2012 OLYMPIC MEDIA KIT

U.S. Olympic Team
Suzanne Stettinius, Dennis Bowsher and Margaux Isaksen
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USA Pentathlon Olympic Media Kit

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USA PENT ATHLON MEDIA CONTACT IN LONDON

Bill Kellick
London phone: 07714141880
bill.kellick@usa-taekwondo.us
Key Dates for Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
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Event Schedule

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Guide to What’s Modern about the Modern Pentathlon?

A sport like no other, at the London 2012 Games Modern Pentathlon will celebrate 100 years as part of the Olympic Games.

Facts for London 2012

Venue: Handball Arena - Olympic Park (fencing); Aquatics Centre - Olympic Park (swimming); and Greenwich Park (riding, combined event)

Dates: Saturday 11 – Sunday 12 August Men/Women

Events: Fencing, Swimming, Riding, Combined Run/Shoot Event

Medal events: 2

Athletes: 72 (36 men, 36 women)

Once upon a time, ok, like 776 BC, the ancient Olympic Games, whose competitors consisted of Greek city-states athletes of the day, saw the team from Athens winning a majority of the events; this upset the Spartans whose warrior skills (think the movie, “300” which, if you missed it, is about 300 Spartan warriors kicking about a million Persian butts at the battle of Thermopylae) weren’t being tested by any event in those ancient Games. Therefore, an Ancient Pentathlon, consisting of five skills that a Greek warrior needed to excel at to avoid getting killed was added to the Games to keep the peace with the Spartans. After that, it’s no surprise that the Spartans won. A lot.

Fast-forward to 1896 and French Baron Pierre DeCubertin who introduced the first modern Olympic Games to the world. After those inaugural Games, the good Baron felt that something was missing. He believed that there was no Olympic test for what he considered to be the complete mind-body sports challenge. Coubertin wanted a pentathlon that required a combination of qualities: speed, strength, skill, and endurance. These qualities were not typically found in combination with other individual sports. So, using the Ancient Pentathlon as his guide, he created a modern one. Only instead of an ancient Greek warrior he chose a “modern-day cavalry officer. The story goes that a young French cavalry officer was sent on horseback to deliver a message during a battle. To complete his mission, he had to grab the first available horse, ride and jump over whatever was in his way, sword-fight and shoot the bad-guys, swim across a river and then run the message on foot – the five challenges that face competitors in Modern Pentathlon today. Hence, the Modern Pentathlon became the Olympic test for the most complete athlete.

Attributed to Aristotle and written on a really old and really big Grecian urn, "The pentathletes are the perfect athletes, because in their bodies are both strength and speed."

The Modern Pentathlon is the embodiment of Olympic versatility. The five disciplines are well known and embraced by the sporting community. The characters change, individual disciplines evolve, but with the Pentathlon and at The Olympics, the themes remain the same. Ride an unfamiliar horse over Grand Prix sized obstacles, fencing every other athlete in the field for one-touch, swimming and running as fast as you can, stopping only to shoot a laser pistol – without missing—all in one day,
against the best athletes in the world. Sound like modern day pirates? Jedi-knights with light sabers? The Pentathlon is as meaningful to Olympic historians as it is to today’s youth, we call our sport ‘Radically Relevant’. It is the only sport created expressly for the Olympic Games, and for 100 years it has best embodied the equities envisioned by the founder of the modern Olympic Movement, as the personification of the true Olympian in mind, body and spirit. Today, the Modern Pentathlon is one of the most authentic, interesting and well-respected sports in the Olympic Games.

Basics

So how does it work? The 36 men and 36 women athletes from around the world who have qualified through a series of World Cup events to represent their nation at the London Olympic Games will compete in all five disciplines in a single day with points being used in each event to determine who is winning. The men’s event is August 11th and the women compete August 12th. The rules are the same for men and women.

The first discipline is fencing, where every athlete is required to fence against every other athlete. For the Olympics that means 35 total matches. The fencing is then followed by swimming (200m sprint freestyle) and riding (equestrian jumping over a 12-jump course). Athletes are given a score (called Pentathlon points) for each discipline of the competition.

After the first three disciplines, the athletes’ total scores are converted into a time handicap. Every 4 points is equal to 1 second of time. The handicap determines the starting times for the combined run/shoot event, for which athletes are required to shoot at sets of five targets with a very cool laser-pistol and run three stretches of 1,000m each for a total race of 3,000 meters or about 2 miles. Because of that handicap start, the winner of the overall competition is the athlete who crosses the finish line first at the end of the combined (laser-shooting, running) event.

