

ATHLETE RANKING SYSTEM Q & A

What are the goals of a selection system based on Actual Pentathlon Points scored?

- The Actual Pentathlon Points ranking system will satisfy the following requirements:
 - Simple and understandable
 - Ranks athletes based on their true pentathlon performance
 - Ensure that the USA will send the best team possible to important competitions
 - Encourages competition
 - Elite athletes strive for continued competitive excellence
 - Developing athletes strive for attainable positions on National Teams
 - Allows elite athletes to concentrate on periodization and peaking for important competitions
 - Outstanding performances are rewarded

What are the criteria for qualifying competitions?

- There are only three criteria
 - The competition must be a senior level competition
 - The competition must be a UIPM Level A, B, or C competition or the US Senior Nationals
 - The system will be a one year rolling ranking system. Competitions older than one year will not be counted.

How does the ranking system work?

- Each athlete's top three qualifying competitions from the past twelve months are totaled.
 - The athlete's are ranked with the highest total ranked first and so on
- Fencing scores in each qualifying competition will be adjusted by a strength of competition factor

- The strength of competition factor is based on the number of athletes on the start list for that competition who are in the top 36 of the UIPM PWR ranking list
 - If there are 21 or more athletes on the start list ranked in the top 36, the fencing score will be multiplied by 1
 - If there are 10-20 athletes on the start list ranked in the top 36, the fencing score will be multiplied by 0.9.
 - If there are 5-10 athletes on the start list ranked in the top 36, the fencing score will be multiplied by 0.8.
 - If there are 1-5 athletes on the start list ranked in the top 36, the fencing score will be multiplied by 0.7.
 - US Senior Nationals fencing (if non-UIPM sanctioned) will be multiplied by 0.7
 - If there are zero athletes on the start list ranked in the top 36, the fencing score will be multiplied by 0.6
- Adjustments will be made to competition scores for long vs. short course swims and altitude
 - Times achieved in short course pools will be increased by 2.5 seconds (score will be decreased by 32 pentathlon points)
 - Combined event times achieved in competitions held at altitudes greater than 6000 feet will be decreased by 30 seconds (score will be increased by 120 pentathlon points)

Will there be adjustments made fast vs. slow run courses or good vs. bad horses?

- Running courses may be considered “fast” or “slow”. This is discovered before, during, or after the competition.
 - UIPM sanctioned competitions are administered by a UIPM certified TD, they will be legal, but granted, some will be faster and some slower, but it is impossible to plan for this beforehand.
 - There have been examples of this both in “weak” and “strong” competitions.
 - An athlete “chasing” weaker competitions will not be assured of, and cannot be assured of a faster or slower running course.

- Therefore we will not make adjustments for fast vs slow running courses
- Good vs. Bad Horses – The overall quality of the horses in certain regions of the world is certainly a factor that most in the pentathlon community will be aware of
 - Certain competition organizers often will not be able to supply quality horses which may or not be adjusted by reducing the difficulty level of the course.
 - There have been examples of World Cup competitions with poorly chosen horses and lower easier courses to compensate.
 - The nature of this event is very much dictated by the “luck of the draw” and will average out across competitions so there will be no adjustment for the riding phase.
 - Therefore, there will be no adjustments made for riding.

Why do we include all UIPM competitions in our ranking system?

- The UIPM lists competitions that satisfy certain requirements dictated by the technical committee.
- As our international federation, we rely on their expertise and oversight to sanction quality pentathlon competitions.
- As noted before, the weaker fencing competitions will be adjusted using our fencing strength factor calculation.

Can a lower ranked athlete enter only Level 2 & 3 competitions and pass an athlete who is superior by scoring higher in these lower strength competitions?

- Definition of a lower strength competition:
 - UIPM defines there Levels of competition by the number of countries competing.
 - The strength of a competition is dictated by the number of top ranked (top 36 in the UIPM PWR) athletes attending.
- An analysis of our sport by phase:
 - Fencing- our current ranking system takes into account the lower strength competitions by discounting the fencing scores by a factor based on the number of top-ranked (UIPM PWR) athletes starting the competition
 - For example: an athlete has an average fencing score of 725 in high strength competitions (Hungarian World Cup or World Championships). He/she fences 1000 in the Swiss Open where there are only 4 athletes in the top 36 of the UIPM PWR. The score will be adjusted to 700. This would actually discourage attending a “weaker strength” competition.
 - Swimming—an athlete’s performance is not positively affected by attending a weaker strength competition.
 - Many swimmers will actually say the opposite is true—they have their best performance and therefore their highest scores in higher strength competitions.
 - Combined Event—although this has not been tested in a full year of competitions, this phase also purely based on the clock.
 - Weaker strength competitions generally have less talented athletes, hence slower running times. A superior athlete in this environment rarely will produce their highest scores if they are not being pushed.
 - Riding—As discussed previously there has been no historical correlation between the strength of the competition and competition quality of the riding event.
- An analysis of 2008 competition scores supports this (see tables below):
 - The eight Level 2 and 3 competitions were chosen because US athletes would have been eligible to compete in them. Missing competitions are those which the UIPM did not apply PWR points to or where US athletes were not eligible to compete.
 - Athletes who hypothetically might have attended these Level 2 & 3 competitions and won gold medals in their top three competitions at this level would still rank behind

athletes who achieved scores in three competitions which would place them in the top 20 of the Level 1 competitions. (see tables below)

