



## Modern Pentathlon Association of WA

### What Is Modern Pentathlon?

Modern pentathlon is an exciting diverse sport, dating back to the ancient Olympic Games in Greece. Back then, the pentathlon consisting of running the length of the stadium, jumping, throwing the spear, throwing the discus and wrestling was introduced for the first time at the 18th Olympiad in 708 BC. The earliest recorded winner of the pentathlon was Lampis of Sparta, nearly 3,000 years ago. The founder of the modern Olympics, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, introduced Modern Pentathlon to the Games at the 5th Olympiad in Stockholm, Sweden, 1912. It comprised the sports of pistol shooting, fencing, swimming, horse riding and running. De Coubertin believed that this event "tested a man's moral qualities as much as his physical resources and skills, producing thereby the ideal, complete athlete".

The Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM), founded in 1948, is the guardian of modern pentathlon and in cooperation with the national and continental organisations, ensures consistency and unity in modern pentathlon around the world.

At the Sydney Olympics, for the first time in Games history, women were able to compete in the modern pentathlon. Not only did this promote equality, it also gave women the opportunity as modern pentathletes to pursue the dream of an Olympic medal. Today both men and women contest all five events of the Modern Pentathlon in one day. A points system for each event is based on a standard performance earning 1000 points. The winner is the pentathlete who has accumulated the most points after the five events. At official UIPM competitions, there is some flexibility in the order of events, but the running must always be the final event.

### Modern Pentathlon Association of WA

The Western Australian Modern Pentathlon Association Inc (MPAWA) is the state governing body

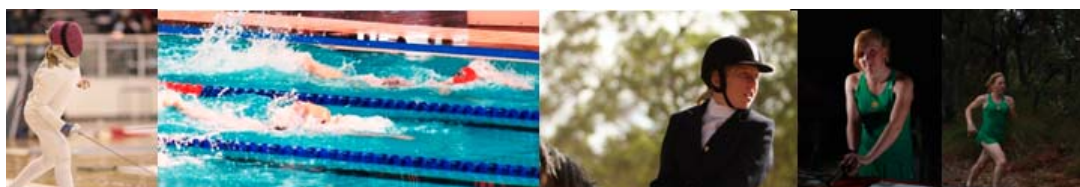
for Modern Pentathlon. Australia has qualified to be represented in this sport at every Olympic Games since 1952, sending men's and women's teams to every World Championship in the last four years and qualifying male and female athletes for all the available representative places at the Sydney, Athens and Beijing Olympic Games. MPAWA aims to:

- » Assist rising stars in pentathlon, who aspire to reach the ultimate level of competition
- » Facilitate a coaching system to boost athlete performance at a national and international level.
- » Encourage people of all ages in the community to get involved in one or more of the diverse range of sports that pentathlon offers; successful pentathletes are often already good at one or more of these sports; pentathlon provides more variety and challenge.
- » Retain participants in the sport.

### How Do I Get Started?

The first step is to become a member of MPAWA; please contact us for membership forms. New pentathletes typically build up to participating in all five disciplines of the sport. Unless a pentathlete is already a proficient show jumper and / or air pistol shooter, new pentathletes usually begin by competing in the swimming, running and fencing disciplines. It is not mandatory to belong to a swimming or running club, however, pentathletes will need to join a fencing club.

When a pentathlete participates in the air pistol and show jumping disciplines, it is mandatory (at this stage) to join a pistol club, due to the firearms laws in Western Australia and be an Equestrian Federation of Western Australia (EFAWA) member. To compete in interstate and in overseas competitions, pentathletes must have Competitive Pentathlete membership. All other pentathletes and supporters are welcome to join as Social members.





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### Training

In terms of pentathlon training, the aim is not to be the best in any one sport, but to be very good at all five disciplines. Pentathletes can do as much or as little training as they want to put in – but like all sports, training effort is reflected in results! Starting out, pentathletes would probably want to be training:

Discipline	Beginning (# of sessions)	Competitive (# of sessions)
Shoot	1 x 1 hour	3 x 1 hour
Fence	2 x 2 hours	3 x 2 hours
Swim	3 x 1.5 hours	4 x 2 hours
Ride	2 x 1 hour	3 x 1 hour
Run	3 x 1 hour	6 x 1 hour

The timed physical components (swim and run) do require a little more training than the technical events of fencing, riding and shooting. It is a good idea to build up to this level and adjust the training over time.

