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“THE EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN PENTATHLON WAS A MODERN NECESSITY” SAYS BARON PIERRE DE COUBERTIN



World-leading expert conducts fictionalised interview with Modern Pentathlon founder

The Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) has teamed up with a world recognised expert on Baron Pierre de Coubertin to conduct a fictionalised interview with the Modern Pentathlon founder to get his views on the sport’s incredible innovations and progress ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games going into Los Angeles 2028.

The interview was conducted by George Hirthler, a member of the International Pierre de Coubertin Committee (CIPC), author of *The Idealist*, the fictionalised biography of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, and the creator of Coubertin Speaks, a website dedicated to Coubertin’s ideas.

Speaking about the integration of Obstacle into Modern Pentathlon, Coubertin said: “Am I

surprised the sport is changing and evolving with the times? Of course not. If you're familiar with my position on change, you'll know that in 1936, writing about the Olympic Movement overall, I spelled out my opinion, and I quote: 'In reality, there are almost always two forms of evolution in an institution: the evolution of appearances, and the evolution of the soul. The first tries to adapt to current trends, and changes according to the whims of fashion. The second remains as steadfast as the principles on which the institution is based.'



"As I see it, the evolution of the Modern Pentathlon was a modern necessity. The move from equestrian to an obstacle course speaks of change that is responsive to the times and yet protects the principles at the soul of the sport.

"Would you expect me to object to a sport that sought to broaden its audience by integrating an exciting, new discipline?

"Did you think I would protest the break with tradition, when I recognise that the obstacle course segment of the pentathlon would appeal to younger people?

"Did you think I would stand in the way of a sport that may draw on a broader pool of competitors, many of whom will be familiar with running the gamut through their military training? Oh no, I applaud the move and embrace it wholeheartedly.

"I'm delighted that the equestrian edition will crown its final champions in Paris 2024, and that Hollywood, I mean Los Angeles, will introduce the new obstacle edition of the Modern Pentathlon to the world. Nothing more appropriate. I see a great future ahead."

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann said: "From everything I know about our founder and founder of the modern Olympic Games, this is an entirely plausible assumption of how he would have viewed the progress our sport is making to LA28 and beyond.

"Throughout the process of evolving and innovating Modern Pentathlon, we have always kept the principles on which Coubertin founded the sport fresh in our minds. We are proud that we have been able to honour the tradition and heritage of our sport while making it more attractive and appealing to modern generations."

Paris 2024 is set to feature a fantastic send-off for Riding as it features in the Olympic Modern Pentathlon for the last time, ahead of the debut of Obstacle as one of the sport's five disciplines at LA28.