The Past and Present

A century after its Olympic debut at the Stockholm Games of 1912, the Modern Pentathlon competition at London 2012 will be the first Olympic Games at which the running and shooting elements are combined and the first to use Laser pistol. For the London Olympics, The competition will be held across three venues: the fencing will be held at the Handball Arena; the swimming will take place in the Aquatics Centre; and the riding and combined running/shooting will be staged in scenic Greenwich Park.
Speech

- **Epée**: A thrusting sword, the épée was developed from the rapier (think 3-Musketeers dueling sword) used in the fencing element of Modern Pentathlon competitions.

- **Touch** – A point or hit in fencing typically against your opponent. In Pentathlon, only one-touch constitutes a win or victory. The idea being in a real duel, “how many times did you need to stab an adversary to kill them or win the duel by drawing “first blood?”

- **Freestyle**: The swimming discipline is a 200 meter freestyle race, which in effect means that all athletes favor the front crawl.

- **Clean** – In the equestrian discipline, a clean round means no jumping faults (knock downs and refusals or stops and no time penalties for going over the time limit).

- **Combined Event** – “Combines” the running and laser-shooting disciplines together so that athletes run and shoot in the same event similar to winter biathlon.

- **Handicap start**: In the combined element, the event leader starts first and the other athletes begin afterwards in competition rank order, with the start times dependent on the results and total points achieved in each of the previous three disciplines.

- **Pentathlon Points** – The points earned in each discipline by competing athletes. Similar to the way decathlon awards points. A good total Pentathlon score is over 5500 points.

What to Watch

**Fencing** – Athletes fence every other athlete in the 36 person field using an epee (think Three Musketeers type dueling sword) in a one-touch format. Why only one-touch? It goes back to the history of the sport. Duels were usually fought not to the death but to “first-blood.” How many times did you need to stab an enemy to make him bleed? Each bout lasts up to one minute and is over as soon as one fencer scores a hit, also called a “touch” against the other and is declared the victor or winner of the bout. Double touches (when both fencers hit at the same time) do not count. Points are earned by getting as many wins as you can. 70% victories equals 1000 Pentathlon points with each Olympic victory plus or minus 24 points per victory or defest. In major competitions this event lasts about 2 hours.

**Swimming** – Athletes swim a freestyle race of 200 meters. Points are earned by time. A time of 2:30 seconds equals 1000 points. Each second faster or slower is plus or minus 12 points per second. In major competitions this event lasts about 1 hour total. Good Pentathlon male swimmers are swimming under 2:00 minutes and women under 2:15.
Riding – This discipline is a test of the riders ability to adjust to an unknown horse and ride over an unknown jumping course. Athletes draw by random-lot their horse and have only 20 minutes warm-up to familiarize themselves with it. In just 20 minutes you have no time to “teach” a horse anything. The rider must have a great deal of knowledge about horses from all over the world. (For example, Russian horses tend to understand Russian commands). Then they must ride this horse over an unfamiliar grand prix style course roughly 12 jumps each 4 feet in height. The test is based on the skills a military courier must have needed. You must be able to ride ANY horse to deliver a message in time of crisis- your favorite horse may not be available. This discipline requires a very special skill set and this test is the only one of it’s kind in the Olympics. A perfect ride is worth 1200 points with the major point deductions being for rail knock-downs, stops (disobedience) and time penalties. In major competitions this event lasts about 1 1/2 hours.

Combined – Running and Shooting. This discipline is a test of speed, stamina, skill and poise under pressure. In the final event of the Pentathlon, athletes run 1000 meters, and then stop and shoot 5 targets 33 feet away and the size of a silver dollar with a laser pistol. In London, the laser-pistol will be the first-ever for an Olympic shooting event. When you hit the target, the lights change from red to green. The gun must be cocked and lowered before each shot and an athlete must hit 5 targets before proceeding to run again. You can shoot as many shots as you need to hit the target 5 times. The start is staggered based on how many points each athlete has earned up to this point with the leader starting first. Because of this staggered start, or handicap, the first athlete across the finish line is the winner of the over-all Pentathlon and title of most complete athlete of the Olympic Games.

