

Last year's World Championships in Oregon marked the beginning of Kimberly Garcia's reign as the queen of race walking. The 29-year-old from Peru made history by winning gold medals at both distances, then continued that momentum into 2023 by setting a world record over 35km in he the year.

But in recent months, Spain's Maria Perez has made it known that Garcia may not have it all her own way in Budapest. Perez, the 2018 European 20km champion, clocked a world-leading Spanish record of 1:25:30 over 20km in March and then broke Garcia's world 35km record two mon Perez has won eight of her nine races this year; her only loss came in La Coruna where she finished fifth in a high-quality race won by Garcia, though it was just less th after her record-breaking performance over 35km.

Garcia also suffered a rare defeat this year, placing fourth in Rio Maior, but she rebounded with her victory in La Coruna, where she set a national record of 1:26:40 – a confidence boost in her final race before heading to Budapest.

China's 2017 world champion Yang Jiayu won in Rio Maior, leading a Chinese 1-2-3 with Garcia finishing 21 seconds behind the winner. Yang, the world record-holder ov enjoyed a strong season so far, clocking a season's best of 1:26:41 and winning over 10km in Madrid.

Yang forms part of a formidable Chinese trio in this event; four-time world champion Liu Hong will be making her eighth World Championships appearance, while Ma Xh looking to improve upon her 10th-place finish from 2022.

Despite setting a Chinese record over 35km this year, and being the world record-holder at 50km, Liu will contest just the shorter discipline in Budapest. But her preser three current world record-holders – Yang (20km) and Perez (35km) being the others – will clash over 20km in Budapest.

Ma, winner of four major age-group titles in her teens, won the 20km at last year's World Race Walking Team Championships, and earlier this year she improved her PB Since winning the Olympic title in Tokyo, Antonella Palmisano has spent most of her time rehabbing her way back from injury. But the Italian returned to form with a ru at the European Team Championships this year and will be aiming to make it back on to the podium in Budapest.

Other strong contenders from Europe include Greece's double continental champion Antigoni Ntrismpioti and Poland's double world silver medallist Katarzyna Zdziebło.

The Latin American challenge will also be fierce. Mexico's Alegna Gonzalez won in Dudince and set a PB of 1:26:59 in La Coruna. Colombia's Sandra Lorena Arenas impr national record to 1:28:02 in Nomi, while Peru's Evelin Inga, Brazil's Erica Sena and Ecuador's Glenda Morejon have all been in good form.

Australia's two-time Commonwealth champion Jemima Montag is undefeated this year. She placed sixth at the Olympic Games and fourth at last year's World Champion that improvement trend continues, she could well end up on the podium in Budapest.

Medal winners

2008 Olympic

1	Olga Kaniskina	RUS	1:26:31
2	Kjersti Plätzer	NOR	1:27:07
3	Elisa Rigaud	ITA	1:27:12

2009 World DQ Kaniskina

1	Olive Loughnane	IRL	1:28:58
2	Liu Hong	CHN	1:29:10
3	Anisya Kiryapkina	RUS	1:30:09

2010 Europe DQ Kaniskina

1	Anisya Kiryapkina	RUS	1:28:55
2	Vera Sokolova	RUS	1:29:32
3	Melanie Seeger	GER	1:29:43

2011 World DQ Kaniskina, Kiryapkina

1	Liu Hong	CHN	1:30:00
2	Elisa Rigaud	ITA	1:30:44
3	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	1:31:14

2012 Olympic DQ Kaniskina, Lashmanova

1	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	1:25:16
2	Liu Hong	CHN	1:26:00
3	Lu Xiuzhi	CHN	1:27:10