- They would however achieve a ranking above an elite level athlete who consistently scored below the top 20 in Level 1 competitions.
- If an athlete is able to score consistently well (as described in this example), they should be able to achieve a ranking which would allow them to attend Level 1 competitions as a member of the national team and replace an athlete who is not able to consistently achieve above average scores at Level 1 competitions.
- The elite athletes are in no danger of being replaced by someone who attends Level 2 & 3 competitions and achieves scores which do not put them on the podium at these competitions.

Competition (Level 2 &3)	1st Place	10th Place
Open Kazakstan Champs	5280	4464
Hungarian Indoor Championships	5539	5274
Pan Am/NORCECA Championships	5102	4914
International Senior French Championships	5495	5180
Nordic and Finnish Open Championships	5161	3882
Grand Prix Slovakia Ondre Memorial	5218	4869
CISM MP Championships	5189	5006
South American Senior and Junior Champs	5052	4080

(Scores are adjusted by fencing strength factor)

Average:	5254	4708
Top Three Scores:	16314	15459

Competition (Level 1)	1st Place	10th Place	20th Place	30th Place
World Cup 1 – Cairo	5620	5364	5208	5012
World Cup 2 - Mexico City	5464	5256	5108	4764
World Cup 3 – Milfield	5392	5152	5044	4812
World Cup 4 – Madrid	5556	5316	5144	4904
World Cup 5 – Kladno	5684	5496	5392	5180
Senior World Championships	5796	5464	5400	5188
Olympic Games	5632	5412	5268	4828
World Cup Final	5628	5432	5296	4884

Average:	5597	5362	5233	4947
Top Three Scores:	17112	16392	16088	15380

How do athlete rankings compare when using the actual Pentathlon Points scored versus the Pentathlon Placing system?

- Following is a hypothetical example of six athletes using 3 scoring competitions from actual scores achieved in 2008.
 - The examples are chosen to illustrate a variety of combinations of performances.

			Pent. Points	Place Points
Bill	World Cup 2 - Mexico City	1st	5464	25
	World Cup 5 - Kladno	20th	5392	15
	World Cup Final	10th	5432	24
	TOTAL		16288	64
Roger	World Cup 1 - Cairo	10th	5364	18
	World Cup 2 - Mexico City	10th	5256	16
	World Cup 3 - Milfield	10th	5152	18
	TOTAL		15772	52
Abe	Open Kazakstan Champs	1st	5280	9
	Pan Am/NORCECA Championships	1st	5102	9
	Grand Prix Slovakia Ondre Memorial	1st	5218	9
	TOTAL		15600	27
Frank	International Senior French Championships	1st	5495	9
	Nordic and Finnish Open Championships	10th	3882	0
	Grand Prix Slovakia Ondre Memorial	10th	4869	0
	TOTAL		14246	9
John	World Cup 2 - Mexico City	30th	4764	10
	World Cup 3 - Milfield	30th	4812	12
	World Cup 4 - Madrid	30th	4904	12
	TOTAL		14480	34
Manny	Hungarian Indoor Championships	10th	5274	3
	Pan Am/NORCECA Championships	10th	4914	0
	CISM MP Championships	10th	5006	0
	TOTAL		15194	3

RANKING	PENTATHLON POINTS		PLACE POINTS	
1	Bill	16288	Bill	64
2	Roger	15772	Roger	52
3	Abe	15600	John	34
4	Manny	15194	Abe	27
5	John	14480	Frank	9
6	Frank	14246	Manny	3

- **Conclusions**

- Using either system, athletes with above average scores in Level 1 competitions (Bill & Roger) will still be ranked highest effectively protecting them against “cherry picking” of competitions.
- Using the total Pentathlon Points scored system athlete with poor Level 1 performance (John-with three 30th place finishes) will be replaced by athletes with superior Level 2 & 3 performances (Abe & Manny) thus giving these developing athletes a chance to be invited to future Level 1 competitions.
- Using the Placing system athlete with poor Level 1 performance (John-with three 30th place finishes) stays ahead of all the athletes attending Level 2 & 3 competitions, including Abe who had three gold medal performances. The placing system effectively blocks new athletes from Level 1 competitions.