Cool

• The Name “Modern” Pentathlon is to distinguish it from the “Ancient” Greek Olympic Pentathlon, circa 776 BC.
• The ancient Olympic Pentathlon was created for the Spartans and included running, long-jump, discus, javelin and wrestling – 5 skills a warrior needed to be good at to be successful in battle.
• The modern Pentathlon was created specifically for the Olympic Games by the founder of the modern Olympic movement 100 years ago; using the skills required of a military courier (messenger) in battle. The intention was to create a sport which would be the test of the most complete athlete in the world. Swimming, Running Riding, Fencing and Shooting.
• Pentathletes score points in each event, much like decathlon and the athlete with the most points wins. A typical good score is over 5500 points.
• Pentathletes fence EVERY other athlete in the competition for one-touch. The idea being, how many times did you need to stab a person to make them bleed?
• London will see the first ever Laser-pistol event. Athletes shoot at a target with Laser pistols while running 3x1000 meters or about 2 miles (no Jedi-mind tricks allowed).
• The first American Olympian in the Pentathlon was General George Patton – participating in the Stockholm, Sweden Olympic Games of 1912 where he finished 5th. USA Army Specialist Dennis Bowsher will follow in the Generals footsteps in London 2012.
• Expected to be on-hand at the London 2012 Games, Olympic rider, Colonel John Russell currently living in San Antonio, Texas and 92 years young, was on the staff of General Patton in WWII, later became the Officer in Charge of the U.S. Pentathlon Team and won an Olympic medal in the 1948 London Games.
• Women’s Pentathlon debuted in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games where Team USA’s Emily Deriel won a silver medal.
• The United States has won 9 Olympic medals and 5 World Championship gold medals.
• Bob Nieman, 1979 World Pentathlon champion was elected team co-captain of the entire U.S. 1980 Olympic team and met with President Jimmy Carter against the U.S. Olympic boycott of 1980.
• Pentathletes typically come from swimming backgrounds. Four U.S. Olympic Pentathletes also were on the Olympic fencing team—Patton, Pesthy, Nieman and Stull.
• General of the Army George Patton, Jimmy Liddy (son of G. Gordon Liddy) Greg Bonnan (Baywatch Creator) Caroline Alexander (Noted author) Lori Norwood (noted artist) Mike Gostigian (Personal Trainer to the Stars) John Helmick (son of former USOC President Robert Helmick) Prince Albert II of Monaco and Dr. Pal Schmidt (former Hungarian President) are all former Pentathletes.
• Action movie-star, Dolph Lundgren (legendary Rocky IV star) while starring in the 1994 film, “Pentathlon” Dolph fell in love with the sport and later became the Olympic Team Manager for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Pentathlon Team.
• The Women’s London Olympic Pentathlon on August 12th will be the final women’s event of the 2012 Olympic Games. Though traditionally the first event of the Games, the British organizers want to go out with a win. The British women are favored to win the 2012 Women’s Pentathlon. Team USA’s Margaux Isaksen and Suzanne Stettinius aim to interfere with those plans.

**Records**

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Team USA Coach Bios

Janusz Peciak – Head Coach, Modern Pentathlon

Janusz Peciak is no stranger to the sport of pentathlon. He represented his native country of Poland for nearly two decades, serving as a member of the pentathlon team from 1968-85. He is a five-time individual world champion and brought home the gold medal at the 1976 Olympic Games.

Peciak first joined USA Pentathlon in 1985, when he served as head coach of the U.S. squad until 1994. Four years later, he became vice president of the organization, and re-assumed the head coaching job in 2000. Peciak has molded the top American pentathletes, as well as a majority of the athletes in USA Pentathlon’s circuit.

A graduate of the University of Warsaw, Peciak earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in physical education. His awards and accolades are many, and this year will make his sixth consecutive stint as an Olympic head coach.

Genadijus Sokolovas – Team Leader, Modern Pentathlon

As the high performance director at USA Pentathlon, Dr. Genadijus Sokolovas coaches resident athletes at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. He joined USA Pentathlon in 2010, and has since developed high-performance training programs for his athletes by conducting physiological and biomechanical tests to better understand and enhance their performances. Additionally, Sokolovas serves as a staff liaison for USA Pentathlon’s Youth Development Program, where he recruits elite-level athletes into the program.

Prior to joining USA Pentathlon, Sokolovas served as senior physiologist at Global Technology, and as director of physiology and director of sports science at USA Swimming. Sokolovas holds a doctorate degree from the Russian Academy of Physical Education.
Team USA Athlete Bios

Dennis Bowsher

Height: 5’ 9”
Weight: 160
Resides: Colorado Springs, Colo.

