

Modern Pentathlon Association of Ireland hosts Youth European Championships

The Modern Pentathlon Association of Ireland takes it's first step into the world of organising major international events this week when hosting the European Youth Modern Pentathlon Championships in Dublin.

Up to 150 athletes, under the age of 16, from over 20 European countries in Europe will participate at the championships, which will run from 2nd-7th July at DCU and the National Aquatic Centre at Abbottstown. For many it will be their first trip to Ireland and first continental championships at this challenging multidisciplinary sport.

The full sport of Modern Pentathlon, which is Irelands newest Olympic sport, consists of Air Pistol Shooting, Fencing, Swimming, Horse-riding (show-jumping) and Running. At Youth B level (under 16), athletes compete at 3 of the 5 disciplines - the shoot, swim and run. The event will be run over two days of individual and team competitions, with shooting and swimming on 3rd July, and running on 4th July. Sunday July 6th is a special team relay competition, where the young athletes compete in all three phases on the same day.

Ireland will field a team of 12 at the championships, with athletes from all corners of the country selected on the team. Emile Greenan, native of Donegal, who last year won the British Open Championships at this level will spearhead the Irish challenge, while John O 'Donoghue from Cork will lead the challenge for the boys.

The Modern Pentathlon Association of Ireland was first formed in 2003, and has steadily developed throughout the country, with the aid of the Olympic Council of Ireland. The MPAI is currently seeking the recognition and support of the Irish Sports Council in order to ensure continued expansion of the sport throughout Ireland, and the successful development of these young athletes towards the Olympics in London 2012 and beyond. More information can be found at www.mpaireland.com and www.pentathlon.org.

Ends

Supporting notes

Photographs to be released by Sportsfile

A further press release will be issued at the conclusion of the competition

Notes for Editors

The Pentathlon was the climax of the ancient Olympic Games, incorporating the five events of discuss, javelin, running, jumping and wrestling.

The new sport of Modern Pentathlon was introduced to the Olympic Games at Stockholm 1912, on the initiative of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic movement.

The multi-discipline format of Modern Pentathlon at senior level includes the five events of air pistol shooting, fencing, swimming, showjumping, and running – all of which take place on the one day.

Competitors must demonstrate the skill, the fitness and the stamina to cope with the following:

- SHOOTING:** A .177 calibre air pistol from a distance of 10 metres; 20 shots at a static target, 40 seconds per shot.
- FENCING:** With an epeeé, in a round robin event of one minute 'one hit' bouts against all competitors.
- SWIMMING:** 200 metres freestyle in a 50m swimming pool.
- HORSERIDING:** Showjumping over a course of 12 obstacles, including a double and a treble. The horses, which are unknown to the riders, are drawn by lots and the rider is given 20 minutes and 5 practice jumps to warm up.

RUNNING:

3000 metres over a course which may be track, cross-country or road. The run is organised 'Hungarian style', where the leader after the first 4 events starts first, and each other athlete starts at a handicap of 1 second for every 4 pentathlon points earned less than the leader. First across the line is the overall winner.

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