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PRESIDENT'S VIEW: TOMORROW TAKES SHAPE FOR UIPM AND IOC



By UIPM President Rob Stull

One of the privileges of being an International Federation President is that you get constant reminders of where we have come from and where we are going. Pentathlon has a rich history and an exciting future. The experience of the past month has encapsulated that for me. I would like to share a bit of that experience with you.

First, to the future: the opening 2025 World Cup in Cairo. What an incredible moment for our sport!

On the sporting side, the first senior UIPM competition to feature Obstacle was a great success. The future is here and you can see how the athletes have responded, and how much most are enjoying this new competitive element. I'm delighted with the way the new format is shaping up.

In Fencing, the new Direct Elimination system is super exciting. Every bout is compelling to watch and most are decided in the final seconds.

The athletes did well on the Obstacle course, perhaps too well – it will likely need to evolve to

become more challenging. It is a step-by-step process, and I can see how senior athletes are going to eat this up as they develop their skills and fine-tune their training.

I have been told that the difficulty will need to be increased, but only after this season. Of course, it's something the UIPM Athletes, Coaches and Technical Committees will need to address, and everything is on the table.

Meanwhile, the way our sport is presented to spectators, “the show”, is a work in progress. More on that further down!



Like our athletes, the UIPM TV crew responded to the challenge of the new format and did a great job, as did the growing social media content team, who now have a sport at their fingertips that can better help us to reach younger fans. After one competition we can already see our audience growing, especially on TikTok.

It wasn't just within UIPM that glimpses of the future were evident. In fact, not so much glimpses as eye-opening visions of a new era that is about to begin. The 144th IOC Session in Greece was a fascinating adventure, not least the Presidential election.

The International Olympic Committee will be led by a woman for the first time. It's a big step for the IOC and a brave new exciting world. Not only the first female President but the first one from outside Europe for a very long time.

We are of course very supportive of the direction the IOC will take under the guidance of President Kirsty Coventry, who officially takes the helm on June 23.

Together with Secretary General Shiny Fang, I learned a lot from the first IOC Session I have attended as an IF President, I was introduced to many fascinating people and had important discussions on behalf of our sport.

From the future it was back to history. I was invited to Riga with UIPM Vice President Viacheslav Malishev to join the 70th anniversary celebrations of the Latvian Modern Pentathlon Federation – a very well-attended event with athletes from various generations, as well as sport leaders such as the NOC Secretary General, Raitis Keselis, and his Sports Council equivalent, Arturs Balodis.



We really do have a rich heritage to celebrate, and as a movement we have come a very long way in over 100 years.

From there, I went to Lithuania and met with NF President Aistis Baronas, Secretary General Justinas Kinderis and Paulius Aleksandravicius, Chair of the UIPM Coaches Committee. I was able to see venues for the UIPM 2025 Pentathlon World Championships in Druskininkai, meeting with their team and discussed ways to improve sport presentation at the Senior World Championships this year, which is a key focal point of our 2025 season.

Part of that effort is a new legacy programme, launching today, that invites pentathletes to apply for training and paid employment as competition announcers, replacing yours truly.

The search is a great opportunity for athletes, especially if they have retired, and it would be nice to have a pool of people from which we can draw, with geographical diversity. I was in Monaco at our HQ the other day recording a video to help promote this opportunity, and my message to athletes is to embrace this, because it's an amazing privilege and a lot of fun.