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NEW PENTATHLON DISCIPLINE: FEEDBACK REVEALS 88% SATISFACTION WITH TEST EVENTS



- Obstacle Discipline receives ringing endorsement at end of historic testing phase
- Olympic medallists join UIPM leaders in Monaco to urge unity of purpose
- UIPM Congress poised to decide next steps on journey back to Los Angeles 2028

The pioneers of Obstacle Discipline, which promises to transform the Modern Pentathlon after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, have given the concept a ringing endorsement.

Feedback from pentathletes who participated in four Obstacle Discipline Test Events run by the Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) around the world in 2022 revealed a satisfaction rate of almost 90%.

The Test Events formed part of the New Pentathlon Discipline process, launched in response to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decision to withhold Modern Pentathlon's place on the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic programme until UIPM could make a compelling case for its inclusion.



Athlete reaction

A majority of around 200 of the Test Event participants were from the Junior (Under 22) and Youth (U19/U17) age groups, but many of the world's leading senior pentathletes have now declared personal support for the future direction of Modern Pentathlon after Paris 2024.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann and Secretary General Shiny Fang were joined today by a panel of athletes who have won senior medals at Olympic and world level for a press conference at UIPM Headquarters in Monaco.

Each of the athletes spoke in support of a statement released last week by the UIPM Athletes Committee that called on all pentathletes to embrace the opportunity presented by Obstacle Discipline and show a unity of purpose behind the slogan #OurFuture.

Elodie Clouvel OLY of France, Rio 2016 Olympic silver medallist and UIPM 2022 Pentathlon World Cup Final winner, took time out of training for her home Olympics at Paris 2024 to talk about the future direction of Modern Pentathlon.

Clouvel (FRA) said: "I am firmly convinced that for the common good, Modern Pentathlon today needs to continue to evolve and keep up with the times.

"Saying that we have to keep horse riding, as I have heard from people resistant to change, is a very selfish choice because it would cut us off from the very essence of our creator, Pierre de Coubertin, who created the [modern] Olympic Games and not the Ancient Games!"

- [Read Elodie Clouvel's full statement here](#)

Ahmed Elgendy OLY of Egypt, Tokyo 2020 Olympic silver medallist and Buenos Aires 2018

Youth Olympic gold medallist, added: “We need to believe in the future of our sport, so I support the new movement of the game because Modern Pentathlon deserves to remain as an Olympic sport.”

Jinhwa Jung OLY of **Korea**, the 2017 world champion who finished 4th in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, said: “We need to be positive and embrace change – it’s all about our future.”

Tamara Vega OLY of **Mexico**, a UIPM 2022 Pentathlon World Cup gold medallist who was Pan American champion in 2017, said: “I love this sport because it changed my life and now Pentathlon is changing its own life. The future of Pentathlon depends on this radical change and I support the long life of this sport and the future of the new generations that are behind me.”

UIPM Athletes Committee Chair, **Yasser Hefny OLY**, added: “Having attended all four Test Events, I can tell you that this new discipline is going to change our sport forever. For athletes, it is an exciting new challenge that will make the sport more accessible around the world. For fans, especially young fans, it will make the sport a lot more appealing. For the Olympic Games, this will attract a whole new audience and add value to the Games.

“As athletes in Modern Pentathlon, we are always evolving and always adapting. The change from Riding to Obstacle Discipline is the biggest transition ever – but I firmly believe that we need to embrace it and move forward to give future generations a chance to enjoy the same opportunities we have had. This is why we launched a new movement on social media last Friday, entitled #OurFuture.”

The UIPM Athletes Committee wrote to the President of the World Olympians Association (WOA), **Joel Bouzou OLY**, also UIPM Vice President and a former world champion pentathlete.

Mr Bouzou wrote in response: “For sure I am a lover of Riding, but above all I am a lover of Pentathlon and this move is correct for the sport, which will evolve like all sports I know which are in the Olympic programme.

“With the new accessibility and cost reduction made by the change, Modern Pentathlon will give itself the possibility not only to remain a reference in building the most complete athlete. Pentathletes will also become role models in numbers, which was the wish of Pierre de Coubertin and is also the aim of WOA.”



Test event 1 – Ankara (TUR)



Test event 2 – Manila (PHI)



Test event 3 – Lignano Sabbiadoro (ITA)



Test event 4 – Zielona Gora (POL)

Testing phase feedback

After a rigorous consultation process, Obstacle Discipline was selected for testing in May 2022 as the preferred replacement for Riding, which has been one of the five Modern Pentathlon disciplines since its introduction as an Olympic sport in 1912.

The four test events took place between June and October in Ankara (TUR), Manila (PHI), Lignano Sabbiadoro (ITA) and Zielona Gora (POL), giving almost 300 pentathletes and 100 obstacle athletes the chance to train and race on four bespoke obstacle courses.

More than 50 Junior and Youth participants spoke positively about their experience in informal interviews. And now, official questionnaires completed by the pentathletes who took part – ranging in age category from Under 17 to senior – revealed the following results:

- **88%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **overall Test Event experience**
- **82%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **enjoyment of the competition**
- **55%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **level of technical difficulty**
- **74%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **physical demands of the course**
- **67%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **excitement of the head-to-head format**
- **72%** of pentathletes were satisfied or very satisfied with the **attractiveness of Obstacle design to global audiences and youth.**

President's reaction

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "On behalf of the UIPM Executive Board I

congratulate and thank everybody who was involved in this testing process that is so critical to the future direction of Modern Pentathlon.

“The feedback from participants provides us with essential data to inform next steps in the New 5th Discipline process. Not only is the overall satisfaction score very high – proving what we could see with our own eyes from the joy and excitement of athletes in all four test events – but we also have a lot of constructive feedback.

“Clearly there is room for improvement in the way the obstacle courses are set up, and the New 5th Discipline Working Group will closely study the feedback and make recommendations to the Executive Board so that we can plan carefully for the integration of Obstacle Discipline into Modern Pentathlon starting from the 2023 season, with a full implementation after 2024.

“We can say without fear of contradiction that Obstacle Discipline has caught the imagination of our global community, and it has the potential to transform our historic multi-sport into a far more popular, accessible and exciting spectator sport that adds value to the Olympic Games and inspires young people in every country around the world.”

UIPM Congress update

Motions proposed by the UIPM Executive Board and National Federations will be put before the 72nd UIPM Congress on November 12/13 to determine the next steps as UIPM moves towards finalising a proposal for LA28 to present to the IOC Programme Commission.

Among other things, key motions on the agenda will concern:

- The amendment of UIPM Statutes to include Obstacle Discipline
- The integration of Obstacle Discipline at Junior and Youth levels in 2023
- New term limits for office-bearers to improve UIPM governance standards.

UIPM Secretary General Shiny Fang said: “The testing phase of Obstacle Discipline has been very successful and provides our global community with a sound basis for decision-making at this year’s UIPM Congress, as we continue our journey back to LA28.

“We will continue to provide National Federations with as much information as possible so that they can exercise their democratic right to influence how we proceed. Debate is essential but I believe we all want the same thing: for Modern Pentathlon to not only survive but thrive within the Olympic movement.”