2011 World Cup Ranking: 59th
2011 National Ranking: 2nd

The Short List

- 2004 U.S. Junior Modern Pentathlon National Championships - Gold Medal
- 2005 U.S. Open and Senior Modern Pentathlon National Championships - Gold Medal
- 2006 U.S. Open and Senior Modern Pentathlon National Championships - Bronze Medal
- 2007 - USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships - Gold Medal
- 2009 - USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships - Gold Medal
- 2011 - USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships - Gold Medal

It's Every Day

Bowsher, a member of the United States Army World Class Athlete Program, is a resident athlete at the United States Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs, Colo...Dennis is the son of John and Nancy Bowsher...Has two brothers (Taylor and Tracey) and one sister Devon...Dennis graduated from W.T. White High School in 2001...Competed in swimming all four years of high school...Began modern pentathlon after
seeing a recruitment flyer at a high school swim meet.

**Competition Record:**

**2012 Results:**

January Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 1st

**2011 Results:**

December Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 1st

Pan Am Games (Guadalajara, Mexico): 4th

World Championships (Moscow, Russia): did not advance past semifinals

U.S. National Championships (Colorado Springs): GOLD

World Cup #2 (Sassari, Italy): 7th in mixed relay with Margaux Isaksen

Domestic Qualifier in Palm Springs, Calif.: 2nd

**2010 Results:**

Domestic Qualifier in Colorado Springs: 1st

Pan American Championships (Individual): 5th

Pan American Championships (Team): GOLD

World Championships in Chengdu, China - 54th (individual); 8th (team relay)

World Cup #5 in Berlin, Germany - 65th place

World Cup #4 in Budapest, Hungary - 61st place

World Cup #3 in Medway, Great Britain - 22nd place

World Cup #2 in Cairo, Egypt - 50th place

World Cup #1 in Playa del Carmen, Mexico - 35th place
Winter Open in Palm Springs, Calif. - Gold Medal

2009 Results:
Pan Am Championships in Buenos Aires, Argentina - Bronze Medal
World Championships in London, England - Did not advance past semifinal
USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal
NORCECA Championships in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal
U.S. Open in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal
World Cup #4 in Rome, Italy - 44th Place
World Cup #3 in Budapest, Hungary - 51st Place
World Cup #1 in Mexico City, Mexico - 42nd Place

2007 Results:
USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Gold Medal
World Cup #5 in Drzonkow, Poland - Silver Medal
World Cup #4 in Budapest, Hungary - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #3 in Millfield, Great Britain - 36th Place
World Cup #2 in Cairo, Egypt - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #1 in Mexico City, Mexico - 35th Place

2006 Results:
World Championships in Guatemala City, Guatemala - 22nd
Place

U.S. Open and Senior Modern Pentathlon National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Bronze Medal

World Cup #4 - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #3 - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #2 - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #1 - Did not advance past semifinal

2005 Results:

World Championships - Did not advance past semifinal
U.S. Open and Senior Modern Pentathlon National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Gold Medal

2004 Results:

U.S. Junior Modern Pentathlon National Championships - Gold Medal

2003 Results:

U.S. Junior Modern Pentathlon National Championships - Gold Medal
U.S. Modern Pentathlon Senior National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - 13th Place
Margaux Isaksen

Pronunciation: Mar-Go E-Sock-Son

Height: 5’10”

Weight: 133 lbs.

Birthplace: Fayetteville, Ark.

Current Residence: Colorado Springs, Colo.

Coach: Janusz Peciak

Preferred Disciplines: running and swimming

2011 World Cup Ranking: 24th

2011 Junior World Ranking: 7th

2011 Senior National Ranking: 1st

2011 Junior National Ranking: 2nd

Personal: Margaux Isaksen has proven to be a quick study in the sport of modern pentathlon. Having first burst onto the national scene in June 2007 when she captured all three U.S. National Championship titles (senior, junior and youth). In February 2008, Isaksen made her first World Cup Final at the first World Cup stop of the season in Cairo, Egypt finishing 13th. She served notice that she was a serious contender for 2008 when she won the silver medal at the second World Cup stop of the season in Mexico City, Mexico. On June 1, 2008, the 16-year-old qualified for the 2008 Olympic Games when she received an official Olympic invitation from the Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) for her ranking on the pentathlon world ranking list for the Olympic qualifying
period. Isaksen secured her spot on the U.S. Olympic Team by being ranked second among American women in the UIPM World Cup standings. Having found early success in the sport of modern pentathlon, Isaksen moved to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. to train full-time in the fall of 2007. She is currently being home-schooled by her mother, Kathleen West. Before leaving her high school in Fayetteville, Ark. she ran cross-country and was a member of the Arkansas State Championship Cross-Country Team in 2007. She also ran cross-country in junior high school. She has proven to be an all-around athlete and does well at most sports. Was also consistently on the honor roll while in school and received the Presidential Environmental Youth Award which provided her the opportunity to attend an awards ceremony at the White House where she met and spoke with President George W. Bush. Upon completion of high school, Margaux is considering several colleges and hopes to study law. Margaux enjoys travelling, reading, hanging out in nature with family and friends and trying as many new sports as possible. She loves people, animals and the outdoors. She says she likes to learn things from others. She says that her mother (Kathleen West) and Margaret Mead are her role models because they enjoy her love of nature and cultures. They also see the value of studying the lives of other people and far away places. When asked what makes her unique, Margaux says that “All people are unique, but I guess I pride myself on my ability to set a goal and work towards that goal. I seem to have a real tenacity
for being successful.” Is the daughter of Kathleen West and the late Tommy Isaksen. Her stepdad is Steve Ferguson and she has a younger sister, Isabella.

