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WORLD URBAN GAMES 2019: BELAUD (FRA) AND PROKOPENKO (BLR) TO STAR IN LASER RUN SHOWCASE



The best pentathletes on the planet will join sprint specialists as Laser Run is introduced to a whole new audience at the 1st World Urban Games over the next three days.

UIPM's urban sports phenomenon, which has grown in popularity across all continents since it was launched as a standalone sport in 2015, is one of just eight sports on the programme for the inaugural competition in Budapest.

The UIPM 2019 Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships took place only last week in the Hungarian capital and many of the **Hungary** athletes who starred in the Laser Run at Kincsem Park, including women's world champion **Kamilla Reti** (HUN), will be on the start line for the three-day showcase event.

Reti (HUN) is one of 18 athletes lining up for the host nation alongside 14 international stars, several of whom are household names in UIPM's global community.

The new men's world champion in Pentathlon, **Valentin Belaud** of **France**, tops the billing in the men's event along with **Ahmed Elgendy** of **Egypt**, winner of the Youth Olympic Games and UIPM world junior and youth titles in 2018 as well as UIPM 2019 Pentathlon World Cup Cairo.

Ireland fields two athletes who won silver at the UIPM 2018 Laser Run World Championships in Dublin (IRL), **Tom O'Brien** and **Kate Coleman Lenehan**.

Among the leading pentathletes on the women's side are 2018 world champion and Beijing 2008 bronze medallist **Anastasiya Prokopenko** of **Belarus**, local favourite **Tamara Alekszejev** (HUN) and Turkey sensation **Ilke Ozyuksel**.

Racing will comprise the Sprint Laser Run format, which includes four laps of 400m instead of the standard 800m, each circuit requiring athletes to hit five targets within 50sec in the laser shooting range. There will be Men's, Women's and Mixed Relay categories on all days.

Alongside the elite showcase there will be a youth engagement programme with 840 pupils from 20 local schools (aged eight to 14) included in try-out sessions and invited on to the field of play to get a taste for UIPM's most popular development sport.

Laser Run was derived from the combined event that has become the climax of all Pentathlon competitions in recent years. The first UIPM Laser Run World Championships took place in Perpignan (FRA) in 2015 and the UIPM Global Laser Run City Tour was introduced in 2017 to make the sport more accessible to urban communities worldwide.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "Laser Run is the perfect sport for the urban environment. It has already been introduced to hundreds of urban communities around the world through our Global Laser Run City Tour, introduced in 2017, and we hope that the World Urban Games will amplify the message that this is a sport for everyone.

"For the organisers, it is compact and easy to organise and environmentally friendly. For the competitors, it is athletic but also fun, appealing to young people who like the thrill of sport but who also enjoy the electronic aspect of laser shooting.

"Since the introduction of the Laser Run World Championships in Perpignan (FRA) in 2015, we have seen the emergence of Laser Run specialists, some within Pentathlon itself, and these are the athletes who will compete in the World Urban Games. They are accustomed to being in the global spotlight already but I know they will really be excited to be part of this multi-sport experience, with a huge global audience.

"In our movement we are involved in many global and continental multi-sport events and we are always looking for opportunities to join more events. It's important for our global community to be part of popular movements and attracting more people to UIPM Sports.

"Our participation base is growing all the time, with people coming from different socio-economic and multi-cultural backgrounds, which is wonderful to see. This is the key to the future of our movement.

"Being part of the GAISF community helps International Federations to feel part of a greater collective community with a clear vision and purpose. We all have a responsibility to promote the Olympic values and to use sport as a vehicle for ideals of education, peace, democracy, tolerance and humanity.

"GAISF helps us to circulate this message throughout the world and make sure everyone has an

opportunity to access UIPM Sports, whether their entry point is at grassroots or elite level.”

The other showcase sport on the programme is indoor rowing, while the six competition sports are BMX freestyle, roller freestyle, parkour, breaking, 3x3 basketball and flying disc freestyle. Visit the official website for more.