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UIPM 2017 WORLD CUP FINAL: PRADES (FRA) ON TOP OF THE WORLD ON OLYMPIC DAY



- French star wins 2nd World Cup Final title four years after 1st success
- Tymoshchenko (UKR) continues fine season with silver after brave chase
- Swiderski (POL) wins bronze after breakthrough performance

Valentin Prades of France marked Olympic Day by winning his second UIPM World Cup Men's Final in front of a healthy crowd in the Lithuanian capital city of Vilnius.

Fans attended Vingis Park in great numbers to see the most versatile athletes in the world compete for prizes and they were treated to a fantastic Laser-Run battle between Prades (FRA) and Pavlo Tymoshchenko (UKR).



Tymoshchenko, the Rio 2016 Olympic

silver medallist, was the most consistent performer in the 2017 World Cup, finishing in each of the top four positions. Today he had to settle for silver but only after a brave chase.

Prades (FRA) dominated from the start of the Laser-Run, which he had started one second behind Sherif Rashad (EGY) in 2nd place. But Tymoshchenko (UKR) caught up with him on the final shoot, where Prades (FRA) became stuck for the first time.

The pair left the range together, to roars of excitement from the tribune at Vingis Park, but Prades (FRA) refused to be denied and he immediately stretched away from his rival and eventually won by 4 seconds. It was his second victory in this competition after a breakthrough gold medal in 2013 in Nizhny Novgorod (RUS).

Behind the leading duo, Jaroslaw Swiderski (POL) enjoyed his best-ever result with a fine bronze medal. Jun Woongtae (KOR) finished 4th ahead of 2016 world champion Valentin Belaud (FRA) in 5th and the 2016 Olympic champion Alexander Lesun (RUS) in 6th.



"I had a good first shoot and I knew that

Tymoshchenko was close behind me, but I knew I had the power in me," said Prades (FRA), who

finished 4th at the 2016 Olympic Games and narrowly missed out on a medal in a sprint finish with Ismael Hernandez Uscanga (MEX).

"My last shoot was not good, but I won the competition and that was my primary objective. My Fencing was not great, and it gives me a good base to work from ahead of the World Championships. It's a good day for me because four years ago I won my first senior title at the World Cup Final in Russia, and today I won again."

Earlier in the day, Jun (KOR) gave notice of his intentions with the fastest Swimming performance. He won the final heat in 2:01.07 ahead of compatriot Jung Jinhwa (KOR) in 2:01.37.

Belaud (FRA) was the star of the Fencing Bonus Round, scoring seven victories before Lee Jihun (KOR) claimed the last five bouts. Lesun (RUS) did not add to his score but he was the Fencing winner after scoring 24V/11D in the Ranking Round. Robert Kasza (CZE) managed the same score but he was eliminated after failing to take part in Swimming.

A large crowd had gathered by the time the Riding began and both Prades (FRA) and Tymoshchenko (UKR) put themselves strongly in contention with clean rounds and a maximum score of 300.

Ilya Palazkov (BLR) and Pavel Ilyashenko (KAZ) also produced a maximum score but Olympic champion Lesun (RUS) lost ground after incurring 35 penalty points. That allowed Prades (FRA) and Tymoshchenko (UKR) to take centre stage, which they did with a thrilling duel.

"Today we saw a very exciting competition with the highest performances of the season and with so many world and Olympic champions participating, and a dramatic finish at the end," said UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann.



"As President of the Union I am very happy

that we had such a great day here in Vilnius, Lithuania where they have organised the perfect World Cup Final with an excellent venue and great horses. Many fans from Lithuania and neighbouring countries have come here to support their athletes and there was a very special atmosphere.

"I congratulate the medallists on all they have achieved today and we are looking forward to the Women's Final tomorrow."

Full results from the Men's Final are available [here](#).

The Women's Final will take centre stage tomorrow (June 24) and Tamara Alekszejev (HUN) will be the woman to catch after dominating the Fencing Ranking Round. The Mixed Relay will then

conclude the 2017 World Cup season on Sunday, June 25.

All three days of competition are available to watch on Eurosport 2, where coverage will be broadcast "as live" at 9.45pm CEST. Details of all TV networks carrying live coverage are available [here](#). A live stream of the Laser-Run in each of the Finals will also be available online at UIPM TV and the Olympic Channel from 6.30pm CEST.