Did You Know?: Margaux grew up on her family's farm in Arkansas and is currently enrolled in university majoring in sports nutrition.

**Competition Record:**

**2012 Results:**
- January Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 1st

**2011 Results:**
- December Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 1st
- Champion of Champions (Sicily, Italy): GOLD
- Pan Am Games (Guadalajara, Mexico): GOLD
- World Championships (Moscow, Russia): 11th-women's individual/4th-mixed relay with Sam Sacksen
- U.S. Nationals (Colorado Springs - Sr. Division): GOLD
- U.S. Nationals (Colorado Springs - Jr. Division): GOLD
- World Cup Final (London, England): 26th
- Kremlin Cup (Moscow, Russia): 24th
- World Cup #3 (Budapest, Hungary): 27th
- World Cup #2 (Sassari, Italy): 15th individual/7th in mixed relay with Dennis Bowsher
- World Cup #1 (Rancho Mirage, Calif.): 20th
- Domestic Qualifier in Palm Springs, Calif.: 1st
2010 Results:

Domestic Qualifier in Colorado Springs: 1st

Pan American Championships in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - SILVER

World Championships in Chengdu, China - 12th Place
(individual); 7th Place (mixed relay)

World Cup Final in Moscow, Russia - 10th Place

World Cup #5 in Berling, Germany - 16th Place

World Cup #4 in Budapest, Hungary - 14th Place

World Cup #3 in Medway, Great Britain - 24th Place

World Cup #1 in Playa del Carmen, Mexico - Silver Medal

2009 Results:

World Cup Final in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - 14th Place

World Championships in London, England - 17th Place

Junior World Championships in Khaisiung City, Taipei, R.O.C. - Bronze Medal

USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal

USA Pentathlon Youth A National Championships in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal

NORCECA Championships in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal

U.S. Open in Rancho Mirage, Calif. - Gold Medal

World Cup #4 in Rome, Italy - 4th Place

World Cup #3 in Szekesfehervar, Hungary - 7th Place

World Cup #1 in Mexico City, Mexico - 9th Place

2008 Results:
Olympic Games in Beijing, China - 21st Place
World Championships in Budapest, Hungary - 29th Place
World Cup #5 in Kladno, Czech Republic - 21st Place
World Cup #4 in Madrid, Spain - 32nd Place
World Cup #3 in Millfield, England - 29th Place
World Cup #2 in Mexico City, Mexico - Silver Medal
World Cup #1 in Cairo, Egypt - 13th Place

2007 Results:
South American Modern Pentathlon Championships in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Gold Medal
Junior World Championships in Caldas da Rainha, Portugal - 18th Place
World Championships in Berlin, Germany - Did not advance past semifinal
USA Pentathlon Youth National Championships in Roswell, N.M. USA - Gold Medal
USA Pentathlon Senior National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Gold Medal
USA Pentathlon Junior National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Gold Medal
World Cup #5 in Drzonkow, Poland - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #4 in Budapest, Hungary - Did not advance past semifinal
World Cup #3, Millfield, England - Did not advance past semifinal

2006 Results:
Youth A World Championships in Popoli-Sulmona, Italy -

31st Place

**2005 Results:**

U.S. Modern Pentathlon Junior National Championships in

Colorado Springs, Colo., USA - Fourth Place
Suzanne Stettinius

Height: 5-10
Weight: 134

Birthplace: Virginia Beach, Va.

