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CLOUVEL AND BELAUD GIVE FRANCE MIXED RELAY GOLD



It was jubilation for France today at the World Championships in Taiwan as Elodie Clouvel and Valentin Belaud teamed up to win the Mixed Relay gold. A riveting day of competition had seen the pair first score 904 points in the fence before a 1:56.99 time in the pool saw them move up to third overall. Their perfect score in the ride ensured they had the perfect platform for a tilt at glory.

After the disappointment of finish fifth in the Women's Final, Clouvel was relishing the opportunity of having another crack at getting a podium finish in Kaohsiung and she was fired up right from the off. The 24-year-old was giving her all in the first discipline, showing great skill with the épée time and time again as Belaud fed off her energy. After the swim, in which they had placed third overall, the duo looked confident, predicting a close battle with the Brits. In the ride, where teams had to share one horse, the scored a maximum 1200 points to put them second on the combined starting grid. A very slow first round of shooting by all the Women showed how tense it was in the pack but Clouvel managed to stay in touch with the leading pack for the change-over and 2012 Junior World Champion Belaud's blistering pace in his two laps making the difference as he pulled away after the last round at the range. So confident was he with his speed that he picked up a French

flag with 400m to go as he comfortably crossed the line and into the embrace of Clouvel. Belaud told us at the finish, "The crucial moment was the last shooting, with Latvia and Great Britain so strong. So when I get away in first place, I knew I would have an easy run." "It is amazing, fantastic, incredible. Than you to Valentin. We had a good fencing, swimming was good and then the running, Valentin is so good. I am so happy." Upon receiving their gold medals, they both looked so proud as they belted out the 'Marseillaise', the French national anthem. Latvia took silver, having lead throughout the day after victory on the fencing pistes in the first event. Veterans Elena Rublevska and Deniss Cerkovskis, who had won the same event at the World Cup Final in June, had in fact finished third behind Great Britain but Samantha Murray and Joseph Evans were later given a time penalty and as a result were relegated to fourth position. Ukraine's Iryna Khokhlova and Pavlo Tymoshchenko moved up to take bronze. US National Champions Margaux Isaksen and Nathan Schrimsher ended their campaign in fifth position with the 20 nations in total taking part.