

4x#1 : Fort William, GBR : 01-02.06.2002

France's Gracia and Chausson Win Four-Cross Debut

The *Downhill* and *Four-Cross* season of the **Tissot-UCI Mountain Bike World Cup** began successfully in Scotland Saturday evening, as the newest discipline in cycling debuted to large crowds and exciting racing. After replacing the dual with four-person racing on a short downhill track, the 4-X has taken off in the 2002 season.



Approximately 5,000 spectators paid admission to witness the racing Saturday on a carefully crafted course at the foot of the Nevis Mountain Range near Fort William, in western Scotland. They saw two of the sport's best riders in **Anne-Caroline Chausson** (FRA, Volvo-Cannondale) and **Cedric Gracia** (FRA, Volvo-Cannondale), who give both their team and nation a double-win in the 4-X.

Anne-Caroline Chausson, FRA



Chausson came into the women's finals with the second-fastest qualifying time behind top-seeded **Katrina Miller** (AUS, Jamis). But Miller crashed out of her semi-final run against **Sabrina Jonnier** (FRA, Intense Cycles) relegating her to the small final, which she then won.

Chausson had crashed in downhill training before the 4X finals, and was thus tentative in her semi-final run against third-seeded **Tara Llanes** (USA, Yeti/Pearl Izumi). Llanes seized the opportunity and won that run, setting up a competitive final between Llanes, Chausson, **Celine Gros** (FRA, Morzine-Avoriz) and **Melissa Buhl** (USA).

In the final run, Chausson rode aggressively and got off to an early lead. Then, after the first big turn and double jumps, Llanes crashed hard onto the track while Chausson rode to victory. Llanes was helped off the course by staff moments later.



Chausson recalled *"I didn't see what happened behind me, I just rode as hard as I could. Last year I got passed while looking around, so now I just pedal hard. Today I just tried to do my best, but I was feeling stiff after my crash."*

Chausson said she was happy with the debut of the Four-Cross, after racing two mountain-cross events in the USA. *"I like the passing, it's better for spectators,"* she said. *"And this is a special course; it's short and hard to pass."*

Jonnier finished second behind Chausson, while Gros finished third for the day. In the small final Melissa Buhl finished second, followed by **Vanessa Quin** (NZL, Intense) and **Miwa Sakamoto** (JPN).

Words: **Ari Cheren**

Images: **Mark Dawson** www.fattirefotos.com



	<i>Bib</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Firstname</i>	<i>Team</i>
1	2	FRA19771008	CHAUSSON	Anne-Caroline	VOLVO-CANNONDAL
2	4	FRA19810819	JONNIER	Sabrina	
3	5	FRA19830128	GROS	Celine	MORZINE-AVORIAZ
4	3	USA19761128	LLANES	Tara	
5	1	AUS19750915	MILLER	Katrina	
6	7	USA19820125	BUHL	Melissa	
7	6	NZL19761015	QUIN	Vanessa	
8	8	JPN19761108	SAKAMOTO	Miwa	
9	9	GBR19810130	GOUGH	Joey	
10	10	NED19820707	BEERTEN	Anneke	TEAM BE ONE
11	11	ECU19840319	MARGGRAFF	Diana	
12	12	GBR19800602	HORRIDGE	Emily	
13	13	GBR19830811	ATHERTON	Rhian	