High School: Hereford High (Parkton, Md.) '06

College: McDaniel College

Year of Graduation: 2011

Major: Business

Coaches: Bin Lu (fencing), Tom Bernier (running), Jeff Heistand (swimming), Joseph and Blythe Davies (riding)

Website: www.suzanne.mintmeadows.com

2011 World Cup Ranking: 48th
2011 National Ranking: 2nd

See July 2011 feature on WBAL (Baltimore)

Sports Played in High School: cross country and track & field

Hobbies: foxhunting, galloping race horses, being a farm girl and snowboarding

Family: her sister, Tallie Stettinius, competes on the Lake Union crew team in Seattle and was 7th at the Head of the Charles
Favorite Foods: killer cheeseburger

Pre-competition meal: lots of carbs and some meat the night before to make sure she is not starving the next day during the long pentathlon competition

Favorite Athlete: Zenyatta

Favorite Movie: "The Lion King"

Favorite Music: whatever the mood calls for...country, classic rock, pop

Favorite Country Visited for Competition: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Did You Know?: Suzanne is an amateur steeplechase jockey...she broke her neck in a horse race in 2009...she has four siblings and lives on her family's farm in Parkton, Md., with 40 horses.

MAJOR COMPETITION RESULTS:

2012 January Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 2nd

2011 December Domestic Qualifier (Colorado Springs): 5th

2011 Champion of Champions (Sicily, Italy): 17th

2011 Pan Am Games (Guadalajara, Mexico): 7th

2011 World Championships (Moscow, Russia): did not advance past semifinals

2011 U.S. Nationals (Colorado Springs): SILVER
2011 NORCECA Championships (Guadalajara, Mexico):
GOLD

2011 World Cup #4 (Chengdu, China): BRONZE in mixed relay with Sam Sacken

2011 World Cup #1 (Rancho Mirage, Calif.): 18th

2011 Domestic Qualifier in Palm Springs, Calif.: 3rd

2010 Domestic Qualifier in Colorado Springs: 2nd

2010 Pan American Championships: 11th

2010 U.S. Nationals: SILVER

2009 NORCECA: SILVER
Four years ago, Dennis Bowsher went through the worst moment of his career when he was cut from Team USA and missed the Beijing Olympic Games.

He was one of the three Americans who qualified but, in the end, team-mates Sam Sacksen and Eli Bremmer were chosen to represent his home country.

Training with Bremmer in the summer of 2008 gave Bowsher the strength to pursue his dream for another four years.

Last October, after finishing 4th at the Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico, he claimed a spot for London and was once again part of the Olympic team.

"Training with Eli at the time gave me something to work for. By seeing his improvement in practices and seeing my improvement just by training with him, I thought that I still had a little bit more left. So I thought I would try again and go for 2012," he said.

The four-time US national champion has been doing modern pentathlon for almost 10 years.

It all started in 2003 in Dallas, Texas, when he received a recruitment flyer at high school.

Bowsher was a swimmer but had never ridden a horse or held a gun before.

"I went to San Antonio, which is close to Dallas, they thought that I had some potential. After a couple of months they offered me an apartment, so I was able to move to there and start full-time," he said.
His hard work paid off as, only seven months later, Bowsher became junior national champion.

At the same time, he was seeing his chances of making the Olympic swimming team getting slim.

"I reached a point in my swimming career where I knew I wasn’t going to make the Olympics, just because of the times I was doing," he said.

“There were people who were younger than me who were beating me – and that was just in the city of Dallas.

“I started to realise that the Olympic dream in swimming wasn’t going to happen. Pentathlon opened up a different path.”

Although Bowsher considered easy to learn the other four disciplines, he admits riding has always been his weakness.

In 2006, during a competition in Lithuania, he was unconscious after falling from a horse and hitting his head on the ground.

“You are put in a giant animal and there is that little bit of fear and nervousness, you always wonder how is it going to be like when you fall off, but I got used to it,” he said.

The 29-year-old US Army specialist lives at the Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs and only sees his relatives around four times a year.

The Olympics will be special for Bowsher’s family as well, as his father John, his sister Devon and his niece will be in London to support him.

“My sister has never seen me compete; my dad has only seen me in domestic competitions so it will be a good experience for both of them to see not only an international competition but also the biggest international competition," he said.

Bowsher admits to be more focused on improving his individual results than in claiming a medal.

After the Olympics, he plans to compete until Rio 2016 and become a swimming coach.

“I have been pretty much injury-free and had no serious setbacks during my career, so I think the next four years will be the same, I will just continue to look to improve,” he said.
“But who knows how my body is going to feel in four years? It’s a very demanding sport but, as long as you are able to stay healthy, you can definitely do it for a long period of time and do well until your mid-thirties.

