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UIPM 2026 PENTATHLON WORLD CUP PAZARDZHİK: REPORT, REACTION & LINKS



- Elusive gold finally in the hands of Ozyuksel (TUR) after a decade of silver and bronze
- Seo (KOR) returns to winning ways as newcomers are forced to think again
- Medals for Guzi (HUN), Elgindy (EGY), Lukes (CZE) and Rochat (FRA)

Experience prevailed in the second round of the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup season as 29-year-olds **Ilike Ozyuksel** of **Türkiye** and **Changwan Seo** of **Korea** showed the next generation how to master five disciplines in the face of chaos.

After 10 years of winning medals at senior level, three-time Olympian Ozyuksel (TUR) finally grasped the elusive gold after an intriguing battle with world No.1 **Blanka Guzi** of **Hungary** in the Women's Final at UIPM 2026 Pentathlon World Cup Pazardzhik. **Ganah Elgindy** of **Egypt** won her first elite senior medal as she hung on to bronze.

In the absence of the current world No.1, world champion **Moutaz Mohamed** (EGY), who suffered an injury in the Semi-final, Seo (KOR) claimed his first gold medal since Ankara (TUR) in 2024,

when he was a serious contender for Olympic glory at Paris 2024. Today's performance in the Men's Final put him firmly back in the picture for LA28, alongside the two men who raced him right to the finish line – breakthrough stars **Matej Lukes** of **Czechia** and **Mathis Rochat** of **France**.

- [Click here to read the Women's Final report](#)
- [Click here to read the Men's Final report](#)
- [Click here to view photography from the Finals](#)



Medallist reaction

Women's gold medallist Ozyuksel (TUR) said: "I took my first World Cup medal [in 2017] and now we are in 2026 and it's my first gold medal. Finally!

"I have a Mixed Relay gold but in the individual, it's my first gold medal, and I know I concentrated a lot. I handled pressure and stress, so I'm so happy, because I know I deserve it. For many, many years I worked a lot. I changed disciplines. I learned new disciplines.

"Now, it's unbelievable. I improved everything - Fencing, Swimming, Laser Run, Obstacle. And during the Laser Run, I just focus, just run, shoot, don't look at anyone, just focus, and I did, and I couldn't believe it when I came first. I was so happy, and, oh, thank you, God, thank you so much.

"I worked a lot, because my upper body is so weak, physiologically. My legs are OK but my body is so weak, so I worked so hard, but I didn't want to be injured, so everything went to plan with my coach, with my team, with my family, with my federation, my government.

“Everybody supported me, and thanks to a lot to them, because some people didn't believe in me when they made the Obstacle-Riding change, but I knew that I would work so much, like four or five hours in one day just Obstacle, I didn't go anywhere and I'm really so happy now after this gold medal.”

Silver medallist Guzi (HUN) said: “Maybe it's the happiest second place in these days, because maybe some people thought I would win the competition from 3rd place, but the wind was so heavy and strong that I just couldn't hold my hand properly, so the Laser Run was chaos, but look at my Fencing, wow, it was really a memorable moment when I could beat Sazonova, she's a very good opponent, and I was happy to fence here with her.

“I'm really happy that Ilke won the competition, because we're good friends, and I think she really deserved it. Before the competition yesterday, I wrote to myself that maybe I would be the 2nd and Ilke would win the competition. That's sport, and that's why it's really enjoyable.”

Bronze medallist Elgindy (EGY) said: “I'm so happy and I'm feeling that all my hard work has finally paid off. It's indescribable. I can't express my feeling right now, but all I want to say is that I'm so proud, so happy, so grateful for everything. My first senior medal, I can't say anything else.

“These champions were my role models. I was looking at them one day, and now somehow I'm competing against them, and I'm on the podium with them. I'm just so happy, so happy and grateful.”



Men's gold medallist Seo (KOR) said: “Today I wasn't thinking about medals but being inside the top five or six was what I wanted. But then I took a medal — and it's a gold medal. It's amazing!

“We finished the Paris Olympic Games and it was very difficult at first, training for Obstacle, but for the last two years we have watched who is doing Obstacle well and we talk with our coaches and

we study it. It's about experience and now we can do very well with it."

Silver medallist Lukes (CZE) said: "My day started with cheering my girlfriend Laura [Heredia] in the Women's Final. She had a bit of a difficult day but I am so proud of her, so it started good for me.

"The competition then started well for me with a win in Fencing, which was important for me. In Obstacle again, like in Cairo, I did a big mistake. Now I feel like a unicorn here because I hit the ladders with my head a lot, but I think I am preparing well and the rest was fast.

"Swimming was normal and I am good in these hard situations with an empty head. I had an empty head and so I just ran and did much better shooting than yesterday [in the Semi-finals].

"After the last shoot I thought 'oh my god, I'm in the top four'. Suddenly we had an accident with El Ashqar (EGY) in the last lap but it was a racing incident and he fell, so I was sorry for that. I wished him the best of luck for next time.

"I was surprised in the end that I had power and Changwan Seo was not that far. I am happy and have motivation for the next competitions."

Bronze medallist Rochat (FRA) said: "I'm very sensitive right now because I have so much work to do to improve. I am very happy with this bronze medal. But there was a chance for me to do better and I'm a little hurt right now, but after the competition I will look back at the images and I will take the good and the positive and work on what didn't go well today.

"It was a real honour for me to compete with such a remarkable athlete [as Seo]. I was always behind him so I could watch his name on the shirt. I remembered that each time I looked at his name it was because I was behind a TV screen [watching him] and he was running. But today I am running with him so it's a real pleasure for me. Thank you to everybody."

President's reaction

UIPM President Rob Stull OLY said: "Days after the Giro d'Italia left Pazardzhik, the Bulgarian sports capital welcomed the UIPM Pentathlon World Cup in a new 'Pentathlon Park' built around a pool. All five disciplines of the Modern Pentathlon were held in and around a permanent 50m swimming pool, with the key moments in Fencing, Obstacle, Swimming and Laser Run happening in this fantastic space.

"It was an entirely new concept created by Bulgarian Modern Pentathlon Federation President Andrey Kuzmanov that was extremely exciting, providing an outdoor compact spectator experience. All six televised sessions were completed in under 90 minutes, with record-breaking athlete participation.

"I loved the set-up of the venue and more importantly the athletes, teams and fans did as well. We had crazy exciting finishes in our Women and Men's Finals, with Ilke Ozyuksel on top and Changwan Seo back in form. It was literally anybody's race amongst the top athletes going into the final lap. I think F1 fans would have been excited by what we saw!"

Watch and follow

Pentathlon World Cup Pazardzhik has now concluded and the next major competition on the calendar is UIPM 2026 Pentathlon World Cup Budapest from June 9-13.

You can catch up on video highlights via UIPM's YouTube service.

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