser Run City Tour in the city of Corbas, near Lyon.

The event attracted a large audience, with family and friends coming to discover one of the disciplines practised by the Musketeers of Corbas – Laser Run – which is now accessible to everyone.

The organizers welcomed neighbours from the Bievre Pentathlon LaserRun 38 club and CONCEPT LASER RUN, whose members took part as athletes and assisted with the event organisation.

Two very big hopes of French pentathlon, Kylian Perrier (a two-time Laser Run world champion in 2019) and Melvin Perrier, who was 5th at the UIPM 2019 Under 19 World Championships in Sofia (BUL), joined the event.

A spokesperson for the local organising committee said: “The pentathletes spent the afternoon advising young and old athletes and even shared the Laser Run track with them.

“The event took place on the sports ground of the René Cassin high school, which was made available by the school director with the support of physical education teachers and all staff. It was a great day of sport and friendship, despite the rain and wind that battered the course, the banners and the runners.”