“I will be 33 in 2016 so I just have to see how my body feels like then.”

Maryland Native To Compete In Pentathlon At Olympics

PARKTON, Md. (WJZ) – In just a week, a young Baltimore County woman will arrive in London to pursue her Olympic ambitions.

She can run, shoot, fence, swim and ride, and she’s one of the best in the world.

Denise Koch has more on Suzanne Stettinius and her quest to go for the gold.

Maryland has made its mark in the Olympics, with athletes such as Michael Phelps, Kimmie Meissner and Dominique Dawes.

Now there is a new name to add to the mix: Suzanne Stettinius. She is one of the best in the world, but in a sport not many have heard of.

The modern pentathlon, composed of riding, running, shooting, swimming and fencing, pits this 24-year-old from Parkton against the world’s best athletes.

Growing up, she did not even imagine that she would one day be competing in the Olympics.

“No, I didn’t even think it was a possibility,” she said.

Stettinius has been riding horses since she was just 4 years old.

“My dad taught me how to shoot. I got swim lessons to try to work on my stroke a bit,” she said.

However, it was not until a national riding competition in middle school that her Olympic dream began to take shape.
“These pentathletes came and we learned about what the pentathlon was, ’cause we never really knew. We’re like, ‘That’s pretty cool.’ I already do all these sports. All I have to do is learn to fence,” Stettinius said.

It didn’t take her long to master fencing. She competed in her first competition when she was 17 years old, and her potential was immediately recognized.

“I won the junior division. The coaches were like where did this girl come from because nobody had ever heard of me before,” she said.

In the world of pentathletes, plenty of people have heard of Stettinius now. She is one of only two American women who qualified for the 2012 Olympic team.

“You have to be one of those people, you’re not amazing at anything, but you’re solid at everything,” she said.

She’ll have to be solid at riding, as competitors don’t find out which horse they’ll be riding until 20 minutes before the event. Then, they’ll have to jump 15 fences.

Her riding coach feels confident.

“She’s so gifted and so naturally balanced. I think she has the edge there,” coach Perry Fitzpatrick said.

It hasn’t always been easy, and at times it has been dangerous. Stettinius has broken both her neck and collarbone over the years.

“It was a reality check. I realized if I want to do this sport, I’ve got to dedicate myself to the sport,” she said.

Hours of training everyday make this a full-time commitment, which can be tiring at times.

“When I hit a wall, it’s not just me anymore, my whole community is backing me up. I have to suck it up,” she said.

Stettinius is the first woman from Maryland to qualify for the U.S. Olympic team in the modern pentathlon.

**Modern pentathlete Margaux Isaksen a veteran at age 20**

*As part of USA TODAY Sports’ "100 Olympic hopefuls in 100 Days" series, prospective U.S. Olympians give their thoughts on the Games in their own words.*
At an Olympics ripe with discussion about the young ages of some of the athletes, Margaux Isaksen floated through the Beijing Games at 16 without much discussion.

Then again, the modern pentathlon (an event that combines fencing, swimming, riding, shooting and running) doesn't have quite the same following as gymnastics. But Isaksen, who was 21st in Beijing, couldn't be better off. While many of her teenage counterparts from the Beijing Games won't be making a return, she'll be headed to London for her second Olympics.

The journey wasn't any easier this time around for Isaksen. The Arkansas native broke a wrist by being bucked off a horse in 2011 (pentathletes must do the riding events on a horse they meet for the first time 20 minutes before competing), and then Isaksen came down with mononucleosis in December, missing nearly four months of training.

While Isaksen is still getting into shape after her bout with mono, she finished fifth at last weekend's Kremlin Cup.

I met (George W. Bush) when, I want to say, I was 12 years old. My sister and I and my two cousins started an environmental organization. We called it the Parker Branch Stream Team and we dedicated ourselves to protecting a local stream that we grew up playing in in Arkansas. We won the president's environmental youth award. We got to go to Washington, D.C., and tour the White House and go all around and meet the president.

I grew up riding horses— not the type of riding you do in the pentathlon, but I grew up on the back of a horse. My freshman year of high school, I started running cross country and somebody's little sister actually, around the same time, wanted to take fencing lessons. We were fortunate enough that I had club there in Fayetteville, Ark.

My mom sent me up to Colorado Springs for a pentathlon training camp, followed by youth nationals. I was horrible. I couldn't do a flip-turn in the pool. I had never held a gun before. It was rather comical. Thinking back on it, it was extremely embarrassing, but I fell in love with the sport.

