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## MODERN PENTATHLON AT PARIS 2024: MEN'S SEMI-FINAL A REACTION



The Modern Pentathlon competition at the 2024 Olympic Games moved to the stunning surrounds of the Palace of Versailles on Friday where the Men's Semi-finals took place. Here is a rapid round-up of athlete reaction from the Mixed Zone after Semi-final A:

**Ahmed Elgendy (EGY)**, 1st in Semi-final A: “The Riding was interesting! It became more interesting after the refusal with the audience. They were amazing actually. They were cheering for me after the refusal. The cheering made me push it harder to just pass the finish line in the Riding and I finally made it here.

“Maybe after the Riding I was a little bit, not to say too much stressed, but of course I was feeling a little bit bad about the Riding. But I was just trying to let it go. Just to think about the Fencing. I made it. Actually, [Valentin] Prades made it too fast for me. Then in Swimming I came back up to the 5th position and then in the Laser Run I went in the 1st position.

“As I told you, the crowds were amazing. It's my first time to compete in this atmosphere. We were

all saying that the audience in Egypt are crazy, in the World Cups and World Championships. But this crowd is very different. It went too far actually! They were always cheering for everyone, especially for the French athletes. Going into the shooting range with a French athlete is not so good because they are counting the green shots of the French athletes, so if you are not focusing on your targets you are in trouble.”

**Alexandre Dallenbach (SUI)**, 2nd in Semi-final A: “I feel blessed. I want to thank God, thank Jesus Christ. It’s all thanks to him and I’m so blessed to be here today. It’s 20 years of training and work to get here. I want to thank my family, especially my wife. We have four kids and she’s a superhero. I think my story is a story of feminism because I have my mum who inspired me competing in running after a very bad road accident and being in a coma, she had a metal bar going through her skull. I’m just feeling blessed. I am so, so happy.

“It’s super stressful because you know everything is on the line and the public is cheering, there’s a big atmosphere which is awesome but it adds a bit of pressure. I’m just glad I managed to get the job done and qualify.”



**Emiliano Hernandez (MEX)**, 3rd in Semi-final A: “It’s amazing to be in the middle of a Pentathlon Stadium. The feelings are very different compared to a normal competition. But we managed to keep the head in the game. We can improve always if there is room for improvement but we are happy to get through.

“In Riding, it was a difficult horse. I saw in the jumping test that it was a difficult horse but I just felt confident with my work and [speaking] to my coach. The Laser Run course is amazing. At moments you don’t hear anything, just people cheering, and when you are beside a French athlete it’s amazing.”



**Matteo Cicinelli (ITA)**, 4th in Semi-final A: "I have no words. It's amazing. To see the stadium and be competing in a stadium full of people, it makes me in tears. Actually everything was good today. I have never competed in such a competition. Riding is the first impression we have in an Olympic Games for us, our first step. All of the people, the crowd, you know you don't understand anything for a few minutes. It was so good."



**Pavels Svecovs (LAT)**, 5th in Semi-final A: "I am good. I did a good job. Shooting was a little bit

bad but that's okay. Qualification was hard, the season was very hard but it looks like now I am in good shape so we will continue tomorrow and see what I can do in the Final. It's a really good arena but very difficult in shooting because after shooting you can see people moving, so you have to shoot and focus, I think."

**Fabian Liebzig (GER)**, 6th in Semi-final A: "Great, I feel awesome. I had a kind of perfect day and I'm so happy to enjoy the last lap with a kind of easy job and feel the atmosphere which is not normal for Pentathlon. Yeah, I was so happy to make it into the Olympic Final. It's awesome.

"This is my second Olympics but Tokyo with no crowds, it doesn't count the same, let's say. Today with the crowd I thought I might struggle more in the technical disciplines but I had a perfect ride, almost perfect shooting for me - it was brilliant. My running was great, there were no question marks. Also I was happy with the Swimming. So the whole day was perfect and all of that with a wrist which was broken just seven weeks ago with four weeks less training, the preparation wasn't perfect. Yet I almost did the perfect competition. Maybe we need to change the preparation from now on!"

**Jean-Baptiste Mourcia (FRA)**, 7th in Semi-final A: "Here we are. Going to Finals at the Olympics. It was the main goal to be satisfied, even though we never have enough really. In Riding I drew a very good horse, I knocked one bar off on a big mistake I made, the horse fell a little bit in the curve and I didn't react immediately to bring him back. But he saved a little bit the refusal by jumping anyway, even if I knocked one bar off. After that I completed the course with this mistake in my mind, but it went OK. It was my own fault.

"I added one touch in Fencing Bonus Round, not amazing but I did the job. In Swimming I did 02:09, I expected a little better but it's been a while since I had done 200m so maybe I was missing a bit more training. I hope to do better tomorrow, a lot better. Laser Run was tough to handle. I was out of the top nine at the start but I thought, 'it's doable, I did the same all year, it's my specialty', so it was reassuring.

"To be honest I was taken by surprise by the public, on the shooting especially. On the first shooting series when I hit one green and the whole stadium started screaming and cheering up, it surprised me. So the first shooting series was not great. But then I thought, I cannot deceive all these people and not go to the Final. Especially since it's my specialty and I have done everything, everything to steer the wheel and switch on those green lights and it went well for the rest of the race. I pushed a little but I still have some under the feet for tomorrow."

**Csaba Bohm (HUN)**, 8th in Semi-final A: "Yesterday after the Fencing, I was really low mentally. I was in tears. I was really sad and disappointed but after hours and hours of thinking and thinking about what happened, I could finally cheer myself up. I had some help. My brother, my coaches, my mental trainer ... and my main goal was to just to qualify today. I had to do almost a perfect, perfect day to get through. I had several mistakes in the shooting range.

"I think it was okay. And running was still nice. I'm going to complete this shooting tomorrow.

"I'm speechless, I'm not a French athlete, but as a Hungarian athlete, I really really enjoyed it.

"A lot of French fans said to me 'Bohm, Bohm!' and then someone just asked for my number. I

gave it to him, and he was happy. It's an incredible feeling to race in front of these fans, in front of my family who came from Hungary, just to watch me compete. It's just so incredible.”



**Valentin Prades (FRA)**, 9th in Semi-final A: “I feel very good. The energy here in the stadium today was amazing. It's the best event I've ever seen.

"It's a dream and the fans are amazing and very nice. Now I'm very happy, I will go into recovery and tomorrow we will see what happens.

"I tried to stay fully focused because the job had to be done. It was tight and dense with strong Laser Runners behind. So I needed to handle the shooting. It was a high-level Final with athletes with big profiles who had only missed a bit in Riding or Fencing so I had to stay awake. The job is done, I could shoot well and manage the race a little. And of course enjoy that incredible atmosphere. Like JB said, the screaming and cheering at the shooting series surprised me a little bit too at the beginning. But afterwards I expected it, so I could stay focused."

**Martin Vlach (CZE)**, 10th in Semi-final A: "I really wanted to make it to the Final because it's the last competition with horse riding. That was my goal for today. It wasn't so far away but from yesterday I really had a big gap for the Olympic positions and I knew that today I really had to do my best. But in shooting there were some mistakes that cost me probably the Final.

"It's amazing, this is my second Olympics but the first one with the audience and 14,000 people shouting. It's very amazing. I have never experienced anything like that. It was really beautiful and I am quite sad that I cannot experience it again tomorrow."

**Shuai Luo (CHN)**, 11th in Semi-final A: "I'm very disappointed. Everything was normal. My goal was to get into the Final, but I'm a little disappointed. Paris is beautiful."