

PENTA5

For the promotion and enjoyment of Modern Pentathlon

In a creative and unique way to promote Modern Pentathlon, the Portuguese Association of Judges and Referees (APAJPM) of Modern Pentathlon have created an exciting competition format – Penta5. In this competition people compete in teams of 5, each person undertaking one of the disciplines.

What is it?

Penta5 is a concept that we idealized in order to promote MP and our association. It should be an event where referees would compete and athletes would be judges. Although, we soon realized that referees and judges must be a part of the referee's team of the event, specially the ones who are involved in the organization. Once we need a big team to work during the event, the athletes are also very important and it is very good so they can understand the referee's work and a lot of them started to me more comprehensive and respectful. It also turned out to be an event where we promote physical activity in general. A lot of the teams are families, some others are groups of friends, and it is very nice to see that we are contributing for healthy habits of those people. In both editions, some of the participants claimed to have lost their sports habits a long time ago but were getting start again and wanted to see the results in the next event. So, we can say that Penta5 is an event where we intend to promote MP, above all, but also sports practice in general, and our association amongst the MP family.

How effective is it?

After these two editions (2007 & 2008) I believe we can say that this event is quite effective. A lot of people who were connected to MP but at the same time didn't exactly know how a competition occurred or how difficult it is to practice all five disciplines, participate on the event with a team and at the end of the day their attitude with the athletes, referees, organizers, coaches, etc, is a lot different.

For those who didn't know our sport is very special because they love it! It is very different to talk about MP to someone, or take that person to try it. Usually they ask how they can inscribe their children to practice. Also, since we invite Portuguese

(some of them international) VIP's such as actors, singers, etc, and athletes from other sports that people know, we have a good acceptance from the media.



How to organise

The organization is both complicated and simple. First of all we have to make sure that the facilities are good for this kind of event. It must be in a place where all the facilities are near each other. People want to see the performance of the other team mates. We host the host the competition at the Military School and it works great. It is the only place in Lisbon, and maybe in Portugal, were it can happen this way.

Another thing we must be aware are the horses. Although we don't accept inscriptions of people who are athletes of a certain sport to practice that same sport at the event (for instance, a swimmer must not compete at the swimming event. He should try a new sport, such as shooting, fencing or running), for the riding event we can not do the same. It is a competition for people that don't have to be good riders, but we make sure that they can ride. Although, we have to make sure that the horses are good for this kind of people and this kind of competition. Some of the athletes take their own horses.

All the staff is composed by volunteers. Whoever they are, they are volunteers. No one makes money with the event. We have lack of financial support, so all the money we can get is to buy whatever we need for the competition. We must have a team of 30 referees so we can follow the schedule above.

We also need a person to be available for anything is necessary. This is the minimum. We can only make a schedule when we know how many volunteers we have, so the schedule is done latter.

One of our biggest difficulties is the fencing equipment. Not the one for the athletes, but the equipment for the tracks: the apparatus and the rolls. MP Portuguese Federation doesn't have any of there and it is difficult to ask to the Fencing Federation. The tracks are the black ones. It is cheaper and people don't need more than this to learn about fencing. The material for the athletes is easier. Not only we have the support of MP athletes that lend us their equipment, but also a lot of the APAJPM's members are ex-MP athletes and current Fencing athletes. Also, the Military School provides us some equipment. All the fencing swords, masks, gilets, etc, are marked by us and we have a list so we can know who the equipment belongs to and to whom did we lend. We have 5 tracks and we only have 10 swords. The swords don't leave the track and it is easier this way. We have reserve swords and a few for left handed.

How long does it take?

It could last only a morning but since we are conditioned with the horses (we have a maximum number of teams: 30 - which make a total of 150 athletes) we must do a round in the morning and a second round after lunch.

This years' schedule was:

09h30 – Confirmation of the subscriptions

10h00 – Reception of the teams at the Military School's Auditorium

11h00 – Fencing Competition

11h15 – Horse's Draw

11h30 – Riding heating

11h30 – Swimming Competition

11h30 – Shooting Competition

11h40 – Riding Competition (1st round)

13h00 – Lunch

14h30 – Riding heating

14h40 – Riding Competition (2nd round)

16h00 – Running Competition

17h00 – Cocktail / Award Ceremony

We were able to follow this program, although we started the reception at the auditorium a bit late.



For Further Information:

If Modern Pentathlon federations wish to follow this format they should contact APAJPM or Inês Caetano at apajpm@gmail.com or inescaetano748@hotmail.com