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MODERN PENTATHLON AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES: WOMEN'S FENCING REACTION



After an exhilarating Olympic Games Fencing Ranking Round in the Women's competition at North Paris Arena, here is a rapid round-up of athlete reaction from the Mixed Zone:

Elodie Clouvel (FRA): "It's the real Elo, she's back. I'm myself again finally! It's magical. I did everything I could, it was amazing. I enjoyed it, I was hyper, I was focused, I was listening to music on my headphones. I was great, frankly it was great."

"For me it's the best Games so far, I love it. It transcended me, it was great. It's magical. It was surreal yesterday when I went Swimming and I could see the castle of Versailles. It's amazing."



Michelle Gulyas (HUN): "It was incredible. Before the competition I wanted to fence good and I was really preparing mentally and physically for a good fence because it is one of my strongest disciplines. I really wanted to make a gap with my Fencing. It was very nice that my family was there cheering, it was very special. It was different from Tokyo because there was Covid then and there were no spectators. So it was a special event. I was happy that my coaches were here too. There cheering gave me a plus for my Fencing so that as nice.

"It's easy to enjoy something when it is going well. So if I would say that this Fencing was one of my favourite competitions so far; Fencing-wise it is one of the best. It is because of the atmosphere because usually in a Modern Pentathlon competition there are not so many spectators for the Ranking Round. After of course when there is Riding and a Laser Run there are more people, so it was very special and nice.

"I have been in Versailles with my family a few years ago and I have of course seen pictures of the competition venue and it's amazing. I am looking forward to it."

Kerenza Bryson (GBR): "Compared to the other World Cups and European Championships I've done this year it was definitely a completely different atmosphere. It was really noisy, the whole preparation and getting into the stadium, it was crazy. I struggled with that a little bit at the start it was very nerve-racking. I just had to work really hard to find my flow and just fight all the way. I guess I'm a bit of a fighter.

"I started really, really poorly. I've never ever done that before and I just knew that if I wanted to end this competition well, I needed to fight it back and to finish on a good result. Fighting back to 5th place after I'm pretty sure I was last at one point, I'm pretty happy with that.

"I think both [myself and Kate French] are in good shape. We both have horse riding experience and I think we can pull out a good competition with what we've got there in the fence."



Marie Oteiza (FRA): "Of course a little bit impressed at the beginning by this French crowd and all the people there to support us. It took me a few touches to get into the right mindset in my own bubble. Only then I was able to win some touches and enjoy the celebration with the crowd.

"It is so special. The only Games I had done before were Tokyo 2020, so the atmosphere was really different with empty stands. Here we can feel the expectation from people around and that's why having done Games already helps for experience.

"We went to the venue in Versailles yesterday. It's crazy. You can feel the place is charged with so much history, good vibes and crazy stands around the arena.

"The atmosphere will be electric. I work to prepare for that and I have been working for a few years now to be ready mentally for these Games in Paris. And the crowd will be here to support us as athletes, I am sure it will lift us and push us more than anything in Semi-finals and Finals."



Elena Micheli (ITA): “Well, I haven't yet seen the results, actually, but I think I'm quite satisfied. At the end, I lost myself a bit. It's painful in that way, but I'm happy anyway, because I am doing something great, just being at the Olympics, and it's wonderful. So I'm happy.

“Well, right now I'm OK. It has been a tough year because of many injuries, and then right now I'm OK. My body is fine, so I'm trying to do my best.

“It's wonderful. I've been in Versailles. I saw the venue, and it was really overwhelming. I mean, I have no words to describe it, because it's amazing. Definitely the best venue I've ever competed in.

“I'm quite confident. I'll try to do my best, because the level is really high. So, I'll do my best and try to get into the Final.”

Sophia Hernandez (GUA): “It's always bittersweet, isn't it? You get to your first Olympics and you have a lot of pressure, there's a lot of things you haven't seen or experienced before. Everyone tells you about it but you can't really feel it until you are there. I was quite nervous and then I started on the piste with all of the cameras and the lights and I think for me it was a little hard to handle. But then for me it went better.

“I was focused and did better. It was a bit hard because I know I can fence better and that didn't happen. It's frustrating but I know you have to try to control it during competition but in the end you're like ‘blargh’!

“We worked very hard for this. I think I did manage to get a lot of good actions during the Fencing which I am proud of. Not everything was bad. But I did make a lot of mistakes unfortunately and you have to pay for that. I am happy, I am still trying to enjoy it. I am looking forward to the Semi-finals.”

Rebecca Langrehr (GER): “I’m feeling not satisfied but I think there is still a chance to go to the Final so I will do my best on Saturday to make it. I wouldn’t say that I was that nervous, I was more excited to finally compete and with all of the crowd in the back it was really nice. It was a very, very nice atmosphere. I actually enjoyed it apart from the touches I did not make.

“Yes, it’s a really nice venue at Versailles. We went there yesterday and I’m looking forward to competing there and taking all of the good atmosphere and vibes.”



Genevieve Janse van Rensburg (AUS): “I feel pretty good. It’s not what I was expecting but I’m happy with it. For a first Olympics and all that pressure. It’s not always the best results. I got my first three and it just went downhill from that. It happens, doesn’t it?

“It’s been incredible. Like Versailles is probably the best, obviously a bit biased here but it’s the best venue for sure. I’m loving it. The village is insane too.”

Annika Zillekens (GER): “It was medium. I did 17-18 so I am not absolutely happy but the Fencing in the last weeks of preparation was really hard. I didn’t have the best feeling so I’m kind of satisfied. But of course I want to do better.

“I think it’s really nice. It’s so different. It was so funny when I told Becky [Rebecca Langrehr] that we can go to the German house she said ‘we are sleeping in the German house?’ I said ‘no, it’s outside the Village!’ She just knew Tokyo and it’s really different here and we have really enjoyed the time we have been here and now look forward to Versailles.”



Gintare Venckauskaite (LTU): “My Fencing was in waves. At the beginning it was pretty OK. Then I lost myself a little bit, but then I managed to come back in my good mood and finish in a better position.”

Jessica Savner (USA): “I feel very proud. I came out very tense, and not only fencing my best for the first half, but I was also able to kind of bring it home for the second half, and end up with a score that I could be proud of. It's sometimes easy when you start really bad, to kind of fall apart, but very happy with how I came back. It's my last time doing Pentathlon, this is my retiring competition, so I'm very pleased.

“Like I said, this is my kind of retiring competition. I'm just kind of taking it one step at a time, really enjoying everything, and taking it all in.”