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ECMP 2018 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS: FRANCE'S FIVE-STAR TOUR DE FORCE



French sport is riding on the crest of a wave this summer and their pentathletes completely dominated the 2018 European Championships in Székesfehérvár, Hungary, winning five of the seven gold medals on offer.

The individual titles went to Marie Oteiza and Valentin Prades, who was joined on the top of the podium by Christopher Patte and Valentin Belaud as the trio were crowned men's team champions.



The

French national anthem, La Marseillaise, was heard on two other occasions during the championships. Two other male athletes, Simon Casse and Brice Loubet, teamed up to win the Men's Relay, and on the final day the individual king and queen of Europe, Oteiza and Prades, joined forces to earn another crown in the Mixed Relay.

It was an extraordinary tour de force by a team supervised by Christian Roudaut, head coach of France and chair of the UIPM Coaches Commission, as they showed their strength in depth in the absence of the Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist, Elodie Clouvel.

Host nation Hungary managed to win one gold, in the women's team event (Tamara Alekszejev, Sarolta Kovacs & Zsolia Foldhazi), while Belarus came out on top in the Women's Relay thanks to Volha Silkina and Iryna Prasiantsova.

Elsewhere there were some interesting revelations – Ireland's women emerged with two silver medals, while Latvia secured bronze in the Men's Relay – and there was also some heart-stopping drama.

Kovacs (HUN) and Alekszejev (HUN) finished the Women's Individual event in 3rd place with the exact same time, with the former awarded the bronze medal, while Belarus won the Women's Relay with just one point to spare against Ireland and Russia.

Tatiana Ardabieva, Secretary General of the European Confederation of Modern Pentathlon (ECMP), said: "Each time I come to a European Championships held by the Hungarian Federation I am preparing myself to be impressed. This championships was no exception.



“The

technical level of the championships was very high as ever but there were other innovations that impressed a lot: first was the fusion of the Senior European Championships with Laser-Run competitions, in which not only local teenagers but also teenagers coming from Budapest and other regions participated.

“The second impressive point was a huge screen on the field of play (where Laser-Run was held) on which each shot, each result was immediately demonstrated and even newcomers could easily understand what was going during the race, and how the athletes were fighting for the place on the podium.

“My last point is that the city of is very cosy and very sport-friendly. This place fits perfectly for Modern Pentathlon since many leading athletes of Hungary live and train there. Two permanent guests at the championships were the Mayor and Vice Mayor of Székesfehérvár, which demonstrated that the city cares.”

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann added: "The ECMP European Championships in Székesfehérvár has been a big success for the European Confederation. The Hungarian Modern Pentathlon Association organized excellent competitions in great facilities, with horses of a high quality.

“A big Laser-Run competition was arranged during the two individual finals, with more than 300 young athletes taking part, as a test for the Laser-Run World Championships in Budapest next year. The French athletes dominated all competitions but also the host country won different medals.”