Until a pentathlete (or a parent, for pentathletes under 18) has a firearms license, training more than once a week for shooting may be difficult. It takes at least 6 months to get a firearms license in WA. Pentathletes can still compete at interstate competitions whilst waiting to get a license! Victoria has additional air pistols for people wishing to compete who do not have a license yet.

### What Coaching Is Available?

Because the sport of pentathlon is so diverse, no one coach can train a pentathlete in all five disciplines. When looking for top calibre coaches and clubs who understand the sport of pentathlon, MPAWA recommends the following as a good starting point:

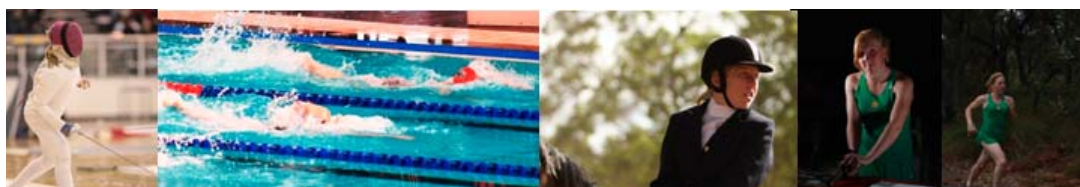
- » **Swimming** – City of Perth offers various swimming squads, depending on current

swimming ability and level of fitness. To find out what squad might suit you, visit their website:

<http://www.cityofperthswimmingclub.org.au/squads.html>

- » **Running** – There are a number of options for pentathlon running coaches. MPAWA can put you in contact with trainers / organisations familiar with pentathlon requirements.
- » **Fencing** – UWA Fencing Club is the home of Modern Pentathlon in WA. For pentathletes beginning to fence, please note the weapon used in pentathlon is epee! Please let the club know that you require epee training. Training at UWA is:
  - Mon 6 – 8pm in the UWA gym for beginners and at the Claremont campus gym (the old Claremont Teachers college) for State Squad epeeists
  - Wed 7.30 – 9.30pm at UWA's Claremont campus gym. All welcome at this session!
  - Thurs 6 – 8pm at the Claremont campus gym for State Squad epeeists
  - Sat 1 – 3pm at UWA's Claremont Campus. All welcome at this session!
- » **Show Jumping** – There are a number of options for pentathlon show jumping coaches. MPAWA can put you in contact with coaches familiar with pentathlon requirements.
- » **Shooting** – Carol Tomcala is MPAWA's shooting coach; she represented Australia in air pistol at the Atlanta Olympics. Due to WA firearms laws, MPAWA members join the Whiteman Park International Pistol Club as shooting members. Air pistol is Tues night from 5.30pm and shooters must have commenced shooting before 7.15pm.

Some MPAWA athletes may also be members of a swimming club or running club, to enable them to compete in swimming and running competitions; this is not compulsory from a pentathlon perspective and is dependent on the individual rules of each club.





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### Competition

The times and distances a pentathlete has to achieve in competition is dependent on their gender and age. Pentathletes compete in each discipline and are awarded a score, based on their results. The pentathlete's final score is worked out by adding the five individual discipline scores together.

A pentathlete's age is calculated by subtracting their year of birth from the year of the competition; months and days are not taken into account. (Eg year of competition is 2003, year of birth is 1980, pentathlete's age is 23.)

Age	Under 12	12, 13 – 14	15 – 16	17 – 18	Under 21	Open
<b>Discipline</b>						
<b>Fence</b>	Fence all	Fence all	Fence all	Fence all	Fence all	Fence all
<b>Swim</b>	50m	100m	200m	200m	200m	200m
<b>Ride</b>	*	*	*	*	1.1m	1.2m
<b>Shoot / Run</b>	No shooting 1km run	5 shots & 1km 2 times through	5 shots & 1km 2 times through	5 shots & 1km 3 times through	5 shots & 1km 3 times through	5 shots & 1km 3 times through

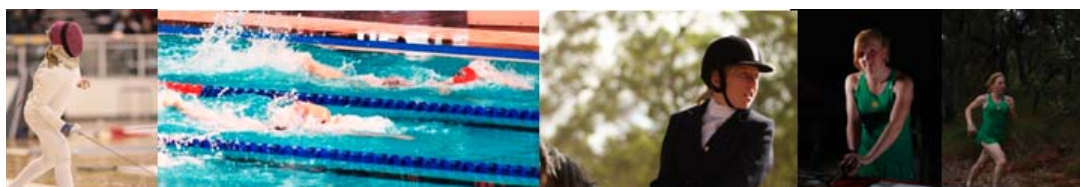
\* Note: In domestic competitions, pentathletes under 18 can jump at any height they are comfortable with.

