

MTB World Cup XC #7 & DH #5 - CDM Bromont, Canada, August 1-3, 2008

August 2: Elite men 4X Alvarez makes comeback to win

By Sue George in Bromont, Québec – www.cyclingnews.com

Rafael Alvarez de Lara Lu won a rainy elite men's 4X in Bromont for this second World Cup win in a row after also taking Mont-Sainte-Anne last weekend. If you also count the World Championships, it was his third win in a row. Cedric Gracia (Commencal - Furious - Oak) finished second in the Big Final. After crashing, Guido Tschugg ended up third and Johannes Fischbach (Team Ghost International) was fourth.

It looked like World Champion Rafael Alvarez de Lara Lu would miss the big final after crashing at the start of his semi-final heat, but when two other riders crashed later in the same run, he seized the opportunity and finished second in that round to advance.



World Champion Rafael Alvarez De Lara Lu won
Photo ©: FJ Hughes

Alvarez had crashed in his semi-final round because he anticipated the start too early. "There was a lot of noise at the top and it was impossible to hear," he said through a translator. "I thought I heard the start, and so I went before the (actual) start." He was left picking himself up at the gate while the others rolled away, but he didn't give up. Guido Tschugg took the win in Alvarez's semi-final heat, but behind him Filip Polc and John Swanguen who crashed, giving Alvarez a chance to move to second from fourth and thereby punch his ticket to the big final.

In the other semi-final, Fischbach and Gracia advanced ahead of Romain Saladini (Team Sunn) and Joost Wichman (Cannondale Factory Racing Team). Wichman looked to have the second spot, but a gutsy pass by Gracia got him second and a ride to the Big Final.

In the big final with Alvarez, Tschugg, Fischbach and Gracia, sparks flew from the start. Alvarez made sure his timing at the start was perfect. He knew just what he needed to do.

"In the final, I knew to keep my eye on the first corner and that's where I would give myself the most options to win," said Alvarez. Behind him, the race was between Tschugg and Fischbach.

"We were fighting for second place, and I always tried to pass in the corners - on the inside," said Tschugg. "Then I thought, 'Now I got him,' but his rear went out and I crashed.

"We both crashed and his pedal ended up in my front wheel, so we couldn't get up quickly and go," said Tschugg. "I waited for him and we both rode in together."

That left Gracia an open door to charge for second place overall.

"I knew everyone was falling on the ground and I waited," joked Gracia. "My game was to wait until everyone else crashed and if they didn't crash, I'd make them crash. I heard it's legal in mountain biking..." he trailed off as he turned his attention to an offered beer which he was being encouraged to chug by some inebriated fellow racers and fans.

Results

Big Final

- 1 Rafael Alvarez De Lara Lu (Spa)
- 2 Cedric Gracia (Fra) Commencal - Furious - Oak
- 3 Guido Tschugg (Ger)
- 4 Johannes Fischback (Ger) Team Ghost International

Small Final

- 5 Joost Wichman (Ned) Cannondale Factory Racing Team
- 6 John Swanguen (USA) MS Intense Factory Racing Team
- 7 Romain Saladini (Fra) Team Sunn
- 8 Filip Polc (Svk) Kenda Tomac

1/4 Finals

- 9 Dan Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal
- 10 Scott Beaumont (GBr) Rocky Mountain UK
- 11 Will Longden (GBr) Team Bike Radar
- 12 Kamil Tatarkovic (Cze) Suzuki-RB
- 13 Dominik Gspan (Swi)
- 14 Hans Lambert (Can) Norco World Team
- 15 Erik Nelson (USA)
- 16 Tomas Slavik (Cze)

1/8 Finals

- 17 Fabien Cousinie (Fra)
- 18 Lewis Lacey (GBr)
- 19 Cody Warren (USA)
- 20 Michael Robert Haderer (USA)
- 21 Heikki Hall (USA)
- 22 Adrian Weiss (Swi) Tomac Factory Racing
- 23 Cody Eichorn (Aus)
- 24 Florian Gottschlich (Ger)
- 25 Jurg Meijer (Ned)
- 26 Joey Van Veghel (Ned)
- 27 George Stephenson (USA)
- 28 Scott Roberts (GBr)
- 29 Sascha Meyenbourg (Ger)
- 30 Bruno Boissin (Fra)
- 31 Michael Garcia (Ned)
- 32 Adrian Hanko (Ger) Solid AClass Factory Team

Qualifications

- DNS Ludovic Gadois (Fra)
DNS Nicolas Gspan (Swi)
DNS Greg Minnaar (RSa) Santa Cruz Syndicate