

14 JUL 2026

UIPM PRESIDENT'S VIEW: PENTATHLON WILL BE FRONT AND CENTRE OF THE 'GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH' AT LA28



By Rob Stull, UIPM President

Two years from today, Los Angeles will welcome the world to the Opening Ceremony of the 2028 Olympic Games.

For every athlete dreaming of competing at LA28, today brings that ambition into sharper focus and for some, a dream closer to reality. For the UIPM and our scores of National Federations, their coaches, officials and supporters, it is a reminder that the countdown is accelerating. I had the great opportunity to attend Los Angeles 1984 and I know that the city understands sport, entertainment and spectacle. LA knows how to capture the world's attention, and I am certain LA28 will deliver an even greater Olympic Games with a character and energy unlike any other that have come before.

Pentathlon will be right at the heart of this sporting showcase.

Our competition begins on July 15, the first full day of the Olympic programme, and we will see the sun rise across four consecutive mornings of Pentathlon action until our last Medal Ceremony on July 18. The Women's Semi-finals will provide the first opportunity of these Olympic Games for global audiences to experience our reimagined sport with Ninja-style Obstacle Racing sharing the Valley urban sport stadium with our four other revitalised Pentathlon challenges, followed by the Men's Semi-finals on July 16 and then the long-awaited crowning of our new Olympic medallists during the Women's and Men's Finals sessions of July 17 and 18.

We have attained a prominent position on the programme and gained an important opportunity for Pentathlon. It's even global-time-zone-friendly!

In recent Games, the Pentathlon took place towards the end of the Olympic programme, competing with numerous other established headline events. In many sporting mega-events, there is a concern that the attention of some audiences can begin to drift towards the end. For LA28, we will be at the top of the show, introducing loyal Olympic fans and whole new audiences to a new Olympic era for our sport literally as soon as the Games begin.

The setting is equally exciting.

Pentathlon will form part of the urban sports cluster in the Valley Zone (regularly known as the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area). We will be surrounded by other sports bringing youthful energy – 3x3 Basketball, BMX (Freestyle + Racing) and Skateboarding (Park + Street) – and this places our athletes and our new competition format within one of the newest and most dynamic environments of the entire Games.

This positioning says something important about how Pentathlon is now perceived.

While yes, we are a sport with more than a century of Olympic heritage, our recent innovations have made us more vibrant, more accessible and more relevant – ready to connect with new generations. I like to say that we are one of the “cool kids in LA”.

Our spectators at LA28 will see five sporting challenges in one multisport event delivered as a fast-moving, integrated competition, with our broadcast scheduled to take just 90 minutes from start to finish, providing extraordinary opportunities for storytelling and digital engagement.

In that time, they will see Fencing presented in a knockout elimination format that creates drama through immediate jeopardy. They will witness Ninja-style Obstacle Racing making its exciting Olympic debut. They will watch Swimming and Laser Run combine speed, endurance, strength and precision as the competition builds towards a decisive and dramatic finish.

Above all, they will see the extraordinary versatility of our athletes, as no other Olympic sport tests such a broad range of physical and mental abilities, connecting Olympic values with modern participation trends.



Our location alongside other sports with urban appeal will help create a festival atmosphere that appeals to and connects with young fans and families. Pentathlon belongs in this company: sports that are visually exciting, easy to engage with and capable of producing unforgettable moments.

As an American who has been incredibly fortunate to attend 16 Olympic Games, I have experienced the unique energy of the Games from many different perspectives. Nothing compares to the anticipation that builds as an Olympic host prepares to welcome the world, and I feel a particular sense of pride knowing that the next Summer Games will take place in my home country.

It will be an incredibly special moment, but my greatest excitement comes from what LA28 can mean for our athletes and for the future of Pentathlon.

There is still a great deal of work ahead of us over the next two years. We must continue

finetuning the competition format, improving our sport presentation, supporting our athletes and building recognition around the star-quality personalities who will bring the LA28 competition to life. We are taking a unique approach to the creation of our Obstacle course. Working closely with our colleagues and partners from Tokyo Broadcasting System, the *Ninja Warrior* global network and LA28, I can guarantee it's going to look and be amazing.

Every competition between now and July 2028 is part of that journey. Every innovation, partnership and successful event brings us closer to the standard we want to achieve on the Olympic stage.

For athletes, the dream is becoming real. For our global community, the opportunity is becoming clearer. And for new audiences that we know our sport will attract to join traditional sports fans who may be discovering Pentathlon for the first time, something new and exciting is coming.

Two years from today, the Olympic Games will return to Los Angeles. The next morning, Pentathlon will be part of the opening day of the greatest show on earth – we will be ready to inspire the world. See you in LA!

- Modern Pentathlon at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games takes place July 15-18, 2028. Visit the official LA28 website to apply for tickets and volunteering opportunities.