

UNION INTERNATIONALE DE PENTATHLON MODERNE



JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cairo, 11 July 2008 – On the fifth day of competition here in Cairo the Women's Relay took place breaking a record even before the beginning of the event: 15 teams from 15 different nations started, never before in a pentathlon women relay competition have as many teams taken part. At the end, as if *deja vu* the Hungarian Team celebrated its second gold medal here in Cairo.

Adrienn Toth, Sarolta Kovacs and Kristina Cseh dominated again winning their second world title after the team event two days earlier. The three Hungarians scored 5436, a great result in the heat of Egypt's capital city. On the second step of the podium was the British team, comprised of Freyja Prentice, Charlotte Granfield and Lucy Fergusson with 5312 pentathlon points. The bronze went to the Czech girls, who in the final 50 metres of the running fought hard against Belarus to finish on the podium. Natalie Dianova (CZE) was 4 or 5 seconds behind the third place in the last 500 metres when she decided to unpredictably overtake the Belarusian Anna Savchenko. The determinate action of the Czech pentathlete overwhelmed the dream for a medal cuddled by the Belarusian athlete till that moment.

The day began with a great surprise in the shooting when the young Mexican team won the event with 275 points, 4 more than the second classified team of Hungary with 271. With the same score as the Hungarians, the Czech athletes Lenka Bilkova, Natalie Dianova and Barbora Kodedova took the third place with 1156 pentathlon points.

In the fencing, the Magyar team demonstrated the tradition and fine fencing technique of Hungary in this sport, with 77 victories and 49 defeats, receiving 912 points. This was equivalent to the Czech team; however coupled with the shooting score the Hungarians took the lead of the competition. The British had the third best performance in fencing with 888 points. These results showed how important fencing is in the relay competition: the first three teams classified in this discipline are the same who placed on the podium.

The swimming event was again ruled by the Hungarians with the time of 3'12"76. Ninety hundreds of a second kept the team of Poland (Joanna Gomolinska, Magdalena Walesa and Aleksandra Skarzynska) on the second place, while the team of Great Britain followed with the time of 3'16"34.

The team of Belarus was the best in the riding and the only one able to score a perfect 1200 points on the arena. This result, meant Belarus propelled into second place after four events, only 1 second in front of the Czech team (1080 points in riding) and 12 from the British (1164 points and 3rd place in riding). Second place in riding went to Canada who finished with only two knock downs and 1152 points.

Hungary started the running event with a huge lead of 124 points on Belarus, but the fight for the silver and bronze medal was open to the 3 teams of Belarus, Czech Republic and Great Britain, all ranked within 11 seconds. The British team started very fast from the first leg with Lucy Fergusson closing the gap with Czech and Belarusian teams taking the temporary second position. While Hungary ran in full control of the first position without any risk coming from behind, the three other teams continued the intense challenge for the medals. Great Britain seemed to have more chances and held the current second position till the beginning of the last leg, whereas Czech Republic showed some difficulties in keeping the pace of Belarus; so in the last 1500 metres the situation was still quite uncertain especially for the bronze medal. After the first lap, Freyja Prentice (GBR) increased her lead on the chasing Belarus who seemed to have finally defeated the resistance of the Czech Natalie Dianova. But when Sarolta Kovacs of Hungary crossed the finish line grabbing the second gold medal in these Championships for her team, and Great Britain was approaching the big New Balance gantry on the finish line to take the silver, Natalie Dianova found the energy and the motivation to increase her pace gaining metre by metre on the Belarusian Anna Savchenko who gave up right in the last 50 metres.



Report by: Stefano Giommoni, Athlete's Committee Chair