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EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AND TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC QUALIFIER: HOSTS GREAT BRITAIN WIN MIXED RELAY GOLD



- Commanding performance from Bryson and Pillage (GBR)
- Silver for Czech Republic as Italy claim bronze on opening day
- Athletes from 25 nations prepare for Olympic qualification bid

The Mixed Relay has again taken centre stage at a major international Pentathlon competition, with Great Britain opening the 2019 European Championships with a gold medal on home soil.

Kerenza Bryson and **Myles Pillage** (GBR) provided cheer for the home crowd on a rainy opening day as they topped the standings in Swimming, Fencing and Riding disciplines to take a 40sec lead into the Laser Run.

Great Britain (Bryson / Pillage) protected their advantage to finish 19sec ahead of **Czech Republic**

duo **Eliska Pribylova** and **David Kindl**, who moved up from 4th to secure silver.

Italy (Irene Prampolini and Valerio Grasselli) joined them on the podium as bronze medallists at the University of Bath Sports Training Village, where the British high-performance team is based.

Medallists' reaction



Pillage (GBR) said: "It feels awesome. This is the first international gold medal I have won, so to do it with Kerenza is really cool. It was a really good day for us.

"It was about holding it together in the Laser Run and maintaining that big lead as neither of us had been in that situation before. Thank you to everyone whose support helped us do that."

Bryson (GBR) added: "It was great to have the home crowd behind us, you could really feel the support, although trying to shoot while people are cheering you was quite tough.

"I'd just like to also say thanks to the National Lottery for supporting us and to my friends and family."

Pribylova (CZE) said: "We are really satisfied with that result. The whole day was full of surprises and this was the best result we could have hoped for – we would never have said we would be second at the beginning of the day because our fencing wasn't the best.

"It's really amazing to be here with the crowd and everything, it's a really nice venue."

Prampolini (ITA) added: "The Riding and the final part of the Fencing were the best parts of the day for us. We didn't start very well in the Fencing but Valerio and I got stronger after that and that gave us the power to go on."

UIPM reaction

Martin Dawe, UIPM Executive Board Member, said: “The first day of the 2019 European Championships has been a very exciting day, with a few rainstorms in between, and it also been an exciting competition with the top nations in Europe taking part.

“It’s very good for the home nation to win the gold, and good for Bath and the British team. We’re looking forward to the rest of the week where we expect some exciting competition, particularly in the individual finals with the Olympic qualification places for the Games.”

Watch and follow

The European Championships, involving more than 150 athletes from 25 countries, continue on August 7 with the Men’s Relay and Women’s Relay, followed by two days of qualification for the Men’s and Women’s Individual Finals.

On Saturday and Sunday (August 10 & 11), eight male and eight female athletes will add their names to the list of qualifiers for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

This will come a week after five male and five female athletes from North, Central and South America and the Caribbean secured their places through performances at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima (PER).

They joined the UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Final winners, Laura Asaduskaite of Lithuania and Joseph Choong (GBR), and the African champions Haydy Morsy and Sherif Nazeir of Egypt in booking their tickets to Tokyo – subject to the UIPM Olympic Games qualification process.