2013 World DQ Kaniskina, Lashmanova

1	Liu Hong	CHN	1:28:10
2	Sun Huanhuan	CHN	1:28:32
3	Elisa Rigaud	ITA	1:28:41

2014 Europe

1	Elmira Alembekova	RUS	1:27:56
2	Lyudmyla Olyanovska	UKR	1:28:07
3	Anežka Drahotová	CZE	1:28:08

2015 World

1	Liu Hong	CHN	1:27:45
2	Lu Xiuzhi	CHN	1:27:45
3	Lyudmyla Olyanovska	UKR	1:28:13

2016 Olympic

1	Liu Hong	CHN	1:28:35
2	Maria Guadalupe González	MEX	1:28:37
3	Lu Xiuzhi	CHN	1:28:42

2017 World

1	Yang Jiayu	CHN	1:26:18
2	Maria Guadalupe González	MEX	1:26:19
3	Antonella Palmisano	ITA	1:26:36

2018 Europe

1	Mária Pérez	ESP	1:26:36
2	Anežka Drahotová	CZE	1:27:03
3	Antonella Palmisano	ITA	1:27:30

2019 World

1	Liu Hong	CHN	1:32:53
2	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	1:33:10
3	Yang Liujing	CHN	1:33:17

2021 Olympic

1	Antonella Palmisano	ITA	1:29:12
2	Sandra Arenas	COL	1:29:37
3	Liu Hong	CHN	1:29:57

2022 World

1	Kimberly García	PER	1:26:58
2	Katarzyna Zdziebło	POL	1:27:31
3	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	1:27:56

2022 Europe

1	Antigóni Drisbióti	GRE	1:29:03
2	Katarzyna Zdziebło	POL	1:29:20
3	Saskia Feige	GER	1:29:25

Relevant records

WR	1:23:39	Yelena Lashmanova	RUS	Cheboksary
Asi	1:23:49	Yang Jiayu	CHN	Huangshan
Eur	1:23:39	Yelena Lashmanova	RUS	Cheboksary
CZE	1:26:53	Anežka Drahotová	CZE	Murcia

All-time list

1	1:23:39	Yelena Lashmanova	RUS	Cheboksary
2	1:23:49	Yang Jiayu	CHN	Huangshan
3	1:24:27	Liu Hong	CHN	Huangshan
4	1:24:45	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	Huangshan
5	1:24:47	Elmira Alembekova	RUS	Sochi
6	1:24:50	Olimpiada Ivanova	RUS	Adler
7	1:24:56	Olga Kaniskina	RUS	Adler
8	1:25:03	Marina Pandakova	RUS	Sochi
9	1:25:04	Svetlana Vasilyeva	RUS	Sochi
10	1:25:08	Vera Sokolova	RUS	Sochi
11	1:25:11	Anisya Kiryapkina	RUS	Sochi

World season list

1	1:25:30	Mária Pérez	ESP	Córdoba
2	1:26:40	Kimberly García	PER	La Coruña
3	1:26:41	Yang Jiayu	CHN	Huangshan
4	1:26:43	Ma Zhenxia	CHN	Huangshan
5	1:26:48	Wu Quanming	CHN	La Coruña
6	1:26:59	Alegna Gonzalez	MEX	La Coruña
7	1:27:15	Qieyang Shenjie	CHN	La Coruña
8	1:27:28	Elvira Khasanova	RUS	Saransk
9	1:27:32	Evelin Inga	PER	La Coruña
10	1:27:35	Liu Hong	CHN	Huangshan
11	1:27:51	Jemima Montag	AUS	Nomi

European season list

1	1:25:30	Mária Pérez	ESP	Córdoba
2	1:27:28	Elvira Khasanova	RUS	Saransk
3	1:28:12	Antigóni Drisbióti	GRE	Melbourne
4	1:28:28	Saskia Feige	GER	Erfurt
5	1:29:00	Reykhan Kagramanova	RUS	Saransk
6	1:29:14	Anastasiya Kolchina	RUS	Sochi
7	1:29:19	Antonella Palmisano	ITA	Podébrady
8	1:29:34	Marina Novikova	RUS	Sochi
9	1:29:35	Ana Cabecinha	POR	Podébrady
10	1:29:58	Lyudmyla Olyanovska	UKR	Podébrady
11	1:30:13	Raquel González	ESP	Córdoba

Czech season list

1	1:33:02	Eliška Martínková	CZE	Podébrady
	1:33:58	Eliška Martínková		Chengdu
	1:35:24	Eliška Martínková		Dudince
	1:40:54	Eliška Martínková		Chia
	1:41:36	Eliška Martínková		Olomouc
2	1:48:54	Ema Klimentová	CZE	Olomouc
3	1:50:02	Alžběta Franklová	CZE	Olomouc
4	1:52:11	Štěpánka Pohlová Kučerová	CZE	Olomouc

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