### How The Competition Works

- » **Fence** – pentathletes fence all other competitors. The competition is one minute one hit epee. A single hit within a minute, is a win. No single hit is a loss! There are no points for a loss. Double hits (where both competitors hit each other simultaneously) do not count. If neither competitor has made a single hit after the minute, both competitors lose! To be awarded 1000 points, competitors need to win 70% of their bouts. If there are 21 competitors, there will be 20 bouts, with 14 hits required to gain the 1000 points. Every hit above or below that number will earn you more or less points. The number of points you gain for a win (or have deducted for a loss) depends on the number of competitors in the competition.
- » **Swim** – various distances, depending on age. To achieve 1000 points pentathletes need to swim the following times:

Dist	Performance for 1000 points
<b>200m</b>	2 min 30.00 secs
<b>100m</b>	1 min 14.00 secs
<b>50m</b>	40.00 secs
For every 0.33 seconds faster or slower than the times listed above, the score is adjusted +/-4 points.	

- » **Ride** – pentathletes jump a course of 12 obstacles, including one double and one treble, on a horse they have never ridden before. Pentathletes are given 20 minutes to get to know the horse with 5 practice jumps. For seniors, the height is 1.2m, for juniors the height is 1.1m and domestically, for youth, the height is 60 – 80 cm. At international competitions, only Junior and Senior competitions have a ride component. To be able to compete in riding at international competitions, you have to prove your competency at domestic competitions. A clear round with no faults is worth 1200 points.





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Refusals, rails down etc, all incur pentathlon penalties.

- » **Shoot / Run** – the shoot / run (called the Combined Event) is the last event. It is a handicap start (the person leading the competition goes first, the person in second place goes second etc). A pentathlete's placing over the line at the end of the combined event determines their final position in the competition. The handicap is based on how many pentathlon points a competitor is behind the competition leader. The competitors run 20m to the shooting line and shoot at a 7 ring target 10m away. The competitor tries to drop all 5 targets within 1 minute 10 seconds. If they achieve this before 1 minute 10 has passed, they can commence the run. If not, they must wait for the 1 minute 10 to pass then they can run, regardless of how many targets have been dropped. The competitors then run 1km and come back to do it again (2 times through for competitors under 15 and 3 times through for competitors over 15).

Time	Performance for 2000 points
14 mins	5 shots & 1km three times through
14 mins	5 shots & 1km two times through
3 min 10 sec	1 km run
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 14 mins - every second faster or slower than the times listed above, the score is adjusted +/-4 points.</li> <li>2. 3 mins 10 sec - every second faster or slower than the times listed above, the score is adjusted +/-8 points.</li> </ol>	

### What Can I Expect To Achieve?

Starting out, pentathletes do NOT need to be scoring 1000+ points in each discipline; but it is something to which all pentathletes aspire. Initially aim to average 700 points per discipline (or 3500 points for all five

events and 2800 for a four event competition without the riding.

Remember, this is an endurance sport and pentathletes need to pace themselves through the events. There is no point swimming 2 minutes flat for 200m and then having nothing left in the tank!

### What Australian Competitions Are Available?

This is a fantastic, exciting sport, with lots to learn and certainly no time to get bored!

Modern Pentathlon in Victoria and NSW run several pentathlon competitions each year. Practice competitions and training camps are also available. WA runs "mini pentathlon" competitions consisting of swim, run and fence. We hope to run pentathlon competitions as our membership grows.

Modern Pentathlon Australia hosts the Australian National Championships in either NSW or Victoria. Pentathletes in WA would be most welcome to come and watch or if you want to compete, you can do as many of the disciplines as you feel able to participate in. If you want to get into pentathlon, it is certainly worth making the trip, to see how it all works in practice. History shows that the sooner a pentathlete experiences this, the easier it actually is to train and understand what you need to do!

### Want More Information?

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#### **Websites:**

Modern Pentathlon WA – [www.pentathlonwa.org.au](http://www.pentathlonwa.org.au)

Modern Pentathlon Australia - [www.pentathlon.org.au](http://www.pentathlon.org.au)

UIPM – [www.pentathlon.org](http://www.pentathlon.org)