I never expected to make the team in ’08. Being there, I was very naïve. I didn't really have any expectations of myself. I was just there to enjoy myself, and got to the Olympics
and, of course, the pressure set in. … Competing, I woke up that morning and it kind of hit me where, wow, I'm at the Olympics. I got quite nervous and I would say panicked a little bit, but all in all it was a really wonderful experience.

I really questioned what I was going to be able to do (after mono). At one point I kind of expected that I might go to the Olympics and just be going to be there, which was a horrible feeling because you spent four years training.

I went to the Kremlin Cup last weekend in Moscow and although my running and swimming were so slow, I felt much stronger. It was a night-and-day difference. My coach said I was moving a lot better. I feel much more confident now.

You get different horses all around the world and you get 20 minutes to warm it up and get to know it the best you can before you take it out on the course. It's scary because, of course, from a performance standpoint, you want to do well and you could also get a bad horse. You have the potential of falling off. I broke my wrist last year in Russia, falling off my horse in warmups. He just bucked me off.

Breaking my wrist was a blessing in disguise. Honestly, I was feeling a little unmotivated that year and kind of questioning how badly I wanted it. So when I broke my wrist it really made me realize just how bad I wanted a gold medal and how hard I was willing to fight for it. I think I came back even stronger after my broken wrist than I had been before.
Pentathlete Margaux Isaksen anticipates an eventful Olympics

Margaux Isaksen hopes to bring U.S. a rare medal in modern pentathlon, which combines five disciplines — fencing, swimming, riding, running and shooting. However, a bout of mononucleosis was a setback.

By Diane Pucin (LA Times)

Margaux Isaksen grew up on a farm in Arkansas and her childhood was nearly perfect.

She loved the hard work and the animals, the horses and dogs and goats. She loved being outdoors and she found different outlets for her athletic genes.

But not in a way that's expected.

Although many kids grow up wanting to shoot a ball, Isaksen found joy in shooting a rifle. If she was told not to play with sharp sticks, Isaksen chose to find an epee. When Isaksen ran, she felt free and she was fast. It turns out that her recreational gallops on the family horses helped develop a skill that would eventually serve as well.

Most kids don't grow up saying, "Mom, I want to compete in the modern pentathlon." Of all the Olympic disciplines, it is one of the most obscure.

But when she was 15, Isaksen wiped away some tears and left Arkansas to move to the only national modern pentathlon training center in the country, at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

A year later, in 2008, she competed at the Beijing Olympics, knowing she didn't have a chance to medal. "I was 16 and didn't have the strength or knowledge. But I came home knowing what I had to do."
Isaksen will be at her second Olympics in London in July. If you'd asked her a year ago, she might have considered herself a medal contender, but a severe case of mononucleosis has been sapping her strength since January.

Even now, Isaksen, 20, finds herself immensely fatigued after doing the easiest of workout sessions.

"It wasn't until the middle of April that I started training," Isaksen said. "But it was still hard. I'd get out of bed and didn't feel too bad, but then if I did jogging or anything physical it was awful. My first run back, I went seven minutes and I could have sworn I went three hours. It's been a horrendous, uphill battle."

She is ranked 40th in the world, the top American, but not what she had hoped for after finishing 21st in Beijing.

And despite that happy childhood in Arkansas, Isaksen's life hasn't been without tragedy. Her father, Tommy Isaksen, who had been a cruise ship captain, died of colon cancer when she was 2.

Her mother, Kathleen West, married Steve Ferguson, a man Isaksen describes as a stepfather in name only. "I think of him as my dad," she said.

The battle with mono might have been worse and Isaksen's mood more downbeat had she not, as she said, "found the love of my life in Colorado Springs."

For almost a year now Isaksen and Olympic speedskating star Joey Cheek have been together.

"He's the guy for me forever," she said. "It's amazing."

The pair met in Colorado Springs when Cheek came to watch his brother, also a speedskater, train. "It wasn't love at first sight," Isaksen said. "The first time we met we kind of nodded at each other and that was it. It wasn't until he came back to watch his brother a second time that we started talking."

Cheek, who recently graduated from Princeton with a degree in economics, said of Isaksen, "She has a bizarre number of incredible talents that makes her good at what she's doing."

If she put her mind to it, Cheek said, Isaksen might make the Olympic trials in both track and swimming and could be an Olympic-level fencer. "But that just speaks to how talented she is," Cheek said. "I know her sport is obscure, but the first time you really pay attention and watch, it all makes sense."